

THE AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY
SUMMER 2007 Communications

Volume 19, No. 2

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June 8, 2007

We will never forget!



The prime mission of the Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society is to preserve the bond that exists between members of the Resistance in occupied countries and the downed airmen they helped.

Our annual reunions provide an opportunity to again express our sincere appreciation for the assistance they extended us, all at great risk to themselves and to their families.

We were fortunate to have nine helpers from World War II with us at the St. Louis reunion last month. Some now live in the States, but some tackled the current problems of international travel and came from Europe.

The contingent of helpers included: from left, Peter Hakim (France) of Livingston, N.J., Marguerite Brouard-Miller (France) of Sedona, Ariz., Miodrag Pesic of Yugoslavia, Roger Anthoine (Belgium), now living in southern France, Gilbert Sauer (Holland) of Wilmington, N. Car., Yoke Folmer of Holland and Milan Buros of Yugoslavia.

Not shown are Maita Floyd (France) of Sun City, Ariz., and Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans (Belgium) of Dunedin, Fla.

U.S. AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

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

SUMMER 2007

The Prez Sez

By Richard M. Smith

<afeesone@gmail.com>

WHAT A REUNION!!!

When General Duncan J. McNabb, at the Albuquerque reunion last year, said, "Come to Scott Air Force Base next year and I will pull out all the stops for AFEES," he did just THAT.

When we arrived at Scott AFB, a four-star general was there to greet us, shake hands, give us a big smile and say, 'WELCOME TO SCOTT.'

Right behind him was a female lieutenant colonel, Shirlene Ostrov, with a big smile, a hand shake, and a hug. How much better can it get?

At the welcoming ceremony, conducted inside the body of C-17 because of threatening weather, a ROTC drill team from O'Fallon High School performed a 10-minute close order drill that was a thrill to see.

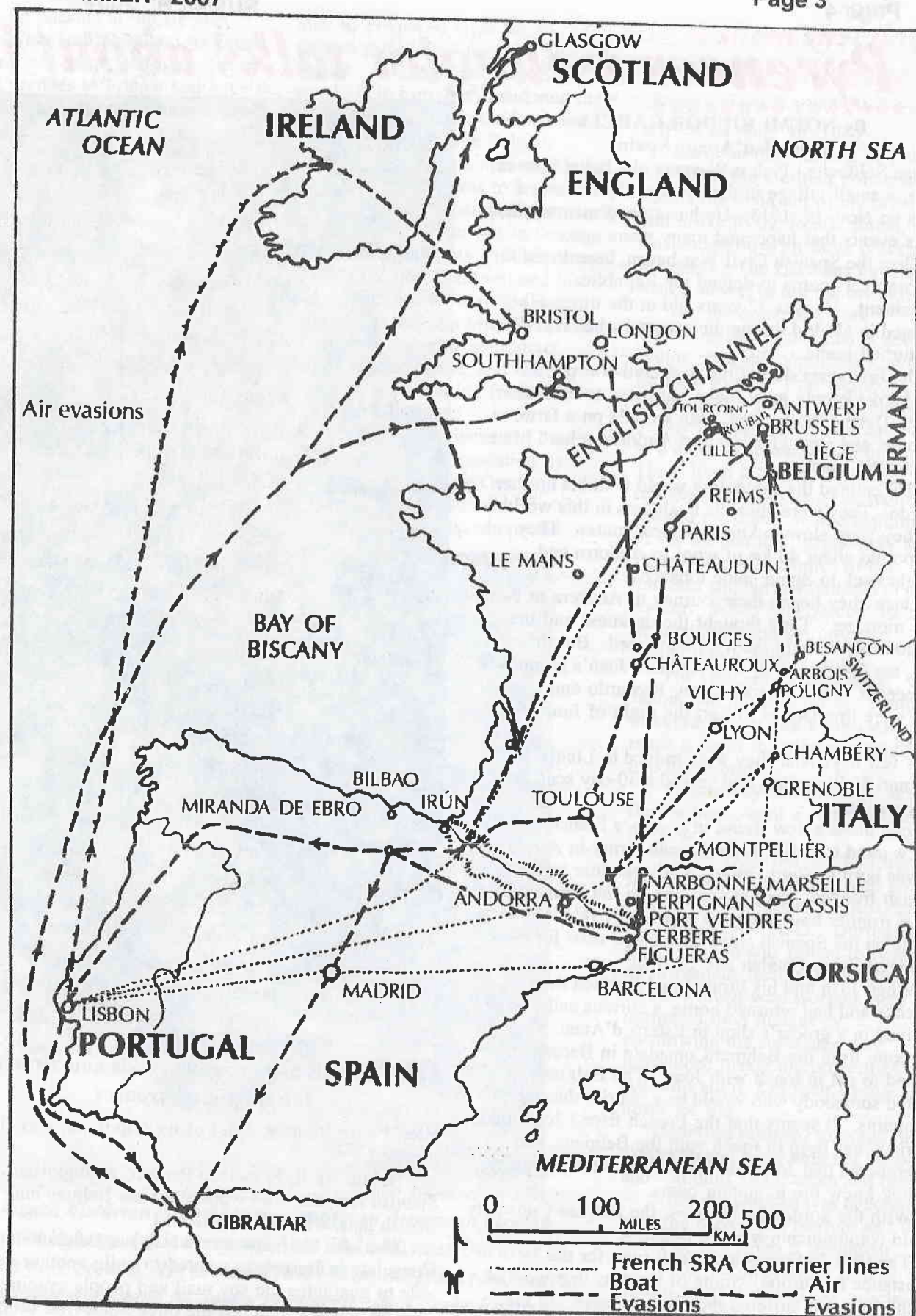
Col. Allan Hunt, 357th Airlift Wing commander, delivered a proclamation from officials of St. Clair County, Illinois, welcoming our group.

A Mascoutah High School choir presented a musical program that was greatly appreciated.

After leaving the hangar, we had an excellent buffet lunch and a tour of the base.

Saturday night began with a social hour, and then Helpers were escorted to their table, one by one, on the arm of an active-duty airman, under a canopy of crossed sabers. Most impressive.

**A GOOD TIME WAS HAD
BY ALL!**



MAIN EVASION ROUTES AND FRENCH SRA COURIER LINES (Often changed.)

A Pyrenees smuggler talks about it

By NOEMI RIUDOR GARCIA

Esterri d'Aneu, Spain

Joan Soldevila i Pich is 94 years old, being born in Escart, a small village in the Pyrenees, province of Lleida on Nov. 19, 1913. He has a good memory and recalls events that happened many years ago.

When the Spanish Civil War began, he enlisted in the Carabiners corps to defend the Republic government. He was 32 years old at the time. He remained in Madrid during the war and when it ended, he returned home.

The first years during the post civil-war period were hard. People must make sacrifices to earn their living. During these years, Joan worked on a farm, in the forest and smuggled wool to Andorra, a hard life to earn a little money.

Joan entered the smuggling world with his brother Ricardo. They were absolute beginners in this world and they were slow to know the best routes. They transported about 40 kg of wool to Andorra and brought back to Spain some tobacco.

Once, they began their journey to Andorra in the early morning. They thought the darkness and the late hour would help them go unnoticed. But that night, the Guardia Civil was vigilant. Joan's group was intercepted near Llavorsi. Joan, Richardo and another mate were imprisoned in Sort the night of June 10, 1943.

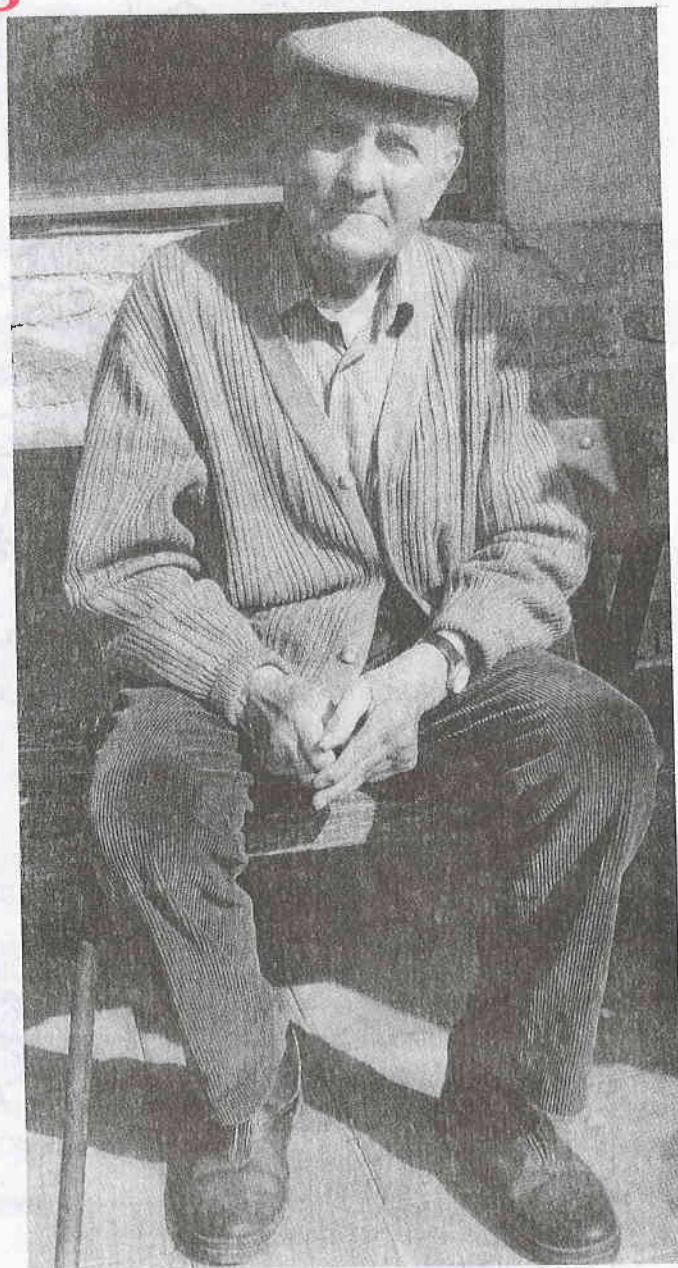
A few days later they were moved to Lleida, to the Seminari Vell's prison and served a 30-day sentence for smuggling.

Joan made a new friend in prison, a French boy who wanted to enlist in the French Army in Africa. He was born in Saint Giron, a village close to the Spanish frontier. People who live on the French side of the frontier have business and family relations with people on the Spanish side. Languages used for these exchanges were Catalan and Occitan.

When Joan and his brother had finished their sentence and had returned home, a curious call was received in a grocer's shop in Esterri d'Aneu. Someone from the Belgian Consulate in Barcelona wanted to get in touch with Joan. The Belgians wanted somebody who would be a courier through the mountains. It seems that the French friend Joan made in prison has been in touch with the Belgians, and remembered that Joan and his brother were smugglers, so they knew the mountain paths.

With the Soldevilas brothers, the Belgian Consulate would communicate with Toulouse.

The year 1943 was a difficult time for the Resistance in Europe. Some of the nets that worked for the Belgians suffered the Nazi pressure. In the middle of January, Dedee, the young Belgian woman who directed the Comete, was imprisoned. A few days



JOAN SOLDEVILA i PICH

At 94, he tells of smuggling goods and airmen in the wartime Pyrenees

later, Pierre Bouriez, chief of the Sabot net, was also arrested.

In late April, Francisco Ponzan, an important Spanish resistant who worked for the Belgian and British nets, was also imprisoned.

That was the context in which the Belgian Consulate in Barcelona wanted to build another net, able to guarantee the spy mail and people evading.

The new net included the three Soldevilas brothers. Ricardo (code name Jose) travelled to Barcelona to

pick up packets in the Belgian Consulate and take them to Escart. Joan (code name Rodrigo) crossed the Pyrenees to France and gave the packets to his brother Jaume (code name Pablo) who lived in Toulouse.

An anonymous woman, who always took a dog for a walk, came for the packets at Jaume's home.

Jaume moved in the French Underground. He also worked for the British Pat O'Leary net. Once he led a group of 10 or 12 British and Canadian aircrew through the mountains. When they arrived in Spain, it was Joan who took care of them and hid them in a stable for three days, until a Spanish military man who worked for the British Consulate in Barcelona, came for them.

In early 1944, the Belgian Consulate sent a Belgian military

man to France to organize an aircrew evacuation near the Spanish border. A Frenchman from Salau was to help him, but abandoned the Belgian inside the forbidden zone. He was arrested. The Belgian carried some documentation related to the new net he was to organize.

When the German police arrived at Jaume's home, he was in Spain. They found there his wife, Gererosa Cortina (named Germain) and his son. Generosa was arrested and imprisoned in Saint Michel's prison in Toulouse. A few hours later, Jaume arrived home, and the Germans were waiting for him. It was May 15, 1944.

Jaume was imprisoned in Toulouse, pending execution by firing squad. His wife Gererosa was deported to Ravensbruck concentration camp, where she

A sham shooting at the gravesite

arrived on Aug. 10, 1944.

Early on the morning of June 27, 1944, the German police took Jaume Sodevila out of the prison and drove to the Reulle forest, near Castelmaurou with three other prisoners. The Germans gave each man a shovel to dig his own grave.

But the noise of a horn distracted one of the guards and Jaume used the opportunity to run into the forest. That created a shooting and his knee was injured.

He managed to escape and came to a house where he could hide. There lived a couple of Italian refugees, the Barcos. The woman opened the door. Jaume explained to her all that had happened. Mrs. Barco gave him clothes of her husband and burned Jaume's in the cooker. When Mr. Barco returned, he treated Jaume's injury; the Italian was a doctor.

The Germans searched for Jaume, but in vain. So the guards, to avoid their upper's reprisals, made a sham shooting and said they had killed him.

Jaume stayed a fortnight at the Barcos home until a cousin came for him.

But for Gererosa, the hell was not finished. She had to wait until April 10, 1945, when the Russians liberated Ravensbruck. During her captivity, she was forced to work in an armament factory where many of the women who worked there mitigated their hunger by swallowing the substance they introduced inside the projectiles. All who ate it, had their stomachs upset for life.

Generosa returned to home in Toulouse and lived with her husband and son until 1987, when she died.

After the war she was decorated with the Medal of Freedom and the Croix de la Legion d'Honneur.

After the liberation, Doctor Barco wrote a newspaper article which reported what happened to the Soldevilas family.



A Czech historian is seeking to identify an American airman downed in Yugoslavia on/about Aug. 20, 1944, near Daruvar in what is now Croatia. He is seated first left on the front row, next to a woman who could be Jovita Podgornik, who spoke English. If you have helpful information, please contact the editor.

Denise Lenain:

... a member of the Felix line

From *Les Chemins de la Memoire*
July-August 2006

Translated by Claude Helias
How did you join the Resistance?

I was a student in Paris. I was 20. I couldn't stand the German occupation. In 1941, I had the opportunity to help a friend who was in the Underground. I took messages and hid weapons.

In 1943, on the occasion of a trip to Northern France where my family lived, this friend arranged to meet me at the gare du Nord station and she asked me to go to Tourcoing and fetch Allied airmen whose planes had been shot down by the Germans in Holland, Belgium and France. The job was to pick them up and help them make it back to England. I agreed.

So I went to Tourcoing with a password. I met someone who lived near the Belgian border. He watched me with a suspicious look, after which he said, "Today there isn't anyone but come back tomorrow."

Actually, I went back three times and eventually I took charge of two Allied airmen whom I escorted to Paris by train. The line was bombed and we were delayed. I was rather frightened. The meeting place in Paris was at No. 2, place de la Sorbonne.

What was your network?

I belonged to the Felix network. Everything was very compartmentalized. As a matter of fact, I wasn't acquainted with anybody. My work was to take messages, to supply with food airmen staying at hotels, generally near place Saint-Sulpice, at flats or with friends.

I also took British, American and Canadian airmen to Paris. Once, on a Sunday morning, I picked up 13 British and American airmen

at the gare Montparnasse station. They were being sent back to Paris because the maritime operation which was to take them back to England aborted.

The Germans didn't see anything. First, all were lodged in Paris but it was too risky, so I took them to the chateau de la Fortelle, in the Seine-et-Marne area, east of the capital.

Three trips had to be organized by train, then on foot across fields. I stayed there for three weeks with them. I remember that the keeper of the chateau was complaining about all those men who wouldn't speak to him. Of course, he didn't know who they were and that they didn't speak French!

On another occasion, I picked up near Nantes an airman who had been wounded when his plane was shot down during an air raid.

Was it difficult?

I never experienced big troubles, except once when, with another Resistance worker I didn't know, I was to guide six airmen 20 km from the Spanish border.

At Carcassonne, we came across some Germans who were checking people getting into a railcar.

We didn't have any luggage, only little parcels, which could have aroused suspicion. Luckily, they didn't notice anything.

My English was bad. When



DENISE LENAIN

people asked questions about the people I was escorting, I used to say that they were deaf and dumb. Actually, I had almost no contact with the airmen.

When did you stop your missions?

My last journey took place in January 1944. I went to Dourdan to pick up an American. It was uneventful. Not long after, I was told that the Felix line had been broken by the Germans, which was not true.

So I went to Brittany to hide with a friend. I stayed with her until the Liberation.

Maita's book: story of occupation

Maita Floyd, French Helper now living in Arizona, was at the St. Louis reunion with a few copies of her 1996 book, *Stolen Years, In My Little Corner of the World*. She has ordered a reprint of 100 copies.

Maita was born in the Basque region of southwestern France and spent four years living under German occupation. During 1943-44 she was a courier for an underground escape network.

She has lived in the U.S. since 1946. Her writing career began after her husband's death. The editor recommends her book for an inside look at life near the Spanish border during WWII.

Contact Maita at 10015 W. Royal Oak Dr. #310, Sun City AZ 85351; Phone, 623-875-7920; <mfloyd@royaloakslife.net>

Jim spent time with the 3rd Army

James (Jim) Fauth, 9th Air Force, crashed his P-38 on 12 April 1945, near Leipzig, 50 miles behind enemy lines. He hid out until he was rescued by one of General Patton's tank columns. Here is part of his story after he went down:

**By Maj. JAMES R. FAUTH
Kingman, Ariz.**

I broke open my escape kit, got out the compass and plotted due west. The only hiding place was across an open field and about a quarter mile away. It was a grove of trees and I planned to hide there and start out in a westerly direction after dark.

I wanted to run across that open field and hide in the trees, but I tried to look nonchalant and strolled along, now and then kicking a clod of dirt. When I got about 100 feet from the woods I spotted a German woman and little girl who had come out of the trees on a trail. Now I could hear men cutting trees in the woods; this blew my cover.

Then I spotted a single clump of brush in the middle of a plowed field about 3/4 of a mile ahead. I figured no one would think a guy would hide in such a conspicuous place and made for it.

The brush was about 3 feet high and when I got there, I guessed that I was about a mile from my bird. I was also about a mile above a small town which later turned out to be Sangerhausen.

I snuggled into that clump and pulled brush and leaves over me. I checked my watch -- 10:00 hours. Outside being scared as hell, I realized that I was in pretty good shape.

I dozed off and was awakened by a swoosh sound, followed by a loud explosion. It was only 4:30. The next round hit the town right below me. Women, children and old men came running out of town, wailing

and crying. But I was building hope because I figured the Krauts wouldn't blow their own town.

Soon a large number of vehicles came down the road. I figured that they had to be ours, as the Germans didn't have that much equipment nor enough fuel to run them.

I thought it was about half a mile to where the road forked. When the first vehicle in the column, a tank, was nearing the fork in the road, I jumped out of the brush, took one look at the Germans, and ran for all I was worth for the road fork.

A tank came around a small hill just before the fork. I'm running toward them and hollering "Don't shoot, don't shoot!" Not one solitary soul waved back and the guys riding behind the gun turrets had their weapons pointed right on me.

About that time, a Jeep came sliding around the corner. I scrambled up the bank to the road and a bunch of GIs surrounded me. A major, "Hotshot Thomas," jumped out of the Jeep and ran up saying, "My god flyboy, let me get you to the medics." I told him I was OK, and that all I wanted was to get in the middle of all those GIs -- I had never been so scared in my life.

They asked what aircraft I was flying and when I told them a 38, they said, "We're going to shoot you anyway, you son of a bitch, you guys clobbered the hell out of us in the Bulge." They weren't joking and I sure talked fast to convince them that we definitely weren't trying to hit our own guys. After some grumbling, they accepted me.

They had come about 50 miles that day and were shutting down in Sangerhausen; I had surely lucked out.

The major loaned me a Jeep and three guys and we went up and put a charge in the remains of my "U" baby.

When these guys saw my 38 on the hill and passed the word around, they all thought I was a hero. After

my episode, I sort of ate that up. I had been picked up by a spearheading tank column of the 36th Armored Infantry, Patton's Third Army, and they were way ahead of following units. That is why I couldn't just go back to my outfit; the enemy closed in and fought behind the spearhead. I spent nearly six days with these guys and it didn't take me long to figure out who the real heroes were.

There was a political prison camp on the edge of one town and the guys on the lead tank jumped off and shot the locks off the gate. Those prisoners, a real sorry lot, kissed the GI's shoes and headed for some dead horses. They tore into the raw meat and when they raised their heads, grinned with blood all over their faces. These poor devils had sores on their faces and hands and were starved nearly to death.

Days later, Hotshot said he would liberate a car for me. This he did and had it filled with petrol. He also gave me a note which asked for fuel from any service vehicle I might encounter. The GIs gave me a barracks bag full of loot and I gave the P-38 pistol to Hotshot as he had mentioned that he liked it. Thomas gave me a clue as how to best head west and after a hearty good-bye, I bugged out.

I had traveled quite a distance when I was stopped on a hill above Nonrdhausen by a GI. He said I couldn't go through the town as it had been bombed by the Eighth Air Force the day before. I told him my tale of woe and he said, "Pass."

I was told that C-47s were flying barrels of gas into Gottingen and I headed for that locale. Shortly after, about 12 ex-POWs and I were heading west in one of Uncle's C-47s. Soon I was back at base and old Sgt. Bill Jackson, the best crew chief in the 428th, came running out saying, "I knew you weren't dead. I knew you weren't dead."

A full bottle of cognac and the flight surgeon took a look at my broken nose. I had made it back.

14 of 80 Raiders are still with us

HYRUM, UTAH (AFNEWS) -- Friends, family and servicemembers paid their respects March 28 to retired Lt. Col. Chase J. Nielsen, a member of the Tokyo Doolittle Raiders, who died March 23 at his home in Brigham City, Utah.

In front of a crowd that included members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1695, his church, and the Royal Air Force, Colonel Nielsen's family spoke about his recollection of his prisoner of war experiences that speak to all and shed light on the atmosphere of World War II for U.S. servicemembers.

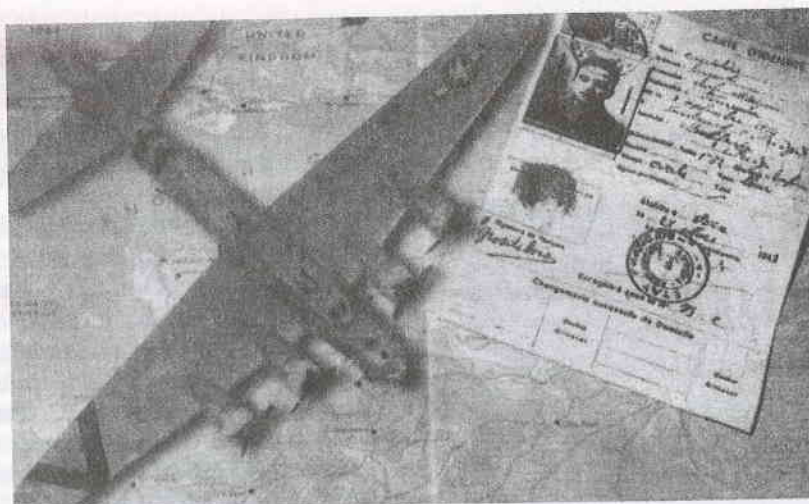
The Tokyo Doolittle Raid was led by Lt. Col. James Doolittle and consisted of 16 B-25 bombers and 80 airmen who took off from the deck of the USS Hornet April 18, 1942. The mission was launched early when the fleet was spotted by Japanese picket boats. The premature launch led to inadequate amounts of fuel that caused some of the planes to crash land off the coast of China.

Afer 40 months of imprisonment, Colonel Nielsen was rescued by a para-rescue team and brought back to the States. In January 1946, he returned to China to testify in the international War Crimes Trail against four Japanese officers who ultimately were found guilty of war crimes.

Of the original 80 men who took part in the historic flight, 14 of those are alive today. In 1947, Colonel Doolittle started a tradition to host the Raiders annual reunion. At each reunion, the surviving Raiders conduct a solemn goblet ceremony to honor the reunion and the deceased.

The reunion will be held annually until only two Raiders remain. They will drink a final toast of a vintage bottle of cognac.

S/Sgt. William L. Birch, a bombardier from Crew # 1 who passed away Nov. 18, 2006, was also toasted to this years.



Airmen and Helpers relive old memories

From the Air Force Times
April 23, 2007

By SEAMUS O'CONNOR

In May 1943, Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans was an 11-year-old Belgian girl living under German occupation. Ralph Patton, Richard Smith and Larry Grauerholz were young American flyboys learning the ins and outs of the B-17.

Sixty-four years later, they will meet in St. Louis, bound by their involvement in a little-discussed but vastly important part of world history.

All are members of the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society, a group formed to reunite World War II airmen shot down over Nazi-occupied territory with the Europeans who helped them escape to freedom.

Thousands of downed Allied fliers counted on the kindness of strangers in Holland, Belgium, France and other countries to keep them out of the Gestapo's grip until they could rendezvous with British rescuers.

The group has held reunions all over North America and Europe since 1964, but this year's destination is a first: It's a U.S. Air

Force base. On May 4-7, 2007, the members will be hosted by Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

That's thanks to Gen. Duncan McNabb, commander, Air Mobility Command, whom Grauerholz, an old family friend, introduced to the group in 2002.

The airmen and their helpers inspire McNabb in the way they "put their lives on the line to protect the tomorrows of others," he told Air Force Times.

"This great heritage ... tells what our folks are doing now, putting their lives on the line for others, and what great airmen did, and what the people that came to rescue them" did, McNabb said.

This year is also special because McNabb has invited several active-duty airmen to participate in the society's banquet and memorial service.

Including younger airmen and citizens is important, Patton said, because, "We have high hopes that they will continue the relationship between the Europeans and the Americans. I think ... we're an influence for good between our countries."

With members now in their 80s or 90s, the society's numbers are



Reunion organizer Yvonne Daley lights a candle at the 2007 memorial service, a solemn part of the AFEES reunion in St. Louis last month.

dwindling. Their stories, though, continue to amaze. And since details of their evasion accounts were classified for 50 years after the war, the airmen are ready to share their history, said Grauerholz, 90, editor of the society's quarterly journal.

Patton was co-piloting a B-17 in January 1944 when flak damage forced his plane to lag behind its formation. Luftwaffe fighters pounced on the wounded bomber, shooting off the tail assembly.

"Nobody had to tell me to bail out," said Patton, then a second lieutenant.

"One of the FW-190s took a look at me, but he was apparently an average human being, and didn't take a shot at me."

Patton and his six surviving crew members wandered the French countryside for days until peasants helped connect them with the French resistance.

"Somebody always knew somebody that knew somebody," Patton said. "Yet nobody knew anybody that was directly in the underground."

Smith, the society's president, went down about 50 miles north of Paris when German fighters tore up his B-17 on Dec. 30, 1943. Farmers with the resistance

hid him and his men in a rabbit hutch.

"If they'd have been caught with us, they and their whole family would have been shot," he said.

Daley-Brusselmans confirmed that threat, one her family faced constantly as her mother helped a total of 130 airmen escape.

Though just a girl at the time, Daley-Brusselmans helped by walking the airmen around her village so German guards would believe they were Belgians.

"You try and take a 6-foot-3 American dressed in Belgian clothes and you might as well have flown Old Glory, he looked so American," she said. Daley-Brusselmans' mother would forge paper and arrange hiding spots for the airmen until they could be moved to a safehouse in Paris.

In February 1944, two Canadian officers pulled off Operation Bonaparte, in which English gunboats picked up Smith and other airmen in the dead of night. A month later, they repeated the rescue with Patton's group.

In 1961, Patton returned to Europe to thank his rescuers, and met Leslie Atkinson, a reserve captain in the French air force and a "Helper" of down airmen.

Atkinson had a list of 94 Allied fliers who'd escaped through Europe, and Patton invited them to a meeting in Niagara Falls, N.Y. Patton and Atkinson co-founded AFEES at that first meeting in 1964.



AFEES President Richard Smith lights a candle during the annual reunion memorial service.

Reunion gets international coverage

Evasion Helpers honored

By CHERYL WITTENAUER

Associated Press Writer

ST. LOUIS (AP) -- Milan Buros still has one of their flight jackets, but he can no longer remember the names of four U.S. airmen he led to safety in the forests of his native Slovakia in 1944.

Nor can he recall how many Jews he saved along similar escape routes.

But the 82-year-old, with ice-blue eyes, still remembers why he risked his own well-being to help save others.

"We wanted to save our future, our lives," he said of Hitler's plan to crush his people. "We knew our fate, and that we were next on the list to be killed."

Three dozen U.S. airmen who were shot down behind enemy lines during World War II are gathering at a St. Louis hotel this week sharing stories with people like Buros. He's one of nine "helpers" being honored at the reunion of the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society.

The society, which was founded in the 1960s, is made up of U.S. airmen who crash-landed or parachuted into German-occupied territory when their planes were shot down during the war. Yet, they evaded capture and returned to their units with the help of people from places like Belgium, Holland, France, Greece and the Balkans.

It would have been nearly impossible to escape without them, the men said. Many of their crew mates were executed or captured by the Nazis.

Members of the French Resistance, the Dutch and Belgian underground, and partisans and soldiers from the former Yugoslavia led more than 2,000 U.S. airmen to safehouses and farms where they were kept and fed until it was safe to travel an escape route out.

Some ventured over the

+++++ This Associated Press article appeared in several publications and broadcast outlets throughout the U.S. and many other countries, including Pravda in Russia and the London Guardian.

Other newspapers in which it appeared include the Houston (Tex.) Chronicle, the Bradenton (Fla.) Herald, Leading the Charge (Australia), the Columbia (Mo.) Daily Tribune, the Centre (Pa.) Daily Times, the Canton (Ohio) Repository, the Army Times, and the Arizona Daily Star.

+++++ Pyrenees Mountains from France into the relative safety of Spain. Others were taken to makeshift airfields in rural meadows and airlifted to England. (Others were evacuated by the Royal Navy from the Normandy coast, or found refuge in neutral Switzerland or Sweden.)

Reunion organizer Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans, a 75-year-old "helper" from Belgium, but now living in south Florida, said there were five major escape lines.

Society President Richard Smith of Battle Lake, Minn., was shot down over France on Dec. 30, 1943. He said he delayed pulling his parachute as long as he could to give the Germans less time to react to seeing -- and capturing -- him.

He ended up 50 miles north of Paris, and hid in a hedge row before three Frenchmen found him and got him in the trunk of their vehicle. They drove him to an abandoned farmhouse, where he was met by his radio operator and co-pilot.

The three later stayed with a couple and their baby, "who gave us their bed and fed us lots of rabbit stew," he said.

Marguerite Brouard-Miller, 79, now of Sedona, Ariz., was a teenager

in 1943 when a family friend asked her mother to house airmen in her Paris apartment. They kept two at a time for three weeks, helping 17 U.S. airmen and a British spy.

They walked them to a station, where they would catch a train and be met by a guide who would take them across the Pyrenees. "They all arrived safely, and my mother kept in touch with them," she said. "But after a while, you lose touch, and quite a few are deceased."

Peter Hakim, 81, of Livingston, N.J., said being part of the Belgian underground was an adventure when he was 18.

But his parents, who had seven children, took a huge risk, he said.

They helped hide 10 airmen whose B-17 crash-landed near their home in May 1944, and kept them safe for six months. They didn't exchange names, he said. Word might get out and someone might betray them.

"If you were found out, the Germans had no pity," Hakim said. "The man would be shot and the women and children would go to a concentration camp. You could be arrested for possessing a radio. My father hid one in the hay loft so he could go to the barn at night to listen to the BBC."

Members, Friends, Helpers, Guests**Roll call of those who signed in at the '07 reunion**

- ANTHOINE, Roger, Peron, (France)
and Felix Thiry, Belgium
- ATKINSON, Felicia, France
- BARRON, Joe, Scott AFB
- BEALL, Sylvia, Tampa, Fla.
- BIE, Cappy & Cindy, Indian Rocks Beach, Fla.
- BOLINGER, Bruce, Nevada City, Calif.
- BUROS, Milan, (Slovakia), Germany
- CLARK, Kimberly, Hopatcong, N.J.
- COMSTOCK, Sandy, East Haven, Conn.
- CUPP, Penny & Bill, Northfield, Minn.
- DALEY-BRUSSELMANS, Yvonne,
(Belgium) Dunedin, Fla.
- DAVID, Scotty and Clayton, Hannibal, Mo.
James David, Barb Harper
- DAVID, Betsy and Lynn, Town & Country, Mo.
Jonathan David, Kim Stevens
- DeCHAMBRE, Gerry, Woodstock, Ill.
Annette & Kevin Butler, David
DeChambre, Michael Butler,
Jonathan & Shannon Butler
- DONAHUE, Jerri, Brecksville, Ohio
- DUNAWAY, Ken, Overland Park, Kans.
Nancy Borel, Peggy Bernath
- FEINGOLD, Leah & Lou, Emerson, N.J.
- FLOYD, Maita (France), Sun City, Ariz.
- FOLMER, Yoke ((Holland), Schiermonnikoog
- FRICKE, Margaret Carlson, Fridley, Minn.
- GOODALL, Judy & Scott, Lescure, France
- GRAUERHOLZ, Larry & Ruth, Wichita Falls,
Tex., Larry Jr. & Kim Grauerholz
- HAINES, June, Clare, Mich.
Dorothy Naughton, San Diego, Calif.
- HAKIM, Ghislaine & Peter (Belgium),
Livingston, N.J.
- HAMILTON, Lois, Grove City, Pa.
- HARMON, Jerry & Kay, Tampa, Fla.
- HEEKIN, Francis, Cincinnati, Ohio
- HENNESSY, Betty, Cerritos, Calif.
- HEWIT, Brenda & Harvey, Haverford, Pa.
- HUNT, Laura & Alan, Scott AFB, Ill.
- KENNEY, Dorothy, Decatur, Ga.
- KOSINSKI, Jean & Anthony, Chicago, Ill.
- KUBLY, Ray, Watertown, Wis.
Jeffrey Kubly
- LASHINSKY, Frank & Dorothy, Cornwall, Pa.
- LEE, Dale, Sun Lakes, Ariz.
Clare Gardner
- LINDELL, Connie & Ernie, Moses Lake, Wash.
Kirsten Lindell, Brian Lindell
- LONCKE, Connie & Peter, Groveland, Ill.
- LORING, Thelma & Bud, Monument Beach,
Mass.
- MANOS, Joe, Sacramento, Calif.
- MARTIN, Ethelene & Clyde, Mackinaw, Ill.
- MATTSON, Arthur, Houston, Tex.
Cheryl & Larry Boyd
- METCALF, Paricia & Charles, Dayton, Ohio
- MILLER, Marguerite Brouard (France) & Ed,
Sedona, Ariz.
- MONG, George, Warren, Pa.
Richard Lawson
- MORGAN, Diana, West Ewell, England
- MURRAY, James, Port Richey, Fla.
Helen Milton
- Mac ISAAC, Steve, Albuquerque, N.M.
John Paul Mac Isaac
- McDADE, Elizabeth, Rochester, N.Y.
- McGINLEY, Bonnie & Bill, Mabelvale, Ark.
- McGLINCHEY, Bayonet Point, Fla.
- McNABB, Linda & Duncan, Scott AFB, Ill.
Marvie McNabb
- OSTROV, Shirlene, Scott AFB, Ill.
- PATTON, Bette & Ralph, Chevy Chase, Md.
Beverly and John Wand, Lucie & Geoff
Patton, Katherine James
- PENA, Godelieve & Jean (France)
- PESIC, Miodrag (Yugoslavia), Belgrade, Serbia
Aleksandar Jovanovic
- ROGERS, LaMerle & Leonard,
Youngtown, Ariz.
Paul Rees
- SALIVAR, Mary Jane & Charles
- SAUER, Gene (France) and Gabrel,
Wilmington, Va.
- SCHAEFFER, Frank, Montello, Wis.
- SCOTT, Elizabeth & Carl, Columbus, Ohio
- SCREWS, Charles, Abilene, Tex.
David Allison
- SHANDOR, Mary, Cresson, Pa.
- SHANDOR, Richard, Cresson, Pa.
- SHERK, Heather & Raymond, Toronto, Canada
- SMITH, Richard, Battle Lake, Minn.
Marcia & Patrick Abernethy, Atlanta, Ga.
Ann & Richard Smith, Wahpeton, N.D.
Kevin Smith, Jonathan Smith
- SPEAREL, Ellen & Don, Clearwater, Fla.
- STEINMETZ, Marjorie, St. Louis, Mo.
Harold, Douglas, Cindy
- SWEATT, Mary & Robert, Burton, Tex.
- VASQUEZ, John, Santa Clara, Calif.
John Carlton
- VERBOUT, Jo & John, Neponset, Ill.
- WEST, Ed, New Castle, N.H.
- WEYLAND, Francene, McHenry, Ill.
- WILSON, Sharon & Robert, Peoria, Ill.
- WINGHAM, Tom, Edmunds, England
- WINK, Doris & Cecil, Indiana
- WRIGHT, Gary, Dunlap, Ill.
- ZIEGLER, Zig, Tampa, Fla.

Introductory remarks at the reunion by Chairman Ralph K. Patton

By RALPH K. PATTON
Co-Founder and Chairman

Three years before our first meeting in Buffalo, a former French Resistance fighter was trying to form the Air Force Rescue Association.

Leslie Atkinson had helped several U.S. airmen as well as being active in sabotage work in the war. His efforts to organize evaders and helpers included a letter he wrote to Air Force Magazine seeking contacts with U.S. evaders. I responded to his letter, and as the expression goes, "The rest is history."

AFEES was born.

Leslie was the prime mover in organizing receptions and dinners on our visits to France. He was the absolute authority on certifying French helpers, and his record keeping was exceptional.

His voluminous files contain a complete set of U.S. E&E reports, the nucleus of our data base.

Leslie and I had discussed the disposition of these files a number of times, but he had reached no decision before he passed away in October 2005. We still hope that these historic stories told to Air Force intelligence officers by U.S. evaders will end up in the U.S.

Leslie is survived by his wife Renee, who we invited to be with us this week. Unfortunately, she felt that the trip to the U.S. would be too strenuous. However, her granddaughter Felicia was studying in Chicago and is happy to represent her grandmother and the Atkinson family at this reunion.

Please give a warm welcome to the granddaughter of one of our founding fathers --Felicia Atkinson!

CAPPY BIE AND THE DVD STORY

At our 2002 meeting in Tampa, a member of the Daedalian team decided that some of our stories were worth recording so he set up his 8mm video cam in his bedroom and tried to talk reluctant AFEES members into a recording session.

He recorded 15 interviews that first year. As an



President Richard Smith watches as Chairman Ralph Patton distributes copies of the DVDs containing stories of escape and evasion. This was part of the Saturday night banquet at Scott AFB.

encore he taped a total of 75 interviews over the next four years, all at a considerable expenditure of his own time and money.

Cappy and Cindy Bie deserve a big *Thank You* for a job well done.

UP STEPS JOHN PAUL

Interviews recorded on 8mm tape are not of much value to most of us, but up steps John Paul MacIsaac, the talented son of Colonel Mac, Daedalian bartender *par excellence*. John Paul volunteered to edit, title and record all this material on digital video disks. *Thank You, John Paul!*

Thanks to Cappy and John Paul we now have a set of 15 DVDs with 75 exciting stories of escape and evasion. Stories that belong in museums and

libraries where future historians can have access to them.

FOR THE AIR FORCE MUSEUM, DAYTON

Certainly, the greatest air museum in world should have a set. From past meetings, I knew that Maj. Gen. Charles Metcalf, director of this great museum, was sympathetic to stories of escape and evasion so I invited him to join us tonight so that we could present a set to him personally.

General Metcalf, we truly appreciate that you and Mrs. Metcalf would drive for five hours to join us as we honor the memory of friends of the Resistance. And that you personally accept this set of DVDs for the Air Force Museum.

FOR THE SCOTT AFB LIBRARY

We are asking Wing Commander Alan Hunt to accept a set of our 75 exciting stories for the Scott Air Force Base Library.

We sincerely hope that the young men and women of today's Air Force will view some of these stories and will then understand why our slogan is:

WE SHALL NEVER FORGET!



COMMANDER
375TH AIRLIFT WING
101 HERITAGE DRIVE, SUITE 375
SCOTT AFB IL 62225-5305

A thank-you from the Colonel . . .

I would like to thank the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society for the contribution of 17 DVDs containing interviews with 70 members and helpers of the Society. I have given the DVDs to the base library so that all Joint Total Force Scott personnel can learn about the tremendous sacrifices of these brave members.

We were truly honored by your presence and appreciate you coming to Scott to share your stories. Sincerely,

COL. ALAN L. HUNT JR.

Chairman Ralph Patton will provide a DVD to any interviewee who sends him a check for \$10, made payable to AFEES, to cover the cost of the disc and postage, as long as the supply lasts.

(Ralph's address is shown on Page 2)

RAFFLE WINNERS

Winners whose names were drawn at the annual banquet in St. Louis last month:

\$500: Roy G. Davidson, Birmingham, Ala.

\$250: Randy Riotto, Gillette, N.J.

\$100: L/C Robert Kerr, Tempe, Ariz.

Raffle Chair Frank Lashinsky reports that net proceeds for AFEES amounted to about \$6,170.

He says about 54% of the membership helped out in this prime fund-raising event, with an average donation of \$20.47.



Chairman Ralph Patton gets a hands-on welcome at Scott AFB from Gen. Duncan McNabb, commanding, Air Mobility Command, when AFEES visited the base on May 4

Evaders honored with ceremony at Scott Air Base

From the Air Force News, May 8, 2007

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. -- The commander of Air Mobility Command honored the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society with a ceremony here May 4 as part of the group's 2007 reunion.

Gen. Duncan J. McNabb paid tribute to AFEES, a non-profit organization of airmen who were forced down behind enemy lines and avoided captivity, or escaped from captivity.

The group also includes "Helper" members, people who either directly aided the airmen in avoiding capture or who are family members of helpers.

"I sewed (the downed airmen's) dog-tags in their cuffs, so when they were picked up (by friendly forces) they could just pull them out," said Yvonne Daley-Brusselmanns, an AFEES helper member and reunion chairman.

Ms. Daley-Brusselmanns said she considered her role as a helper a small one. In order for the airmen to blend into World War II enemy-occupied Belgium, the young girl coached them on minor etiquettes.

"I would take them on short walks, and I taught them to eat the European way," she said. "I told them not to light a cigarette by shielding (it with their hand) and to not jingle money in their pockets."

She said she her mother, Anne, started helping airmen because her mother felt it was the right thing to do.

"My mother used to say, for us to bring back a man to his wife, or his sweetheart or his family, it was worth it, because she said, 'I would like someone to do the same thing for my son,'" Ms. Daley Brusselmanns said.

During the ceremony, General McNabb likened the past sacrifices of AFEES airmen to the current sacrifices made by servicemembers fighting the war on terrorism.

"When you think of (the sacrifices of) the *Greatest Generation*, when you think of what our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of this next greatest generation are doing right now, it is every bit as profound and every bit as noble," General McNabb said.

"They are putting their lives on the line so that others might live, protecting the tomorrows of those less fortunate -- just like the *Greatest Generation*, just like you all did."



GENERAL DUNCAN J. McNABB

AFEES salutes General McNabb!

Gen. Duncan J. McNabb, Air Mobility Command at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., hosted the 2007 AFEES reunion with a tour and program on Friday and for the annual banquet at the Officers' Club on Saturday night. He and his wife Linda have attended other reunions.

In recognition of his hospitality and other contributions to our society, AFEES has appointed the general to the unique position of Honorary Director.

Air Mobility Command's mission is to provide rapid, global mobility and sustainment for America's armed forces. The command also plays a crucial role in providing humanitarian support at home and around the world. The men and women of AMC provide airlift, aerial refueling, special air mission and aeromedical evacuation for all of America's armed forces.

General McNabb graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1974. He has held command and staff positions at squadron, wing, major command and Department of Defense levels.

These positions included commanding the 89th Operations Group, overseeing the air transportation of our nation's leaders, including the president, vice president, secretary of State and secretary of Defense.

General McNabb served as director of programs and deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Programs, Headquarters U.S. Air Force. He also served as chairman of the Air Force Board and had oversight of all Air Force programs. Prior to assuming his current position, the general was Director for Logistics, the Joint Staff, Washington, D.C.

He is rated as a command pilot and navigator, with more than 5,400 flight hours. Aircraft he has flown include the T-37, T-38, C-141, C-17, C-20 and C-30.

OFFICIAL MINUTES
Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

May 5, 2007
St. Louis, Mo.

The annual meeting for the AFEES was called to order by President Dick Smith. There were 57 members present, as counted by Sandra Comstock and Thelma Loring. A quorum was met.

Minutes for the previous meeting in 2006 were approved. Copies of the minutes were placed at the rear of the room for the members to read.

Members of the Board of Directors were introduced: President Smith, Frank Lashinsky, Yvonne Daley, Francene Weyland, Clayton David, Robert Sweatt, Sandra Comstock and Ray Kubly. Directors Herb Brill and Thomas Brown were absent.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nominating: Board members up for re-election are Ralph Patton, Clayton David, Sandra Comstock and Francene Weyland. The committee recommends no changes.

Finance: The financial report was presented by Francene Weyland, the treasurer.

Receipts, \$10,838.81; Dispersal, \$10,861.97; Checking Account, \$15,334.37; Certificates of Deposit, \$13,368.82; TOTAL, \$28,703.19

A complete copy of the financial report was placed on a table at the rear of the room for members to read. (Financial Statement will be found on Page 26.)

Raffle: The report on progress of the raffle tickets was given by Vice President Frank Lashinsky. There were 745 names on the old roster, now there are 680 names. The list of names has been shrinking, but there has been an increase in donations -- \$17.48 to \$20.50, on average.

Membership: Clayton David, reporting on the membership of AFEES, said there were 407 evaders on the rolls at present. Numbers are getting smaller each year, however, the AFEES organization will fight to the end. Clayton said they would continue to seek new members.

There are 2150 evaders registered from the 8th AF, and 265 from the 15th AF. There were 1026 members in AFEES at the height of enrollment.

Newsletter: Editor Larry Grauerholz reported on *Communications*. The newsletter is printed and sent out four times a year. He pointed out that suggestions have been made to use better paper for improved reproduction of pictures.

Larry pointed out that the content of the paper is more important than the type of paper it is printed on. He said about 1300 copies are printed. Each member is mailed a copy, about 200 are sent to Europeans and about 30 go to Canadian addresses.

The PX: The PX has been phased out and the surplus stock has been turned over to President Smith and Dr. Walt Brown of the 8th AF Museum. There are five medallions left and the price for them is \$20 each. Upon request, medallions were sent to Helpers for use as grave markers.

Christmas Cards: Clayton and Scotty David are in charge of mailing the cards and are to be commended for their hard work. The number of cards distributed is declining, yet 600 were mailed last year. Some were returned by the postal service. Clayton commented that he would appreciate word from members about the status of helpers they are acquainted with.

Nominations: Yvonne Daley, Sandy Comstock and Ray Kubly were appointed as a nominating committee. Nominees for director are Beverly Patton Wand, Richard Shandor, Larry Boyd, Jerry DeChambre and Richard Smith.

2008 Reunion Site:

The vote was taken for the 2008 reunion site, and Savannah, Ga., was selected. Dr. Brown assures us that the AFEES display at the museum will be completed before for the reunion.

Motion made for the meeting to adjourn. There was a second and the meeting came to a close.

MARY SWEATT
Acting Recording Secretary

REUNION PHOTOS



Miodrag Pesic introduces his nephew, Aleksandar Jovanovic, at the reunion welcoming night dinner.



Peter J. Hakim, Belgian Helper now living in Livingston, N.J., and his wife Ghislaine have attended many reunions, and of course, were with us at St. Louis.



Member Frank Schaeffer and Helper Marguerite Brouard-Miller posed for a photo at the reunion.



Old Inky Grauerholz, wearing his Cardinal baseball cap, seems to be offering some advice to Chairman Ralph Patton at the reunion. At least, Larry got to see his favorite team win a game.

Mid Continent Band entertains banquet crowd

The audience at the Saturday night AFEES banquet was entertained by the U.S. Air Force Band of Mid America, which is headquartered at Scott AFB.

The concert band of about 40 musicians and vocalists performed everything from patriotic tunes and symphonies to classic American pop.

The band's area of responsibility includes six states: Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Last year alone, they gave 427 performances.

A TDY schedule has its members on the road for at least 75 days a year.

More than professional musicians, members of the band wear the uniform.



Some airmen were laying down on the job for our visit to Scott AFB. They were demonstrating how the C-17 is used for medical evacuation by the Air Mobility Command.



A choral group from Muscota, Ill., High School presented a musical program as part of the welcoming ceremony prepared for visiting AFEES members and guests on Friday, May 4. The belly of a C-17 transport plane was converted to a concert hall for the affair at Scott AFB.

Farewell, Mio, may you RIP

Those attending the St. Louis reunion were shocked on Saturday morning when they learned that Miodrag D. Pesic, well-known Yugoslav helper/writer now living in Belgrade, had suffered a massive stroke the previous night and was paralyzed on his right side.

He was taken to a St. Louis hospital, where he passed away about 1:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 24.

He was accompanied to the reunion by Aleksandar Jovanovic, a nephew who does not speak English.

Miodrag, a popular personality at AFEES reunions since he attended the reunion in Columbia, Mo., in 2000, was born on Aug. 18, 1925, at Cuprija (Serbia.) At age 18 he joined the Chetnik Movement, fighting against the Germans and at the same time, against the Communists in the Civil War in Serbia during World War II.

In October 1944, after Russian occupation of Serbia, Miodrag was arrested by the Communist regime. He spent several months in prison, exposed to torture and from there was sent to the disciplinary battalion of Tito's Yugoslav Army. Coming out of the army, he was not allowed to continue his studies. Instead, he worked in different jobs such as loading and unloading lorries and ships, logger, steam engine stoker, driver of lorries and tractors. At the same time he studied economy as a part-time student at the University of Belgrade.

After graduation, he worked as a commercial agent until his retirement in 1981.

Since that time, he has been a writer and historian. He wrote political and historical essays and stories for various publications, including the *AFEES Communications*.

His published works include *Operation Air Bridge* (1977), *Error Facti* (1997), *Red Dungeon* (1998) and *Old Chetniks* (2000). "Operation Air Bridge," subtitled "Serbian Chetniks and the Rescued American Airmen in World War II" was translated into English and is available in the U.S.



MIODRAG D. PESIC
at the 2007 St. Louis Reunion

ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL

By **RICHARD M. SMITH**
President of AFEES

Early Saturday morning at the reunion, Fran Weyland was intercepted at a hotel elevator by Aleksandar Jovanovic, the nephew of Miodrag Pesic. Aleksandar could not speak English, but convinced Fran that she must come to Miodrag's room.

Miodrag was comatose! Fran called the front desk; they came with oxygen and called for an ambulance. He was taken to St. Louis University hospital.

Fran then arranged for Alek to attend the Saturday night banquet to represent Miodrag. All day Sunday and Monday, she comforted Alek. She arranged for him to stay, for free, at a home for people visiting hospital patients and for free meals.

She made arrangements for an interpreter to visit the hospital several times. The interpreter, the doctor and staff finally convinced Alek to use his ticket to return to Belgrade. There was nothing he could do.

Fran stayed an extra day at her own expense, to arrange for Miodrag's care and Aleksandar's return home.

***Talk about Above and Beyond the Call . . .
Fran Weyland qualifies for THAT!***



A Promise . . .

**More
St. Louis
reunion
photos
and news
coverage
in
September
issue!**



AFEES Director Sandy Comstock (left) and Felicia Atkinson got to pose for the camera at the reunion banquet in St. Louis. We were honored to have Felicia, granddaughter of AFEES co-founder Leslie Atkinson, as a reunion guest. She said she was proud to represent her grandmother, Renee, and other members of the Atkinson family. Felicia is currently studying in Chicago.



AFEES members were herded together for this photo at St. Louis.
Ray Sherk, Canadian guest, is shown at extreme right with his companion.

Tom got to freedom, the hard way

By **BRUCE BOLINGER**
Nevada City, Calif.
AFEES Friend Member

"The Wild Hare," a B-17 returning from a bombing mission over Münster, is shot down 11 November 1943 west of the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch, known locally as Den Bosch. Although all members of the crew bail out successfully, one man is killed and seven others are captured within a day.

Tom Applewhite, the bombardier, a stocky 22-year-old from Memphis, Tenn., heeds the advice given them back in England—wait until the last possible minute before pulling your ripcord. At the cost of a burst eardrum, he is one of the first to reach the ground, in a field just west of the village of Hedikhuizen, on the south side of the River Maas.

Residents of the village and nearby farms immediately rush to his aid. Knocked out by the force of his landing, Tom recovers consciousness as two farm workers carry him off the field. A farm family feeds him a sandwich and milk while disposing of his parachute and flight suit.

A doctor, who happens on the scene, checks his flak wounds, pronounces them minor, and advises him to get away as quickly as possible because German troops will be searching the area.

Jan van Bommel, a teenager who speaks English, directs Tom to a temporary shelter, a barn in a field east of the village. Tom sets off at a run,

Thomas B. Applewhite, E&E #324, 385th BG, died Jan. 17, 2007, in St. Louis, Mo.

(See Page 30, Spring 07 issue of *Communications*.)

with some of the villagers cheerfully dogging his heels.

Peter de Noo, a farmer from the village of Well on the other side of the Maas, attracted by the aerial battle, finds Tom in the barn. Van Bommel then arrives and tells Tom that de Noo is someone he can trust.

At dusk, Van Bommel and de Noo row Tom across the Maas to the north bank. Peter and Tom then stealthily make their way through Well to the thatched-roof de Noo farmhouse on the village's outskirts. De Noo and his eight-months-pregnant wife will shelter Tom there for two nights.

It is imperative that Tom be evacuated as soon as possible because of the danger to the de Noo family--German troops are conducting a house-to-house search. Fortunately, Peter de Noo's brother, Adriaan, has contacts in Den Bosch who alert the Raaijmakers brothers, Fons and Jacques.

Fons is the local contact for an escape line headed by Karst Smit, a marechaussee, or member of the Dutch Royal Military Police, stationed in Baarle-Nassau on the Dutch-Belgian border.

By the end of the second day of Tom's evasion, all the arrangements have been made to move him to Brussels. The next day, 13 November, Adriaan and Tom rendezvous with the Raaijmakers brothers in a field outside Den Bosch.

Equipped with bicycles, the brothers guide Tom south to a deserted tavern in a forest between the villages of Oisterwijk and Moergestel, where Jan Naaijkens, a schoolteacher from the village of Hilvarenbeek, takes over.

The evening is drizzly, dark, and cold. By now it is well after curfew. Naaijkens, who is helping an airman for the first time, knows what the consequences will be for

him if they are caught by the Germans.

Shortly after setting out on the deserted road for Hilvarenbeek, mishaps disable both their bicycles, forcing them to finish their journey on foot. Arriving at the home of J.C. van der Heijden on the east edge of Hilvarenbeek,

Tom is served a hot meal by Mrs. van der Heijden before another marechaussee, Albert Wisman, arrives to guide him to a shelter near the Belgian border, a large chicken coop insulated with bales of compressed hay and occupied by five Dutch students from the University of Wageningen, who are in hiding to avoid being sent to Germany as forced labor.

Next morning, 14 November, Eugene van der Heijden, one of the van der Heijden sons, who is a school teacher friend of Jan Naaijkens and close associate of Karst Smit, arrives at the chicken coop to guide Tom to Brussels by way of Weelde, Turnhout, and Antwerp.

The reception point for airmen arriving in Brussels is the apartment of two Dutch ladies, Charlotte Ambach and her mother Elise Chabot. Ambach's fiancé, Ernest Van Moorleghem, an assistant police commissioner of the suburb of Ixelles, takes over, delivering Tom to the processing center for arriving evaders, the fish market of Prosper Spilliaert in Schaerbeek, another suburb.

Tom is now in the hands of Service EVA, a Belgian evasion group which handles interrogations of arriving airmen (to make sure they are not German agents); preparation of false ID; supplying them with civilian clothing befitting their new "occupations;" and housing them until they can be passed on to the Comet Line, which will move them to Spain. Tom is now "Ludwig Oskar

Ronquet, clerk de notaire."

On 15 November, while Tom is still at the fish market, Nello Malavasi, top turret gunner on "The Wild Hare" and the only other member of the crew still at large, and his guide Willem Schmidt are arrested by Germans in Turnhout.

Schmidt, forced to cooperate, leads the Germans to the North Station in Brussels where Charlotte Ambach awaits to take Malavasi to her apartment. When she attempts to greet "Malavasi," who is actually a Luftwaffe policeman, she is arrested.

The arrests of her mother, sister, brother-in-law, and fiancé follow within hours. The wave of arrests spreads. Karst Smit and Eugene van der Heijden go into hiding. On the 16th, Service EVA transfers Tom from the fish market to a never-before-used safe house, the Brussels home of Arthur Schrynemakers, a Dutch businessman, where Tom remains for over a month.

But then an unfriendly tenant at Schrynemakers' home threatens to inform the Germans, and Service EVA immediately moves Tom to the home of Yvonne Bienfait, a nurse at the hospital in Schaerbeek. Schrynemakers evicts the tenant, who is found dead a few days later, the result of an "accidental" fall down a flight of stairs.

But then Bienfait suspects Tom of being a German agent, because of his German-made razor (a gift from Schrynemakers) and his Swiss watch, and notifies Service EVA. Two men arrive to subject him to a "physical," which includes a dental check, supposedly to ensure that he can withstand the rigors of crossing the Pyrenees into Spain. But their real purpose is to note the pattern of his dental fillings and radio it to London.

Fortunately for Tom, London confirms that he is who he claims to be.

On 23 December, Gaston

Fifty years after the de Noo family hid Tom, they are reunited with him at the AFEES meeting in St. Louis in 1993.

And in 1995, a Dutch TV station flies Tom back to The Netherlands for an on-the-air reunion with Jan Naaijens and Eugene van der Heijden.

Matthys, one of the inner circle of Service EVA, guides Tom and "Jockey" Wiggins, whom Tom met at Bienfait's apartment, to the Brussels train station, where he turns them over to Jules Dricot, their Comet guide to Blandain, the last train stop before the French border.

After a brief rest at the home of Dr. Henri Druart near the village of Hertain, under cover of darkness and falling snow that covers their tracks, Amanda Stassart, known to them only as "Diane," guides Tom, "Jockey," and two other men, probably Dwight Fry, American, and Gerald Lorne, RAF, across the border to the dairy of Andre Dewauvrin. After a meal of delicious, freshly-made French fries, they spend the night in his cow barn.

The next day, with "Diane" leading the way, they set off for Paris where "Diane" deposits Tom at the apartment of her mother's neighbor, an aristocratic older woman, Madame Elizabeth Buffet, with whom Tom spends Christmas.

The day after Christmas, new guides take Tom, "Jockey", and two others: Elton Kevil, American, and Stan Munns, RAF, to the Paris railway station serving southwest France. Slipped aboard a train before other passengers arrive, they are told to pretend to be asleep.

An overnight journey, with a change of trains in Bordeaux, puts them in Bayonne on 27 December. But instead of being picked up at the Bayonne station by their next guides, Tom and the three others promptly are placed on another train and sent back

north to the town of Dax.

This apparent change of plans may have been caused by the disastrous crossing of the Bidassoa River into Spain by the previous group the night of 23-24 December when two men drowned.

"Franco," head of Comet, and another man, probably Max Roger, pick up the four airmen at the Dax train station, provide them with bicycles, and set off on a 70 km. ride to Marthe Mendiara's restaurant at Anglet near Bayonne.

Upon their arrival, Marthe provides them a good meal and they meet Pierre and Marie Elhorga, close associates of "Franco," who are involved in the transfer of airmen to Spain via the alternate Larressore route. Tom signs the evader registry, deliberately misspelling his name as "Appelwhite" so that one day he can determine where he is.

He also writes a thank-you message in Pierre Elhorga's notebook. Marie Elhorga, a motherly type, tucks the four men in for the night, insisting that they get their rest.

Late on the 28th they set off on bikes with "Franco" for the village of Villefranque on the east side of the River Nive, where a rowboat is waiting to carry them across. From the west side of the river, they now cycle to the town of Ustaritz, where they stop at a home with children and pick up four Basque guides, all friends of Pierre Elhorga.

With "Franco" accompanying them, they make their way on foot to a shepherd's barn outside of Larressore, where they are directed

MORE: Tom Applewhite

to replace their shoes with the traditional Basque zapatos, and provided with hiking staffs.

If they now proceed directly south to enter Spain, they risk coming too close to a German border patrol post at border marker 76. Instead, their group gives the patrol post a wide berth by swinging west toward the official border crossing at Dancharia before turning south again and crossing into Spain near marker 74.

The Pyrenees crossing is a tremendous ordeal for the four men. It has been snowing and raining. Their zapatos and their clothes up to their waists are soaked from crossing streams and sliding in the snow. Their feet are freezing and their toes bleeding. "Jockey" Wiggins' heel wound from flak, which had been on the mend in Brussels, opens up and at one point he collapses.

When Stan Munns nearly breaks his leg in a fall, making it impossible for him to continue by himself, Tom has Stan put his arm around Tom's shoulders for support and they continue on.

When they reach the first Basque farmhouse where they are to rest, "Franco" leaves them to go on ahead to make arrangements for their arrival. When they reach the Baztan Valley on 31 December a car is waiting for them. Driven to a hotel in San Sebastian run by a British couple, they have a warm bath, a hot meal, and are given fresh clothes.

A British diplomatic car from the Bilbao consulate picks them up and delivers them to the British embassy in Madrid.

For six days they rest in the temporary barracks built in the embassy gardens as more men spill across the Pyrenees. On 7 January 1944, with 18 evaders having arrived, the men learn it is time to continue on to Gibraltar.

Tom, "Jockey," Stan, Elton, and a fifth man, John K.

Hurst, are taken to the port of Seville, an inland port on the Guadalquivir River capable of handling seagoing merchant ships.

There, under the cover of a drunken party of British expatriates on a Norwegian ship in the port, the five men are slipped aboard past the Spanish guards and hidden in the ship's propeller shaft compartment. The partygoers are dismissed, the ship weighs anchor, and Tom and the others arrive in Gibraltar 11 January, two months after Tom was shot down.

After the war Tom is reunited with five of his helpers.

Serge Avons, the last member of first Geneva escape group

**Submitted by Warren E. Carah
Brighton, Mich.**

I have learned of the death of Serge Avons on 6 February 2007 in Villefranche-sur-Saone, Rhone, France.

Mon. Avons was the last living member of an Allied escape group which left Geneva, Switzerland, on Jan. 8, 1944, bound for Barcelona, Spain. The escape group was the first attempt to move large numbers of escapers out of Switzerland back to Allied control via Spain.

The group included S/L Fletcher Taylor, RAF 420 Squadron; Flt/Lt. George Lambert, RAF 15 Squadron; Flt/Sgt Hugh Colhoun, RAF 101 Squadron; Flt/Sgt Stanley Eyre, RAF 207 Squadron; Sgt. Richard Brown, RAF 207 Squadron; 2nd Lt. Ralph Bruce, USAAF 92nd Bomb Group; CPO Donald Lister, Royal Navy HMS Seal, and my father, 2nd Lt. John M. Carah, USAAF 381st Bomb Group.

The only other living individual who had personal involvement in the escape is M. Joseph Marsal, one of the Pyrenees Mountain guides who now lives in retirement in Perpignan.

Mr. Avons was the son of Marguerite Avons, a highly acclaimed and decorated Resistance member who helped many Allied evaders reach safety in Barcelona from her home in Frangy, Haute-

SUMMER 2007

In 1948, the organizers of the Freedom Train decide that their final ceremonies in New York should feature a beautiful young woman from the Resistance who helped evading airmen, along with some of the men she helped.

They ask the U.S. Army for assistance and it produces "Diane" (Amanda Stassart), Tom Applewhite, and "Jockey" Wiggins. After the ceremonies Tom invites "Diane" to be his guest in Memphis, his home town, where she is given a royal welcome. (See Page 31, Spring 07 issue of *Communications*.)

Savoie. While a teenager, Serge Avons often worked for Charles Clement Blanc, a local Resistance leader, and frequently made clandestine trips into Switzerland to obtain false identification papers, money and weapons for evaders being handled by M. Blanc.

Soon, it became impossible for Serge Avons to work in the open, and he elected to join the British and American evaders that lived with him and his mother in Frangy for several weeks in January 1944. Together, they boarded trains for Narbonne and then Perpignan in early February 1944 and eventually reached Barcelona on Feb. 11, 1944, after a difficult climb over the Pyrenees.

After reaching Barcelona and then North Africa, Mr. Avons was selected for pilot training in the French Air Force and was sent to America to learn to fly in the summer of 1944.

After the war, Mr. Avons trained to be a mechanical engineer.

He was a delightful man to work with in reconstructing the history of the evasion event in which he personally participated in the winter of 1944. He had an excellent memory and was of great help to me in the editing of my father's memoirs of WWII. He was a hero of both France and America.

Ride put Len back at gunners' post



AFEES member Len Rogers of Youngtown, Ariz., looked out the waist gun position of "Liberty Belle" during a flight over Phoenix.

He was a B-17 tail gunner and bailed out twice over France.

From the DAILY NEWS-SUN
Leonard "Len" Rogers smiled as he looked out the window as the B-17 bomber glided over northwest Phoenix. The World War II veteran (E&E # 1351, 91st BG) stood in the waist gun in the middle of the plane, and tightly gripped the machine gun. It's the first time the Youngtown resident rode in this part of the aircraft.

"I was a tail gunner, so I'm not used to sitting up this close," he said.

Rogers took a short trip on the *Liberty Belle*, a newly restored WWII bomber at Deer Valley

airport in Phoenix.

Scott Maher, spokesman of the Liberty Foundation, said the organization spent 15 years and \$4 million to renovate the airplane. The Flying Fortress tours across the country. It's just one of 14 B-17 bombers left. "We did it as a tribute to veterans and those who have sacrificed so much for our nation," Maher said.

As the bomber moved across the sky, Rogers walked through the plane and recalled some of his memories as a tailgunner in 1944. "In a way, I feel frozen in time a



little bit because it's almost like yesterday, even though it was 60 years ago," he said.

Throughout the ride, Rogers shared one war story after another, many of which are shared on a website developed by his nephew, Paul Rees, at

<www.rogers1944.com>

Rogers remembered when his crew parachuted out of their plane after German fighters shot it down. He said he landed in a cow pasture and two Frenchmen hid him in the woods. Weeks later, Rogers and two crew members hid in different homes until they were flown back to London.

Rogers hadn't flown on a B-17 since the war. When he rode on the *Liberty Belle* he quickly reminded himself why he loved the plane so much. "Aerodynamically, it was one of the best planes that you could ever have," he said.

LeMerle Rogers, his wife, said she's happy her husband had another chance to fly on the B-17 again. "I'm so proud," she said.

Beetle Bailey



Call brings final closure to survivor

**From the Plain Dealer
Cleveland, Ohio
Monday, Jan. 1, 2007**

A call from a lieutenant in Hawaii took a Fairview Park veteran back 63 years.

"Were you shot down in Catania in 1943?" Lt. Frank Huffman of the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command asked on Nov. 29.

"Yes," replied former Lt. Jarman G. (Jerry) Kennard, 85, "and how the hell did you find me?"

The answer brought Kennard back to 2006: "Google."

Kennard learned that the POW/MIA Command was starting to look for his missing comrades. He had been the crash's only survivor, and only one of the nine comrades' bodies had been found.

Other countries bury their warriors where they fall. The United States tries to bring them home.

The POW/MIA Joint Command wants to find 88,000 Americans missing from past wars, including 23,000 from the European theatre of World War II.

Huffman says aging survivors still give out solid information. "You're going to remember the day you were shot down."

Kennard told him something new. The plane had crashed in water, not on land. So Huffman plans soon to scout Catania, a city of the Sicilian shore, then return in warm weather with an underwater crew.

In return for the help, Huffman sent Kennard 45 pages of documents about the blast, including enemy accounts.

"One man bailed out and

presumably drowned," an account said.

Correction: One man bailed out and survived.

Kennard wrote up the call in an addendum to "My War," a short, private memoir of his captures, escapes and close calls.

Kennard was born in Ithaca, N.Y., and quit Cornell University to join the war.

He asked to practice parachuting at a training camp.

"There's no use practicing something that you have to do right the first time," an officer replied.

A few of his first 15 missions seemed likely to be his last. Once his plane landed with frozen brakes

and wing flaps. Another time, it circled over the enemy with a frozen rudder.

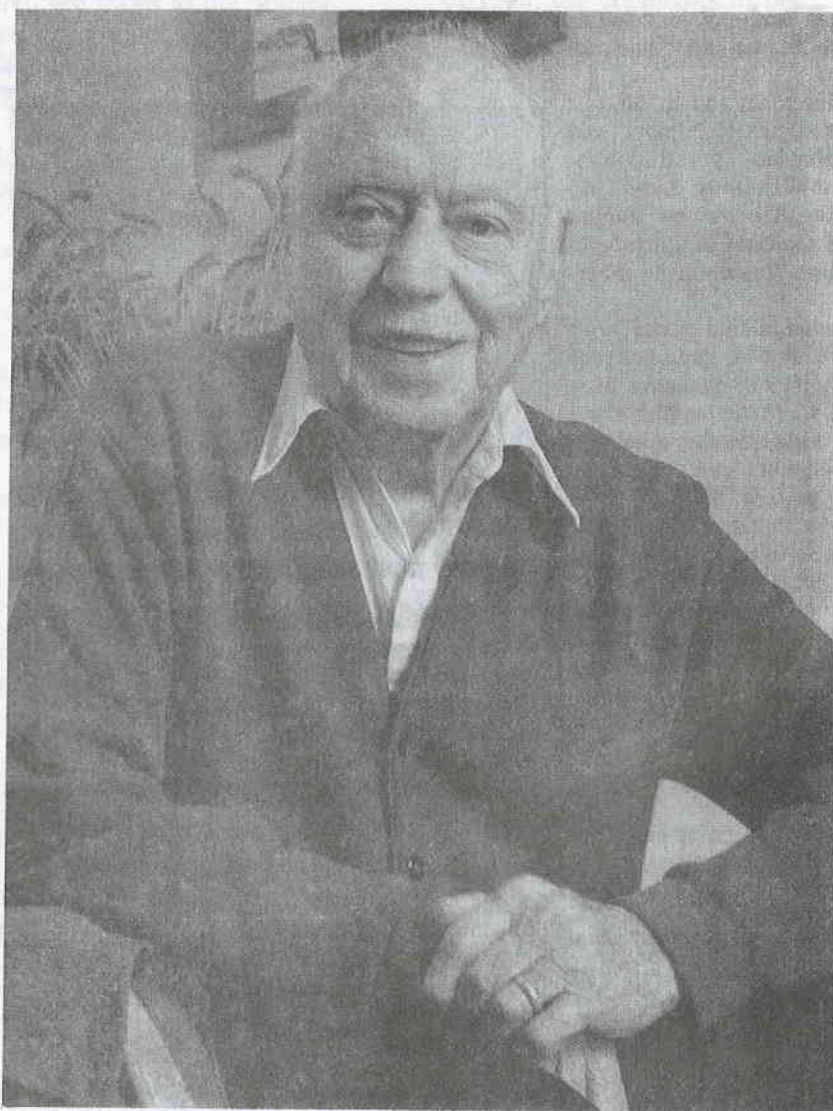
The 16th mission came May 11, 1943. It went smoothly for awhile. The crew of a B-24 bomber hit some ships at Catania that seemed lightly guarded.

Then the bomber filled with smoke and shrapnel. A comrade toppled.

Kennard saw a hole in his right thumb. He couldn't see much else for lack of oxygen. The plane began to roll. He bailed out. Then he managed to do the parachute right the first time, after all.

No one followed him out.

"Once the ship spirals," he says,



Jarman G. Kennard, 85, was the sole survivor of a B-24 crew of the 98th Bomb Group that was shot down over Sicily in 1943.

"you'll get plastered against the wall, and you can't move."

The next thing Kennard knew, he was bobbing in the water. Some fishermen hauled him into their boat. Scared and angry, they sat as far as possible from their catch.

At the dock, some locals spat, shook their fists or threw stones. It turned out the bombs had killed 100 Germans and 200 Italians.

But the staff at the local hospital was kind. They fixed up Kennard's right arm, saved a stub of his thumb, fished out shrapnel from his body and helped him recover from dysentery and paratyphoid.

In late July, the Allies approached, and the patients had to journey north. But a friendly nurse left Kennard behind. The ailing man ran down the street as fast as he could. A man spotted him and cried out. He was caught.

In late September, he jumped from a train and started hiking south. The locals hid him and fed him.

"They were just kind people," Kennard said. "They were thoroughly tired of the war."

It helped that he claimed to be an artilleryman, not a navigator who had helped to bomb the country.

He had several close calls. Once he visited a family that had hosted him for weeks. A few hours later, police shot most of them and razed their home.

On Dec. 31, police caught Kennard with hosts who had been selling black-market goods. He went to a prison camp on the North Sea.

He said the prisoners often were rougher than the captors. While their ranks were being counted, the prisoners would shift in and out of empty spots. The Germans would try for hours to get the right number.

In 1944, doctors examined prisoners to exchange the badly wounded. Kennard faked paralysis in his right arm and kept mum about being a lefty. In September, he sailed home on a Swedish ocean

liner.

Soon he married an old sweetheart and started a family of six. He also spent decades as a mechanical engineer, eventually joining the future NASA Glenn Research Center. Though he could rotate his right wrist just 90 degrees,

BOOK REVIEW

'Bless you Brother Irvin' is one of the good ones

By The Rev. Thomas D. Wilson
The Anglican Parish of Blyth
& Brussels, Ontario

As a historian, with many years of interest in the air war over Europe during World War 2, and especially first person accounts, I have read many books, both good and bad on the subject. John Neal's work, "Bless You Brother Irvin" is a one of the good ones, and provides a great read and brings home both the horrors of war in having to bail out of a crashing plane, and also the great gift that has been given to those who fly in perilous conditions by having the benefit of the Irvin Parachute System.

John's work on the Caterpillar Club, an exclusive club set up by the Irvin Parachute Company, and whose membership is limited to those who have exited a plane unexpectedly by parachute, both in wartime and in peace, provides fascinating personal stories of those who have had to bail out, including the author's own escape by parachute from a burning bomber over France in April 1944.

When an aircraft is out of control, it is only a matter of seconds that an airman, or woman as John notes in this book, has to try and escape the plane. In "Bless You Brother Irvin" it is clear that those escaping an aircraft in its death throes were blessed in being able to rely upon Leslie Irvin's

he worked with his wife, Vera, to build a five-bedroom house here in Fairview Park.

Whether successful or not, the search has already brought Kennard full circle.

'After 63 years,' he says, "there's closure."

invention of his parachute system, which is still in use in the 21st century.

Perhaps the most incredible story in the book is that of Flight Sergeant Nicholas Alkemade of the RAF who bailed out of his burning bomber at 18,000 feet over Germany with his parachute harness on, but no parachute attached. God had determined that Sergeant Alkemade's earthly life was not up and his free fall ended up being cushioned by pine branches and snow drifts and he survived his fall with only minor injuries. Sergeant Alkemade's German captors vigorously investigated his miraculous escape from death and provided signed documentation attesting to the accuracy of his account.

I heartily recommend *Bless You Brother Irvin* to anyone who has an interest in things military, especially dealing with military aircraft. You will enjoy the book, and by the end of it, certainly echo the words of all those whose lives have been saved by Leslie Irvin's parachute system, "Bless You, Brother Irvin."

The author can be contacted at nealpigeon1@aol.com or (403)873-1353. The price is \$25.00 per copy in Canada (Delivered) and \$30.00 in the U.S.A. (Delivered)

U.S. Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society

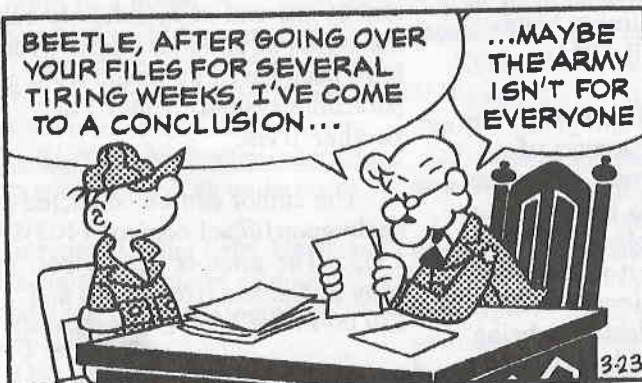
Cash receipts and disbursements

for calendar year ending Dec. 31, 2006

(Prepared by Clyde J. Martin from information supplied by Treasurer Francene Weyland)

RECEIPTS:		
DUES	3,005.00	
GIFTS & MEMORIALS	630.00	
INTEREST	346.54	
DVD	292.00	
RAFFLE - NET	<u>6,565.27</u>	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		<u>10,838.81</u>
DISBURSEMENTS:		
NEWSLETTER -PRINTING & POSTAGE	5,828.89	
CHRISTMAS CARDS & POSTAGE	788.72	
REUNION - NET	2,570.18	
PX - NET	479.95	
MISCELLANEOUS	<u>1,194.23</u>	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		<u>10,861.97</u>
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS (DISBURSEMENTS)		(23.15)
CASH BALANCE - BEGINNING		<u>28,726.34</u>
CASH BALANCE - ENDING		<u>28,703.19</u>
SUMMARY OF ENDING CASH BALANCE		
CHECKING ACCOUNT		15,334.37
CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT		<u>13,368.82</u>
TOTAL		<u>28,703.19</u>

Beetle Bailey



PILOT, EVADER, SOE COMMANDER

Air Chief Marshal Sir Bob Hodges

From *THE DAILY TELEGRAPH*
 London
 Friday, Jan. 5, 2007

Air Chief Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, who died Jan. 4, 2007, aged 88, was one of the RAF's most highly decorated pilots; after an audacious escape from occupied France and an outstanding record flying clandestine operations in Europe and the Far East he went on to have a distinguished peacetime career.

Flying moonlit operations for the Special Operations Executive (SOE) Hodges landed his single-engine Lysander or the larger Hudson aircraft in remote French fields to deliver and pick up agents.

None of these sorties, nor the rest of his wartime operational career as a pilot and squadron commander, would have been possible had he not escaped from captivity after crash landing his

bomber in northern France in September 1940 and returned to his squadron the following June.

On the night of September 4, he was returning from a raid on Stettin in his Hampden bomber when he was forced to land in a field in Brittany. Together with his air gunner, who had not heard his order to bail out, he burned the aircraft before setting off to the southeast on foot.

Moving from farm to farm, the two men obtained civilian clothes to wear over their uniforms and eventually made their way to Marseilles in Vichy France, where they were arrested and imprisoned.

Hodges escaped and stowed away on a French cargo ship, but was picked up in Oran and returned to Marseilles; he was then sent to the camp for British prisoners at St. Hippolyte du Fort, near Nimes, pending trial.

He escaped from the fort with a pass he had forged, using a potato to create the official-looking stamps. He took a train to Perpignan, then a taxi to the Spanish border before crossing the Pyrenees. In Spain, however, he was arrested by customs officials and sent to the notorious concentration camp at Miranda del Ebro. Five weeks later a British Embassy official secured his release.

On June 13, 1941, Hodges was repatriated from Gibraltar and returned to his squadron.

He resumed night attacks over Germany until the following April, when he was awarded the DFC.

By May 1943 Hodges had been awarded a bar to his DFC. He had also assumed command of No. 161, which had been re-equipped with the Lysander and Hudson, both aircraft small and manoeuvrable enough to land in fields and pick up passengers and vital packages.

It was a lonely and exacting role, using moonlit rivers and lakes as navigation aids to find small fields

lit by three or four hand torches, and there was the ever-present risk of an enemy reception committee on the ground. By their very nature such operations were conducted in the deepest secrecy, and few in the RAF were aware of the squadron's activities.

Hodges will long be remembered for his work directing the modernization of the RAF Club in Piccadilly.

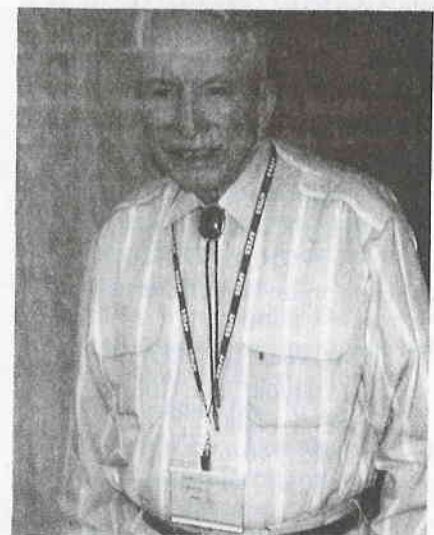
His experiences as an evader, and his contacts with the SOE and the French Resistance during his wartime services, left Hodges with a deep respect for those who risked so much and for the many who gave their lives.

He was president of the RAF Escaping Society. Until the end of his life he maintained close links and was in constant touch with his wartime friends in France, Belgium and Holland.

Bob Hodges married, in 1950, Elisabeth Blackett, who survives him with their two sons.



SIR LEWIS HODGES
 (1953 Photo)



Raymond Sherk of Toronto, a member of the Canadian Branch, RAFES, was present for the St. Louis reunion. The Canadians have officially ceased operation and no longer conduct reunions.

New Members

JARMAN "Jerry" KINNARD

21030 N. Park Drive
Fairview, OH 44126
Ph.: 440-333-4832
15th AF, 98th BG
Downed in Italy

PAUL G. SWANSON

4093 Glen Cairn Grove
Stow, OH 44224
Ph.: 330-928-3122
Fighter Group
Downed in Italy

New 'Friends'

JEFF COLTON "FFL"

1855 S. 1100 East
Zionsville, IN 46077
Ph.: 317-769-4227
(Son of Lashinsky's BT gunner)

Capt. FRANK H. DELL "FFL"

10A Kanoona Ave.
St. Ives, N.S.W. Australia
Royal AF evader
Wife: Isabel
<thedells@hotmail.com>

Col. RICHARD HELLWEGE "F"

9755 Alhambra Lane
Bonita Springs, FL 34135-2816
<hellweges@aol.com>

DIANA MORGAN "F"

2 Jasmin Road, West Ewell
Surrey KT19-9DZ U.K.
Ph.: 020-8397-8484
<diana.morgan42@gtinternet.com>

J. HOWARD MORGAN "F"

15 Hyde Park Court
Wichita Falls, TX 76309
Ph.: 940-692-2774
(452nd BG Gunner)

WM. M. VANDEGRIF "FFL"

PO Box 21
Catharpin, VA 20143-0021
Ph.: 703-754-8420
Flew with the 95th BG
<DubVande@comcast.net>

Walk planned to retrace path of Shelburn evaders

The British ELM (Escape Lines Memorial Society) is planning a four-day walk along the French coast, following the path that many of the 94 American airmen took to meet a British gunboat for the return to England.

Roger Stanton, founder and secretary of the ELMS, is organizer of this outing. Roger has arranged many escape line walks over the Pyrenees Mountains and in Italy.

The Shelburn walk will cover 13 to 15 miles per day over the weekend of Sept. 28-Oct. 1, 2007. It will be along the Brittany coast of France, and only a day pack will be carried.

Contact <contact@escapelines.com> or <wandbandj@aol.com> for more information.

Chairman Ralph Patton says that this is a great opportunity for children and/or grandchildren of members to visit the site and meet the people who risked their lives to save American airmen.

ROSTER UPDATES

(Changes are in **BOLDFACE** type.)

ELISE ANDRE 'FFL', 408 Jackson St., Berea, KY 40443;
Ph.: 859-986-4569 <eliseandre@yahoo.com>

WILLIAM W. DRISKO, 3800 W. 71st St., Apt. 2221, Tulsa, OK 74132; Ph.: 918-388-3144

THOMAS J. FAHEY, 43 **Harmony Crossing**, East Bridgewater, MA 02333-1198; Ph.: 508-350-9711

JAMES E. FROLKING, 18675 Parkland Dr., Apt. 301, Shaker Hts. OH 41222; Ph.: 216-752-1829; <frolking@sbcglobal.net>

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WILLIAM O. GIFFORD, **Brighton Gardens Dunwoody #440**, Atlanta, GA 30338 <wmgifford@bellsouth.net>

Mrs. BETTY HELSEL "W", 765 Perryville Rd., Parker, PA 16049-3919; Ph.: 724-399-2373

WALTER S. HERN JR., 900 E. Stanley Rd. #205, Livermore CA 94550, Ph.: 925-292-1584

WILLIAM C. HOWELL 'L', 123 **Stoney Creek Church Rd.**, Goldsboro, NC 27530-8824; Ph.: 919-735-4348

Mrs. ROBERT O. LORENZI 'W', 1135 W. Sunny Creek Circ., Spokane, WA 99224-8458; Ph.: 509-363-1402

Mrs. JAMES McMATH, "W", 313 S.W. Alsbury Blvd., Burleson, TX 76028-3703; Ph.: 817-295-8333

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Mrs. WILLIAM MILLER (Lilly) "W", 2670 S. Abilene St. #110, Aurora, CO 80014; Ph.: 303-755-7226

EARL J. SEAGERS, 10650 **Lone Tree Dr.**, Anchorage, AK 99507-6924

Yvonne Kervarec

1918 -- 2007

*She stood by her
father's ideals*From *Owest-France*

Feb. 27, 2007

(Translated by Claude Helias)

She joined the Resistance in Rennes in the first days of the German occupation. Desiree Kervarec, called Yvonne, passed away on Feb. 25, 2007, aged 89.

Born in Douarnenez on 29 January 1918, Desiree Talec was the daughter of a French army officer. She stood by her father's ideals in helping Allied servicemen evade the occupying forces.

In Douarnenez, she was involved in all forms of underground activities. In spite of the danger involved, she helped volunteers who wanted to join the Free French Forces to get to Great Britain by boat.

Desiree Kervarec was arrested by the Gestapo during a mission on 17 April 1944. She was interrogated and tortured but she kept her pledge to say nothing, saving the members of her organization.

Eventually, Desiree Kervarec was sent to the Ravensbruck women concentration camp in Germany on 1 September 1944 and then transferred to the *Kommandos* (work camps) of Bendorff and Hamburg Altona where she was a great consolation to her comrades.

Desiree Kervarec was awarded the Legion of Honor, the Resistance Medal and the Croix de Guerre with Palm,

Yvonne, a guest in '98

Yvonne Kervarec with James E. Armstrong of Thomasville, Ga., a former USAAC pilot and evader she had the pleasure to meet again in Washington, D.C., at the 1998 AFEES reunion.

From *LE TELEGRAMME*,

31 May 1998

TV interview, banquet with the French ambassador, guided tour of Washington, D.C.

Yvonne Kervarec, native of Douarnenez, was welcomed with ceremony in the U.S.A. She was a guest of honor of the AFEES as a token of gratitude for her help during World War II.

A reunion, 55 years after a first meeting in Brittany, the scene took place on May 6, 1998, in Washington, D.C. One is a former U.S.A.A.F. pilot, now a minister.

The other risked her life during the Germany occupation to help Allied airmen to evade capture. The force of the emotion mirrored the thrill experienced during 28 days in December 1943 and January 1944.

In 1943, Yvonne Kervarec, aged 25, was living with her mother Mme. Talec in an empty house in downtown Douarnenez. Her husband was a POW in Germany, her brother Jacques was serving with the Free French Forces, her father had gone to Spain. The peaceful facade hid a station of the

Burgundy evasion line.

During four weeks, Yvonne and her mother fed, clothed and housed two Americans and three British airmen and arranged their departure.

One of them was James Armstrong (E&E #339, 384th BG), who left France on board the *Brez Izel*. This 12-meter fishing boat set sail at 3:00 a.m. on 22 January 1944 with a crew of five and 26 passengers, (10 USAAF and four RAF/RCAF evaders, 12 helpers and volunteers for the Free French Forces.)

After a gruelling 36-hour trip, Falmouth was reached on the 23rd.

In April 1944, Yvonne Kervarec was arrested and deported to the Ravensbruck concentration camp.

Yvonne, who now lives in Brest, was invited to attend the AFEES reunion in Washington, D.C. With 37 other Frenchmen, including her son Yves, she received a hero's welcoming from May 6-13, 1998.

At the AFEES banquet, Yvonne was guest of honor at the table of Jean-Pierre Masseret, French Secretary of State for Veterans Affairs and the French ambassador. As she didn't understand why she was in such a company, the ambassador said: "I made investigations. I know that your place is here."

-FOLDED WINGS-

MEMBERS

- #124 Ford C. Cowherd "L", North Palm Beach, FL, 91st BG,
Feb. 20, 2005
- #462 Robert K. Fruth "L", Napoleon, OH, 93rd BG, Mar. 1, 2007
- #1570 John G. Harms "L", Temple Terrace, FL, 390th BG,
March 29, 2007
- #538 David G. Helsel, Parker, PA, 379th BG, Feb. 5, 2007
- #489 L/C Robert O. Lorenzi "L", Spokane, WA, 452nd BG,
Feb. 5, 2007
- #183 James G. McMath, Burleson, TX, 384th BG, March 7, 2007
- #1568 Howard J. Snyder, Sedona, AZ, 306th BG, April 25, 2007
- #2121 Walter W. Swartz "L", Ft. Meyers, FL, 801st BG,
Feb. 17, 2007

HELPERS

- M. Serge AVONS, Villefranche Sur Saone, France, Feb. 6, 2007
(Helped move men from Switzerland to Spain in 1944)
- M. Henri BEAUDET, Orbec, France, (Helped Al Sutkowski and
Stanley Canner) died Feb. 14, 2007
- Mme. Rene BEFFERA, Pleau, France, (Helped Shaver and David)
died Nov. 23, 2005
- M. Rene CROIZE, St. Paul, France, (Helped William Cupp and
Robert Donahue) died Feb. 27, 2007
- Mme. Yvonne KERVAREC, Brest, France, March 23, 2007
- Mr. William de BRUIN, Beerzerveld, Holland, Nov. 23, 2004
- Mr. L. D. "Bert" POELS, Sittard, Holland, March 26, 2007
- Mrs. Hortense Daman CLEWS, Staffordshire, UK, Dec. 18, 2006
- Mr. Miodrag D. PESIC, Ralja, Yugoslavia-Serbia, May 24, 2007

SUMMER 2007

Hortense Damon-Clews

Belgian Resistance

*From the Royal Air Forces
Escaping Society (Australia)
Newsletter, January 2007)*

**By Robert M. Horsley
Eagle Heights QLD 4271**

<rmhorsley@austarnet.com.au>

Sorry to report the passing of
Hortense Damon-Clews on the 18th
of December 2006. Courier for the
Belgian Resistance, she was born on
12 August 1920.

At the age of 10, she began
working with the Belgian
Resistance, was eventually tortured
and sent to Ravensbruck
concentration camp after refusing
to reveal the whereabouts of her
brother, who was a leader of the
Resistance group.

As a courier of the Belgian Army
of Partisans in Louvain in 1942,
Hortense Daman faced the daily risk
of arrest, interrogation and being
sent to a concentration camp.

The partisans of Louvain had
limited support from the local
population until October 1942 when
the call-up of young men for war
industry drove many to them or go
on the run.

The following spring the
partisans destroyed about 300
wagons and thousands of gallons of
fuel in the Louvain rail yards as well
as attacking other German facilities.

Hortense Damon acted from
patriotic motives and support of her
brother Francois' work with the
partisans by helping British
servicemen left behind in Belgium
to avoid capture. Hortense proved
ideal as a courier as she had a cool
head and knew how use her blonde
good looks to advantage when
necessary.

She and her father and mother
were arrested on St. Valentine's Day
1944. For a month, all three were
subjected to interrogation and
beatings by the Belgian SS.

In 1946, she married S/Sgt
Sydney Clews of the British Army,
who had befriended her father on his
return from Buchenwald. She is
survived by a son and a daughter.



DAVID GEORGE HELSEL

DAVID G. HELSEL

David George Helsel, 86, of Perryville, Pa., (E&E 886, 801st BG) passed away on Feb. 5, 2007, after a lengthy illness.

He was a 1940 graduate of the former Parker High School.

He served with the U.S. Army Air Corps from Oct. 17, 1942, through April 14, 1944,

S/Sgt Helsel served as an engineer/gunner on a B-17. On his 10th mission over Europe, his assigned plane was shot down north of Paris. He and several of his crew members survived the crash.

He evaded for 52 days with the help of the French Underground and was returned to England via Plouha and Operation Bonaparte.

He and part of his crew arrived

back in the U.K. on March 24, 1944.

He was a 60-year member and post commander of the American Legion, a member of the VFW, and a member of AFEES.

After retirement, he and his wife spent many winters in Bradenton, Fla. He loved to care for his lawn, shrubbery and garden in the summers in Perryville.

He married the former Betty Jane Wetzel on June 23, 1951, and she survives, along with a daughter and two grandchildren.

ROBERT K. FRUTH**Evaded via Shelburne**

Robert K. Fruth, E&E 462, died Thursday, March 1, 2007, in Napoleon, Ohio. He was born Sept. 30, 1922.

On June 21, 1945, he married Wilma Plassman in Smyrna, Tenn. She survives.

He was a life member of the VFW and the U.S. Escape and Evasion Society.

S/Sgt. Fruth, ball turret gunner with the 93rd Bomb Grp., went down 7 January 1944 near Nemours, France. He and Sgt. Harold R. Wines were helped by the Shelburne organization. They reached the St. Breuc area and were returned to Dartmouth by British gunboat on March 18, 1944.

Kirtland teaches next generation

KIRTLAND AFB, N.M. (AFPN)

--Along the halls of the Pararescue and Combat Rescue Officer School here, reminders of heroes past adorn the walls with honor.

There have been 13 Air Force Crosses and one Medal of Honor awarded to former students. They serve as testimony to the valor demonstrated by a fresh crop of students receiving their first hands-on training at the five-month pararescue recovery specialist course.

M/Sgt Ramon Colon-Lopez is director of the pararescue apprentice training at the school. He has prepared 50 operators for the career field, 40 of which have already experienced combat.

"Picture the scenario and injury with someone lying in the dirt and extremists or insurgents shooting at you," Sgt. Colon-Lopez said.

"There are only two of you with two backpacks containing limited equipment, but you still have to try to make things happen the same way it is done in an ER room."

"The scope of training we give here prepares them for extreme situations and we teach them ways to make things happen in bad situations," he said.

Just a reminder: dues caught up?

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

Send payments and changes to Clayton C. David, AFEES Membership Chair,

19 Oak Ridge Pond, Hannibal, MO 63401-6539, U.S.A. <davidafe@adams.net>

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COMMENTS _____

The editor has the last word

By LARRY GRAUERHOLZ

garcherco@wf.quik.com.

WICHITA FALLS, Tex. -- That General Duncan McNabb does know how to handle a bunch of geezers from the World War II era.

I know that he promised "to pull out all the stops" when he invited us last year, but the walk matched the talk. From the time we arrived at Scott AFB for a tour on Friday until after the Saturday night banquet at the OC, we were royally entertained.

For example, dozens of Scott active duty personnel mingled with our group. Several of them had a part in the memorial service.

And the introduction of helpers beneath an Arch of Sabers was spectacular!

The reunion attracted international coverage from The Associated Press and USA Today, as well as the Army Times and many other newspapers.

In addition, Channel 5, a major St. Louis tv station, covered the reunion on the Friday night and Saturday morning news.

A photo of Clayton David holding a special bomber jacket that son Lynn had ordered for him, was the top-carried AP photo on Yahoo for the week. The jacket lists all bomber and fighter groups assigned to the 8th AF in England. A special message on the jacket reads, "All gave some; some gave all."

Savannah, Ga., home of the 8th Air Force Museum, was selected as site for the '08 reunion.

Maj. Gen. Charles Metcalf of the

Wright-Pat Air Force Museum at Dayton, invited us for 2009.

The Grauerholz family has been saddened by the loss of Miodrag Pesic, Yugoslav helper who suffered a fatal stroke during the reunion.

Several of our family members, especially daughters Mary and Liz, assisted Miodrag at the Wichita Falls reunion in '03 and he never failed to inquire about them. First thing he said to us in St. Louis: "How are Leez and Maria?"

His body was returned to Belgrade for services.

Miodrag's experience should remind every airline passenger that travel insurance can be a good buy.

Your editor, a St. Louis Cardinal baseball fan for 75 years, got a charge out of seeing the Cardinals in their new stadium. Thanks to an evening arranged by Lynn David.

Only thing that could have been better would have been to catch a home-run ball from Albert Pujols.

Slovak Helper Milan Buros lost his wallet on the way to visit a friend in Miami after the reunion, but thanks to helpful personnel at American Airlines, he got it back.

An AA operations officer named Vera Aster, from information in the wallet, established that Milan was

headed home on Lufthansa. She intercepted him at the ticket counter and presented him with his wallet. Vera Aster qualifies as one of the nice people left in the world.

Jeanine Anthoine-Moreau, wife of Belgian Helper Roger Anthoine, passed away on Jan. 21, 2007, in Geneva. She was born in Huy, Belgium, which was bombed by the 351st BG on 18 Aug. '44, in 1929.

She and Roger had been married 60 years. Roger, a writer/researcher and I have been in touch for many years, but we met for the first time in St. Louis.

Rev. Ambrose Watlet, 95, who hid fighter pilot Robert Grace (E&E# 1599) and other evaders and refugees in the war years, died in Belgium on May 6, 2007.

After the war, he visited the Graces several times in the States and even baptized one of Bob's grandchildren.

Kudos to Paul Rees and Richard Shandor, who supplied most of the photos in this issue. Thanks, guys.

AN OLD FARMER'S ADVICE:

* Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a rain dance;

* Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.

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