# Air Force Escape & Evasion Society

***We will never forget!***

Issue: July 2021

## 2021 AFEES REUNION!

SAVANNAH, GA
OCTOBER 27th - 31st, 2021

The AFEES reunion in 2021 will be held in conjunction with that of the 8th Air Force Historical Society in **Savannah, Georgia, October 27-31** at the **Savannah Riverfront Marriott (see letter below re use of Hampton Inn due to Marriott being full)**. For full details on the reunion, click on 2021 8th_AFHS_Savannah_Reunion (AFEES) (1) or see the six pages immediately below. When completing your reunion registration form, please indicate on it that you are AFEES members. Note that we will have a separate hospitality room and that we plan to have our separate memorial service. The following six pages include the itinerary and registration forms for the reunion. To enlarge a page, simply click on it.

Hello, everyone!
Due to the overwhelming response for our upcoming 47th Annual Reunion in Savannah, GA, October 27-31, 2021, our room block at the Marriott Savannah Riverfront is completely sold out! We have arranged for a special rate at a nearby hotel located in "Midtown" Savannah, about 15 minutes from the Marriott:

**Hampton Inn & Suites**
**20 Johnston St.**
**Savannah, GA 31405**

If you were unable to reserve at the Marriott and plan on attending the reunion, please call the Hampton Inn & Suites directly @ **(912) 721-3700. Use the GROUP CODE: AFH *or* 8th Air Force Historical Society**.
We have a special rate of:
**$179 ++ per night which includes breakfast!**
**Parking is $7 per day**
The above rate is good from October 25—November 2, 2021
**PLEASE:** We ask that you ***ONLY reserve rooms for YOUR use ONLY***. Do NOT reserve additional rooms for others who "might" come. We have a finite number of rooms being held in this block. If rooms are reserved on speculation, then they are unavailable for those who truly need them. We appreciate your cooperation!
These rooms MUST be reserved prior to September 26th in order to receive the reduced rate.
If you have ANY questions or problems, PLEASE contact me:
Debra D. Kujawa
ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org
(912) 748-8884
Thank you all!

## Join us in Savannah for our Annual AFEES Reunion!

Download and complete the registration form by clicking link below:

**AFEES Reunion Registration Form**

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## 2021 AFEES Reunion Schedule

**47th ANNUAL 8th AFHS REUNION**
**Marriott Savannah Riverfront, Savannah, GA**
**October 27-31, 2021**

**Wednesday, October 27**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1:00pm — 6:00pm | **Reunion Registration open** |
| 6:00pm — 7:00pm | Complimentary Welcome Reception, followed by dinner on your own |
| 7:00pm — 9:00pm | 8th AFHS Board Meeting |
| 7:00pm — until | Hospitality Suites remain open throughout reunion |

**Thursday, October 28**

| | |
|---|---|
| 7:30am — 8:30am | American Breakfast Buffet |
| 8:00am — 12:00pm | **Reunion Registration open** |
| 9:30am — 12:00pm | ***"The Other Savannah"**** |
| 1:00pm — 6:00pm | **Reunion Registration open** |
| 2:00pm — 3:30pm | ***"Learn from the Past...Journey to the Future"***— UK Speakers: Emily Charles, Hattie Hearn, Suzie Harrison, Jeff Hawley, & Paul Bellamy—with Q & A |
| 3:45pm — 5:00pm | ***"Honoring Their Service"*** Gary Webb—Webb Military Museum |
| 6:00pm — 9:00pm | Cash Bar Open |
| 7:00pm — 9:00pm | Buffet dinner and program: ***"The 8th—Beyond the Legacy"*** LTC Steve Bolton, Garrison Commander, Hunter Army Air Field ***(subject to the needs of the US military)*** |

**Friday, October 29**

| | |
|---|---|
| 7:30am — 8:30am | American Breakfast Buffet |
| 8:00am — 12:00pm | **Reunion Registration open** |
| 8:00am — 9:15am | Group Meetings |
| 9:30am — 2:30pm | ***National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force**** |
| 1:00pm — 6:00pm | **Reunion Registration open** |
| 3:15pm — 4:30pm | ***WWII Vets with Q & A*** |
| 6:00pm — 9:00pm | Cash Bar Open |
| 7:00pm — 9:00pm | Rendezvous Dinners |

**Saturday, October 30**

| | |
|---|---|
| 7:30am — 8:30am | American Breakfast Buffet |
| 8:00am — 12:00pm | **Reunion Registration open** |
| 8:45am — 10:15am | General Membership Meeting |
| 11:00am — 2:30pm | ***"Historic Savannah" (City Tour ~ lunch on your own)**** |
| 12:00pm — 4:00pm | 8th AFHS Board Meeting |
| 1:00pm — 6:00pm | **Reunion Registration open** |
| 6:00pm — 9:00pm | Cash Bar Open |
| 7:00pm — 10:00pm | Gala Dinner and Program |

**Sunday, October 31**

| | |
|---|---|
| 7:30am — 8:30am | American Breakfast Buffet |

***It is important that you be in the bus boarding area at least ten [10] minutes prior to the scheduled departure times. All tours require a minimum of 35 participants, unless otherwise stated. Driver and Staff gratuities *ARE NOT* included in the tour prices.**



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## 2021 AFEES Reunion
## HOTEL INFORMATION

## 47th ANNUAL 8th AFHS REUNION

**Marriott Savannah Riverfront**

**October 27-31, 2021**

## REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

**STOP!**

### ◊ RESERVE YOUR HOTEL ROOM *FIRST!*

The reunion hotel has a liberal cancellation policy—in the event you are unable to attend the reunion, you will be able to cancel your reservation without penalty within 48 hours of your scheduled check-in time. However, if you wait until the last minute to book your room reservation, you may not receive the reunion rate or rooms may no longer be available at the reunion hotel. Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that our vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less a $5 processing fee.

***Canceling your hotel reservation does NOT cancel your reunion activities.***

### ◊ COMPLETE THE REGISTRATION FORM

Please fill out the registration form completely.

⇒ Fill out your name as you wish it to be on your name tag—and for any others registering with you. The principle attendee **MUST** be a current member of the Society to register for the reunion. You may JOIN and/or RENEW directly on the registration form. If you are a WWII veteran, and/or affiliated with a bomb or fighter group, please indicate which group.

⇒ **ALL meals are priced separately**—Breakfast buffet begins Thursday, Oct 28th —Sunday, Oct 31st. Be sure and select your entrée if you plan on attending the Saturday evening gala.

⇒ There are three [3] tour options available during the reunion. Please read the information [here in this issue] on each tour and then make your selection on the form.

### ◊ MAIL IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM

Once you have completed your registration form, please total up the amount owed and include a check, money order, or complete the credit card information on the form, payable to the **8th AFHS** and mail to:

**8th AFHS**
**68 Kimberlys Way**
**Jasper, GA 30143-4769**

Or you may **SCAN** your registration form *[if paying by credit card]* and **EMAIL** to:
**ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org**

**ALL** registration forms **MUST** be received by **October 10, 2021** in order to guarantee your place.
If you have any questions or problems in completing your registration, please contact:

**Debra Kujawa**
**Managing Director**
**8th AFHS**
**912-748-8884**
**ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org**

**ALL reunion information and forms are available on our website: 8thAFHS.org**



## 47th ANNUAL 8th AFHS REUNION

**Marriott Savannah Riverfront**

**October 27-31, 2021**

## HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION

**(800) 285-0398**

**or *ONLINE* registration on our website: 8thafhs.org**

**(Reference '8th Air Force Historical Society' for group rate)**

***Hotel has a 48 hour cancellation policy***

**Location:** ***100 General McIntosh Blvd., Savannah, GA***

Stay in the heart of historic Savannah, Georgia, at Marriott Savannah Riverfront. Explore the warmth and beauty of Georgia's oldest city from our riverfront location, with many top attractions, shops and restaurants just a short stroll away. Treat yourself to a massage at our premier day spa, work out in the 24-hour fitness center or go for a swim in our seasonal outdoor pool. Enjoy traditional Southern breakfast options at Blue, our delightful restaurant overlooking the riverfront, or enjoy cocktails and a light meal in the Atrium Bar. If a meeting, conference or social event brings you to our hotel, our contemporary indoor and outdoor venues, custom catering and outstanding service are available to help create an impressive gathering. At the end of the day, retreat to your room or suite and enjoy plush bedding, room service and Wi-Fi access while you take in views of the Savannah River or downtown. No matter what brings you here, we look forward to making your visit to Savannah remarkable.

### Parking

Self-parking has been discounted to $25 per day per vehicle. There are two [2] electric charging stations available.

### RESERVATION INFORMATION

**Group Name:** ***8th Air Force Historical Society***
**Reunion Dates:** October 27-31, 2021
**Rate:** $180+13% (tax) +$6.00 (City & State occupancy fees) Total per night: $209.40
Rates are offered 3 days prior and 3 days post reunion based on availability.
**Cut off Date:** 9/27/2021
**Cancellation Policy:** All reservations have a 48 hour cancellation policy, or attendee will be charged one night room rate plus tax.

### WHEELCHAIR RENTALS

**ScootAround: (888) 441-7575** or ScootAround.com

### **HOSPITALITY SUITES**

The 8th AFHS is pleased to announce that we are again offering **HOSPITALITY SUITES** to groups. However, due to restrictions on alcohol in the hotel, **SUITES** will be **"JUNIOR" SUITES**—sleeping rooms @ **$230++ per night.** The number of suites is limited, so we ask that you reserve your suite as soon as possible. **This is also a sleeping room, so just an additional $50 above the group rate.** Suites are located on various floors throughout the hotel. ***Two bedroom suites are also available for larger groups to share space.***

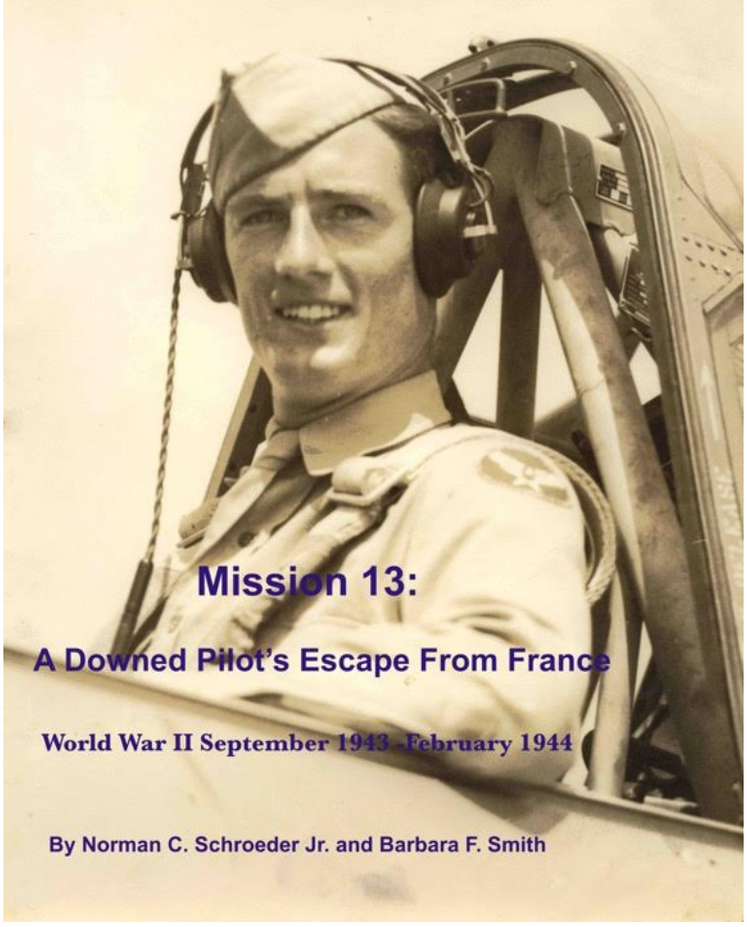
In order to **RESERVE** your suite,

please call **Jamie Walker** ASAP for details:

**(912) 373-2036**

**Order your AFEES T-Shirt for 2021 Reunion!**

Contact Mary Shier:
spwheel357@gmail.com.
(810)-441-7932.




## Mission 13: A Downed Pilot's Escape From France

Fifty years after WWII my father, Norman C. Schroeder Sr. tape recorded his evasion from France after being shot down over Brittany which is the basis for the book summarized below. Further research, travels to France and interviews with family members who hid Norman filled in much of the information that Norman would not of known or inquired about for fear of compromising the Resistance, families that hid and fed him and helpers along the way.

On September 16, 1943 the B-17, "Battlin Bobbie" took off from Kimbolton Field England with twelve 500-pound demolition bombs to hit targets in Nantes, France. On board were Capt. Elton "Pete" Hoyt (pilot), 1st Lt. Norman C. Schroeder (co-pilot), 2nd Lt. William Cook (navigator), 2nd Lt. Louis Glickman (bombardier), S/Sgt. Herbert Dulberg (radio operator), and gunners T/Sgt. Bill Miller, T/Sgt. John Thomas, S/Sgt. Harry Minor, T/Sgt. Russell Eldridge, and Sgt. Edward Shaffer. The crew were members of the 525th Bomb Squadron, 379th Bomb Group. This was Mission 13 for 1st Lt. Norman C. Schroeder.

Near Rennes, France, they were seriously hit by flack. As Lt. Schroeder described it: "It picked up the whole airplane, just one big whap! It lifted the plane about 100-150 feet. The left waist gunner called “fire in the engines!” "I looked out and saw the #1 and #2 engines on fire and the left wing looked like a sieve. I would estimate that there were 200 holes in that thing. I looked over at the right wing and aft of the #3 engine; it had a hole of maybe 3 or 4 feet in diameter. No. 4 engine’s prop was acting up, not maintaining steady rpm." The flack damage forced the "Battlin Bobbie" to drop out of formation and attempt to return to Kimbolton.

The wounded B-17 was then finished off by a German ME-109 fighter (Lt. Helmut Beitz) About 15 miles SW of Rennes all 10 men had to bail out near the town of Messac. On his way down in his chute Lt. Schroeder watched the wounded bird circling in flames as it crashed on the farm of Francis Bourgeon. A very young Jean-Claude Bourgeon witnessed the events that day and still remembers the smoke, fire and explosion as the plane crashed. Norman had to slip his chute in order to avoid high voltage lines just before landing in an apple tree. He hid in a small woods before walking to a farm house where he was given food and ill fitting French cloths by the Massiot family. Strategically he did not give up his GI boots. Knowing his position in Brittany he used his silk map of France and compass to plot the shortest route to the Demarcation Line; essentially a straight line from Rennes to Poitiers. His plan was get out of German occupied France ASAP and get to Spain. On the morning of September 17 he started his trek to Poitiers. Meanwhile seven of the "Battlin Bobbie" crew were rounded up by the local Resistance group and two crewmen, Thomas and Eldridge, were captured and became POWs. The Resistance people told Pete that no one knew anything about the 10th man. He was MIA.

As rag-tag Schroeder walked he obtained water from the town wells, avoided main roads and large towns. He decided he could not be running into the woods every time a German car, truck, or motorcycle came by. "If I'm going to be caught lets get it over with.” He was wary that his boots were too fancy for the "rag-picking-bum" he appeared to be so he scuffed them up, changed their color and removed some of the eyelets. Even so a German officer stared at his shoes for a long time as he walked through one town.

Every day was an effort to find food and shelter, usually haystacks or barns; it took about five requests before he got a positive response. However one farmer was very suspicious of Schroeder and it became serious when his son took off on his bike to get someone. Whereupon Schroeder got the hell out of there. Later at another house he became aware of the local calendar maps that gave him detailed information about the local area which, allowed him to plot the next days route more strategically. This was beneficial for finding a route to go over the Loire River. The silk map was not detailed enough to find river crossings. Thus he went over the bridge at Varades continuing his trek to Poitiers While nearing the town of Thouars he started seeing many more Germans including tanks. He watched the tanks taking target practice and he would move off the road to allow them to pass. Going through Thouars he looked in store windows to see how people were surviving the occupation. He poked his head into one place which turned out to be a German mess hall. Some soldiers looked up at him and he nonchalantly slipped away. On September 29 he slept in a hay stack and plotted the route he would take through Poitiers. He followed the Clain river until he came to the *rue du Faubourg du Pont Neuf* bridge which would allow him to take N147 south out of Poitier and toward Limoges.

This bridge was heavily guarded as it was a major barrier before the Demarcation Line. He surveyed the bridge several time to see if the locals were being stopped and checked for papers. Surprisingly security checks were few so he easily walked across the bridge and had an emotional letdown after he had met his initial goal of crossing what he thought was the Demarcation Line. His feet were sore and blistered, he was always hungry, and he wondered where the underground network was that he had been briefed about.

It was fortunate that as he walked through southern Poitiers, along *rue de La Pierre Levee* (French Route N147), he saw a woman in her front yard and asked to wash his feet. They could not communicate, she did not know he was an American, but she gave him a tub of water to wash his feet and a bowl of soup. This act of kindness possibly raised Schroeder's spirit enough for him to travel a little further down the road to an event that changed his evasion!

As he approached the intersection of N147 and D1 he observed an isolated house that appeared safe. He was warmly welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Auguste Vergnaud, a blacksmith, who told Schroeder that he helped a French Canadian (Lucien Dumais) the previous year get into the underground. Schroeder's spirits were elevated and he finally slept and ate well for the first time since he left Kimbolton 15 days and walking 250 km earlier.

The next day Auguste took him by bicycle to Lussac-les-Châteaux where he was deposited at the l'Hotel de la Gare. The hotel owner was quite worried because the blacksmith had told many people he was escorting an American airman. "Every one knows you are here but we will put you in a room on the second floor. Do not open the door unless there is a particular knock; if it is not correct jump out the window onto the shed and flee. We will find you afterwards". Lucien Dumais stayed at the same hotel, in the same room, and had received the same instructions a year earlier. Late in the evening that particular knock came; *"vite, vite"* (quick, quick) you go outside and get in the back of a truck. They drove him to Montmorillon to the home Capt. Pierre Martin, assistant leader of the Lower Vienne Department Resistance Group. Martin's 16 year old daughter who was taking English lessons came to talk to him and she described the situation:

*“Your father Norman, arrived at our place on a cold rainy night. It was late and I was sleeping when my father woke me and told me to come down to meet an English man that had been shot down by the Germans". He said: "You speak English, come talk to him". I went to our kitchen and saw this very tall man, all wet, who was sneezing. We could not communicate. My mother gave him coffee and aspirin, and then I gave him my bedroom for him to rest. The day after, Mlle. Lancaster, my English teacher, came to translate for my father. This is how and when we learned that he was an American aviator, and that he had come to bombard Nantes. He stayed hidden at our place, but I don’t remember for how long. At the same time, my father was hiding a German deserter from the Eastern front and a person that did the radio transmission with London (Lt. Robert Vanier, alias "Vincent"). These three people were hidden from each other, they never met nor knew the existence of the others.”*

The next day Schroeder was having a wonderful breakfast. "Boy was I eating. They had some homemade confiture (jam), good French bread, and café au lait". While eating, Mlle. Lancaster and Raoul Gaschard came into the room. She was an English school teacher and he was a member of the St. Savin Resistance. She said, “Good morning, young man. And how are you?” "Perfect English! It was a pleasant surprise to be able to speak English for the first time in weeks.”

Mlle. Lancaster informed him that he was going to a POW camp for black soldiers. Le Vigeant was a Senegalese prisoner of war camp near L’Isle-Jourdain about 23 km south of Lussac-les-Châteaux. Because of the German racial polices these soldiers were imprisoned in France. The local Resistance took advantage of this situation and became the operators of the POW camp for the Germans and secretly used it to hide spies, saboteurs, and Frenchmen who were being conscripted to work in Germany. While there they would listen to the BBC. It was broadcast first in French then in English. Non-sensical messages were being sent to various resistance groups for example: “Susan likes blood pudding.” Messages about blood pudding referred to Schroeder. One broadcast was particularly funny. After the French version, the English version described two fellows crossing a bridge and arguing about whose turn it was to carry a suitcase. The German guards on the bridge were laughing at these dumb Frenchmen who eventually, after their animated argument, left the suitcase in the middle of the bridge and went off in opposite directions vocally cursing at each other. Shortly after, the suitcase explodes and takes out the bridge. When Schroeder looked up from the radio he saw two fellas with beaming smiles pointing to themselves as the proud saboteurs.

After about 3 weeks Schroeder was taken back to Montmorillon to Marcel Guibert’s house. He stayed here one night but was told by Mlle. Lancaster that he would be taken to a place where he would be picked up by a small plane and brought back to England. The next day two people took him by bicycle 9 km to the hamlet of Haims where he stayed with both the Perriquiaux and Neveu families.

Norman Schroeder was escorted at night to a field north of Haims. The Resistance group centered here had worked diligently to establish itself since October 1942. One of their goals was to procure a field large enough for use by Lysander aircraft. By September 1943, “Coconut,” (the code name for the airfield) was ready and was recognized by MI-9, the British Intelligence group responsible for returning downed airmen, as a potentially useful tool. They directed their Dahlia network chief, M. Yves Le Hénaff, to use it. Le Hénaff, who was originally from Brittany, was trained in England to be an MI-9 agent. One of his jobs was to bring Lysander airplanes into France to exchange British and French spies and saboteurs, deliver supplies, and evacuate evading airmen.

On November 11 Schroeder was taken to a muddy “Coconut.” Operations at “Coconut” were conducted during full moon periods and “Vincent” was the radio operator. There were nine possible passengers for the three Lysander aircraft that were expected to land. However, the muddy field condition allowed only one Lysander to land. Unfortunately for my father, this was a British operation and RAF pilots took precedence. Thus Norman, who talked to RAF pilot Sgt. Victor Matthews at “Coconut,” watched him board the mud-laden plane with two Frenchmen for their scary take-off to England. Even though Norman did not get his ride back to England he was quite impressed with the Lysander operation.

The pilot of the Lysander that landed, Flight Lt. Robin Hooper, described the field as “extremely soft” and cancelled the landings of the other two Lysanders. He said he “had great difficulty in extracting his Lysander from the mud and taking off.” Hooper was admonished by his superior officer for the cancellation: “What do you expect? Concrete runways?” In response to this comment, the ground crew dug out two wheelbarrows full of sticky yellow French clay from the wheel wells of the Lysander and dumped them near the officer's cottage with a sign stuck in the dirt proclaiming “There's some corner of an English field that is forever foreign.”

Coincidently, Lucien Dumais was on one of the two Lysander aircraft that did not land; he was trying to return to France as an MI-9 agent with his radio operator, Raymond Labrosse. Having failed at “Coconut” Dumais and Labrosse landed in Chauny, France on November 19, 1943 with the mission to evacuate US airmen by boat from the Brittany coast. Dumais’ Shelburne Line successfully returned 300 airmen by boat to England. Many airmen remembered them; so much so that when the initial meeting of the Air Force Escape and Evasion Society (AFEES) had their first reunion in 1961, Dumais and Labrosse were guests of honor.

After the Lysander aircraft left, Schroeder, two MI-9 agents, and Le Hénaff went to the Château de l’Epine. Schroeder stayed for 13 days in the trusted hands of the Giraudet family while the others left for Brittany. Schroeder was hidden in a dark room on the third floor of the Chateau. For security reasons, he was not allowed to open the window shutters. Le Hénaff’s Lysander and boating evacuation efforts ended sadly. He was caught by the Gestapo and suffocated in a crowded railroad car on the way to Dachau on July 2, 1944.

On November 25 Norman was brought from Château de l’Epine to Roger and Marie Tiffineau’s home in St. Savin. Their partitioned living room provided a small room for Schroeder to hide. The back garden of the house connected to the garage, and Café/Restaurant Jacquelin; the latter was Marie's grandmother's property. In 1943, the café/restaurant was known as the “Conspiration House,” where the local Resistance group met. If there was danger, members could scatter out the front door or the back door into the garden and exit through either the Tiffineau's garage or house. While at the Tiffineaus, Schroeder would go to the garage and listen to the BBC on the clandestine suitcase-radio with MI-9 radio man “Vincent”.

Winter was coming on and it became imperative for the Resistance to find a way to get Schroeder on his way to Spain. In order for this to occur he would need a fake ID to ride on a train. Fortunately Marie and her coworker, Robert Lajon, worked at the town hall. There Robert had access to all the official stamps and he produced Norman's fake ID and ration cards. Schroeder became Jean Bezaud, a deaf and dumb baker from Limoges.

While Schroeder was at Château de l’Epine, Raoul Gaschard traveled to Paris to arrange the transfer of him to the Burgundy Escape Line. On December 3, 1943, with all the hubbub of the Farmer’s market in St. Savin as cover, Schroeder met “Anne-Marie” and M. Andrault at the

Place de la Republique. M. Andrault, from Lussac-les-Châteaux, took Norman and "Anne-Marie" to the train station in Poitiers in his charcoal-burner automobile.

They stood all the way on this slow journey to Paris arriving on December 6 at 4 am, and transferring to a student's house until 7 am. Later Schroeder was taken to another student's house in the center of Paris for "breakfast." "After breakfast" S/Sgt. William C. Howell was brought in and Schroeder and William were taken to meet T/Sgt. Otto Bruzewski. The three of them were taken by train from Gare d'Austerlitz to André and Pauline Lefèvre's home in Juvisy-sur-Orge; Paulette Pavan was their daughter. Howell and Bruzewski stayed with the Lefèvre's and Schroeder was taken to the Meilleroux pharmacy.

The Burgundy Line was very thorough and lethal about preventing German spies from infiltrating their organization, a factor that was the demise of a number of Escape Lines. Schroeder did not realize the danger he was in during "breakfast." This was a subtle interrogation by a bilingual member of the Burgundy Line, Geneviève Soulie, to verify Schroeder's identity. Howell was listening in another room to his responses to verify that Schroeder was a legitimate airman. If Schroeder had failed "breakfast" he would have been executed; a fate rendered willingly to potential infiltrators by the Burgundy Line to maintain security.

While in Juvisy there were discussions of taking Schroeder, Howell and Bruzewski to Brest to be evacuated by boat. This was probably another attempt by Le Hénaff to evacuate US airmen. His October and November attempts were failures, as Howell experienced. Dumais's "Shelburne Line" that was to evacuate airmen by boat had just been established in mid to late December but bad weather prevented any escapes. By December the backlog of evading US airmen had strained the resources and capacity of safe houses in Paris and the Brittany peninsula. It was time to revert to the routes over the Pyrénées.

After 13 days the airmen left Paris for Perpignan on December 18, 1943. Paulette Pavan escorted them to the Jardin des Plantes, the Arboretum adjacent to Gare d'Austerlitz. Paulette told them to sit separately on the park benches and look for a certain woman, Geneviève Crosson Le Berre, to pass by, turn around, and come back to them. They were to follow her one-by-one to board the train. The airmen, Geneviève, and an older Belgium man evading the Gestapo were in one train compartment. Two other airmen, Eugene Mulholland and Rosswell Miller and their guide were in another compartment. The first leg of the trip went to Toulouse then they took a secondary train to Perpignan. Geneviève would stop in Montauban because it was safer to wait there than the Toulouse train station which had a heavy Gestapo presence. However Geneviève recounted:

*"We came into Montauban, and there were so many Germans at the station that I had to find a place to take my evaders. When I heard the church bells ring, I decided to take them to Mass at a church located across from a park near the station. I sat in a pew next to a German officer and one of my evaders on my left. Unfortunately, he was shaking so badly that I was very afraid. After Mass we went to a park and had something to eat, then caught our train to Toulouse."*

At 7 pm, on December 20, 1943, Geneviève arrived at the Perpignan train station with five airmen and the sick Belgian. She transferred her evaders and money for the guides to Jean Olibo. Olibo led the evaders through Perpignan to St. Martin's Cemetery to arrive before curfew's start. At 8 pm, they met English Capt. George Millar, Serge Avons, Pierre Cartelet, and Joseph Marsal. Marsal was the person who hired and paid the Spanish guides Marsal, Olibo, and Cartelet were members of the Burgundy Line. Millar had been captured in North Africa and escaped a POW train on the way to Germany and managed to work his way to the Haute-Savoie. Avons came to Perpignan from the Haute-Savoie with Millar and wanted to escape France to join the war effort as a pilot.

Marsal led all the evaders to a place outside of Perpignan called the *"Al Peu de las Couloubres"* which is Catalan for the "Well of the Grass-Snakes", a small stream that flows southeast into the countryside where the Spanish guides were hiding in a reed thicket. The guides were smugglers and did not come into town because they were wanted men in both France and Spain. They came out of the reeds on signal, Marsal passed the money to the guides and off they went towards the Pyrénées. The guide for the first attempt to cross the Pyrénées was named Pedro.

Pedro took a short cut to the Pyrénées; straight from southeastern edge of Perpignan city to the Gorges de Lavall in the Pyrénées. The normal route would have allowed them to cross the Tech River near its mouth, where the river widens and is shallow and slower, an important feature during the heavy rainy winter of 1943. Pedro's more direct route to the mountains ended up trying to cross the swollen Tech River further upstream. Crossing here at 2 am in the winter of 1943 proved disastrous. Pedro and Avons were almost swept away, the Belgian lost his coat, and Miller lost his pants. At sunrise Pedro decided to take them 2 km upstream. In the evening of December 21 Pedro told the evaders that he would fetch a rope to aid in crossing the river.

After another cold night the evaders waited all day on December 22 for Pedro to return. They were short of food and clean water. Pedro never returned and was later reported to have drowned or been shot by the Germans. However, this was an alibi disseminated by Pedro because he was seen a month later in Spain by Avons. Avons was on the first two attempts to cross the Pyrénées with Schroeder but gave up and went back to his home in Haute-Savoie. He returned to Perpignan with John Carah's group of US and British airmen to cross the Pyrénées on January 29, 1944. We think Pedro spread the rumor of his demise to cover his abandonment of Norman's group of evaders so that the Resistance would not execute him for not delivering on his contract. Pedro may have been worried about getting killed while leading these evaders because the sick Belgian's loud cough could have easily given their position away to the Germans and resulted in all of them being shot for being in "no man's land."

That evening the abandoned evaders returned to Perpignan. On the way back, George told the Belgian, Alberic Volkaert, that he could no longer go with the group because he was a danger to them. He had money and could speak French so George had little sympathy for his predicament. Volkaert had a 500,000 Belgian franc price on his head for killing a German officer, but he did eventually cross the Pyrénées with Pete Hoyt.

In the early morning, December 23, they returned to Perpignan and went to see Cartelet at l'Hotel du Centre. Cartelet was leader of the local chapter of the *Compagnons de France*, a Vichy youth organization. The *Compagnons de France*served as a useful front for his work as leader of the local Resistance. Cartelet told them to go to a certain café and then at 8 am to go to the *Compagnons de France* building, known as the Palais Consulaire today. In 1943 the café was next to the bus station where farmers arrived from the country to sell their goods at the market, and they were often dirty and muddy from being in the fields. The group of evaders fit in well as they were quite muddy from crossing so many rain-soaked fields and vineyards on their way back to the city. They also used this café after the second failed attempt to cross the Pyrénées.

The Palais Consulaire was the first hiding place in Perpignan for the evaders. Suzanne Dedieu, a teacher at the College of Perpignan, was going on Christmas break, so she brought some Christmas food for the evaders. She was active in the Resistance and would hide John Carah and other evaders in her house a few weeks later. Norman and the other evaders stayed at the Palais Consulaire only one night before they were split up and sent to safe houses. Schroeder and several others went to the house of M. and Mme. Plantier for three nights including Christmas.

In the evening of December 27, the evaders left for their second attempt to cross the Pyrénées. This trip was also a fiasco as both Norman and George described and they returned to the café and then the Palais Consulaire in the morning of December 28. This attempt was where Norman noticed the guides were taking them north instead of south; George agreed. After hours of wandering around George threatened to kill the guides but let them leave. There were several new people on this attempt; one of them was an infiltrator. George became suspicious of him and made sure that he did not follow the true evaders to the Palais Consulaire. Cartelet supplied the evaders with bread, sausage and wine. On December 29 the evaders returned to their safe houses.

Cartelet had worked hard for the Resistance and eventually paid with his life. Because the Gestapo were on his trail, he had to leave Perpignan on March 2, 1944. He went to Toulouse and was arrested on May 11, 1944, imprisoned, tortured, then executed on June 27, 1944, north of Toulouse near the village of Castelmaurou with 14 other prisoners. His body was identified by DNA analysis in 2014.

From December 29 to January 3, 1944, Schroeder was at the Plantier's. He was ill from being cold, wet, drinking Tech River water, and hungry over the last nine days. But Madame Plantier's skill with teas and herbs fortified him for the third attempt. On the evening of January 3rd the airmen were gathered and led again by Marsal to meet two guides hiding in the reeds outside of Perpignan. The lead guide was quite old and short, had a high-pitched voice, and a favorite walking stick. We think he was Joseph Ferrusola, the guide used by John Carah a month after Norman crossed the Pyrénées. The similarity of Carah's route to Schroeder's would suggest a common guide. But a key point is that both groups stopped at the town of Rabos after crossing into Spain because Ferrusola had relatives in this town. Ferrusola followed the appropriate route to the mouth of the shallower Tech River, then southwest toward the Gorges de Lavall, and up the steep north face of the Pyrénées. At 8 am on January 4th they stopped near a shepherd's cabin to sleep under bushes and fill their water bottles. The guide only allowed travel at night to avoid detection.

At 6 pm Ferrusola got the evaders moving again. He took them on goat trails and sometimes bushwhacked on steep mountain sides to avoid observation by Germans that patrolled the high ridges. They headed west over a ridge and dropped into the Gorges de Lavall. They stayed below the ridge line on the east side of the Gorge with the Massane River below them and followed it towards the border. It began to snow. Miller, Howell, and Mulholland started to lag. George noted that Schroeder seemed to thrive on the challenge. Heavier snow forced them to take refuge in a small shepherd's cave. After a brief rest, George and Norman carried the packs of the other airmen and periodically helped them walk. Thirty minutes from the summit Mulholland collapsed. No amount of coaxing from Norman and George stimulated him to continue. Beatings from the guide were also fruitless. Mulholland completely gave up and begged to be left. George and Norman covered him with leaves and left him some food. The rest of them then continued up the last ridge and then crossed the treeless, windswept, mountaintop plateau into Spain, thrilled to see the lights of Spain. Miller, who spent 11 weeks with Mulholland in a cramped room in Paris, actually went back to help him. He never found him in the mountains but both ended up in the same jail in Spain.

In Spain the guides took Norman, Otto, William, and George towards Rabos, where they stayed in a cowshed. Ferrusola's son sent a message to the British Consulate notifying them that they had “packages to pick up.” The guides took them further south to a farmhouse where Ferrusola tapped a code on a window to signal that the evaders had arrived. A Spanish man from the British Consulate was there to get each name, rank, regiment, etc. The old guide said goodbye and left for home. The evaders were fed and spent the night. They were served mutton stew for lunch. “Splendid” was how George described it. Schroeder never ate lamb again!

In the morning a new guide arrived and took them two miles south to a wooded area next to the train track. Each evader was given a train ticket to ride from Figueres to Girona, but for security reasons they needed to hop the train near a country train station just before the Figueres stop. That way the evaders avoided waiting in the heavily-guarded Figueres train station. The train did not stop at this station, it merely slowed enough to hop onto the last car. They had to do this without anyone seeing them. The guide went to the front of the Pullman car and had instructed the airmen to sit apart from each other near the rear of the car and to discreetly pay attention to him. “In two hours, as we slow to stop at Girona, I will walk to the back platform of the car, follow me, and jump off the right side of the train.” The Spanish controlled this station and would arrest evading airmen and send them to Miranda, a terrible POW camp in Spain that was noted for its diseases.

Later in the evening in Girona, the guide took the evaders to a freight train switching yard and when the correct train chugged out spewing smoke and steam they hopped aboard and rode on the small brake platforms at the rear of the cars. The evaders were warned by the guide to pay attention to him because they would be jumping off the train after the fifth stop near Hostalric, Spain. After this, they walked along the railroad tracks going east for three hours and arrived in the wee hours of the morning at a fancy villa near Tordera. Norman described it as “fair little cottage” where they had delicious meals, a good place to sleep, and a change of clothes. The next day, the husband of the couple who owned the villa took Norman, Otto, and William to a country train station (Tordera) and put them on separate trains to Barcelona. George was sick and stayed at the villa. The date was January 9th, 1944.

Norman arrived at the then above-ground Passeig de Gràcia train station, which is across the street from Antonio Gaudi's Casa Batlló. He then walked southeast on Passeig de Gràcia to

Plaza Catalunya, turned left onto Ronda de Sant Pere, then right onto Plaza d' Urquinaona. In front of him, at the intersection of Carrer Trafalgar and Carrer de les Jonqueres, was a lamp store. In 1944 the British Consulate was two stories above the store. The lamp store is still there. After his interrogation he was cleared to go to Gibraltar and fly back to London, then returned to the USA via Africa and South America and arrived at his home in Egg Harbor, NJ, for his 21st birthday on February 26 1944.

The full book was published by Blurb and is available through the blurb.com book store. Search the title: Mission 13: A Downed Pilot's Escape from France; no royalties are required just printing costs, tax and shipping.

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Dutch WWII Airwar Researcher Jacobus "Co" de Swart investigated WWII air combat victory claims of German Luftwaffe Fighter Pilot Oberleutnant Erich Burkert. De Swart's research found confirmation of those claims, including two USAAF B-17s, one from the 95th Bombardment Group on 17 August 1943, and one from the 96th Bombardment Group on 20 October 1943. This photo Gallery presents the results of the research, as well as the modern day gatherings of the descendants of the combatants and witnesses to these events. Among the researchers de Swart collaborated with to fill some voids were the Belgian team at The Comet Network.

Read more....

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## Your father's aid to McKennon, Reuter, Howell, and Ritter

shared by Jeanloup Bodot

NATIVE OF MOSELLE

( annexed by the Germany in 1940 )

AND REFUGED IN MOUACOURT ( M & M )

I FINISHED THE WAR IN THE

AMERICAN ARMY.

BY Paul BODOT

translated by Bernard FRANK

1 On August 28 th 1944,the weather was fine.I decided to go fishing.
As I was going out,I heard someone howling:" Alarm! Alarm! Falschimjäger
( Alarm! Alarm! Parachutist.)
I raised the head and saw a parachutist above the forest of Parroy.
A few weeks ago,a detachement of German Soldiers installed them selves by us. These soldiers had to replace the required ones who couldn't stop the sabotages on the canal and the warrant officer's howls gave warning to me.
Bringing together the men who didn't mount guard,they were running towards Xures by following the towpath.So they could join the forest very fast.But they forgot: between the canal and the forest there was a river; the Sanon. This river hindered them from coming in the forest.
As soon as the patrol was going away,I went by bicycle to Mouacourt.
Near this village the family Christmen (1) was living.I foresrelled August and we decided to share the searches.While I was going deeply in the forest and calling,August stayed at the skirt of the woods.So he could welcome the aviator if this one,having located the village by his flying down,was looking for a refuge.Half an hour later,I went back empty handed.August was waiting in front of his house.He had found the parachutist and he hid him in a sap.About this sap,he gave me the co-ordinates and I rejoined the aviator.
This aviator was Captain Pierce Mac Kennon.His plane a Mustang P 51 had been touched by the D.C.A. of the train that he was machine gunning.I told him this: a German patrol was looking for him.So he had to stay there until the night.Shortly after,the German soldiers went back and the warrant officer was very angry.He rand up the authorities who stayed in Luneville.Later we heard,they had decided to rake the forest.
At nightfall,August was taking Pierce. By following the selvage he escorted him near Parroy.There it was possible to pass the canal on a provisoby bridge where I was waiting for him.August went back home.
I leaded Pierce towards a nest of machine guns which was overrun by the vegetation.I found that nest of machine guns two months before.
I arranged it on the off chance; perhaps it would be used as a refuge.
This shelter wasn't only near our house but near the bridge,guarded by the German soldiers too.
My sister Marie Therese,who was fourteen,took charge of bringing,in spite of the sentinel,the replenisching of stores to Pierce.She used to take grass for the rabbits in a meadow on the other side of the canal.So she availed herself of keeping in the depth of her sack the food.She put this food down in a place where I could recover and bring

2 it to Pierce.I chattered a long time with him and we commented upon the last news ( 2 ) In this time the revictualling was a very difficult problem and I have to thank the family Kirch,living in Arracourt,for their help.So I could bring enough food.
Two days later,I found a family:the Castets who agreed to quarter the aviator.Mr Castet was a teacher in Coincourt.This village was only 2 miles far from our house.He arranged one room where the fugitive could stay.
A short time later,my friends F.F.I. and myself,had to collect all the fire arms we had ( those fire arms were recovered in the forest of Parroy where they had been camouflaged in old saps dating from the war 1914/18. )
We had to muster in the forest of Drouville.Our quarters were in the farm of St Libere.
We had to take care of parachutists flying down.Those parachutists had to liberate Nancy.
Pierce went with me.Three days later we heard the German soldiers had evacuated Nancy. So they could escape from the " 4 th A.D." Then our mission was closed.We dispersed end went home discretly.German soldier stayed in my father's house and he told them I had gone away to Nancy.
So it was out of my mind to come back to Mouacourt. Pierce was always with me and above all it was the same for him.
Too many people were familiar with the allied aviator's stay. I was afraid of the inevitable chatterings. Because,on account of those chatterings a lot of inhabitants had been arrested before.
I didn't think of denunciation.The population was still thinking about the drama taking place on August 17 th 1944. ( 3 )
One of the F.F.I.( the responsible ) took us with him to Einville.
We went to Mr and Mrs Bady.But as this family had got children,it was too dangerous fot them.We couldn't stay there.So at nightfall we went to Mrs Brady's father,Mr Pierson,an old soldier from the war 1914/18 and we stayed there.
One day after all that,Lieutenant Bill Howel and sergeant Bob Ritter members of a flying fortress which was in perdition,were committed to m
Thanks to a retired manager, Mr Maurice,who managed the salt mine of Einville,they could stay in his house.
On september 10 th 1944 another man who had escaped a danger,Lieutenant Ray Reuter whose plane ( a P 51 ) crusched near Arracourt,added to the list.

He was housed by Mr Houot whose son was a teacher.

3 In the night of september 14th the village was occupied by German soldiers.As usual the officers were housed by the inhabitants.We didn't know that Bill and Bob's room had been registered for Two German Office: Wake up at about midnight,Mr Maurice,before opening,invited Bill and Bol to go to the attic.There he camouflaged them. He covered them with haulms and dried pods. During this time the other members of the family ordered the room.

I only heard about that next morning. But I was reassured because it wasn't a domiciliary search.

When I came back to Mr Maurice's house,the officers were away.I went to the attic,kept Bill and Bob posted up and enjoined them to be quiet.

Mr Maurice drew attention to me; with Mr Andre's agreement ( manager of the salt mine ) we could stay in the salt mine ( this one was out of service since a fortnight ) by following the assistance pit.

All seemed to be in order. The inhabitants were working.The soldiers were walking without looking at the civilians.

When I was near the bridge of the canal,my heart was beating very fast. I saw an armed sentinel.

I decided to stop and observe him. A lot of people were taking this bridge once or twice a day. But there wasn't any problem for them. The sentinel didn't worry about them.

As I was back I exposed the situation.It was out of question to try the adventure by having only one knot.

Reine, one of Mr Maurice's daugthers and Jules Houot intended to accompany each one a person.

Pierce agreed to attempt the first crossing.

Before leaving I enjoined the fugitives not to speak.Only the accompanis had to do it.

A basket between us and a hook on the shoulder we took the road like people going to their garden.

It was a good travelling. Not any event took place.I could leave Pierce in his wooden shelter that covered the well.After my coming back,it was Reine's turn.She went away with Bob,pulling a hand cart loaded with garden tools.

Then Jules and Ray prepared themselves to leave by pulling a wheel barro

Everything was perfect except Bill's travelling.

Indded,by jumping out of is plane,Bill's head knocked against the cock-p and he was seriously wounded.

4 Mr Schneider,a doctor,living in Einville,looked after him. Bill had got an enormous bandage round his head.His cap couldn't hide it and it was difficult for him to pass unknown.As this travelling was the most difficult,I decided to do it myself.

Fortunatly another sentinel had taken the place of the first one. But here the basket had been replaced by a sack of potatoes.

When we began to go away we were afraid.But nothing happened.

Now all together in security we began to descend the eleven steps ( ten meters each one ) by using the iron cramps.Then we were a hundred meters deeper,at the entry of the gallery.We found where the food was stocked.

After two days staying there,the aviators were nervous.They wanted to join their army.We went back in the well.

We heard noises coming from outside;noises meaning fusillades and cannonades.Looking through a narrow gap between the boards in our shelter,we saw German soldiers run everywhere.

Without fire arms it was impossible to leave. A few hours later we hea the phone ring.A good new. There was an engagement between American tanks and German soldiers.Further it had been possible for a companion to signalize our presence.But those American soldiers couldn't stay there longer.Fortunately an American officer determined a meeting point. ( It was for the next day at ten o'clock in the forest house.)

On september 18th we went outside and were going towards this forest house. But nobody was waiting for us.I made inquires about the positions of the American Army.Across the fields we went to Arracourt.

In Valhey we saw at last Two " jeep " that were under the order of chief sergeant J. Richardot. It wasan outburst of joy. With these two cars we could join Arracourt where C.C.A of the 4th A.D. was stationed ( 4 )

It was my first coming into contact with the 4 th A.D. The same day Pierce,Ray, Bill and Bob were repatriated.

After my voluntary engagement,I was appointed to C.C.B. and shared to all the battles ( in East France, in Belgium ( Bastogne ) in Germany ( at Buchenwald with Lieutenant Desard,we were the first soldiers coming there) and at last in Tchecoslovakia.

There we heard of the signatory of the armistice an May 8 th.

It was the end.

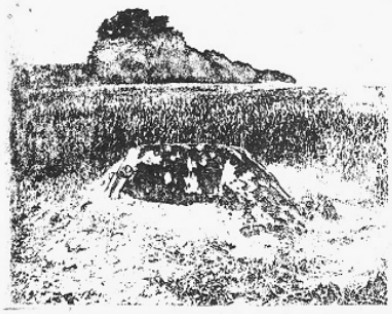
5 ( 1 ) February 1944 an Australian aviator was housed by the family Chrisment. The aviator's plane ( a Lancaster ) crashed near Avricourt.With my father we made this aviator a new identity card.His new name was Jacques CLAPIN . My father went with him to Nancy. There a person responsible for the escapes took care of him.

( 2 ) I was working at the custom office. I had a lot of time left. With my companions we did lots of damages.

( 3 ) On August 16 th 1944, three ground ups Jules CHRETIEN, J. VALOT and J.C. PEYRE were caught by the German soldiers. They were terribly tortured at the sap of Saurupt. But they didn't talk so they were killed on August 17 th. Then the German gestapo shoved their bodies to all the population.

( 4 ) On september 19 th Mr ANDRE and Mr MAURICE were killed.

7

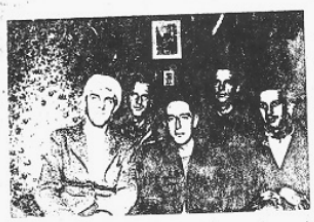


The place where Pierce was hidden during his first days in France In 1986 this shelter couldn't nearly be seen.

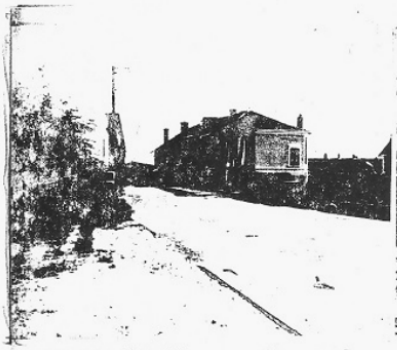
NOUAGOURE; the bridge over the canal Our house. The main room was occupied by German soldiers. On the left the sluice

At Maurice's Home
from the L to the R.
Lt Bill HOWELL
Paul BODOT
Lt Ray REUTER
Cp Pierce Mac KENYON
Sg Bob RITTER

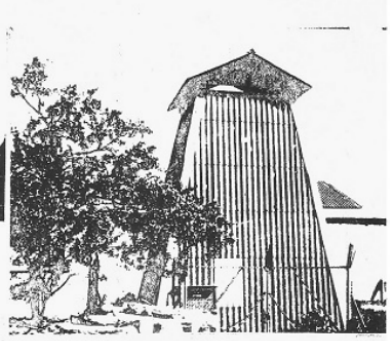
L



R



EINVILLE/ Bridge over the canal occupied by a German sentinel



EINVILLE: entrance of the well. In 1944 there was nothing round this well.

## Guardian documentary Colette nominated for an Oscar

Colette, written and directed by Emmy-winning filmmaker Anthony Giacchino, produced by Oculus Studios and Respawn Entertainment, and released by The Guardian, has been nominated for the Academy Award for Best Documentary Short Subject.

Executive produced by Peter Hirschmann and produced by Alice Doyard, Annie Small and Aaron Matthews, Colette has been selected by voters as one of the five films nominated in the Documentary Short Subject category for the 93rd Academy Awards. The winners of the 2021 Oscars will be announced on Sunday 25 April.

Colette is the second Guardian documentary to be nominated for an Oscar, following the success of Black Sheep which made the Oscar nominations list in 2019. Colette's executive producers for the Guardian were Charlie Phillips, Lindsay Poulton and Jess Gormley.

Colette tells the story of 90-year-old Colette Marin-Catherine, one of the last surviving members of the French Resistance, who confronts her past by visiting the Nazi concentration camp in Germany where her brother, Jean-Pierre, was killed. She always refused to set foot in Germany. This changes when a young history student named Lucie enters Colette's life as part of her research into the camp where Jean-Pierre died. The film follows Colette as she travels with Lucie to what remains of the forced labor camp near Nordhausen, Germany, in a journey of discovery that reopens old wounds and lessons of the past.

The film is free to watch on the Guardian website here.

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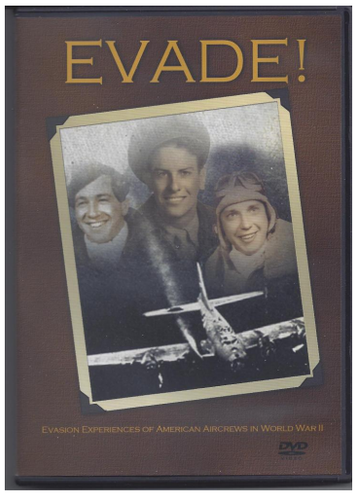
**1953 London England - Reunion Comete Line - Belgium**
shared by Marie-Claire Vienne (Daughter of mile ROISEUX.)




### New Escape and Evasion Books

For your reading enjoyment, the AFEES website lists the latest escape and evasion books that have come to the attention of the webmaster. A brief description of the contents, a reproduction of the book cover, and links to booksellers are included.
See https://airforceescape.org/escape-and-evasion-research/book-list/.
There are approximately 177 books on that page of the website. Since the beginning of the year five new books have been added to the list:

- Evans, Bryn, *Airmen's Incredible Escapes: Accounts of Survival in the Second World War*, Pen & Sword Books, 2020.
- Fleming, Brian, *Heroes in the Shadows, Humanitarian Action And Courage in the Second World War*, Amberley, 2019
- Langrehr, Henry and Jim DeFelice, *Whatever It Took: An American Paratrooper's Extraordinary Memoir of Escape, Survival and Heroism in the Last Days of World War II*, New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2021.
- Marnham, Patrick, *War in the Shadows – Resistance, Deception, Betrayal in Occupied France*, Simon&Schuster, 2020.
- In the case of Henriette Roosenburg's book, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down*, instead of saying "Originally published in 1957, it has been reprinted.", would you please say "Originally published in 1957, this is a new edition and contains an afterword by Sonja van 't Hof, a researcher of Roosenburg's Resistance work."
- Would you please add "Carah, Lt. Col. John M. Carah, USAF (Ret.), (edited by Warren B. Carah), *Achtung! Achtung! Die Flugfestungen Kommen! (Attention! Attention! The Flying Fortresses Are Coming!* Brighton Lane, MI: Elbow Lane Books, 2006."

Please let the webmaster know of new or old escape and evasion books that should be added to the list. Contact him at bcbolinger@comcast.net."

## AFEES Membership

AFEES has more than 600 regular members from most wars, primarily World War II
To be eligible for membership, a person must have been an Allied airman and 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**, **Members of the Families of Evaders and Helpers**, and **Friend Members**

**Download Membership Form**

**Attention Current members:** If you would like to pay your $25 membership dues through PayPal, please use the link below:

**Pay Membership Dues**

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