

THE U.S. AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY SPRING 2009 *Communications*

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March 15, 2009

Dangerous Work . . .

Resistance took airmen to freedom

By JEAN HALLADE
63 Rue de la Republique, 02300
Marizelle-Bichancourt
France

During the war, I served Region B of Aisne. My role was Intelligence, sending to London SOE and then to OSS, reports about Aisne Luftwaffe locations, newly arrived aircraft, new units, names of the officers and types of A/C in the German airdromes of Aisne.

Also, to search for, find and rescue Allied flyers who bailed out over Aisne, hiding them in several homes until they were assembled to *Garage Logeon* for the trip to Spain via the Pyrenees, or by Comete, or by Bourgogne.

I am 80% sure that Bernard Rawlings was escorted from Paris to the Pyrenees by Genevieve Le Berra of Bourgogne.

My role was also to identify rescued flyers, as often the Gestapo tried infiltrations by false Allied flyers trained in U.S. POW camps to play the role.

Newcomers were placed in secret until we had confirmation by London MI-6, SOE or OSS that they were truly Allied flyers and not spies. By the dog tags first, also by the style of writing. Germans did not write characters as U.S. flyers did.

Interrogation was a first approach to detect false Allied flyers and the spies were executed and sent back to



FRENCH TOURISTS (At Chauny Aisne, 1944)

De gauche a droite: (From left to right): Capt. Kenneth MacDonald, RAF bombardier; Sgt. Byron Houser, B-24 bombardier; M. Marius Carion, proprietor de la ferme Carion Hallade; Lt. John Mac Sweeney, B-24 navigator; Sgt. Stephan Bostridge, RAF bombardier; Lt. Tommy Gerbing, B-24 pilot

Note: The RAF crewmen were in a Stirling which was dropping supplies to the Resistance when they were downed. The Americans were on a 392nd BG crew downed by flak on June 23, 1944.

Germany in coal wagon trains to the Reich, taking a couple of weeks and not revealing where they had been executed to spare reprisals.

When rescued airmen were identified by London, we moved them to different homes, waiting orders of a date for the "great trip" to Paris, then to the Pyrenees border.

Generally, guides from Chauny to Paris, and then Paris to Toulouse and Perpignan were women of Comete and Burgogne organizations; as with Mme Genevieve Le Berre (Still living, at 338 Rue Du Marechal, Joffre, 60370 Berthecourt, France.) She is still active, going always to ceremonies of the Resistance.

She escorted by train, to the Pyrenees, at least 227 airmen, a real "shaky do" job. She risked torture and execution.

These great ladies were courageous and despite the danger, they did the job with devotion.

In April 1944, London radioed us (Our "George" was Dr. Cerf in Tergnier), as to no more Pyrenees -- to keep in place our evadees.

It caused us great problems of place, as they were more and more of them with D-Day approaching.

Also food; how to find food enough to feed all these young

(Continued on Page 3)

U.S. AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY COMMUNICATIONS

<<http://www.rafinfo.org.uk/rafescape/afees-usa.htm>>

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FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY. AFEES IS A TAX-EXEMPT
VETERANS ORGANIZATION UNDER IRS CODE 501 (C)(19). IT WAS
FOUNDED IN 1964 AND IS CHARTERED IN THE STATE OF GEORGIA.

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

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

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

SPRING 2009

The Prez Sez

By Richard M. Smith

<afeesone@hotmail.com>

This might well be the last
letter you will receive from your
current president.

Wheels are in motion to retire
the AFEES Flag and present it to
the Air Force Museum, Dayton,
Ohio, where it will proudly fly in
the Rotunda with other retired
military flags.

The ceremony for this
retirement is very respectful and
very interesting. As it should be!

Some 45 years ago, in the fall of
1964, a small group of American
airmen were invited by Ralph
Patton and Bill Spinning to attend
a meeting in Niagara Falls, N.Y.,
to consider forming a group of
evaders in the United States.

This first group consisted of
airmen who had evaded via the
water route from the Brest
Peninsula, France, to England.

By word of mouth the good
news spread and soon AFEES had
members from several air forces.
After several years, the Clayton
Davids became members, got very
interested in evaders from all of
the U.S. Air Forces. At one time
AFEES had nearly 1,000 members.

Now with the median age of an
AFEES evader member hovering
around 85, it became evident that a
change had to be made. The
decision was made to disband
AFEES at the Wright-Patterson
Air Museum at the 2009 annual
meeting.

It is with a shaky hand and a
heavy heart that I write these last
lines. s/RICHARD M. SMITH

MORE about RESISTANCE

(From Page 1)

starving airmen, also civilian clothes. Shoes to fit them as civies.

Americans often had abnormal sizes for 1944 Europe. They were tall and few in Europe at that time wore #12 shoes.

We had to do our own marketing - in German depots or road convoy trucks. Our young and attractive ladies "amused" the guards or drivers while we stole what we needed to equip our Allied brothers.

Our *Guests* had to have a hair cut or else had to move outside by daylight, escorted by one of our girls. They had better LOOK LIKE A FRENCHMAN!

The German guards, mostly unable to read, were easy to fool. But it was much more dangerous when the French Socialists Youth served the Gestapo. NO WAY TO



BERNARD W. RAWLINGS

B-17 co-pilot, 303rd BG

E&E # 671

--Photo taken March 12, 1944, by Jean Hallade in Aisne.

FALSIFY THEM!

Around D-Day, London asked us to now turn on the active fights which include sabotage of railways, telephone lines, factories, depots and so on.

And to send messages concerning large German concentrations of trains, troops, tanks and other military equipment.

Raids of the B-26, P-38 and P-47s of the 9th AF cleaned up many of the targets. Our area had many targets, including six German airfields, Abwehr headquarters, depots and yard assemblies, factories which worked for the Reich (By Vichy laws of total *Kollaboration*.)

Several evadees worked with us in sabotage and to do battle with the "New Socialists."

I, several times, have been to the

States for the Escape & Evasion Society reunions with my wife, who too served in the Samson Reseau. But now, age and hazy health do not allow me to go back.

My last visit was in 2002 when I was invited to the 387th BG reunion at Tucson, Ariz. That trip allowed me to see again a great friend, Tommy Gerbing (B-24) who had been a "guest" in 1944 at Chauny.

In March 2008, we had a visit from Mrs. Bobbie Ann Mason of the Barney Rawlings family. I showed her the various locations where her father-in-law was hidden in the Chauny area.

I would like to forward my warmest salutations to surviving members of AFEES. Lucien Dumais was a good friend. I met him for the last time, in Montreal in 1993.

WWII History Round Table Plans 9th Battlefield Tour to England

By DONALD G. PATTON

WWII History Round Table

Edina, MN

coldpatton@yahoo.com

The WWII History Round Table will be conducting its 9th Battlefield Tour beginning on May 21, 2009, to visit the significant places in England that were part of the Air and Land Battles in WWII.

The Tour will leave the Twin Cities with a destination of Heathrow Airport. After arriving, we will visit the Museum at Blechley Park, where the Code-Breakers broke the Nazi Enigma codes on the way to Cambridge.

In the Cambridge area we will visit the American Cemetery and 8th Air Force Bases. On Sunday the 24th, we will attend the Duxford Air Show that is like the Oshkosh show in the U.S. The Glen Miller Museum and Shakespeare Museum will be visited before moving to Canterbury to see the Castle and Cathedral. Next the Tour will visit Dover, the Coastal fortifications, and the Battle of Britain Museum.

Moving to Portsmouth, we will visit the Eisenhower Headquarters, ports of debarkation for the Normandy Landings. Visits to Stonehenge, the Roman ruins in Bath, and the Salisbury Cathedral will be stops on the way to Windsor. We will tour the Windsor Castle and the 8th Air Force Headquarters at High Wycombe on the way into London.

In London, there will be a city tour that will stop at Westminster Abbey, Parliament, Tower of London, Churchill's War Rooms, St Paul's Cathedral, and other important city stops. There will be a day and half of free time to visit sites that are of personal interest.

For those, interested there is the opportunity to visit York and Edinburg Scotland as an extension to the basic Tour.

For Information, Call Don Patton at 952-941-5700 or Bob Riggs at Hypointe Travel at 952-891-8430

Frank finally found his helper

By **FRANK GRIFFITHS**
Career RAF Officer
July 1987

One of the sad things about Escaping/Evading experiences is that to protect our helpers, we did not wish to know their real names or to remember addresses. We thus failed to make contact with many of them after the war.

For over 43 years I endeavored to trace a helper with whom I had formed a strong rapport.

All I knew of him was that his name was "Antoine" (obviously a nom de Guerre) and that his French was difficult to understand because he was Catalan.

At 1530 hours on Wednesday 27 October 1943, Antoine had collected Joe Manos, a Flying Fortress gunner, and me from a seat in a park in Perpignan, announcing that we had a long walk in front of us and that we had better get started.

Ten hours later we collapsed in the hayloft of what appeared to be a small, very remote farm house in the foothills of the Pyrenees somewhere southwest of Perpignan.

This was the start of three nights of walking and scrambling in pitch darkness with four different guides all equally difficult to understand and all related to each other.

I was determined to contact them after the war and the first opportunity came on the 6th of July 1945 when I was flying a Dakota from Gibraltar to Istres near Marseilles. I grasped the chance to carry out a search in the foothills of the Pyrenees south west of Perpignan.

Apart from a very rough distance from the city all I had to go on was a distinctive sharp pointed hill which overlooked this farm and in 1943 could be seen through the cracks of the hayloft door.

We were warned not to go outside as the Germans surveyed the valley from the top of this hill. We left as darkness enveloped the area on the next night.

My reconnaissance, carried out at a respectable height, was useless. The area seemed too highly populated and there was no pointed hill.

Twelve more years went by and in September 1957 I wangled a "Duty Visit" to the French Parachute School at Pau. I mentioned my problem to one of the French pilots in the bar.

I wish I hadn't for within an hour I found myself flying a few millimeters above the ground in a Nordatlas looking for the sharply pointed hill. Apart from being thoroughly frightened I gained nothing from this flight.

So the years rolled by and we come to 1986; 43 years since I met Antoine.

Antoine, after a full career in the Armee de l'Air, is retired (1987) in the equivalent rank of Warrant Officer and now lives with his Provincial wife, 16 hives of bees and a truffle hound in Salon en Provence.

Always homesick for his beloved Pyrenees, he decided to attend the dedication memorial at Tarascon (Ariege) to commemorate the guides and escapers who lost their lives in the Pyrenees during the war.

Antoine fortunately knew my name. As a rule the guides did not wish to know or remember the names of anyone whom they helped over the mountains for obvious reasons.

But I had given a small English/French dictionary I had bought in Switzerland to his school boy cousin before setting off on the second night's march. My name was in the dictionary.

Also he remembered my "sympathy" for the Catalan problem for I had explained to him that we had the same problem in Wales being subservient to the English and in fact I was a mercenary flying for the British!

Somewhat far-fetched I agree but it helped him to remember me and so at Tarascon he sought out Secretary Mrs Elizabeth Harrison and asked if there was an evadee called

Frank Griffiths, RAF, was shot down near Grenoble while dropping supplies to the Maquis and reached Perpignan where he linked up with AFEES Member Joe Manos, E&E #234.

Together, they crossed the Pyrenees, only to be arrested by the Spanish police and imprisoned for a time in the Miranda gaol.

"Griffiths." After 43 years contact was made.

And this resulted in my being taken over our route from Ceret in France to Boadella in Spain in June 1987, almost 44 years since the original journey.

This time the journey was made by car, for with the introduction of the bulldozer and Spain having joined the European Community, the journey which once entailed three nights of exhausting walking and scrambling, will shortly be merely a matter of a couple of hours by car.

And, at the same time, this move of Spain has spoilt the Catalans main source of income – smuggling which has been going on for hundreds of years.

I was however still eager to find our starting point, the remote farm overlooked by the German observation post on the pointed hilltop. I sensed that Antoine did not relish me raising the subject.

Finally on the last day of our tour within two kilometers of Caret, a town of 4,000 inhabitants, we dropped down an escarpment on an almost vertical track and there, to the south, was the pointed hill and, hidden in the bend of the river, the farm, "Les Pouillades," almost the same as it was 44 years ago.

Under the trees in front of the farmhouse on this gorgeous sunny day was spread an enormous

"picnique" with all the now greyhaired guides and their wives and families to greet us.

Why did it take 43+ years to find Les Pouillades? Moving stealthily by night with no moon and avoiding all roads and tracks I had the impression that we were in deep "Indian

Country" whereas in fact Les Pouillades was in a well inhabited area but no other building could be seen from this Shangri-la encircled by the heavily forested bend in the river.

And the sharply pointed hill? It is still there and it is still a German observation post. A retired couple

from Munster have converted a barn near the top into a summer chalet!

This article was contributed by Frank H. Dell, former chairman of the RAF Escaping Society. Frank now lives in Australia.

Bill: 'the unluckiest/luckiest' man

From a Jacksonville, Ark., newspaper, Oct. 25, 2008

Standing before a crowd at the Jacksonville Museum of Military history as a senior citizen, Bill McGinley (E&E # 1874) of Bryant, Ark., told of his military days where he eluded German soldiers after parachuting behind enemy lines during World War II.

McGinley spoke about failing to pass pilot training, which ultimately led to his being reassigned to the position of a tail gunner.

"I washed out" of pilot school, McGinley said with unabashed honesty.

McGinley's adventure began after being trained as a tail gunner on a B-24. "We shipped out to England on a cattle boat," McGinley said. "Boy, it smelled."

After landing in England, his mission proved dangerous. That mission was conducting bombing runs over Germany

"We were going to Frankfurt to drop the bombs and five fighter planes got on our tail," McGinley said. "They killed the bombardier and the navigator and I finally ran out of ammunition."

This was happening during his ninth mission and he remembered pushing out the last survivor -- other than him -- aboard the plane. According to a news release from the military history museum, McGinley pushed out another gunner and then got down on his knees to push out the turret gunner just as a German fighter strafed the side of his plane. It also indicated that if he had not dropped to his knees, he would have been dead.

During his informal speech, McGinley also remembered seeing

two other American planes shot out of the sky before crashing into the English Channel on that fateful day.

"And I'm still in the plane dancing around there," McGinley describes his state of mind.

McGinley had his parachute on him and it went out of the B-24. With that, the parachute quickly extracted McGinley from the plane.

"There was about two or three seconds, I didn't know what went on...I think, there must have been an angel or two around me," McGinley explained. "Only thing I remembered was going under the plane's tail."

One of the audience members asked him about the material of that parachute, which saved his life so long ago. He answered, "Silk."

Prior to McGinley's landing in a pasture behind enemy's line, his plane had experienced mechanical problems and the crew, which was under attack, received orders to jump. On the ground, however, his safety was still questionable. German soldiers were now looking for any survivors of that plane's crew.

"I started running, jumped a fence and laid down in a plowed-up field as they searched for me in ditches," McGinley said.

If he had hidden in a ditch, McGinley said he would have been captured. He walked until he arrived to the edge of Waterloo, Belgium. He remembers encounters with the German soldiers during his months with the Belgium underground but also remembered a tip in covering up the fact that he was an American.

"I was told to keep my fork in my left hand and the knife in the right," he added.

Bouncing around from one safe-haven to another, McGinley stayed

alive without being captured. His living quarters ranged from a barbershop to a mill. While with the miller, however, someone warned them about the Gestapo getting close.

"Two or three weeks later, I saw the miller and could not recognize him because the Gestapo had beat him up so bad," McGinley said. "It was scary cause at night you never knew if the Gestapo would get you and they would kill those helping us. Who knows about what they would have done to the children?"

For seven and a half months with the help of the Belgium underground, however, McGinley successfully moved to one place after another to escape the watchful eye of Germany's Gestapo under the leadership of Adolf Hitler. Despite his success at staying alive, McGinley's mother had received word from a U.S. official that her son was missing in action and heard from the German government her son was dead. However, he cheated death even after being safely extracted back to England in September 1944.

According to McGinley, a bombing by German aircraft took a direct hit on his location after returning to England.

The U.S. government had already paid out his life insurance policy and his parents had already spent it, he says. After saving all of his back pay for the seven and half months of military service, McGinley signed off on an agreement that would relieve him of any monetary obligations.

McGinley said that he ultimately returned to the central Arkansas area where he married a Little Rock girl. Museum officials dubbed McGinley as the "unluckiest/luckiest man in World War II."

Helpers respond to greeting cards

Our helpers and friends around the world have been responding to the annual AFEES year-end greeting cards that went into the mail on Dec. 8.

More than 250 cards were air-mailed to those persons on the AFEES mailing list maintained by Clayton and Scotty David. Their Hannibal (Missouri) address is displayed as return address on envelopes containing the folders.

Again, Scotty has faithfully prepared the list of responders for publication in this issue.

Many responders were generous enough to include a few words of greeting and to express best wishes to members of AFEES.

Persons who had responded to the 2008 holiday greeting cards at press time include:

BELGIUM: Camille Bernier-Brasseur, M et M Raoul Steyaert-Broekaert, Lila Ann DeBout, Mme. Janine De Greff, Mme. Emile Boucher-Vanden Groen, Mme. Andre Degive, Mme. Andree Antnoine-Dumont, M. Jacques P. Grandjean, Mme. Monique Thorne-Hanotte, M. Raymond Itterbeek, Mme. Simmonne Decort-Hellbois, Edgar Keesemaeker, M. Roger A. Janblin, Simonne Kieckens, Robert Lintermans, M. et Mme. L. Vienne-Roiseux, M. Victor Schutters, M. Andre Vernaut.

CANADA: Mrs. Agnes N. Frisque

ENGLAND: Mrs. Grace Mulrooney

FRANCE: Mr. Emile Adam, M. Roger Anthoine, Mme. Paule Arhex, Mme. Leslie A. G. Atkinson, Mr. Andre Aubon, Dr. et Mme. Bernard

Avigon, M. Christian Babled, Mme. Loulon Balfet, M. et Mme. Serge Baudinot, M. Jean Pierre Benier, Mme. Andree Besse, M. Louis Blanchard, M. Robert Boher, Mme. Max DeBroissia, M. Paul Boe, Mme. Georges Brest, Jacqueline T. Briand, Mme. Janine Carter, Gilbert et Hugette Combez, M. Maurice Costa, M. Marcel Closset, M. Louis Coum, M. Jean Deduit, Mme. Anna Diez, M. Guy de Rouville, M. Jacques Flahou, M. Claude Fontaine, M. Andre Formici, M. Albert Gloaguen, M. Jean Louis Gourcuff, M. Scott Goodall, Mme. Rosemary Grady, Mme. Pierre Guillermin, M. Jean Hallade, Mme. D. Heches,

AND: Melle. Denise Lenain, M. Georges Jacob, Mme. Paulette Jauneau, M. Paul LeBot, M. Louis Ledanois, M. Marcel Ledanois, M. Ernest LeRoy, Mme. Jacqueline LeRoy, Mme. Odile LeRoy, Mme. Genevieve Levasseur, M. Rene Loiseau, Mme. Jeanne Mansion, Mme. Michele Agniel-Moet, Mme. Yvette Montaz, M. Emile Monvoisin, Mme. Paulette LeFevre Pavan, The Van-Laere-Pena Families, Mme. Bertrand Petit, Dr. Alec Prochiantz, Mlle. Anne Ropers, Mme. Orlette Salingue-Deslee, M. Raymond Servoz, Mme. Anne-Marie Soudet, M. Michel Tabarant, M. Paul Thion, M. Andre Turon, Mme. Alice Paquelot-Villard (change of address: 87340 Saint Lege le Montague), M. Jean Voileau, Federation Nationale Andre-Maginot, 24 bis boulevard Saint-Germain, 75005 Paris.

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*May the quiet beauty
of this lovely season
bring you deep joy and warm memories
to cherish throughout the coming year.*

U.S. Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society

Cash receipts and disbursements

for calendar year ending Dec. 31, 2008

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

RECEIPTS:		
DUES	1,085.00	
GIFTS & MEMORIALS	2,710.00	
INTEREST	126.01	
REUNION -NET	3,817.97	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		7,738.98
DISBURSEMENTS:		
AIR FORCE ESCAPE BOOK	885.88	
NEWSLETTER -PRINTING & POSTAGE	5,828.49	
CHRISTMAS CARDS & POSTAGE	542.04	
FUTURE REUNION	644.83	
MISCELLANEOUS	1,134.14	
EXPENSES OF A RERESENATIVE TO BELGIUM WW2 ESCAPE LINE MEMORIAL	1,874.84	
ESCAPE LINE MEMORIAL	250.00	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		11,160.22
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS (DISBURSEMENTS)		(3,421.24)
CASH BALANCE - BEGINNING		25,407.58
CASH BALANCE - ENDING		21,986.34
SUMMARY OF ENDING CASH BALANCE		
CHECKING ACCOUNT		6,986.34
CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT		15,000.00
TOTAL		21,986.34

Beerie Bailey



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PARK SERVICE WANTS TO KNOW ...

Were you involved with MIS-X?

By DAVID LASSMAN
National Park Service
McLean, Va.

While serving in World War II did you ever receive special training on how to avoid capture behind enemy lines?

Were you trained as a "Code User" to enable you to send messages home if you became a POW? As a POW did you ever receive a care package with a radio, a map, a compass, German currency, or other escape devices hidden inside?

After an escape or imprisonment, were you debriefed overseas or in the United States on what escape training and resources were useful? If so, you were probably helped by a secret program known as MIS-X, and you can help reveal the secret work done at PO Box 1142.

Fort Hunt is located eleven miles down the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. Focusing upon recreational activities like biking and picnicking, many visitors are unaware of Fort Hunt's unique history.

In the 1700s President George Washington, who lived at his nearby home of Mount Vernon, farmed the site. A century later in the 1890s, the War Department established Fort Hunt as a coastal artillery post designed to protect Washington from naval assault.

During the Depression, Fort Hunt served as a camp for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Today the site is maintained by the National Park Service as part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Yet it is the World War II era at Fort Hunt that offers the most intriguing story and the largest mystery.

In May, 1942, the Army needed a secure intelligence center, and it chose Fort Hunt for its proximity to the nation's capital and the newly constructed Pentagon.

For the next four years, Fort Hunt assumed a decidedly military, though mysterious, air as it was transformed into a top secret Military Intelligence operation. In fact, the facility was simply known as PO Box 1142.

The old fort rapidly mushroomed into a major installation with 150 buildings, lofty guard towers, and multiple alarmed fences. The most secretive project was known as MIS-X, and it went into operation in October 1942.

Only top War Department officials and the President knew of its existence. Even Fort Hunt's post commander was uncertain of what MIS-X was doing within his own camp.

Select military personnel were trained by the MIS-X staff of PO Box 1142 how to evade capture and, if captured, how to escape. These personnel were then expected to pass their special training along to

servicemen.

In addition, some air crewmen were trained as "Code Users" or "CUs" in order to send home secret messages if they were captured and made Prisoners of War.

Clerks working for the Director of the Censorship scanned all incoming POW mail for the names of known CUs. When one appeared, it was picked up by an MIS-X officer and transported to PO Box 1142.

Crypto analysts at PO Box 1142 then decoded the message and passed it along through the chain of command. The decoders composed a return message to the POW on civilian stationery, posing as family members or girlfriends.

The secret correspondence continued undiscovered throughout the entire war, and by this means MIS-X was in regular contact with virtually every German POW camp.

In February 1943, MIS-X technicians at PO Box 1142 began operations in a building they called the "Warehouse." According to the Geneva Conventions, POWs were entitled to receive parcels from family members and humanitarian organizations. MIS-X established two fictitious relief organizations, the "War Prisoner's Benefit Foundation" and the "Serviceman's Relief," as a cover for smuggling escape and evasion materials into POW camps.

Since the Germans would almost certainly scrutinize the packages, it was essential the technicians hide escape aids within seemingly mundane items. After much trial and error, they became experts at hiding compasses and tissue paper maps in the handles of shaving brushes, shoe brushes, and Ping-Pong paddles. Checkerboards were steamed apart and maps, documents and currency inserted. Shoe heels could easily contain other materials.

But even with the best equipment, there was a limit to what Fort Hunt's technicians could produce at the Warehouse itself.

MIS-X contacted various American companies, who sworn to secrecy - agreed to make their products with hidden materials. The F. W. Sickle Electronics Company of Chicopee, Mass., manufactured specially designed miniature radio transmitters that were secreted in baseballs by the Goldsmith Baseball Co.

The U. S. Playing Card Co. inserted map segments within special peel-away cards. Boston's Gillette Razor Co. magnetized their double-edged blades so that when balanced on a stick or string, the "G" in Gillette pointed north.

The Army's supplier of uniform buttons, the Scoville Company of Waterbury, Conn., agreed to hide small compasses within five million buttons, with the threaded screw reversed to fool suspicious inspectors. Though

***For more information on the Fort Hunt oral history project,
contact any of these Park Service staff members:***

Vincent Santucci—Chief Ranger, 703- 289- 2531, vincent_santucci@nps.gov

Matthew Virta—Cultural Resources Program Manager, 703- 289- 2535, matthew_virta@nps.gov

Brandon Bies—Cultural Resources Specialist, 703- 289- 2534, brandon_bies@nps.gov

David Lassman—Park Ranger - Cultural History Aide, 703- 289- 2555, david_lassman@nps.gov

they never knew the purpose of destination of these special items, the majority of these patriotic companies never charged the government for their services.

By 1944 POWs were sending coded letters back to Fort Hunt asking them to stop shipments of escape items; they simply had no more room in their quarters to hide more materials.

By this time, escape had become an increasingly dangerous proposition. After D-Day, Hitler issued his infamous Kommando Order, which created "Death Zones" throughout Europe in areas around munitions, armament, and experimental plants. Any POW captured in these zones was subject to summary execution.

MIS-X responded by informing prisoners that they were no longer expected to attempt escape, though they might continue resistance efforts at their own discretion. Late in the war, as Germany's infrastructure and transportation networks crumbled, mail shipments to POW camps also became increasingly sporadic, and packages sent by MIS-X did not always reach their intended destinations.

The end of PO Box 1142 and MIS-X came sooner than expected. Germany surrendered to the Allies on May 8, 1945, and immediately MIS-X was ordered to cease operations.

Throughout the summer, Pentagon officials debriefed the program's participants. Following the surrender of Japan, the War Department ordered all MIS-X records at Fort Hunt destroyed. For 36 hours, the men burned records nonstop, all but obliterating the history of one of the most secret and successful military intelligence operations in American history.

During World War II, over 95,000 United States servicemen fell into enemy hands. Of these, more than 700 managed to escape and return to their commands. Many did so with the help of PO Box 1142.

Through their correspondence with the POW camps and debriefings, MIS-X collected critical intelligence from behind enemy lines and had an immeasurable effect on the morale of the prisoners.

Six decades later, the National Park Service is endeavoring to reconstruct what actually happened at Fort Hunt. While the staff at George Washington Memorial Parkway have learned a great deal about Fort Hunt, the number of holes in the story seems infinite.

In the past couple of years, the staff has successfully tracked down and interviewed a few dozen individuals who served at Fort Hunt during the 1940s.

Now the staff plans to expand this oral history project to include the stories of those who benefitted from the work of PO Box 1142 and MIS-X. So please contact the National Park Service if you are a World War II veteran trained in these activities, were a former POW, or even a family member who heard the stories of a loved one.

The National Park Service is also interested in obtaining copies of papers, letters, photographs, and artifacts that will further document these historic events that helped the United States to win World War II.

If you have questions or comments, or wish to participate in the oral history program, please contact:

National Park Service
George Washington Memorial Parkway
c/o Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101.



Three members of AFEES were among those who attended the 8th Air Force Historical Society meeting in Savannah last July. From the left: Frank Schaffer of Montello, Wis., Yvonne Daley of Dunedin, Fla., and Richard Shandor of Cresson, Pa.

*This article was prepared by AFEES President
Richard M. Smith for publication in the 2009
Membership Roster of his unit,
the 95th Bomb Group.*

Our AFEES man and wife, who keep track of, and have hunted for Evaders, tell me they have a record of 64 evaders from the 95th. 30 have been members of AFEES. How many are still living is unknown.

AFEES is an aging group of once young men, who in the 1940's answered the call of their country, and did a wonderful job of protecting it. They were shot down, or crash landed, in enemy occupied territory and by their wits, and with the help of the local resistance people were able to EVADE capture, and were returned to Allied Command and continue the war effort. The group does have a few members who were once captured and made Prisoners of War, and then were able to ESCAPE, TO AGAIN CONTINUE THE War Effort

For my own experience: December 30, 1943 the mission was the I.G. Farben plant, in Ludwigshafen, Germany. We were flying along, just North of Paris, when we lost our #4 engine. We had evidently had a piece of flak invade our #4 engine oil tank. Because of the total lack of oil, we could not "feather" the prop. We now had a great big brake, instead of a puller. We could not keep up with the Group. We had been the last group over the target, so we had no other group to fall back with or on..

We were all alone for about 5 to 10 minutes, when a lone Mc.109 spotted us and soon there were six more 109's, one right behind the other. It took them about 5 minutes to make the B-17 unflyable. The flight deck was gone, and we had a fire in the radio room. The flight controls were not responding, and the order was given to "bail-out"!

I landed in a farm field, where an elderly French farmer was plowing with a one bottom plow and a team of Oxen. He pointed one way and said Aleman and toward a big grove of trees, and said comrade. I headed for the trees, and found a place to hide and then waited for dark. I heard a train to the West of me, and decided, after dark, to walk to the village, get on the train and move out

I was about to leave when three young French men approached my hiding place, each had a 45 pistol, and motioned for me to come out and change my clothes into the sack of clothes they had, with them, in a sack.. (lousey they

were) We walked to the village, met the local gendarme. In French they discussed my future.

They indicated I should get into the trunk, of a very, very small car. I was driven some distance, and was removed from the car, and walked into a good sized farm house. In the farm house was the co-pilot and radio operator. We ate, drank, talked with our hands, and spent the night on the floor. The next day, in the late afternoon, were put into a car, and driven to a good sized town of St. Just. We moved into an abandon house. No indoor plumbing, and we were told NO GOING OUTSIDE. We were in this house for 4 days, and moved to a one bed home, owned by a French couple, and a brand new baby. The three Evaders took turns sleeping on the floor. The owners in the barn, in the back yard.

After four days we were moved, by car, into Paris, about 50 miles. Dropped off at the apartment of a little old English lady, who had missed the last train out of Paris, and was marooned there for the duration. She could not keep four good sized Americans---the ball turret gunner had joined us at the beginning of the automobile trip to Paris---in her little apartment.

The radio man and I walked from the Arc de Triomphe to the Grand Hotel, in down town Paris. We were taken into a nice 5 story apartment building and lead up five flights of stairs to a lovely bedroom, with running water! There were four German officers living on the third floor. (cozy arrangement).

We were taken, one night to a bar and to a burlesque show. Couldn't catch on to the language, but laughed when every one else did. We stayed in Paris for two weeks, and one morning a young lady came for me, and told me I was moving out.

After arriving at the train depot, I was briefed on what the day had in store for me. I was given authentic papers, which every French person had to carry. I spent the whole day riding the train and could absolutely NOT speak to any one. Hard to be hungry and thirsty and have to turn down bread, cheese and wine!

Arrived St. Brieux on the Brest peninsula, and got onto a narrow gauge train,, and off I went. I was briefed to follow a young girl, in a leather coat and knee high rubber boots when she walked down the aisle of the train coach, and imagine my surprise when five more young men, got up and followed her down the railroad right of way and into her house.

We were in this house for two nights, and then we walked through some barn yards, down to the beach and waited for the row boats to come to shore, take us back to the British Motor Gun Boat and back to England, on February 2nd, 1943.

Nice trip but it did have its MOMENTS!

Dick Smith *[Signature]* 95th Bomb Group 336 Squadron

Reported changes (underscored) for afes directory

Eric Brill, 3137 Barkentime RD, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-5936

Neal Cobb, 8140 Township Line RD, Apt#5204, Indianapolis, IN 46260-5866

Paul Courtad, 260 Duck Pond RD, Upper Sandusky, OH 43351-9603

Alexander Dewa, 117 Williams ST, Newark, NY 14513-1740

Betty Jane Dulberg, 700 Starkey RD, Apt#1144, Largo, FL 33771-2336

Malcolm Edwardson, 12910 Dorman RD, Apt#3306, Pineville, NC 28134-9391

Ramona Eldenmiller, 401 9th ST, Lacon, IL 61354-1140

James Hix, 7404 Stiller Lake RD, Pensacola, FL 32526-4348

Laurie Horner, 10105 Polo CT, Dayton, OH 45458-9274

Barbara Hugonnet, PO Box 73, Kensington, MD 20895-0073

Clarence Larrew, 4677 Otis ST, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033-3714

Arthur Mattson, 3106 Shriner CT, Pearland, TX 77584-7985

Linnette McElroy, 2261 Tuolunine ST, Apt#387, Vallejo, CA 94589-3400

James Murray, 18 Laurelhurst DR, Brick, NJ 08724-3644

Ernest Skorheim, 4477 Edison AV, Sacramento, CA 95821-3367

Richard Sykes, 725 N. Avon ST, Burbank, CA 91505-2934

Kenneth Williams, 2122 Summit Circle DR, Rochester, NY 14618-3966

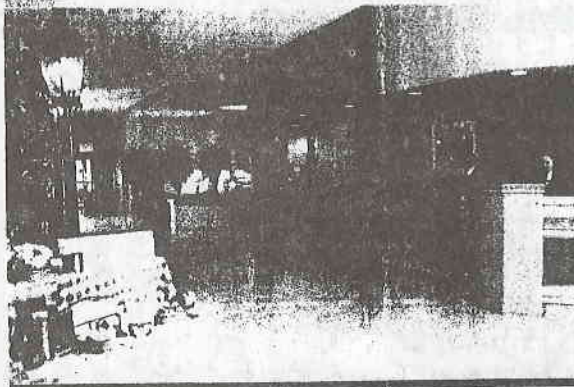
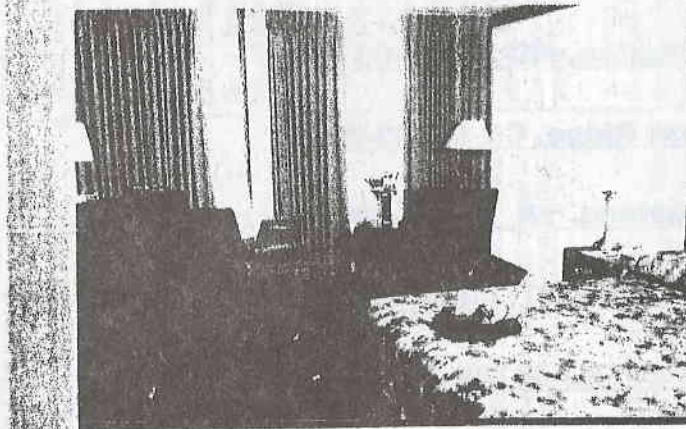
Beetle Bailey



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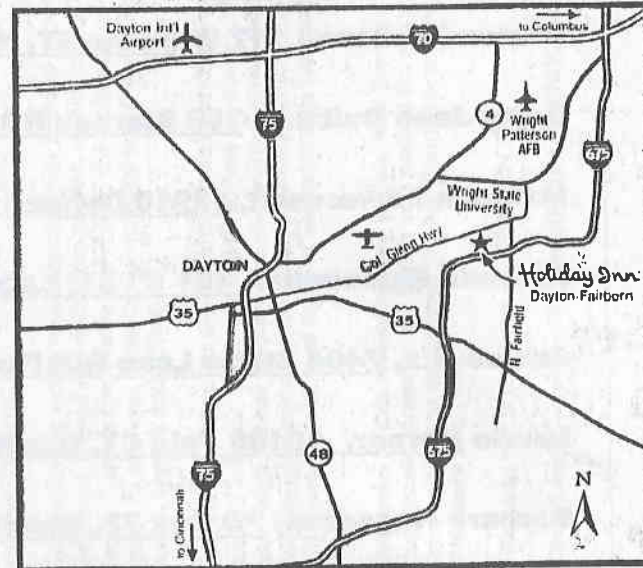
Bivouac for the '09 AGM

May 6-10, Holiday Inn, Dayton-Fairborn, Ohio



** Holiday Inn*

DAYTON/FAIRBORN
WRIGHT PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE



LOCATION:

*East of Dayton and easily accessible from I-675, in the Wright Executive Center Office Complex

*Adjacent to Wright State University and the Ervin J. Nutter Center

DIRECTIONS:

*From I-675, take exit 17 to intersection of Colonel Glenn Hwy. and Fairfield Rd. Hotel is on the left.

ACCOMODATIONS:

*All rooms feature electronic keyboard security locks, iron and boards, remote control Tv with CNN, ESPN and HBO, data ports, coffeemakers, hairdryers, modem hook-ups.

*City Chop House, the Cafe and Sugar's Lounge at the hotel.

*Daily express breakfast buffet

Our host for May 6-10 reunion:

National Museum of the USAF

Dayton, Ohio

...the Keepers of our Stories

See...

- Only B-2 Stealth Bomber on Permanent Public Display
- Presidential Aircraft including Kennedy's Air Force One
- Exhibits from the Wright Brothers to Stealth Technology
- Rare and One-of-a-Kind Aircraft
- New Cold War and Missile Galleries
- Research and Development/Flight Test Aircraft includes world's only XB-70 "Valkyrie" Bomber
- Sensory rich dioramas with mannequins, theatrical lighting and sound effects

Experience...

- Giant Screen IMAX® Theatre
- Morphis MovieRide Theatre
- Sitting in a Jet Cockpit
- Hands-on Educational Programs
- Entertaining Special Events

Enjoy...

- "Valkyrie" Cafe
- Extensive Souvenir Shop and Book Store
- Memorial Park

**Something for
the Entire Family!**

F.Y.I.

The Reunion Skinny

Charter van service from Dayton International Airport is available by calling Kris Davis at 937-431-4603 at Holiday Inn for reservations.

The 1-way price of \$20 per person can be billed to your hotel room. Van service normally ends at 5 p.m. If your arrival time is later, Kris will attempt to make arrangements for transportation, if you provide her with airline/date/time of arrival.

Usual site for meeting ground transport is at the coffee bar near Baggage Claim.

Reunion Coordinator Yvonne Daley is asking for volunteers who are driving and are willing to provide transport from the airport for our travel-weary helpers from overseas.

A limit of 100 persons is in effect for the Friday visit to the Air Force Museum. It is first come, first served, so sign up early if you are eager to make the trip!

Security at the airbase museum requires a list of non-U.S. citizens in advance for the Friday visit. That means that full name, passport number and date of issue should be submitted to Yvonne asap.

And a few reminders:

- * Please provide unit number and squadron number when making your reservation.
- * List an emergency phone number on the reservation form.
- * And, for answers to questions, contact Yvonne at 727-734-9573, <gadabout127@msn.com>

2009 Reunion Schedule

(Events and Times Subject to Change)

Daily schedules will be posted

Wednesday, May 6

Hospitality Suite Open at 1300 hrs.

(Dinner on your own.)

Thursday, May 7

Breakfast on your own.

Hospitality Suite and Registration Table open

Carillon Park Tour via bus, 1300-1600 hrs.

(Board busses at 1230)

Board of Directors' Meeting, 1630 hrs.

Complimentary welcoming reception, 1700 hrs.

Cash Bar open at 1730 hrs.

Welcoming Dinner (open seating) at 1900 hrs.

Hospitality Suite open after dinner.

Friday, May 8

Registration Open

Air Force Museum tour, board busses, 0900 hrs.

Lunch on your own at museum cafe

OPTIONAL, especially for Ladies, 1015-1330, bus to "The Greene," an 800,000 sq. ft. shopping mall.

Hospitality Suite open.

Evening Dinner on your own.

Saturday, May 9

Breakfast on your own.

Memorial Service at Hotel, 0915 hrs.

Annual General Membership meeting to follow.

(Hospitality Suite open after meeting)

Directors' Meeting

Depart for AF Museum, 1700 hrs.

Dedication of E&E Exhibit with ribbon cutting.

Followed by reception with Cash Bar

(Background of static B-17 and B-24 for reception)

SEATED BANQUET, 1830 to 2200 hrs.

(Open seating. Choice of entree tickets will be enclosed in registration envelope.)

Sunday, May 10

Farewell Breakfast, 0730-0930

FAREWELL! BON VOYAGE! ADIOS!



New exhibit dedicated to 'Warrior Airmen'

DAYTON, Ohio (AFNS) -- A new exhibit at the National Museum of the United States Air Force now gives visitors a chance to see not only the service's past, but also its present and future.

Called "Warrior Airmen," the new exhibit highlights how today's airmen are contributing to the war on terrorism, both in the air and on the ground.

The exhibit includes more than 400 artifacts, three dioramas with fully dressed and equipped mannequins, an audiovisual presentation on a 15-foot wide screen, and compelling firsthand accounts.

"The Air Force has always been an adaptive service," said Dick Anderegg, the director of Air Force history and museums. "This exhibit is a testament to this adaptability and serves as an opportunity for future generations to see what we already know our airmen are capable of."

The exhibit, which opened to the public Jan. 12, is divided into three sections, each highlighting a way the Air Force is supporting efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. The first section, "Battlefield Airmen," is dedicated to Air Force special operations forces such as pararescuemen, tactical air controllers and combat weather personnel. The section opens with an immersive video recreation of the battle for Takur Ghar, where several Air Force pararescuemen were either killed or wounded while attempting to rescue a Navy SEAL who had fallen out of his helicopter when it was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade.

The next section, "Expeditionary Combat Airmen," highlights other ground operations airmen perform on a daily basis in support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. These Airmen include security forces personnel, convoy operators and explosive ordnance disposal teams.

The final section, "In the Air," demonstrates how pilots and aircrews continue to perform important missions in the air, providing close-air support, flying rescue aircraft and dropping bombs on target.

All of the uniforms, items and photos in the exhibit were donated by Airmen who served in either Iraq or Afghanistan. For them, this exhibit is a way to honor all Airmen and keep the memory of their sacrifices alive.

The exhibit also includes several firsts at the museum. There are several digital touch screens that allow visitors to interact with the displays and the donated items include numerous special operations "tools of the trade."

The exhibit itself is also an original at the museum. It is not a monument to the past, but to the present and future of Air Force operations.

"The past is static and never changes," said retired Maj. Gen. Charles D. Metcalf, the museum's director. "This exhibit is a contemporary one, though. It will change and grow with the mission as long as the mission continues."

The "Warrior Airmen" exhibit is a permanent display at the museum and is open year-round.



Dayton/Fairborn I-675



Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society Reunion

May 4-12, 2009

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

Please complete this form and send to

Kris Davis, Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn, 2800 Presidential Drive, Fairborn OH 45324**Phone: 937-431-4603; FAX: 937-426-1284 <kris.davis@hdaytonfairborn.com>****HOLIDAY INN -- DAYTON/FAIRBORN -- \$103.50 per night, inclusive**

(Check room type)

Standard Double ____ King Leisure (1 King bed) ____ King Sofa (1 King and 1 Sofa bed) ____

HOMEWOOD SUITES -- FAIRBORN-- \$114.75 per night, inclusive

Standard Double (2 double beds) ____; King Leisure (1 King bed) ____

ROOM RATES APPLY THREE DAYS BEFORE AND THREE DAYS AFTER REUNION**Reunion Hotel Rates guaranteed only until April 18****HELPERS ONLY: Send both Hotel Reservation Form and Reunion Reservation Form to:****AFEEES, c/o YVONNE DALEY-BRUSSELMANS, 1962 Brae-Moor Drive, Dunedin FL 34698-3250**

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

ARRIVAL DATE:	DEPARTURE DATE:
Number of Adults:	Smoking Preference:

Check Enclosed (y or n)	
Visa Number	
AMX Number	
MC Number	
Other CC Number	

Name on Credit Card: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

REUNION RESERVATION FORM**AIR FORCES ESCAPE AND EVASION SOCIETY****Thursday-Sunday, May 6-10, 2009****Holiday Inn, Dayton-Fairborn, Ohio*****Please complete and return this form with check or money order (No Credit Cards.)******Your Check is your receipt.*****HELPERS ONLY: Send both Hotel Reservation Form and Reunion Reservation Form to:****AFEES, c/o YVONNE DALEY-BRUSSELMANS, 1962 Brae-Moor Drive, Dunedin FL 34698-3250*****Please Indicate Your Choice of Events***

Number

_____ Registration Fee @ \$25 per person \$ _____

_____ Carillon Park Bus Tour, 1300-1630 hrs., \$15 per person \$ _____

_____ Thursday Night Dinner, \$32 per person \$ _____

_____ Friday W-PAFB Museum Tour
OR, Greene Shopping Center tour, \$9 per person \$ __________ Saturday Banquet at AF Museum, \$38.50 per person \$ _____
Choice of Entree: Beef _____ Chicken _____ Fish _____

_____ Sunday Farewell Breakfast, \$15.10 per person \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____***(Total of all events is \$134.60 per person)*****For Reunion information, contact Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans, 1-727-734-9573;****Cell Phone, 727-804-3664; <gadabout127@msn.com>****NOTE: If you have a blue AFEES lanyard from a past reunion, please bring it for use at registration.****NAME BADGES: List names as you wish them to appear:**

NAME (please print) _____ Service Unit _____

Spouse's Name _____ Guest's Name _____

Mailing address _____

City, State and Zip Code _____

IMPORTANT: Emergency Contact (Name and Phone Number):

Any Special Needs? _____

Hagar the Horrible



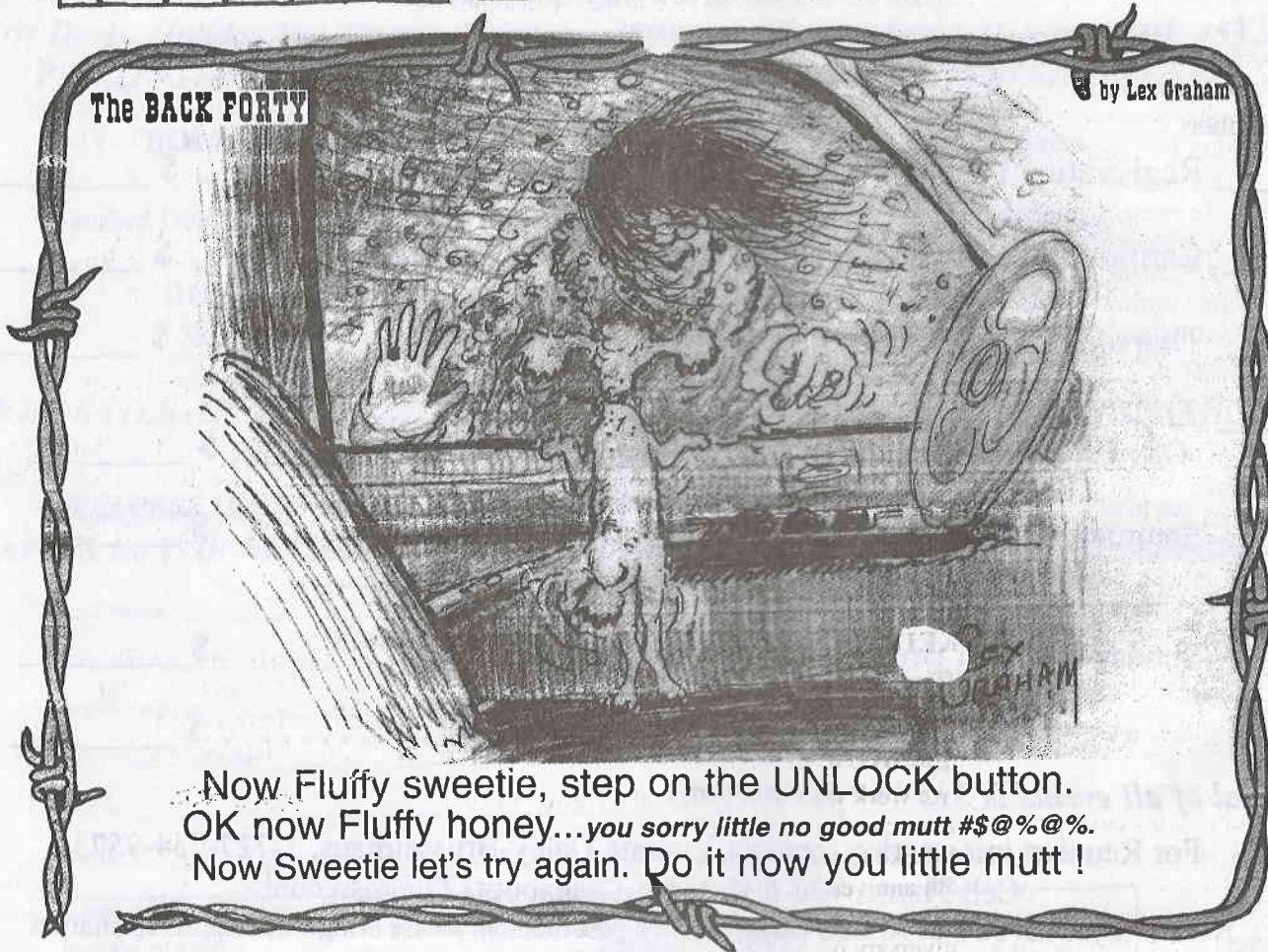
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YOUR FATHER HAS AGREED TO GO SHOPPING WITH ME!



The BACK FORTY

by Lex Graham



Now Fluffy sweetie, step on the UNLOCK button.
OK now Fluffy honey...you sorry little no good mutt #\$\$%@@%.
Now Sweetie let's try again. Do it now you little mutt !

Beetle Bailey



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AF Heritage displayed at Baltimore airport

BALTIMORE (AFPN) -- The rich diversity, heritage and history of the Air Force can be seen as part of an exhibit at the Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport through July 30.

Nearly 50 pieces from the Air Force art collection are part of a rotating exhibit in the airport's *international terminal which sees thousands of travelers each month.*

The exhibit features "an extraordinary assortment of really great art," said Timothy Campbell, executive director of the Maryland Aviation Administration, during the exhibit's official opening ceremony Feb. 5 at the airport.

Mr. Campbell said the airport is fortunate to have these pieces on display documenting the achievements and history of military aerospace and aviation.

"The location of this exhibit in the international terminal is wonderful," said William Davidson, administrative assistant to the secretary of the Air Force.

T-birds release 2009 schedule

NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE, Nev. (AFNS) -- The U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, "Thunderbirds," has announced its 2009 air show schedule. In their 56th season, the Thunderbirds are scheduled to perform more than 73 shows in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Far East.

Entering his second season, Lt. Col. Greg Thomas, the team's commander and leader, welcomes the opportunity to again represent the nearly 700,000 active duty, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and civilian Airmen, serving in the United States and overseas.

"The entire team is excited about our 2009 schedule," Colonel Thomas said, who commands the Air Combat Command unit. "This year we are humbled to represent Airmen at locations throughout America and overseas."

Colonel Thomas will join 11 officers and more than 120 enlisted Airmen during the 2009 air show season.

"We are focused on making this season thrilling for audiences from

Ocean City, Maryland, to the Far East," said Colonel Thomas, who leads a demonstration composed of more than 40 aerial maneuvers and a ground show. "Our team comes from over 30 specialties throughout the Air Force; they are proud to represent their fellow Airmen who continually execute the Air Force mission, which is to Fly, Fight and Win ... in air, space and cyberspace."

The 2009 schedule:

March

21-22 Luke AFB, AZ
28-29 MacDill AFB, FL

April

4-5 Keesler AFB, MS
18-19 Ceiba, Puerto Rico
25-26 Langley AFB, VA

May

2-3 Robins AFB, GA
9-10 Branson, MO
15-17 Andrews AFB, MD
23-24 Wantagh, NY (Jones Beach)
27 USAF Academy, CO
30-31 Ellsworth AFB, SD

June

6-7 Hill AFB, UT
13-14 Ocean City, MD
20-21 Dover AFB, DE
27-28 Helena, MT

July

4-5 Battle Creek, MI
11-12 Peoria, IL
18-19 Dayton, OH
22 Cheyenne, WY
25-26 Milwaukee, WI

August

8-9 Vienna, OH (Youngstown ARB)
15-16 Chicago, IL
19 Atlantic City, NJ
22-23 Selfridge ANGB, MI
29-30 Hillsboro, OR

September

5-7 Cleveland, OH
12-13 Sacramento, CA
19-20 Hickam AFB, HI

Slovakian writer needs some help

By **KEITH E. HUGHES**

Information office, U. S. Embassy Bratislava

Phone: +421 (2) 5922-3083

<HughesKE@state.gov>

One of the best reporters we work with here in Slovakia, asked me the other day if I could put him in touch with U.S. soldiers who have served with Slovak soldiers. He would like to interview them, by phone, for articles commemorating the 5th anniversary of Slovakia's accession into NATO as well as the 60th anniversary of its founding. He might also be able to tie it in to the 20th anniversary of the fall of communism.

I am hoping to find three different kinds of U.S. soldiers:

1) Anyone who served with Slovaks in SHAPE, both pre and post NATO accession. (I may have found someone right here at post for this one.)

2) U.S. Soldiers who have served with Slovak soldiers in either Afghanistan or Iraq.

3) Airmen or Soldiers who found themselves in Slovakia during World War II and who were either helped by Slovak Partisans or was able to fight alongside them.

I was hoping to find airmen or OSS who ended up in Slovakia and are willing to speak about the experience. If any AFEES members have any way of helping me find anyone who wound up in Slovakia during WWII that fits the bill, I would be most grateful.

*Here are more examples of the stories of
World War II helpers displayed in the
AFEES Corner at the Mighty Eighth Air
Force Museum near Savannah, Ga.*

*--Photos and captions by courtesy of the Mighty
Eighth Air Force Museum, Pooler, Ga.*



Russell Weyland (L) and Maurice Costa

Maurice Costa worked with the Free French in the area of Toulon, France. In late summer 1944, Costa arrived at the Free French camp to move Russell Weyland to a safe house in Hyere, a suburb of Toulon.

Russell had parachuted from his burning B-24 Liberator on 6 August 1944 and had been found by the Free French several days later. While he was staying with them, Russell helped assemble weapons airlifted in by the Allies.

After about a week he met Maurice Costa. Together they traveled to Hyere and spent several weeks moving from house to house. Their next stop was a farmhouse outside of Hyere.

Here, from the safety of the loft, Russell watched the Nazis retreating on everything available, including horses and bicycles. P-51s from the Fifteenth Air Force stationed in Italy strafed this German retreat.

Following the liberation of Hyere and Toulon, American forces flew Russell back to his Fifteenth Air Force, 513th Bomb Squadron.



**Jacqueline Cabre
and Paulette Thomas**

French public institutions could provide some protection for evading downed airmen.

The Vichy-sponsored Secours National in Senlis, north of Paris, used a large secluded house as its headquarters. Here the Director Marguerite Gronier and her staff assisted war widows, wives of prisoners of war and victims of the bombing raids.

In addition, she lodged 12 Allied airmen, 7 of them American. Their presence was known only to her and to two young women on her staff, Jacqueline Cabre and Paulette Thomas.

During the day the men stayed in an isolated room, but in the evenings they could walk around the house and gardens. Jacqueline and Paulette obtained and prepared food for the men who ate after the rest of the staff had gone home.

At times the two young women remained after dinner and danced with the airmen. They also arranged for the men to go to the public baths even though they had to wait their turn standing in line with Germans.

For two Eighth Air Force evaders, Jonathan Pearson and Thomas Yankus, the risk was worth taking because this was their first real bath in the two months since bailing out of their damaged B-17 Flying Fortress on 4 March 1944.



Gilbert Ramognino

Among the French resistance members was a rather colorful man named Gilbert Ramognino. A veteran of World War I, in which he was wounded twice, Ramognino at 44 years was technically too old to join the armed services when Germany invaded France.

To solve this problem, Ramognino dyed his hair black and acquired fake identification. He then joined with a liaison mission to France and was assigned to a British Royal Army Service Corps unit, during which time he received two letters of commendation from his British Colonel.

He returned to France in 1940 and served with the French Free Forces until 1943, during which time his apartment in the Montmartre district of Paris served as a safe house for evading British and American airmen.

In late 1943, the Nazis began closing in on Ramognino. The pressure mounting, Ramognino left Paris for Toulouse on 20 December 1943, where he joined with local resistance forces.

Because of Ramognino's excellent command of English, he was held there to await a group of 7 American and 1 British airmen. They met on 20 January 1944 and left Toulouse heading

for Spain.

After a long and arduous journey through the Pyrenees, Ramognino met with Spanish officials and delivered the airmen safely to their respective embassies in Madrid. He proceeded to the British Counsel, where he was given a British passport and left for Algeria via Gibraltar.

Once in Algeria, Ramognino was offered a desk job by the French Bureau Central de Renseignements et d'Action, or Intelligence and Operations Central Bureau, the World War II forerunner to France's later intelligence bureaus. Ramognino turned down their offer, instead volunteering to join France's first Commando Group.

He was the recipient of numerous awards and medals, including the Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur (A Knight of the Legion of Honor), the Croix de Guerre avec Palme (The War Cross with Honors), the Médaille des Évadés Décret (Prisoner-of-War Escape Medal), and the Médaille de la Résistance (Medal of the French Resistance).

Marcel Albinet

On 13 August 1944 the 91st Bomb Group's B-17 Flying Fortress "Fifinella" crashed near St. Cyr, France.

The American co-pilot Joe Vukovich parachuted into a field of harvested wheat. As he ran through the stubble a Frenchman, Marcel Albinet, caught up with him and then abruptly stopped. Joe halted also, and Marcel pulled back the wheat sheaves and directed the airman into the center of the shock and then buried him with wheat.

Marcel immediately took off running. Joe stayed hidden in the wheat field until late afternoon. At around 5 p.m. when French farmers normally went home from working in their fields, Marcel arrived with an extra bicycle for Joe and took him to a safe house.

Five other crewmen on his B-17 became evaders including ball turret gunner Jess Britton and tail gunner Leonard Rogers. The Allies eventually liberated St. Cyr, and Joe Vukovich observed "You can't imagine the joy. Everyone hugged and kissed each other"



Jean-Francois Nothomb

Using the code name "Franco," Jean-Francois Nothomb joined the Comete line. He made his first trip to Spain with the line's 25-year-old founder, Andree de Jongh, code named Dedee.

They had with them a group of evading Allied airmen whom they took over the Pyrenees into San Sebastian in Spain.

Thereafter, Franco took many more evaders over the Pyrenees.

In early 1943, he became the group leader following Dedee's arrest and imprisonment and her father's execution.

On 18 January 1944 he too was arrested and sentenced to death. Fortunately, he was not executed and was released at the end of World War II.

The Comete Line aided approximately 700 of the 5,000 to 6,000 downed Allied airmen in German-occupied Belgium, France and The Netherlands.

Paul and Yvonne Beque

Northeast of Paris in St. Just, France, Paul and Yvonne Beque used their one-bedroom home as a safe house. During January 1944 three downed Eighth Air Force airmen stayed with them. These men, pilot Richard Smith, co-pilot William Booher, and radio operator Alphonse Mele were all members of the same 95th Bomb Group crew and had bailed out of their damaged B-17 Flying Fortress on 30 December 1943. While there the airmen joined the young family for meals and helped entertain baby Paulette.

For these evading airmen, their next stop was Paris and then escape through Operation Bonaparte on 29 January 1944, the first of eight successful transports by a British gunboat across the English Channel to the United Kingdom and freedom.



Josephine Louise Hollesch Heller née Josephine Louise Heller and Ernest Heller

As head of the French Resistance in the village of Billy-Montigny, Josephine Louise Hollesch Heller (1907 -1998) hid evading airmen in her apartment.

Eighth Air Force flyers she helped included William Dubose, Charles Elwell, Charles Carlson, Clifford Williams, and Graham Sweet. Dubose later wrote about his time spent hiding in her apartment. While there he learned that she was Austrian and her husband Ernest Heller (1899-2000), was a Hungarian photographer.

When the Nazis invaded France, Louise and Ernest were forced to remain even though they were not French citizens. Their subsequent resistance activities will always be remembered by those they helped hide and evade.



Johanna Maria ('Joke') Folmer

When the Nazis occupied The Netherlands in May 1940, Johanna Maria ('Joke', 'La petite') Folmer was a student at the Sociale Academie in Amsterdam. She became involved in resistance work.

Her contacts in the police departments of Amsterdam and Rotterdam alerted her to locations of newly crashed Allied aircraft. She relayed this information to her friends in areas near the crash sites who then searched for downed airmen in a concerted effort to find them before the Nazis did.

She and her parents hid Allied airmen in their home, and she moved evading Allied airmen by train to the south near the Belgium border. Since Joke traveled with papers saying that her job was to inspect "soup kitchens," she received free train tickets and traveled freely throughout The Netherlands.

She spoke excellent English and by her own calculations aided 120 people, including at least seventy flyers move closer toward freedom.

In April 1944 the Nazis arrested her, but her father and Peter van den Hurk, the leader of a resistance group in Meppel, continued her work.

Condemned to death by the Nazis, Joke

spent the rest of World War II in concentration camps waiting to be executed. Still alive when the war ended, she was one of only 30 women out of 300 to survive her last prison.

Liberated by the Russians, she was included in a Russian American exchange that allowed her to return to The Netherlands.



Johan Hendrik Weidner

Johan Hendrick Weidner (1912-1994) of The Netherlands organized the Dutch-Paris line after Germany invaded his country in 1940. He and his 300 dedicated workers spirited approximately 1,000 Jews and Allied airmen out of Holland, Belgium and France to safety, first in Switzerland and later to Spain.

Johan was arrested several times.

The final time he was imprisoned at Toulouse, France. He escaped and was flown out of France to England.

His sister Gabielle was among 40 members of the network executed by the Nazis.

Abstracted from
RAFES (Cdn.) Newsletter

February 2009

By ROY BROWN

<rbrown888@cogeco.ca>

From Frank Harmsworth--

Frank advised that he had received notice that Madame Yvonne Lapeyre had passed away. Her husband Robert Lapeyre passing was reported in the last news Letter. They were both active helpers in the Comet line. They were our guests in Canada in the 60's.

From Madge Trull--

Madge Trull has been advised of the passing of Henri Maezelle on September 4 2008. Henri was one of the late John Trull's Helpers.

From Roy Brown--

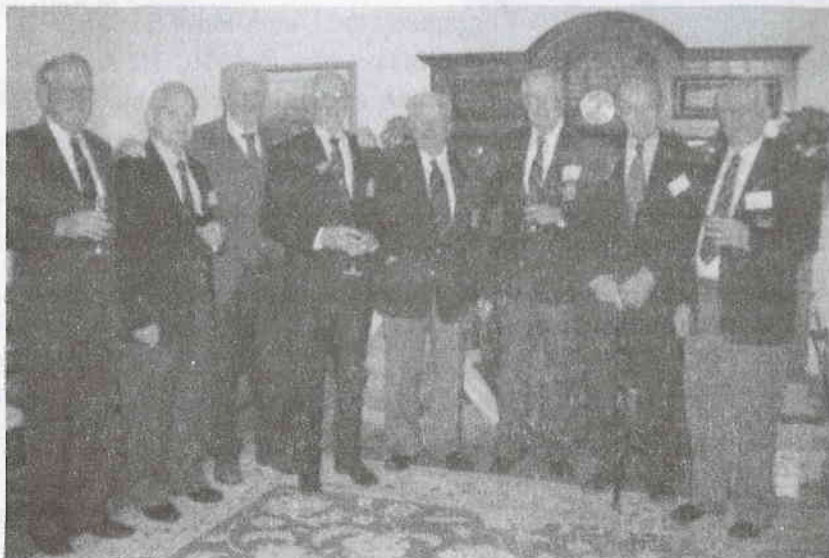
It is with great sadness I report the passing of William (Bill) Cunningham a member of the RAFES (Cdn Br) on November 24th 2008. Bill was also a dear personal friend; he was with me when we escaped from the "Ghost Train" in Brussels. Bill remained in the air force retiring with the rank of Wing Commander.

From Ray Sherk-

Ray Passed along an article from Mail on Line announcing that, finally, 60 years late, a memorial will be raised in London's Regent Park to recognise the heroes of Bomber Command and honour the 55,000 members who lost their lives during the war with their own memorial.

2008 Christmas luncheon-

We had a very successful Xmas, luncheon On December 14th at the Toronto Golf Club (thanks to Bob Charters for making the venue arrangements). A total 68 people attended, sponsored by 8 RAFES and 6 Widows. We were especially happy to welcome the Stuart Leslie family from Vancouver.



Left to Right: Ray Sherk, Keith Patrick, Stuart Lesley, Clayton Leigh, Gord Stacey, Bob Charters, Ray De Pape, Roy Brown.

SPRING 2009

March 20, 1945

**THE DAY
 THAT
 CHANGED
 MY
 WORLD**

By HARVEY HORN

Monroe, N.Y.

15th Air Force

On Feb. 21, 2007, I was on a Grand Circle Bus Tour that motored along a highway overlooking the city of Rijeka on the way to Opatija, Croatia. I looked down out of the bus window at Rijeka and the waters of Kvarner Bay. Many memories stirred within me.

It was almost 62 years ago that our damaged B-17 crashed into the Bay. The last time I was high over Rijeka, then Fiume, I was sitting on the floor of our B-17 with my back against the center bulkhead, bracing for the inevitable jolts would come when we hit the water at 100 miles per hour.

I had no idea that this day would change my life, forever.

The weather for March 20, 1945 was forecasted to be clear and sunny, in the high 60s. I awoke at 4:30 AM, got dressed in my flying clothes, ate breakfast, went to the briefing room. The target was Amstettin, outside of Vienna.

A groan went up as Vienna was very heavily protected with 88 anti-aircraft guns. We were on the flight line by 6:30 AM. Our Flying Fortress, "Pretty Baby's Boys" took off at 7:00 AM.

In 1945, the City of Fiume was Italian. After the war, it was returned to Croatia and renamed Rijeka. Rijeka is located at the uppermost

part of the Croatian coast along the Adriatic Sea.

Rijeka is now the third largest city in an independent Croatia. The city has grown from 55,000 people in 1945 to its present size of over 255,000 people.

FOGGIA

I was stationed at Celone Air Field in Foggia, Italy as part of the 15th Air Force, 463rd Bomber Group, 772nd Squadron.

On March 20, 1945 the crew of Pilot John Lincoln, Co-pilot Lorin Millard, Navigator Harvey Horn, Togglier Gilbert Caldwell, Flight Engineer Ed Linnane, Radio Operator Herb Stover, Waist Gunners Oren Herrick & Huber Wagner, Ball Turret Gunner Richard Michael and Tail Gunner Louis Brown was assigned to "Pretty Baby's Boys".

Our mission was to bomb Amstetten, south of Vienna. Our flight plan took us across the Adriatic Sea south of Fiume, over the Yugoslavian Alps and Yugoslavia.

As we approached Zagreb about 2:45 PM, we were hit by flak. Tailgunner Louis was wounded in his right hand. We lost an engine. Herb radioed the formation that we were dropping out and we would bail out or try to make it back to an emergency base or home.

While preparations were made to bail out, we elected to try to make it home. Everything that was not bolted down was jettisoned to lighten the bomber, gun belts, 50 caliber machine guns, including the parachute harness with our shoes attached.

Only Lorin retained his shoes. I directed Gil, the togglier to drop our armed bombs over what appeared to be open farm land. An attempt was made to unbolt the ball turret without success. As we continued to descend, number 4 engine died.

We had just cleared the Yugoslavian Alps when the third engine sputtered. We could now see the city of Fiume, Italy and the Adriatic coastline. The crew was alerted to prepare to ditch. Calmly and professionally, the crew went

During the battle for Nuremberg, Lt. Harvey Horn and 18 other Allied prisoners of war were marched out of the camp.

They managed to capture their guards and turn them over to the 86th Black Hawk Division in early May 1945.

about securing the plane and took their positions for ditching.

Ivo Simonic, 12 years old and Stelio Vrancich, 9 years old, looked up and saw our B-17 flying low over the city with only one engine operating, 2 engines feathered, one engine on fire.

John and Lorin were able to ditch "Pretty Baby's Boys" into the shark-infested waters of Kvaner Bay without breaking apart, about 6 miles from shore. The plane shuddered from the first jolt as the tail hit.

It was followed quickly by another short but powerful jolt and then we stopped dead in the water. John's head hit the steering yoke cutting the bridge of his nose. Lorin had his Mac West over the yoke which protected his face.

Even though we were braced for the impact, the jolts as the plane hit the water battered the rest of us pretty badly. Lou's wrist watch shattered.

As the plane settled, water gushed in through the top escape hatch and the bottom door that was left open. Blindly, we scampered up the ladder onto the wings. Lou said that 2 guys waded out the waist ports. John and Lorin were able to exit through the front windshields. Rubber boats were released from each side.

The one on the right side had to be hand inflated. We got into the rubber boats and started to paddle toward the island of Kirk, approximately 2 miles south.

A German Navy gunboat came out to capture us. I can still see the sailors pointing their rifles at us as they neared the boats. We became prisoners of war. I believe our Fortress stayed afloat for 8 minutes.

The crew and I owe our lives to John and Lorin. My gratitude to the

crew for keeping their minds on the task at hand and conducting themselves as professionals. We were battered, bruised and bleeding from the impact, but were alive.

Many years later, I found that I had sustained a broken little toe on my right foot.

FIUME, 1945

The crew on the German gunboat ordered us to surrender our G I issue 45 Colt sidearms. They tied our rubber boats together and towed us to the city waterfront dock. Surrounded by German guards, we were marched along the via Roma, a very wide street.

The people of Fiume lined the street as if we were circus animals coming to town. Shortly, we were marched into the courtyard of the SS prison located behind St Vitus's church.

By now, the sun was setting. We were wet, tired and cold and hungry. We were told to stand against a large grey wall that was pock-marked with machine gun and shell fire. A German guard stood in front of each of us with a rifle pointing at our chest. I was sure they were going to shoot.

We had to stand there for what seemed like an eternity but was probably 10 minutes. Finally, we were brought into the lower floor of this building where we were individually interrogated. We gave our name, rank and serial number in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

It was now about 7 P.M. They gave us a slice of black bread and ersatz coffee. We had not eaten since morning. They moved us into a very large room. The first thing we said to

each other was "What did you think. That they were going to shoot us as we stood against the grey courtyard wall?"

We stripped down to dry our wet clothes and fell asleep from total exhaustion. Some slept on cots, some on the floor. Louis Brown said he slept in an anteroom. In the morning, we were given another slice of black bread and ersatz coffee and told to go into the courtyard.

We were marched to a trolley line a few blocks from the prison, surrounded by 10 guards to connect to a train to that would take us to Trieste, Italy.

The trolley was crowded with Italians going to work. I remember standing next to a beautiful young girl who showed no interest in the captured American flyers. Even though I was in a very precarious situation, I still kept looking at this young beauty. When we reached Trieste, we were put in a SS prison.

RIJEKA, 2007

In anticipation of this tour, I contacted the Croatia Consulate in New York City to locate any records of this event or someone who could

Comete So. walk slated next fall

Brigitte d'Oultremont, chairman for the Comete Kinship Belgium, reports that the Comète-South group "Les Amis de Comète", including children of the Comète Line around the Pyrénées (French, Spanish and Basques people), the "Randonnée Comète au Pays Basque", commemorative walk in the Pyrénées on the path of Florentino and Dédée De Jongh and all the others is scheduled for Sept. 11-13, 2009.

This year is the 10th anniversary of this walk.

Initiated by an idea coming from the ELMS, organised by the Urdaburu group and the children of Comète in the Pyrénées and with the participation of the Belgian Amicale Comète, it took place for the first time in the year 2000.

have witnessed our ditching and imprisonment. Ms Zdanka Kardum directed me to Ms Wanda Radetti, who was born in Fiume/Rijeka and is now the Commercial and Cultural Attache to the City of Rijeka.

Ms Wanda Radetti is the owner of a company specializing in luxury travel for Croatia. She was selected by Conde Nast Traveler as the top destination specialist for Croatia. She initiated contact with the mayor's office in Rijeka and arranged for my wife, Minerva, and me to be greeted by Mayor Obersnel.

On Feb. 23, 2007, the Mayor's Public Relations and Protocol Director, Ms Tayana Mavrinac arranged for us to be picked up and driven to City Hall to meet the mayor. We were ushered into the second floor conference room where we were joined by Ms Tayana Mavrinac and Ms Wanda Radetti who had flown to Rijeka, earlier and a reporter and photographer.

Mayor Vojko Obersnel greeted us warmly. I reviewed the events of March 20, 1945 and commented that the accommodations in Opatija were far superior to those offered by the Germans almost 62 years ago.

I presented Mayor Obersnel with a letter of friendship from John Karl, jr, mayor of the Village of Monroe, N.Y., my home town.

I then presented a framed "Certificate of Appreciation" from the Hudson Valley Chapter of the Prisoners of War for the efforts of the Croatian Partisans who helped downed American flyers. I had been told that Mayor Obersnel's parents were Partisan freedom fighters in World War 2.

Prior to lunch we had arranged to meet Denis Romac, a reporter for the "Novis List" newspaper, the largest paper in this region. Denis spent over an hour interviewing me and taking pictures.

We then walked to the waterfront that was rebuilt years ago. I took petals from the bouquet and threw them into the sea. It is an annual ceremony that our POW chapter conducts to remember all POWs who

served our country..

After lunch, we walked and drove through the streets to try to find the building and courtyard where we were held prisoners that first night. Alas, I was unable to identify this building.

March 20, 1945 was a clear, sunny day. We took off at 7 A.M. from the Celone Air Base in Foggia. We ended that day at 9:00 PM as Prisoners of War in Fiume, Italy.

In 2005, I returned to Foggia. Now, in 2007, I returned to Fiume/Rijeka to complete the circle.

EPILOGUE

The articles in *Novis List* by S. Pucic and particularly by Denis Romac were picked up by Mr. Danijel Frka, a writer, photographer and deep sea diver.

He has written a book the "Secrets of the Adriatic Sea." Danijel contacted me for information about the ditching of "Pretty Baby's Boys". He is the process of locating our sunken B17, serial number 46377.

The articles also caught the attention of Mr Ivo Simonic. Mr Simonic was 12 years old in 1945. He was seated on a slope above the city when he and his friend hear the roar of our bomber. They watched as we passed very low over Fiume, with smoke trailing from one engine and crashed into the bay.

He remembers standing beside two German SS officers who said that the pilots must be very capable to be able to ditch that bomber.

The article also was read by a cousin of Stelio Vranicich, who emailed the information to Stelio in Brooklyn, N.Y. Stelio is a cousin of Wanda Radetti. He saw fire and smoke from one engine as we passed over the city. He said the plane stayed afloat for 5 minutes and was 6 miles from shore. He also told of the heavy Tiger shark population in the bay. Stelio knew the exact building where we were held that first night.

The people we met on our tour asked me to describe my feelings. All I could do was to look and wonder. Where did almost 62 years go? How did I and the others survive?

A Young Boy and the "Good" War

© Edouard RENIÈRE

*With my heartfelt thanks to the late Paul GRISSO
(1922-2003) – 106th Infantry Division, 442nd
Infantry Regiment, Company G – POW 1944-1945
- for fine-editing the text.*

VI bombs fall on Brussels

(Continued from Winter issue, pg. 26-29)

On October 21, nine rocket-bombs fell on Brussels, fifty more in the following weeks. In Antwerp, at the end of November, there was not a single pane of glass available to replace the broken windows. The authorities thought this wasn't so bad, because a great deal of the wounded were hit by shards of flying glass blown out of their frames by the blasts. Other cities were targeted: Tourcoing and Lille in France; Diest, Hasselt, Tournai, Liège in Belgium.

From the beginning of December, Hitler decided to shift the main thrust of his rocket attacks from London to cities in Belgium, mainly Antwerp and Liège. Many bombs aimed at London had been destroyed by the RAF or artillery, or had simply fallen into the sea. Furthermore, preparing his Ardennes offensive, he decided to target regions where the Allies had large supply depots near the German border. The bombings aiming at Antwerp and Liège intensified and Antwerp began to get twice as many rockets than were aimed at London.

On Saturday, December, 16, while the Germans launched their offensive in the Ardennes, Antwerp was hit by no less than 6 rockets, one of them falling on a crowded cinema, the "REX", killing 271 and wounding 200, of which 97 seriously. The cinema was showing a musical film and fresh newsreels about the Italian campaign. Many American and British soldiers were among the unlucky spectators.

From September, 1944 to March, 1945, 698 Belgian cities had been hit by V1 and V2 rockets. Almost 8000 such bombs fell on the larger cities, making mainly civilian victims: 6,448 dead and more than 22,500 wounded. Thousands of houses had been destroyed or were badly damaged.

My personal recollections of those dreaded rockets, is that, unlike the Allied bombers that were detected long in advance, thus allowing the alerts

to be sounded soon enough, those flying bombs came "unannounced", the alerts sounding at most a few minutes before they came over, not allowing everybody to reach a shelter. Many times when we were at school, the alert sounded and all we could do was jump under our desks, as usual. At first, we found it was fun, as this allowed us again some kind of recess from class, but after a while, we sensed the growing danger, having heard the damage and casualties those bombs could make. The fact that they were aimed at military and civilians alike, and that they could explode really anywhere, anytime, without much warning was rather frightening.

If you were on the street when the alert sounded, it was pure, white panic, everybody listening to the distinctive sound of the motor of the V1 and fearing the sound would stop. When the noise stopped, you had a maximum of 30 seconds left before the rocket hit the ground and exploded, in principle not far from where you were. The V2 made almost no noise and was even more scary because, when its motor stopped, either by pre-programming, or the calculated fuel supply having run out, it fell abruptly to the ground at 1300m/second.

When we were at home, during the day or at night, my parents decided it was useless to try to reach the shelter two blocks away, and that it was better to immediately head for our cellar. It was the same old story again than when the Allies had been bombing, but this time it was the Germans again, and with more vicious weapons. So, we met the frightened neighbors again, and my mother and the lady living in the apartment immediately next to ours nearly went crazy when the V1 rockets stopped making sounds, or V2s were announced. I remember one night in the cellar when we heard the engine of a V1 stop, and a few seconds afterwards, the not too distant sound of a big explosion, the ground lightly shuddering under our feet. A rocket had fallen a little more than a kilometer from our home, near the Palais de Justice, destroying a whole block of houses in the poorest section of that part of the city, killing dozens of civilians. It was the only time we heard a rocket explosion so nearby. The fear was always there. Even I was afraid because I had seen newsreels and an information film about these rockets and seen the damage they could wreak.

One evening, having reintegrated the apartment after yet another alert, my father told us in no gentle words (he was usually very calm and polite) that he was sick and tired of those alerts and of having to hurry down four flights of stairs each night and just stand in the staircase or the passage-ways of the cellar. He told us that the next

night we would sleep in our own little cellar, normally used to stock with coal (I personally had never seen a piece of coal in there) and that was it !!!...

So, the next day, when he came home, he and a friend hauled a wire mattress and a mattress down into our cellar. They installed a bed and that same evening, after supper, without waiting for any sound of sirens, we four tramped down, each armed with his own thin blanket, to our dark (there was no electric light, all we had was a flash-light), little (with the bed inside it, one could barely move) hotel room, my brother and I rather excited at being part of some sort of adventure. My mother and father positioned themselves normally, side by side, and my brother and I shared, head to foot, the space at the feet of Mom and Dad. Needless to say, nobody did sleep well, each of us not wanting to annoy the others by moving, or either being woken up by involuntary movements of any of us who had finally fallen asleep. To add to my parents' agony, mainly my father's I think, there was no alert that night, and when we got out of bed the following morning, each and every one of us had a cold, sneezing our noses out. My mother wasn't saying anything but you could hear her think. Blankets under one arm, handkerchiefs close at hand, we were going up the stairs toward the apartment when my father said calmly, very calmly, "That's the... tchoo !... last time we sleep in the cellar". Case closed. My brother and I weren't at all unhappy with that wise decision, mainly I think because although we liked each other, we had not fully appreciated each other's feet so near our noses.

"NUTS !"

On December 16, 1944, the German Army launched an offensive that started what was to become known as the Battle of the Bulge. When people heard that the Germans advanced, that undermanned American troops began to retreat, that many GIs had been made prisoner by the German divisions, everybody feared that maybe, just maybe, the hated Germans would come back. An uncle of mine, who was born in Bastogne and lived there until he moved to Brussels after his 4-year stint as a prisoner of the Germans in World War One, had family in the region of the fighting and was depressed about not being able to do something or even come in contact with his relatives. Everybody listened permanently to the news on the radio, my father having details also via the BBC to which he listened without fear since the liberation and even I, barely 6½ years old, followed the evolution of the battle. I looked into my geography book to locate the towns and villages that were mentioned in the news bulletins and

"followed" the events happening only 100 kilometers away.

When news came that an American general had replied "Nuts !" to a German ultimatum in the encircled Bastogne, and a few days afterwards that the German advance had been stopped, Allied reinforcements had finally come through and were pushing the enemy back, everybody heaved sighs of relief. "Nuts" was literally translated as "Des noix", but I remember the adults, who were talking in the evening in the kitchen after my brother and I were put to bed in the little room next to it, using more expressive language evoking male body parts, words I had began to hear, and confidentially use, but didn't dare utter in the presence of my parents or any other adults for that matter. I remember I was proud to "understand" what they were talking about. I remember also my admiration for my American heroes who were fighting over there. And when newsreels were shown in the movie theatre downstairs or in 3 others in our immediate vicinity at the time, I remember I looked with awe at the pictures of US soldiers running towards enemy positions, or keeping watch from their foxholes in the snow, or marching in the winter mist; artillery cannons blazing, tanks rolling, and, in January, when the skies had cleared, US fighter planes strafing retreating German columns. We went at least twice a week to see films, mostly American ones, which had of course not been shown during the occupation, and the newsreels were almost as much appreciated as was the main feature.

Map reading

So life went on, food began to be more easily available, the Allied armies, after having penetrated into Germany, were advancing, and everybody sensed this war couldn't last long any more. I couldn't follow the advance in my geography book, because there were only maps of Belgium in it. So, I borrowed my brother's geography book (he was 4 years older than I) to trace the events in Germany. After a while, I began to hear strange place names, of that other war in the far away Pacific... Iwo Jima had a special ring to it, especially after I had seen Joe Rosenthal's photo of the second flag-raising atop Mount Suribachi. That picture made a big impression on me at the time (it still does) and I remember seeing the newsreel of that flag-raising some time later in the movie-theater downstairs. Then there was Okinawa, Tokyo, Yokohama. I searched for all these names also, but didn't find all of them in my brother's book. Luckily, there were maps in the paper, so my father helped me sometimes in finding the islands nearer and nearer Japan, the Japanese cities that were bombed by

Then came news of the liberation of camps in Germany and there was talk of unbelievable horrors that had been committed by the Nazis. Although my parents never did show us the ghastly pictures of inmates in concentration camps that were published in the weekly magazines that they sometimes bought, I was so curious about that matter that I finally managed to see some of them, either through a classmate, or an older pupil at school. I could not believe what I saw, and couldn't help telling my parents about it. They "explained" as best they could to the young boy that I was, that the Germans (they didn't use the word "Nazis" at the time) had built big prison camps where they had put thousands of people from the occupied countries, that they could not properly feed all of them but that soon all that would be over and the prisoners would go back to their homes. When it was learned that there were also extermination camps, all I heard my father say in my presence about it was "Les salauds!" ("The dirty skunks!..."), answering to the questioning little boy that it could not be explained and that I would understand later.

When we heard in May about Hitler's suicide, the surrender of Germany, the end of the war in Europe, there were again mad days of rejoicing, although, in the humble opinion of a seven-year old, not so "crazy" than at the liberation. Anyway, there was much rejoicing and hope for really better times. In the meantime, Paula, the daughter of our upstairs neighbors had met a member of the US Air Force; his name was Peter. I met him only once and didn't understand what he said. He had been a prisoner of the Germans after his plane went down somewhere in Germany. I don't know if he was a fighter pilot or the member of a bomber crew. He had been tortured but didn't talk; according to bribes of information I heard from my parents and so, Peter became another of my American heroes. A few weeks after their meeting, Paula and Peter were married and left for the States. I have never heard of or about them since then and I think Paula's parents didn't like talking about that union which I thought I understood they didn't totally approve of, what with their daughter leaving for a foreign, far away country with a relatively unknown, although charming, young man.

Prisoners had been coming back since the liberation of camps in March and April and I saw many of them walking the streets, almost always alone. In their striped pajamas and caps, most of them thin and emaciated, walking like zombies, they were always a poignant sight, in spite of the fact that they were coming home. For some of them, there was no home anymore because their house had been destroyed, most or all of their

family dead or having vanished. We in our family had no such problems, because everybody had escaped injury and was either too young or too old, or just plain lucky, not to have been sent to Germany on forced labor.

In the summer of 1945, one apartment on the first floor of our building was for rent and in it moved a woman in her thirties, I think, rather small, with short, dark hair. Her name was Cattrell and I remember she didn't seem at first to want to mingle with the neighbors. After a while, the ice was broken, and it was learned she was a Jew and had come back a few weeks before from a place called Ravensbrück in Germany. She had lost her husband and all her family members. All had died in concentration or extermination camps. I didn't hear nor learn all the details when she spoke to the group of close neighbors that had taken the habit of assembling in the evenings in our apartment. The conversations began after my brother and I had been put to bed and we didn't hear distinctly what they were talking about, their voices being often so low. I remember one such evening when I had to go to the toilet and passed through the kitchen full of adults. Everybody fell suddenly silent. Mrs Cattrell had one sleeve of her blouse rolled up and was showing them the number tattooed on the inside of her forearm. I couldn't help but stop and stare at the strange mark but my parents told me to get on with my business and go back to sleep.

When I came back, Mrs Cattrell took me gently on her knees and began calmly and with simple words to explain that the Germans had arrested her and her husband a few years before. They had been sent to separate prison camps in Germany and she finally ended in the women's camp at Ravensbrück. She had been liberated by the Russian Army in April, 1945, and had come back to Brussels. She had learned in the meantime that her husband and all her relatives were dead at the hand of the Germans. She said the number on her forearm was just an identification because her papers had been destroyed. She added she was glad to have found new friends in the building and that she was happy to be alive. I went back to my room but didn't fall immediately asleep, those numbers on her arm and the reasons of her arrest and deportation still puzzling me. After a few months, during which she seemed to fall into a severe depression, she moved out of the building and I never saw her again. All my parents said afterwards was that she was so sad to be all alone in the world that only doctors could really do something for her.

TO BE CONCLUDED IN NEXT ISSUE

Reading about the war

-FOLDED WINGS-**MEMBERS**

- #383 William C. Howell, Goldsboro, N.C., Jan. 11, 2009
Tail gunner on 381st BG B-17, evaded from June 22, 1943, until January 1944 when he crossed the Pyrenees into Spain
- #2029 James P. Law, Johnstown, Pa., 100th BG, May 21, 2008
Downed Dec. 30, 1943, on Ludwigshaven mission
- #1859 Cobern V. Peterson (L), West Grove, Pa., June 22, 2008
Flight engineer on B-24 with 458th BG
Bailed out over Belgium on July 20, 1944
- #433 James N. Quinn (L), Haworth, N.J., 91st BG, Feb. 10, 2009
- #497 L/C Clyde C. Richardson, Summerhill, Pa., Sept. 8, 2008
Navigator with 388th BG, B-17 shot down Jan. 29, 1944
- #1415 Rev. Henry F. Wilson, Kathleen, Ga., Jan. 30, 2008
Toggler with 390th BG
His B-17 crashed June 4, 1944, at Maissemy, France

HELPER

PIERRE UGEUX, husband of Madame "Michou,"
St. Siffret Par Uzès, France, January 2009
Received awards from British, French and Belgian governments.
He was 95.

65 yrs. later, a Dayton date

By RICHARD SHANDOR
Cresson, Pa.

Last July I attended a Pa. Chapter/8th AFHS picnic and as I was leaving, someone told me that a Mr. Michaels had inquired about me. I never did see or meet him that day. I did get to meet Edwin Michaels at the next chapter luncheon on Oct. 15, 2008 in Monroeville, Pa. We sat together and he started to tell me his evasion story.

At that time I became aware that he had been Frank Shaeffer's navigator. Next I found out that Edwin and Frank had not seen each other since they bailed out of their B-24 on Aug. 8, 1944. I then told Ed the 44th Bomb Group was having their reunion that weekend in Harrisburg.

I said Frank is attending the reunion and I'm planning on meeting him in Harrisburg. Ed could not make it on such short notice.

Since that attempted reunion did not happen, I want to get the two crew members, who have not seen each other in almost 65 years, together at the 2009 AFEES reunion.

**POW inspired
escape movie**

SHREWSBURY, England — Jimmy James, a British flier and World War II prisoner of war who helped to inspire the breakout portrayed in the 1963 Steve McQueen movie *The Great Escape*, died here on Jan. 18, 2009, according to the BBC. James was 92 and at work on a book about his experiences.

McQueen's motorcycle chase in *The Great Escape* is one of the most remembered action sequences in movie history. However, James called the action scene "rather Hollywood fantasy," according to *The New York Times*.

The movie was based on the true story of Allied prisoners of war with a record of escaping from German prisoner-of-war camps.

James was "one of the last great links with a period of history that continues to exert a fierce grip on the popular imagination," said Britain's Independent newspaper. He was said to be "obsessed with escape plots" during his five years in captivity.

The most memorable escape occurred in 1944, when 76 Allied prisoners tunneled out of Stalag Luft III. James and another prisoner coordinated the hiding of soil displaced by tunnel digging. The escape ended in the recapture of 50 men who were shot on Hitler's orders; only three of the 76 made it to freedom.

New 'Friends'

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Wife: "Jerri"

William C. Howell

1921-2009

S/Sgt. William C. Howell was a tail gunner with the 533rd Bomb Squadron, 381st BG.

He was born in 1921 in Goldsboro, N.C., and passed away in his home town on 11 Jan 2009.

Howell was assigned to 1st Lt. Olof M. Ballinger as a tail gunner for the 4 July 1943 mission to LeMans, France in 42-29928. The aircraft suffered severe flak damage on the bomb run and was shot down over LaCoulonche, l'Orne, Normandy, at 12 noon.

Howell bailed out, but was covered with flak wounds which plagued him for years. He spent several months at Domfront, l'Orne as an evader in the home of auto engineer Andre Rougeyron, before being moved to the Paris area by the Resistance.

While in Juvisy sur Orge, south of Paris, he was sheltered by the Lefevre family. He finally escaped over the Pyrenees Mountains from Perpignan to Barcelona, Spain in January 1944.

One of his escape mates was British Infantry Lt. George Reid Millar, who wrote a number of books on his SOE experiences including "Road to Resistance" in 1979, which describes the escape to Barcelona in detail.

DOOLITTLE RAIDER

'Davie' Jones bailed out over China, landed in friendly hands

By Edmund Tijerina
San Antonio (Tex.) Express-News

Although the military career of Maj. Gen. David M. Jones took him all over the world, he was best known as a pilot with Doolittle's Raiders, and he had special connections with San Antonio.

Jones died Nov. 25 of heart failure. He was 94.

Born in Oregon and reared in Tucson, he enlisted in the Army after graduating from the University of Arizona. His early training included learning to ride on horseback. After he served in the Army cavalry, he went to the Army Air Corps and came to San Antonio for pilot training at what was then Kelly Field.

In 1942, he volunteered as a pilot for a secret mission under Lt. Col. James H. "Jimmy" Doolittle. Doolittle's Raiders flew 16 B-25 bombers from the U.S.S. Hornet on a secret attack on Tokyo and four other cities.

The raid, on April 18, 1942, gave a huge boost to a United States, still reeling from Pearl Harbor.

Jones, a captain at the time, was the

pilot of plane No. 5.

He had to bail out over China, but landed in friendly hands and returned to the U.S. safely. He spoke to the Express-News in 2001 about the experience of bailing out.

in North Africa. He was shot down over Bizerte, Tunisia and spent two and a half years in the Stalag Luft III prison camp in Germany. His fellow prisoners selected him to be part of the "escape committee" which, according to his Air Force biography, reviewed escape plans and directed escape attempts.

The prisoners' actions formed the basis for the classic film, "The Great Escape." He was liberated from the camp in April 1945.

After the war, Jones had various assignments in air and space research and development, including flying supersonic jets.

In 1967, he was appointed commander of the Air Force Eastern Test Range at Cape Canaveral and remained in that position for most of the Apollo moon missions.

He retired in Florida in 1973. Since 1999, he made his home in San Antonio and in Tucson.

Please send roster changes to Richard Shandor!

***AFEES membership dues are \$20 per year; life membership is \$100.
Changes of address and telephone and checks (payable to AFEES)
should be sent to***

***Richard Shandor, PO Box 254, Cresson PA 16630-0254;
Phone: 814-886-2735; <rsandor@hotmail.com>***

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COMMENTS _____

The editor has the last word

By LARRY GRAUERHOLZ

<afees44@hotmail.com>

OR

<archerco@wf.quik.com>

WICHITA FALLS, Tex.--The way things are looking, the Dayton reunion will determine whether AFEES lives or expires.

President Richard Smith and several other members of the Board believe that it is time to dissolve the society, since most of the WWII generation have reached the high 80s in age -- not golf.

Their thinking is that members are not able to participate and that time has come to hang it up.

Folks who know me know that I just love to take the opposite side of any argument, so here goes:

There are still nearly 400 evaders on our membership roll. Many of them paid for a life membership. While some cannot do much in the way of travel, I believe that they still have an interest in keeping the society going for a while.

As I have pointed out previously, our society is unique among WW2 veterans' groups. We are bound together by our experiences after being downed in enemy territory.

Our primary mission has been to preserve the bond that exists between us and members of the Resistance who made our evasion or escape possible, at great risk to themselves and to their families.

We have a great legacy:-- WE WILL NEVER FORGET! Not while any of us remain on this earthly coil.

There is a practical element involved in preserving the society. We are a tax-exempt veterans' organization, recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and as such, are entitled to a Bulk Mail Permit for distribution of the quarterly newsletter.

Loss of that permit might mean that this is the last AFEES newsletter you will receive.

Members of the Doolittle Raiders

plan to continue annual reunions until only two members are able to attend. That pair will divide a bottle of vintage wine in a salute to those who have gone before and smash the empty bottle. That sounds good to me.

As I mentioned at the Savannah reunion, my solution is to for AFEES to continue with members of future generations being phased into positions of leadership.

Your thoughts on this subject would be appreciated, and it is important that you be present in Dayton to vote on the subject..

Reunion Coordinator Yvonne Daley reports that reservations are really coming in for the '09 reunion. Her advice is to make hotel reservations asap -- they are subject to cancellation until 6 p.m. the day of arrival.

Family groups might want to consider the Homewood Suites. The suites offer one bedroom, one sitting room with sofa bed and a door between rooms.

Our 2000 reunion was held at Columbia, Mo., where we were honored guests at Memorial Day Weekend. This year the banquet at Columbia will be on Saturday night, May 23.

For info, contact Mary McCleary

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Many members may remember Claude Murray (E&E 3050), who spent many months as an evader in Holland. When my wife and I visited in Sun City years ago with my sister there, we would get with Claude. I have learned that he is now in a veterans' home.

Those who would like to send him a note should direct it to: Claude Murray, 2606 East Greenway, Parkway Road, Phoenix AZ 85032.

Yeh, I goofed. On page 24 of the Winter issue was a book review of *Only One Returned*. Problem: the blue ink was not picked up by the camera for the website to order. Here it is: <www.onlyonereturned.com>

FROM THE OL' FARMER

REMEMBER: Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.

AND, Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.

SOUND FAMILIAR?

Wife said: "What are you doing today?"

I said, "Nothing."

She said, "You did that yesterday."

I said, "I wasn't finished."

(Credit Steve MacIsaac for this.)

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