



COMÈTE

“Thank you. We’ll never forget.”

AIR FORCES

Escape and Evasion Society

Birmingham, Michigan

October 7-8-9, 1974



American Airmen who flew over Nazi occupied Europe during World War II took great comfort in the knowledge that patriots of these occupied countries were actively engaged in aiding those airmen unfortunate enough to be shot down.

Although airmen knew that help was available if they were shot down over occupied countries, they knew nothing about the people or the organizations behind this possible help. After the war, they learned that most escape lines in the occupied countries were organized and controlled directly by British Military Intelligence, but that there were a few that were organized and operated by heroic nationals of Belgium, Holland and France.

The Belgian Comète Line organized and operated by patriotic Belgian citizens was one of the most successful of these independent escape networks. From its inception in 1940 until the liberation of Belgium in 1945, this group was responsible for the successful escape or evasion of 773 Allied Airmen and agents.

The success of the Comète line was achieved at a cost of 216 agents executed or died in captivity, plus uncounted numbers of men and women whose health was destroyed by imprisonment or injuries. In spite of these terrible losses, no post ever went unfilled for lack of a volunteer; as leaders or agents were arrested there was always someone ready to take over. From its creation to the end of its action, Comète was not dependent on either the Belgian or British government, it was truly an organization of volunteers who were willing to give their lives, if necessary, to help drive out the hated Nazi conqueror from their beloved Belgium.

Some thirty years have passed since those terrible yet heroic times, but we former American Airmen say to our Belgian friends of Comète, "we have not forgotten, WE WILL NEVER FORGET." We welcome you to the United States with the sincere hope that your visit will be a memorable one, one that you will never forget.

THE AIR FORCES
ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY
WELCOMES YOU TO
THE U.S.A.

COMÉTE — U.S.A.

DETROIT — WASHINGTON — NEW YORK

OCTOBER 7-13, 1974

*We hope that your stay in the U.S.A.
will be one that **YOU** will never forget.*

PROGRAM

MONDAY, OCTOBER 7

- 2:00 PM** Arrive in the U.S.A. via the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel.
- 3:00 PM** Reception at the Cadieux Cafe sponsored by Mr. Bob DeVos and the Detroit Belgian community.
- 4:30 PM** Reception at Meadowbrook Hall of Oakland University, Rochester, Mi. Sponsored by the Modern Language Department.
- 6:00 PM** Dinner and relaxing with your Host Family.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 8:45 AM** Board Ford Motor Co. busses at Oakland University.
- 9:00 AM** Board Ford Motor Co. busses at First Presbyterian Church for day's activities.
- 10:00 AM** Tour Rouge Assembly plant of The Ford Motor Co.
- 11:00 AM** Arrive in front of Ford World Headquarters Building for group souvenir photograph.
- 11:30 AM** Arrive at Ford Guest Center to view 1975 model product display.
- Noon** Lunch hosted by Ford Motor Co. in the Ballroom of the Dearborn Inn.
- 1:45 PM** Tour Greenfield Village as guests of the Ford Motor Co.
- 4:15 PM** Busses leave Ford Guest Center for return to Birmingham.
- 5:00 PM** Arrive First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Mi.

PROGRAM

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8

7:00 PM Dinner at the Birmingham Country Club as guests of the Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society.

11:00 PM Return to the home of Host Family.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9

8:00 AM Board chartered Greyhound busses for trip to Washington, D.C. at First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Mi.

8:30 PM Arrive at the Ambassador Hotel in Washington, D.C.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10

8:30 AM Depart for one half day sightseeing tour of Washington.

12:30 PM Return to the Ambassador Hotel.

1:30 PM Board United States Air Force busses for trip to the Pentagon.

2:00 PM Briefing by Major General George J. Keegan, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, U.S. Air Force.

3:30 PM Board busses for Arlington Cemetery.

4:05 PM Wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

4:35 PM Board busses for tour of Arlington Cemetery, and return to hotel.

PROGRAM

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 6:15 PM** Board U.S. Air Force busses for reception at Belgian Embassy.
- 6:30 PM** Reception at Belgian Embassy.
- 8:00 PM** Board busses for return to the Ambassador Hotel.
- 8:15 PM** Arrive at the Ambassador Hotel, balance of evening free.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11

- 9:00 AM** Departure by Greyhound bus for New York City.
- 3:00 PM** Arrive at New York City Hall.
- 3:30 PM** Reception in the Blue Room with The Honorable Abraham Beam, Mayor of the City of New York.
- 4:15 PM** Depart for Tudor Hotel.
- 5:00 PM** Arrive at the Tudor Hotel.
- 6:30 PM** Reception, Belgian Consul General of New York.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 9:00 AM** Depart by chartered bus for four hour tour of Manhattan.
- 1:00 PM** Arrive at the Tudor Hotel, balance of afternoon free.

PROGRAM

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 6:30 PM** Reception and dinner at the 7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. & 67th St. Courtesy of the New York Chapter of the Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 8:30 AM** Depart for special church service.
- 9:00 AM** Catholic services at St. Patrick's Cathedral dedicated to the men and women of the Comète Line.
- 1:00 PM** Tour of the Empire State Building.

HONORED GUESTS

Révérende Soeur Aléne	rue des Cendres 7 - 1000 Bruxelles
Mme G. Antoine	rue Papenkasteel 21 - 1180 Bruxelles
Mme Y. Bienfait	rue des Prés Verts 10 - 7210 Cuesmes
Mme Billiet	Pres. Rooseveltlaan 166 - 9000 Gent
Mme Boulou	avenue Coghen 159 - 1180 Bruxelles
M. P. Buchet	avenue St. Henri 82 - 1200 Bruxelles
Mme B. Bulteel	rue des Casernes 15 - 1040 Bruxelles
M. et Mme Busschots	Keizerstraat 11 - 2000 Antwerpen
M. W. Dekeiser	rue de Roodebeek 23 - 1040 Bruxelles
Mme Delsaux	rue de l'Autruche 7 - 1170 Bruxelles
Mme E. Dumon	rue Papenkasteel 21 - 1180 Bruxelles
Mme Goya	Villa San Fransisco - F - 64 Urrugne (France)
Mlle Y. Heyn	avenue L. Parmentier 135 - 1150 Bruxelles
Mme M. Houmart	rue Grande - Aisne s/Heyd (Prov. Luxembourg)
M. et Mme Hoyez et leur fils	avenue Cor de Chasse 87 - 1170 Bruxelles
M. R. Jamblin	Quai des Grosses Battes 8 - 4900 Angleur
Mlle Janssens	Mechelbaan 36 A - 2870 Putte
M. et Mme Jaspers	Dambruggestraat 99 - 2000 Antwerpen
Mme M. Jonckheere	Dieweg 78 - 1180 Bruxelles
Mlle S. Lamquin	avenue du Diamant 168 - 1040 Bruxelles
M. et Mme Lapeyre	rue Bernadou 3 - F - Bayonne (France)
Mme J. Léonard	rue de Nalinnes 29 - 6001 Marcinelle
Mme Liétard	rue des Fraises 45 - 1170 Bruxelles
Mlle V. Massant	rue de la Station - 1410 Waterloo
Mme E. Maréchal	B.P. 1364 á Bujumbura (Burundi)
Mme Marsden	Chemin de la Sarte 26 - 5200 Huy
Mme P. Maugueret ...	bd. Franklin Roosevelt - F - 23 Rueil Malmaison (France)
M. Mertens	Oudesstraat 30 - 2980 Boorsmeerbeek

HONORED GUESTS

M. et Mme E. Miroir	rue Général Fivé 86 - 1040 Bruxelles
Mme Molle	rue Docteur Lemoine 1 - 1040 Bruxelles
Mlle S. Nélis	rue Belliard 201 - 1040 Bruxelles
M. et Mme Op de Beek	Wipstraats 1 - 2870 Putte Mechelen
Mlle Pardon	rue Genot 43 - 1080 Bruxelles
M. et Mme A. Saboulart	Bichta Edevra - F - 64 Bayonne (France)
Mme Stadsbader	Steenweg op Bergen 793 - 1600 St.-Pieters-Leeuw
M. et Mme J. Thomé	Chateau de la Rocq - 6521 Feluy
*Michou Ugeux	avenue Belle-Vue 40 - 1410 Waterloo
M. et Mme Vaes	Beyne 622 - 4500 Jupille
M. et Mme Van de Castele	Beerzelbaan - 2D - 2870 Putte Mechelen
Mme van der Borcht	Heydenberg 45 - 1200 Bruxelles
Mme J. Vander Heyden	rue Cardinal Lavigerie 5 - 1040 Bruxelles
M. et Mme Vandermies	rue des Pensées 7 - 1640 Rhode-St. Genése
M. D. Vanostaeyen	Vremdessteenweg 94 - 2530 Boechout
M. J. Van Peteghem	Elegemstraat 135 - 1710 Dilbeek
Mme J. Vantuykom	Le Colysée - Zeedijk 125 - 8400 Oostende
Mlle Witters	Beerselbaan 2870 Putte
Mme Woitchik	LaPaudure - 1420 Braine-l'Alleud
M. et Mme V. Wuyts	rue de la Forteresse 17 - 6804 Cugnon
Mr. & Mrs. Leslie Atkinson	AFEES Representative in France Paris, France
Mr. & Mrs. Renaud Guibert	Vice Consul General of France Detroit, Mi.
Mr. & Mrs. Rene DeSeranno	Consular Agent of Belgium Detroit, Mi.

*Secretary, Cométe

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A heartfelt "THANK YOU" to the following companies and individuals, all of whom made a significant contribution to the success of this project.

Mary Adema
Maj. John L. Allen
Birmingham Country Club
Vicki Borthwick
Maj. Agenor L. Castro
Consolidation Coal Co.
J. Lewis Cooper
D'Arcy-MacManus & Masius
Bob DeVos
Lt. Col. Alfred L. Feldman
First Presbyterian Church
Birmingham, Mi.
Ford Motor Co.
Philip Gross
Col. Gilbert T. Hodges
Emile Houtteman
Don R. Iodice
Justified Composition
General & Mrs. S. L. A. Marshall
Hugh McCann
Stuart Moak
9015 Air Reserve Information Squadron
Oakland University
Modern Language Dept.
Meadowbrook Hall
Sam Rabinowitz
Seaholm High School Choir
Thunderbolt Pilots Association
United States Air Force
Captain Jacobson
Maj. Joel M. Weiss
Wings Club

The following members of the **AFEES** contributed their time and their money to assure the success of project **COMÉTE-U.S.A.**

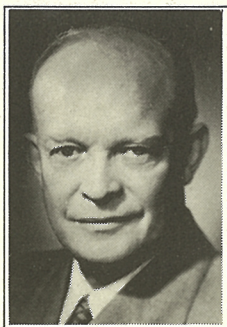
Richard Alheim
Milo Blakely
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Robert Couture
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Robert Fruth
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Robert Grimes
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Elton Hoyt
J. K. Hurst
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Joe Manos
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Carl Meilke

Bill Miller
Claude Murray
Ralph Patton
Lou Rabinowitz
Robert Rapps
John Shaw
Gilbert Shawn
Heyward Spinks
Bill Spinning
Dean Tate
Col. George Weinbrenner
Bob Wills
Ed Winslow
Henry Wolcott
Mark Wohlfield
Ken Woodhouse
Ted Woznicki

NOTES & AUTOGRAPHS

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"It takes little imagination to understand the sublime quality of the courage that, during Hitler's occupation dedicated citizens displayed in undertaking to rescue Allied fliers downed over Europe. They undertook the work deliberately and with the certain knowledge that they were risking not only their own lives but those of all they held dear. This they did far from the excitement and frenzy of the battlefield; their inspiration was their patriotism, the determination to see their beloved country freed from the domination of the hated Nazis and by their ideals of liberty and justice that they shared with the Allied fliers who were risking their own lives each time they made a sortie into Europe.



"The loss of every Allied plane that was shot down over Europe was a tragedy—every member of a crew that was found and saved and sent back to us brought joy to all comrades. To every one who joined in this great work and to each member of his family and to all who shared, in those days, his risks and dangers I sent assurances of my deep and lasting gratitude."

Sincerely,

Dwight D. Eisenhower
Dwight D. Eisenhower





COMÈTE

