

**AIR FORCES ESCAPE AND  
EVASION SOCIETY**



IN MEMORY OF  
U.S. AIR CREW MEMBERS  
WHO EVADED OR ESCAPED  
FROM ENEMY CAPTURE  
DURING WORLD WAR II.  
ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO  
DIED IN THE ATTEMPT.

TRIBUTE IS PAID TO THE  
RESISTANCE FORCES WHO  
CAME TO THE AID OF DOWNED  
AIR CREW MEMBERS. WE  
SHALL NEVER FORGET THE  
BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN  
WHO PAID WITH THEIR  
LIVES FOR THEIR HEROIC  
ACTIONS.

**AFEES PLAQUE FOR AIR FORCE ACADEMY**

The copy has been approved and authorization has been granted for manufacturing of the AFEES plaque that will be mounted on the USAF Academy Cemetery Memorial Wall. The actual mounting of the plaque will probably take place within the next two months but the dedication will be delayed until later in the year or until 1988.

Thanks to David O'Boyle and a handful of Colorado members this project was carried out without a hitch. We can all be proud that AFEES is represented at the Air Force Academy.

FROM

AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 844  
BEAUFORT, S.C. 29901

 **THE AFEES  
INVITES YOUR  
PARTICIPATION !  
MARRIOTT HOTEL  
RIVER WALK  
SAN ANTONIO  
TEXAS  
MAY 24, 1987**   
 

TO

LETTERS

24 November, 1986  
Ralph K. Patton  
Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society  
720 Valleyview Rd.,  
Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Dear Mr. Patton:

You may not remember me, but three years ago I corresponded with you while trying to determine whether a California man, Bob Hannah, is a member of your group. (He is.)

I am writing again because I am undertaking initial plans to write either a book or magazine articles about Hannah and I may need your help. Hannah's B-17 was shot down and he stayed in Holland to help the underground route Allied servicemen to freedom rather than himself return.

I eventually would like to have the chance to interview some members of your organization and would like to know the whereabouts of any AFEEES members who live in California.

Until our next correspondence, thank you for your time on this matter.

Cordially

George R. Hower (s)  
300 Los Alamos Rd., #202  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
Home phone: 707 538 0525; work: 707 546 2020

Ed. note: I replied to Mr Hower that we considered the names of our California members to be confidential but that I would put the information in our next newsletter.

Translation of a letter, written in French, dated 20 October 1986.

Mr President, Dear Friend:

I am sending you a short note following a letter received from a childhood friend, Mme Jeannette Pennes formerly Mlle J. Gueguen, now living at 53 Blvd. Jean Jaures 78400 Chatou.

This woman would like to obtain, if possible, the certificate of: The Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society in recognition of services rendered to two American fliers during the second World War.

In January 1943 Mme Pennes, not yet 17 years of age, lived in the town of Paule; young and orphaned, she sheltered for a period of time two American airmen whose airplane crashed in the region. She procured civilian clothes for them thus helping them to get back to England.

In 1946 Mme Pennes had received a certificate of recognition from the American military authorities for having aided two of their men. She has mislaid this diploma.

We hope you are all in good health and remember with fond recollection our beautiful and moving ceremony at Kergrist Moelou.

Sincere friendship from both of us.

(s) M et Mme LeGoff, Albert  
Bourg de Paule  
22340 Mael Carhaix  
France

Ed note: A certificate & Helper pin were sent to Mme Pennes and an enthusiastic new member was located

15 December, 1986

To: Ralph K. Patton  
Pres. AFEEES

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you very much for your letter and for the certificate of your Society. I was very touched and so glad to receive this honorary citation of remembrance from the Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society.

With Kind Regards,  
Yours Sincerely

Cluire Ruscant (s)  
1180 Brussels Belgium

Ed. note: The certificate & Helper Pin were sent at the request of member Louis Abbott.

November 25, 1986

Ralph K. Patton  
AFEEES

Dear Mr. Patton:

Thank you for your nice letter of Nov. 15th in which you discuss Madame Gabriel and wishing to present her with a certificate and pin.

General Yeager asked me to write you and tell you that it has been since 1968 or 1969 when we last saw her and she was 90 or so years old at the time. (That was when the picture in the book was taken.) We are sorry but we don't have her address or an address for any of her family. We assume she has since passed away.

We are sorry we are unable to help you out and sure wish we could come up with an address of her family, at least. We both wish you luck and thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Glennis Yeager (s)

Ed. note: After reading YEAGER I wrote to the General suggesting that AFEEES would like to present a Helper Pin and a certificate to Mme Gabriel who helped him to evade capture in France in 1944.

Plouha, 14 Nov. 1986

Dear Ralph:

On May 29, 1943 an American Flying Fortress crashed in the sea near Saint Quay Portrieux. The crew was able to parachute and for the most part they were received by the French resistance of Plouhan and Saint Quay and the group of our friend Ray LaBrosse.

Recently divers have recovered one of the props and two of the motors, these have been given to the Mayor of Plouhan. With the concurrence of the Federation and the local resistance he has decided to erect a monument in the community using the prop and the reconditioned motors to pay homage to the American Aviators and the French Resistance. In the presence, if possible, of you and the living aviators and French, American And Canadian authorities.

The inauguration of this memorial will be held on May 31st 1987 at Plouhan (near Plouha). Of course dear Ralph, we hope that one time again you will be with for the inauguration.

Yves LePicard



## She Saved Yanks, but Is Left Stranded

By BILL PAUL

When America needed Anne Brusselmans, she was there.

Now, in her hour of need, America has turned its back on her.

Anne Brusselmans helped save more than 200 U.S. and Allied fliers during World War II. She helped run the "Comet Escape Line," an underground railroad that spirited pilots downed in German-occupied Belgium back to England, via France. For her service, the U.S. awarded her the Medal of Freedom ("with silver palm," a special distinction). Britain made her a Member of the British Empire; Poland gave her its Medal of Resistance.

But merely listing her honors doesn't do justice to her courage. Although a mother with two small children, Mrs. Brusselmans didn't hesitate when a local priest asked her to hide Allied fliers from the Germans.

That was 1941. For the next four years, she hid dozens of Americans, Britons and Australians—including my future father-in-law—in her small apartment in Brussels. She fed them and bought them clothes. (The secondhand clothes dealer, a German sympathizer, was suspicious, but with a suggestive wink, she convinced him she was merely a loose woman outfitting her amours.)

When it was time to "send them down the line" to Paris, she arranged for other Comet members to transport the fliers. It was dangerous work. Time and again, the Germans infiltrated her operation by planting phony fliers. Of the several Comet leaders, all were imprisoned or had to flee but her. Many of the broader Comet membership, people who did the actual transporting of fliers, disappeared. Permanently.

She survived on her wits. One night, two Gestapo agents bashed in her door, revolvers drawn, and headed for the bed-

room where she was hiding a pilot. She got in their way and warned them to keep out. Her little boy, she explained, had typhoid.

"I added this casually, as if it were a secondary consideration, but in reality it was my trump card, for if there is one thing that Germans are afraid of, it is infectious illness," Mrs. Brusselmans wrote in her diary, which was published after the war.



Anne Brusselmans

Anne thinks her survival also had something to do with the small, gold crucifix she still wears around her neck. But not even a crucifix has helped Mrs. Brusselmans, now 81 years old, win her final battle.

For the past six years she has tried, and failed, to get the U.S. government to grant her permanent-residence status so that she might live out her days with her daughter in Florida. That doesn't seem like much to ask for a woman who is a "bona fide World War II heroine," according to an aide for New York Rep. Mario Biaggi, who has championed her cause.

But no, when Mrs. Brusselmans in 1980 applied for U.S. residency at the American Embassy in Brussels, she was told that she didn't fit into one of the State Department's preferred-status categories, and hence she might have to wait up to 10 years to become a resident alien.

Anne then went to the Canadian Embassy, which immediately gave her perma-

nent residency out of gratitude for the Canadian fliers she saved. But under Canadian law, Anne can lose her Canadian residence if she doesn't live there at least six months a year. And her daughter, Yvonne Daley of the Clearwater area, is effectively tied down by the terms of her late husband's pension. So now Anne can be with her for only six months at a time before returning to her cold exile.

In 1985, Rep. Biaggi introduced a bill that would allow Anne to become a permanent U.S. resident, but it died in the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration.

Ironically, if Mrs. Brusselmans were the wife or daughter of a resident alien—as opposed to the mother of one—she would fit into one of the State Department's preferred categories. Moreover, if she were an illegal alien who had lived continuously in the U.S. since before Jan. 1, 1982, she'd be subject to permanent-resident status under the new immigration law.

Early in December, all the stress and heartache of the past several years finally caught up with Anne Brusselmans. She suffered a heart attack that her doctor says was in part brought on by her long battle. Her daughter has already put her Florida home up for sale to help pay her mother's mounting medical bills.

During the war, Anne not only saved fliers, she ran a spy network that fed intelligence about German troop movements to the Allies in England and helped Jews by providing them with phony papers. When the war ended and her last lot of boys was about to go home, they saluted her with a spirited rendition of "For She's a Jolly Good Fellow."

Where is America now?

Mr. Paul is a reporter in the Journal's New York bureau.

The author of the above article, Bill Paul, is the son-in-law of AFEES member Ronald Pearce. Anne met Ronald in Atlanta at our meeting for the first time since WWII. To make our 1986 meeting more pleasant for Anne, Ronald was one of three of her airmen to meet her there.

Anne's daughter, Yvonne Daley, tells us that as of this time we should expect her mother in San Antonio. For those of us fortunate enough to know Madame Brusselmans this is indeed wonderful news. It is virtually impossible to do justice to Anne in a description of her, she is one of those people who makes everyone a little better person by being in her company.

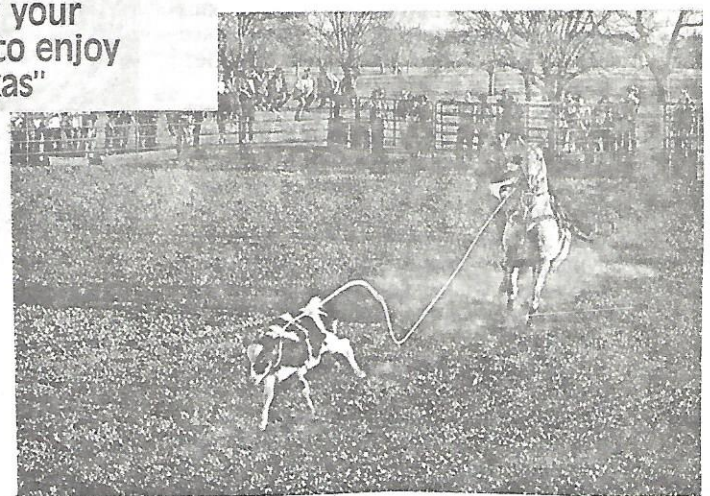
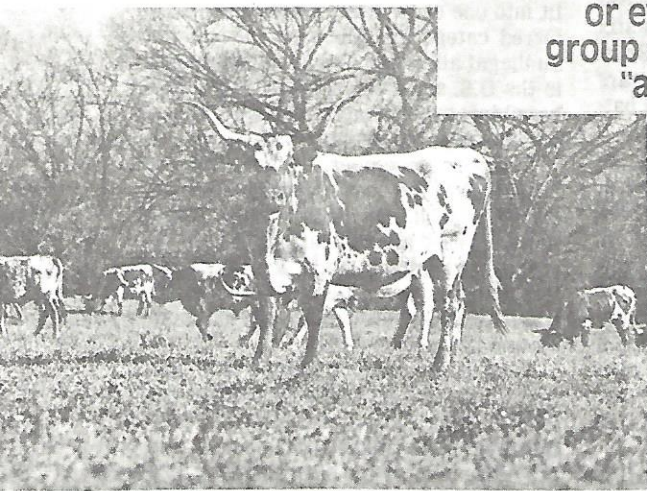
The entire membership of the AFEES wishes a speedy recovery for Anne and we look forward to meeting her again in San Antonio.





## A Western Style Adventure At Rio Cibolo Ranch

The perfect setting for a day  
or evening to allow your  
group or convention to enjoy  
"a little bit of Texas"



### THOMAS S. THOMAS III TO HEAD 15th AIR FORCE SECTION OF AFEES

Tom Thomas of the 464th Bomb Group of the 15th Air Force has agreed to head up an as yet unnamed section of AFEES to work exclusively with men of the 15th Air Force who evaded capture after having been shot down over one of the Balkan countries. Since its founding in 1964 AFEES has been oriented towards recognizing our Helpers in Western Europe. This was brought about because all of our founding members had been shot down in Western Europe. In the last year we have received inquiries from a number of men who were shot down over Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria etc. In view of this we have asked Tom Thomas to organize a wing of AFEES that will be dedicated to recognizing the Helpers of these Balkan countries. We hope that this group will invite a Helper or two, or three, to our San Antonio reunion. Any help that our friends of the 15th Air Force can give to Tom will be greatly appreciated. Helper pins and citations of Remembrance are available for all Helpers.

Questions or HELP on this project should be addressed to:

Thomas S. Thomas III  
442 Speedwell Ave.  
Morris Plains, NJ 07950



## AFEES MEMBERS MEET IN HOLLYWOOD FL.



Left to Right, back row: Louis Abbott, James Heddleson, Ruben Fier, Francis Heekin, John McKee, Merle Rainey, Clayton David, Claude Murray, Paul Kenney, Art Horning, Bob Seaman: Seated, Bette Abbott, Scotty David, Ralph Patton, Dorothy Kenney, Janet Horning.

The above group of AFEES members attended the 12th Annual Reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Society at the Diplomat Hotel in Hollywood FL. Oct. 15th thru the 18th. A short poolside AFEES meeting was held in the afternoon of Saturday October 17th. Those present were briefed on the activities of AFEES since our Atlanta meeting and the plans for our San Antonio meeting. A good time was had by all at the best ever 8th Air Force Reunion. Unfortunately when the Davids returned home they found a first floor full of water as the result of a broken water pipe.

IT IS WITH SADNESS THAT WE REPORT THE DEATH OF TWO HELPERS IN 1986

MADAME LEBERVET of St Quay Portriux Brittany France.

Mme LeBervet was a member of Reseau Shelburne who sheltered and fed a number of American airmen during the early part of 1944. A number of our members will remember Mme LeBervet and her daughter Marcelle and granddaughter Christelle from the 1976 visit to the U.S.A. of the Shelburne group. News of the death of Mme LeBervet was sent to us by her daughter who advised us that her mother passed away peacefully on Tuesday September 16th.

MARIETTE HENDRICKS of Belgium and the Comete Line

Mariette Hendricks was a member of the Comete group in attendance at our annual meeting in Atlanta, she was also present when we dedicated our AFEES plaque at the Air Museum in Dayton Ohio in 1981. She was one of our Comete hosts when we visited Brussels in 1983. The details of her death are not known to us at this time but she was not well during the Comete tour of the U.S.A. in May 1986. We will miss her at future AFEES and RAFES meetings.



ALBERT GUERISSE, alias PAT O'LEARY

The story about Major General Albert Guerisse alias Pat O'Leary was translated from an article printed in "Le Soir", a Brussels newspaper, dated Oct. 8, 1986. Translation by Ralph Patton. Opposite page headlines read "Once upon a time"....

Albert Guerisse: The spy who came from our house

ELLIS ISLAND MEDAL AWARDED TO HELPERS

On Monday October 27th The Ellis Island Medal of Honor was awarded to Dr Gabriel Nahas and Mirielle Rostad former members of the French and Belgian Undergrounds now living in the United States. U.S.A. Today carried the following information about these awardees.

Mirielle Rostad, 62, Houston Minn: A neurosurgical-urology nurse, she trained as a medic with the underground in Belgium and France during World War II. After the Nazi defeat she worked for the U.S. Army in Germany. Rostad came to the USA under War Brides Act.

Gabriel Nahas, 66 New York City: professor of anesthesiology at Columbia University. Consultant to United Nations Commission on Narcotics. Got the USA's highest civilian award for role in underground during World War II.

Mme Rostad is unknown to AFEES but we would be very much interested in locating her and learning more about her underground activities and whether she helped American airmen.

Dr Nahas is well known to AFEES having attended our New York dinner for members of the Comete Line in 1974. He was one of the leaders of the Dutch Paris Network. Operating out of Toulouse France he organized escape lines over the Pyrennes Mountains.

Congratulations to these deserving recipients of the Ellis Island Medal.

COMETE ANNUAL MEETING OCT. 18 & 19

Your president received the following greeting from members of the RAFES and the Comete Line who were having their annual Memorial Weekend in Brussels. "All the members of the Comete Line send their warmest wishes to you and to all the members of the American Escape & Evasion Society.

Good luck to you all in 1987.

The card was signed by 15 members of Comete and the RAFES. This was a very warm gesture by our Belgian & English friends.

LESLIE ATKINSON

After an operation and a very slow recovery encompassing most of 1986 our good friend Leslie Atkinson now seems to be on the road to recovery. He writes like his old self and is discussing plans to come to our San Antonio meeting. We look forward to seeing Leslie and Renee in the United States. In addition to being our representative in Europe, Leslie is one of the organizers of AFEES and a bonafide Helper of U.S. Airmen. AFEES was not the same while Leslie was ill, welcome back.

RAYMOND LABROSSE

Ray LaBrosse, a good friend of AFEES since our first meeting in Buffalo in 1964, recently underwent surgery for a very serious liver ailment. He is recovering at his home in Ottawa and the prognosis is good.

ANNE BRUSSELMANS

We call the attention to all Americans to an article concerning Anne on page 10. New York Representative Mario Biaggi (D) has introduced a Bill in the present Congress concerning Madame Brusselmans. This Bill has now been given a number, HR-440. You are urged to write your Congressman and request his support of this Bill. It is possible that you will want to send a copy of this article to your Representative.



*Dites, une fois...*

# Albert Guérisse : l'espion qui venait de chez nous



Hush, the walls have ears! Who does not know this celebrated slogan which imposed the law of silence during the war. Albert Guerisse, alias Pat O'Leary or Adolphe Cartier, had lived up to the letter of this regulation of gold. Because this Brussels military doctor, born at Molenbeek of Ardennes parents, and living today at Ixelles, became a spy of her majesty the Queen of England.

His life has resembled a Roman adventure with one significant difference, his adventures were not imaginary. Thanks to him, hundreds of Allied Aviators, shot down over France were able to escape during the second World War.

It all started at the end of the 16 day war the 28th of May 1940. The 1st Lancers encamped at Spa, to which Albert Guerisse was attached, was anilated at Passendale and forced to lay down their arms. But this 29 year old military doctor decided, with some others, that he was not built to be a prisoner. He was going to continue the war, his war.

By an incredible detour via London and Brest he reached Gibraltar. He knew a French officer in command of the ship Rhin whose crew was divided between followers of Petain and Pro resistants. One night Guerisse, while on guard duty, acting with the Commander succeeded in subduing a mutiny of the Petain followers. The Rhin from that time on flew the British flag and became a CU ship (a sort of spy boat) destined for the secret war. Albert Guerisse had made the great leap, he had become a spy of her Majesty.

## PAT O'LEARY, EVADER

Promoted to captain of a British frigate and effectively with the secret service he abandoned his Belgian identity to become Patrick O'Leary. Under the guise of a French Canadian born in Quebec, he justified his bad English. Until March 1941 he attended espionage school. He was introduced to the sea profession during the course of missions of conveying merchant ships. Then came the great mission, ultra secret, which he conducted in the gulf of Lyon. It was to pick up some Polish Officers.

But there was a storm at sea and the expedition ran aground. Pat O'Leary was arrested and sent to an internement camp under guard near Marseille. Like the other British Officers he was a prisoner on parol (under promise that he would not escape). This gave him certain freedoms. However after some weeks he advised the commander of the fort "I retract my parol" In short he very simply expressed his intention to escape.

As a result he constantly had a guard at his heels. It didn't matter, he staged an improbable escape. He would stir up a massive excape of all of the prisoners during which O'Leary would escape from the opposite side. D day arrived and the miracle was underway. But scarcely had he gone outside of the walls when an armed guard saw him and followed him racing through the streets. Exhausted, Pat dove into a dark building and landed on a table where he found himself face to face with a nun.

The sisters hid him in a trunk in the attic. Not for long because a systematic search had been organized. The sister superior therefore conducted our spy to an underground passage that let to a vineyard. And here is Pat, crawling among the vines, half hidden under the skirt of the sister superior, finally he reached the woods; he was saved. With his false papers he returned to Marseille and from there on called himself Adolphe Cartier.

## ADOLPHE SHOULD STAY

At that time he met an English doctor, Ian Garrow who proposed that Pat work with him to help shot down Allied aviators escape. He sent a message to London; some days later he received a response via the BBC. "Adolphe doit rester" I repeat "Adolphe doit rester". (Adolphe should stay)

And Adolphe stayed. At the end of 1941 Ian Garrow was arrested and Albert Guerisse alone directed this escape network. He organized 6 maritime operations and thus some hundreds of aviators were evacuated by sea. He discovered a traitor in his organization and he made possible the escape of Ian Garrow who had been condemned to 20 years in prison. When he made contact with one of his men in a cafe the barrel of a revolver was pointed against the nape of his neck. He was arrested as a result of being denounced.

Imprisoned after his arrest by the Gestapo he entered into that which he called "his third life". That of the concentration camps. Sent to Mauthausan, then to Natzweyler, and finally to Dachau. But his true identity was never discovered, to the Germans he was always Pat O'Leary, British.

April 1945 he was freed by the Americans but his fantastic adventure did not stop there. Shortly thereafter there was the Korean War, a terrible war. The Belgian expeditionary Corps had practically no doctors therefore he did not hesitate for a moment and for 13 months he served the Commandant of Health Services in Korea and became a Major General.

Since that time Albert Guerisse has taken his retirement. He estimates that with his retirement he has had more chances than other spys to salute those who did not work in the field and were uninformed as to the results of their formidable work. He salutes also those who had risked their lives in spontaneously sheltering and tracking down British aviators.

Albert Guerisse received the title of Count after having been honored several months ago by King Baudouin. The Queen of England had not waited so long, she had made him a Chevalier seven years ago.



**AIR FORCES**

**Escape & Evasion Society**



REMEMBER THE ALAMO

BUT DON'T FORGET THE

AFES ANNUAL MEETING

SAN ANTONIO TEXAS

MAY 24-28 1987

MARRIOTT RIVERWALK HOTEL