



306th Bomb Group Historical Association

# Echoes

First Over Germany



Volume 50, Issue 3 & 4

Educate and Communicate

Summer • Fall 2024

## 2024 Reunion Receives High Acclaim



Over 400 Eighth Air Force Historical Society reunion attendees gathered for the Saturday evening Gala, a momentous occasion culminating four days of activities. The event was held in the grand Boeing Center atrium, a space steeped in history, beneath the iconic B-17E *My Gal Sal* suspended from the ceiling.

Entertainment by the Victory Belles was followed by a presentation by featured guest speaker Major General Jason R. Armagost, Commander of the Eighth Air Force and Commander, Joint-Global Strike Operations Center, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. In his address, Major Armagost assured his audience that the service’s bomber force, airborne nuclear command, and its assets are at peak readiness should the need ever arise in which the defense of this nation becomes paramount. The Eighth Air Force is one of two active duty-numbered air forces in the Air Force Global Strike Command. At Barksdale Air Force Base, combat readiness has been enhanced with new bomber generation squadrons. The mission commands continue to innovate and prepare for the future, ensuring squadrons are organized, trained, and equipped for combat in any theater where the unique capabilities of bombers are required to meet combatant objectives.

The event concluded with a heartwarming moment as Major Armagost, Eighth Air Force Historical Society President Paul Tibbets, and Reunion Chairman Steve Snyder personally presented the four World War II veterans attending the reunion with commemorative pins as a token of our deep respect and gratitude.

The primary draw for the reunion was the access to the National World War II Museum, directly across the street from the iconic Higgins Hotel, the mainstay for the reunion dinners, meetings, and bomb group hospitality rooms.

Aside from visits to the World War II Museum, reunion participants had the opportunity to enjoy a luncheon cruise along the Mississippi River aboard the *Steamboat Natchez*. Thursday’s two-hour cruise featured a view of the port and skyline of New Orleans, entertainment provided by the Dukes of Dixieland Band, and an authentic Creole lunch.

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## Leadership

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SUE MOYER

MIKE PRENTICE

CLAYTON SNYDER

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#### 306<sup>th</sup> Museum Thurleigh

MARK FUSSELL  
UK Representative  
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*The 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association was determined by the IRS to be a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) as a public charity, effective 24 July 2015. The federal tax ID number is 58-1365152.*



## A Message from President Steve Snyder

Greetings! Boy, what a fun reunion we had in conjunction with the Eighth Air Force Historical Society in New Orleans! With over sixty 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA members attending, we were the largest bomb group by far! Plus, it was great to have 306<sup>th</sup> members attending a reunion for the first time or who had not attended a reunion for a long time.

I hope even more 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA members will be able to attend the reunion next year. Not only are reunions fun, but the best part is making new friends and reuniting with old friends. The more reunions you attend, the deeper the relationships you develop. You go from just being friends to feeling like family. Next year's reunion will also be held with the Eighth AFHS in Colorado Springs, Colorado, from October 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>, where the big draw is the US Air Force Academy.

In addition to being President of the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA, I am also on the Board of Directors of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and am Chairman of the Reunion Committee. The goals of both organizations are the same: to Remember the air war over Europe, to Honor the men who fought it, and to Educate the public about it. The only difference is that we focus on the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, and they focus on the entire Eighth Air Force (all the bomb groups and fighter groups). I encourage you to check out their website at <https://www.8thafhs.org/> and to join the Society. It is doing great work to keep the memory alive of those brave young men whose sacrifice must never be forgotten.

A year or so ago, one of our veterans said he thought that the Association needed to communicate more with the membership. In an effort to do that, I have begun sending emails on significant dates in history relating to the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group. I send a thank you email to everyone who becomes an “official member” of the Association by completing a registration form or who renews their membership. Finally, I send a thank you email to anyone who donates to the Association. If anyone has additional ideas, please let me know by emailing [306.bgaha@gmail.com](mailto:306.bgaha@gmail.com).

Historically, donations have been the only means by



which the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA has been funded. We did launch a PX Store a few years ago, but the profits from it are minimal. During World War II, there were forty bomb groups in the Eighth Air Force stationed in England. Most of them no longer have active associations, but of the ones that do, the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA is the only one that does not charge dues. Although the Association is currently in healthy financial shape, donations have been steadily declining, which causes concern. It is a situation the 306<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors will be discussing.

Thank you for your support. It is our duty to remember. ■

## Thurleigh Museum Donation Declared “Fantastic”

At the 2023 Reunion Board of Directors Meeting in Ontario, California, the board determined that an annual fundraising campaign for the 306<sup>th</sup> Museum at Thurleigh, England, should be initiated to help support its mission. Yearly, the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association is now slated to donate \$500, and at the same time reach out to the membership, requesting additional donations.

The results for 2024 are FANTASTIC!

A total of \$2,078.41 was collected and provided to the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Museum Board of Directors. You, the membership, contributed over \$1,500, of which \$756 was donated by those who attended the recent reunion in New Orleans. The 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Board of Directors thank you for your generosity.

Upon receipt of this donation, the Thurleigh Museum board of directors responded with the following message:

*The 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Museum would like to thank all the amazing people from the 306<sup>th</sup> BG Historical Association who kindly donated monies for the support of the Museum here in the UK. Your continued support allows us to honour all those that flew and worked at Station 111.*

*So, thank you again to every one of you! ■*



## 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Memorial Plaque Opportunity

The 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA, in partnership with the UK's 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Museum, has designed memorial plaques to honor veterans who served at Thurleigh (Station 111). By donating \$25 (US) or more, a plaque will be placed at the Museum in honor of the donor's veteran. Please refer to the form on the following page for more information regarding the ordering process. All request forms shall be sent to Mark Fussell at [Fuss306thbg@outlook.com](mailto:Fuss306thbg@outlook.com). If you have any questions you are asked to contact Mark at the email address provided. Once you have agreed upon the plaque design, you will be invoiced for your order. ■



# 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Memorial Plaques (\$25.00)

## Order Form:

Plaque Type (check one) <i>See sample below.</i>	Garden		Wall Mount	
---	--------	--	------------	--

Which Squadron Patch? This will be shown on the plaque alongside the Triangle H.

367 <sup>th</sup>		368 <sup>th</sup>		369 <sup>th</sup>		423 <sup>rd</sup>	
-------------------	--	-------------------	--	-------------------	--	-------------------	--

## Aircraft Type and Serial Number

Aircraft Type and Serial Number to allow aircraft artwork creation. Check box  if no aircraft image included.

B-17F		B-17G		Tail Letter	
-------	--	-------	--	-------------	--

Serial Number		Plane Name	
---------------	--	------------	--

## Memorial Wording

Use these lines to enter your desired tribute wording.


Fin Color (Top Color + Yellow) Refer to sample below. Check box  if no fin color to be included.

Red 367 <sup>th</sup>		White 368 <sup>th</sup>		Green 369 <sup>th</sup>		Blue 423 <sup>rd</sup>	
--------------------------	--	----------------------------	--	----------------------------	--	---------------------------	--

Other Wording/Motto Check box  if no additional wording to be included

--

## Extra Voluntary Donation

\$	
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## Email Address

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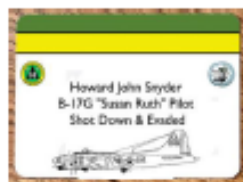
This allows the 306th Bombardment Group Museum to invoice you directly for the Memorial Plaque and any Voluntary Donation.

Please email your form to [Fuss306thbg@outlook.com](mailto:Fuss306thbg@outlook.com)

If you have any questions or need our assistance, please contact us using this email address.

You will not be invoiced until you are happy with the final design.

If ordering multiple plaques, use separate order form for each.



Example: Wall Plaque



Example: Garden Plaque

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**Donation Update:**

**Your Dollars Sustain the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Mission**

Because the 306th BGHA does not charge membership dues, we depend on your tax-deductible donations to support the continuing education mission of our organization. Donations may be made online at [www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us) or mailed to the Treasurer at the address below. Many thanks to those of you who have donated to date in 2024. As of 29 November 2024, the association has received a total of \$8,489.73 from 77 supporters, 16 of which are first time supporters.

The 306th BGHA can also now receive donations through Zeffy (<https://www.zeffy.com>), a zero-fee fundraising software platform for nonprofits. You can donate to the 306th BGHA via Zeffy by visiting our website (<https://www.306bg.us/>) and clicking on the "Donate" button.

Zeffy is a fundraising platform exclusively for nonprofit organizations that allows donors to share one-time and recurring donations with zero fees. Zeffy is solely supported by any additional amount donors are willing to contribute on top of their donation to the specified organization.

We also still welcome donations through PayPal or check!

**Memorial Donations**

Please consider this significant way of honoring the memory of a veteran or other person who has been part of the 306<sup>th</sup> family by noting "306<sup>th</sup> Memorial Fund" along with the veterans name you are honoring on the memo line of your check or as a notation when using PayPal. For additional information regarding memorial donations, see page 26 of this issue of *Echoes*.

**All donations are extremely important to the continuing education mission of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association. Although donations are optional, they are greatly appreciated!**

**DONATION FOR THE  
306<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

Make checks payable to:

**306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association**

Send to:

Sally Smith, 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Treasurer

PO Box 17163

Boulder, CO 80308

Name

By initialing here ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), I hereby confirm this current contact information should be used for my FREE membership registration/renewal for 2025, indicating my continuing interest in the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA.

Address:

eMail:

Telephone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

This donation is being made in memory of:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to 306<sup>th</sup>: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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(continued from page 1)

Thursday's excursion was a journey of discovery, as reunion guests embarked on a sightseeing tour of New Orleans. They were introduced to the city's famous attractions, including the vibrant French Quarter, the lively Bourbon Street, and the elegant antebellum-era plantation homes. The tour was capped off with a unique introduction to the famous above-ground cemeteries and intriguing ghost, vampire, and voodoo legends. Guide commentary aboard the motor coach ensured guests were immersed in the rich history for which New Orleans is known.

Thursday night's dinner program featured John Curatola, PhD, LTCOL, USMC, the Samuel Zemurray Stone Senior Historian at the National World War II Museum who captivated his audience with stories about World War II artwork that so often appeared on the nose and fuselage of aircraft. Although not officially sanctioned by the USAAF, ultimately regulations were not enforced. The practice evolved to express the individuality of crews, their accomplishments, their memories of home and peacetime life, and a kind of psychological protection against the stresses of war. Some artists were professional and included such noted individuals as Alberto Vargas, Milt Caniff, and Al Capp, all of whom were handsomely paid for applying their talents to a crew's bomber. Paint supplies for the artwork were acquired locally. Themes included humor, the girl back home, Disney characters, irony, and aircraft mission scoreboards. Despite the scantily clad ladies frequently depicted, very few were considered pornographic, and sometimes only by the beholder.

Saturday morning's General Membership meeting highlighted reports from Jim Peters, President of the Historic Windover Airfield Foundation; Scott Loehr, President and CEO of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia; and Dr. Hattie Hearn, Historical Consultant for the American Air Museum at the Imperial War Museum in Duxford, England. The speakers shared with those in attendance current activities and plans for each of these organizations.

"Walk Where They Walked," the motto of Wendover Air Force Base in Utah, a World War II training base for B-17 and B-24 bomber crews, is undergoing a significant restoration effort. Mr. Peterson noted what has been a "History in Ruins"

now has several projects awaiting funding, including the objective of devoting display spaces for every bomb group that trained at Wendover, including the 306<sup>th</sup> bomb group, which was the first to arrive at the airfield. In addition, the goal is to allow visitors to stay in the barracks, eat in the dining hall, and have an immersive understanding of what those who trained there experienced.

Mr. Scott Loehr emphasized the mission of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is to preserve and present the history of the Eighth Air Force. The museum's programs include STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) programs, tours for school-aged students, educational travel, and author presentations. The museum has raised \$13M in funds toward the expansion campaign with a goal of raising an additional \$2M. The museum's goal is summarized by the assertion: "They saved the world. We save their stories."

Dr. Hattie Hearn, museum curator, author, and historical consultant with expertise in the wartime history of the Eighth Air Force, was an historical advisor to the "Master of the Air" mini-series. Her focus is on researching and preserving hidden histories, which is aided by her eclectic collection of artifacts and personal stories, all intended to share the legacy of the Eighth Air Force.

In closing the meeting, President Paul Tibbets reminded those present to mark their calendars for forthcoming reunions:

October 1 – 5, 2025 – Colorado Springs, CO  
2026 [dates TBA] – Savannah, GA  
2027 [dates TBA] – San Antonio, TX

The 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association was represented by 60 descendants who identified themselves with the four squadrons that made up the bomb group. The Friday night Rendezvous Dinner brought together those members for a short business meeting and a Folded Wings Ceremony at which deceased veterans and family members who passed away during the previous year were remembered. To complete the ceremony, Treasurer Sally Smith and her father, Thomas Smith, sang the hymn "Mansions of the Lord." To conclude the meeting, before adjourning for dinner, Steve Snyder read the poem, *Ode to the Reich Wreckers*, by Ben Rosser, grandson of a 100<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group airman. ■

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# 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Folded Wings Tribute to the Fallen

## *Ode to the Reich Wreckers*



*Jackie Feeser reading names of deceased veterans and deceased family members.*



High above her coast and shores,  
The mighty thunder of a thousand engines roar,  
Towards the sky and over the sea,  
With guns bristling fore to aft, they fly onward, the steel beasts.

Those poor young bastards, so brave were they all.  
And when the Hun fighters came, many of them, too many, did fall.  
They were her soldiers, loyal until the end,  
They were the Reich Wreckers, the noblest and finest of all men.

Pressing onward into the Lion's den did they ride,  
Breaking the Hun's mighty back, but so many did die,  
The cost was mighty, the price was high,  
But this was the cost, to preserve our way of life.

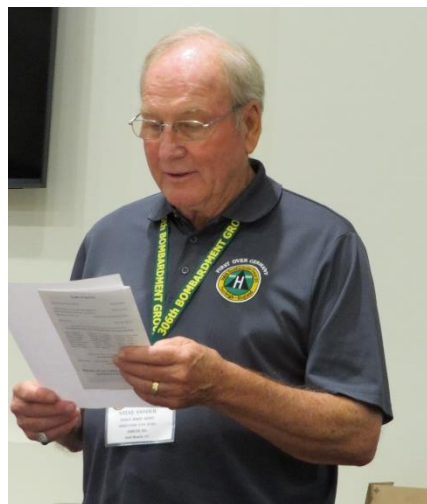
Some of her kin are now old and gray,  
Telling the tales to the earnest grandchildren here today,  
But others were not so lucky, and the price they did pay,  
But they are not dead and buried, they aren't lying in graves.

Look up child and you shall see with your own eyes,  
A thousand white streamers rising over England's blue skies,  
And listen to the thunder of a thousand engines roar,  
Ghosts of the 306<sup>th</sup> still guarding her shores.

*Artwork: Thurleigh's Guiding Light by artist Keith Hill; used by permission for Folded Wings Tribute to the Fallen Observance*



*Thomas and Sally Smith singing "Mansions of the Lord."*



*President Steve Snyder reading "Ode to the Reich Wreckers"*



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# 2024 Reunion Photo Album

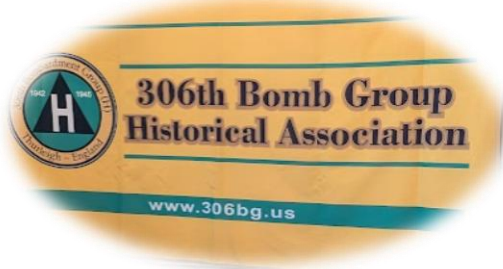


*306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association Reunion Attendees: (front row, left to right) Kathi Prentice, Patricia Perline, Nancy Huebotter (kneeling) Bryan Prentice, Sarah Prentice, Dick Fox); (back row, left to right) Dave Jordan, Glenda Snyder, Steve Snyder, Sally Smith, Mike Prentice, Sue Sharkey, Mike Linton Derrek Johnson, Clif Yaussi, Richard Perline, Doug Snyder, Michael Goncher, Sue Linton, Robert McCaleb.*



*Third generation 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA members Bryan Prentice, Derrek Johnson, and Doug Snyder.*





*Mike Linton and Leonard Kudlack*



*Nancy Huebotter, Jackie and Bill Feeser*



*Mike, Kathi, and Sarah Prentice*



*Susan and Mike Linton*



*Linda and Michael Goncher*





*Dr. Vernon Williams and Nancy Huebotter*



*Donna DeLair and Treasia Hendricks*



*Richard and Patricia Perline*



*Sally, Lillian, and Thomas Smith*



*Sally Smith and My Gal Sal*



*Kathleen Kilcoyne and Christina Kilcoyne Grazer*





*Thursday Night Speaker: John Curatola, PhD, Lt Col, USMC, National World War II Museum Senior Historian*



*Landon Wilkey (Curator, Historic Wendover Airfield) and Jim Peterson (President, Historic Wendover Airfield Foundation) with Eighth Air Force Historical Society President Paul Tibbets*



*Linda Hermann, Clif Yaussi, Bill and Jackie Feeser, Michele Fox*



*Left to right: Clif Yaussi (back to camera) Bill and Jackie Feeser, Michele and Dick Fox, Patricia and Richard Perline, Mindy Zeiter, Robert and Linda Hermann*



*Col. Susan O'Konski and Dr. Vernon Williams*



*Evelyn Sammons, Leonard Kudlack, Barbara Wood*





*Mike Prentice and 486<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Veteran Clarence Kooi*



*Derrek Johnson and Les Stellish*



*306<sup>th</sup> BGHA PX Items*



*Nancy Huebotter and Doug Snyder*



*Dick Fox,  
Steve Snyder,  
Mike Prentice*



*Steve Snyder*



*Richard Perline and Linda Hermann*



*Many of the photos included in this Reunion Photo Album are courtesy of Wm. Craig Dubishar.*



# Saturday Night Gala



*Eighth Air Force Historical Society Paul W. Tibbets IV and Guest Speaker Major General Jason R. Armagost, USAF Commander, Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana*



*Candle Lighting Ceremony*



*Reunion Chairman Steve Snyder paying tribute to the "Missing Man" table.*



*The Victory Belles*



*Saturday Night Gala Dinner held in the US Freedom Pavilion, Boeing Center beneath the iconic B-17E My Gal Sal.*



*Eighth Air Force Veterans: (left to right) Alfred Benjamin, Clarence Kooi, Melvin Hurwitz, and Maurice Berger*

# Wendover Field



We are the boys from Wendover Field,  
Earning our meager pay  
Guarding the folks with millions  
For one sixty-five a day.

Out in the wind-swept desert  
Wendover is the spot,  
Fighting the terrible dust storms  
In the land that God forgot.

Out in the brush with rifles  
Eating and drinking the dust  
Doing the work of a chain gang  
and too damn tired to cuss.

Out with the snakes and lizards  
Here's where the boys get blue  
Out in the wind-swept desert  
Two thousand miles from you.

No one cares if we are living  
No one gives a damn  
Back home we are soon forgotten  
cause we are loaned to Uncle Sam.

All night the wind keeps howling  
Its more than one can stand  
Hell folks, we're not convicts  
We're defenders of the land.

For the duration we must stand it  
Many years of life we'll miss  
Don't let the draft board get you  
and for hell's sake don't enlist.

Out on this Utah desert  
It's one helluva spot  
Fighting in a terrific heat wave  
In the land that God forgot.

But we are the men from the U.S.A.  
and we'll go without green grass  
and someday we'll catch Hitler  
And shove Wendover up his —.

We're up at six each morning  
Digging in the sand  
No, we're not convicts  
We're defenders of this land.

We spend our leisure hours writing to the gals  
Hoping when we return again  
They're not married to our pals.

We have washed a million dishes  
and have peeled as many spuds  
We have our hands all blistered  
From washing dirty duds.

All the inspections we have had  
are worse than we can tell  
and I hope it's nice in heaven  
For I know what it's like in hell.

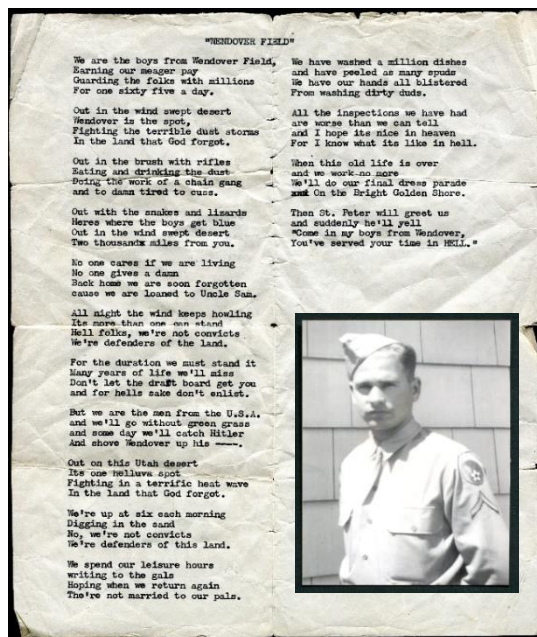
When this old life is over  
and we work no more  
We'll do our final dress parade  
On the Bright Golden Shore.

Then St. Peter will greet us  
and suddenly he'll yell  
"Come in my boys from Wendover,  
You've served your time in HELL."

*The author of this poem was PFC Lavaun Manning, an aircraft armorer at Wendover. Unfortunately, the unit to which he belonged has not been identified.*

*Wendover's mission was to train heavy bomb groups, which began in April 1942 with the arrival of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, flying their B-17s.*

*Many thanks to Landon Wilkey, Curator, Historic Wendover Airfield, for providing a copy of this poem along with the information about its author.*







## From the Secretary

By Derrek Johnson  
(Secretary's contact information on page 2)

The 306<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting held in New Orleans during the annual reunion focused on seven major topics.

The primary discussion concerned donations supporting the 306<sup>th</sup> Museum in Thurleigh, England. To mark the 22<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the July 27<sup>th</sup> opening of the 306<sup>th</sup> Museum at the Thurleigh Airfield, the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association Board of Directors had previously voted to make an annual contribution to the Museum. In addition, a fundraiser was sponsored by the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA, giving anyone wishing to donate to the Museum the opportunity to do so. Treasurer Sally Smith reported that donations collected during the reunion have been significant.

In addition to these donations, the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA, in partnership with the Thurleigh Museum, has designed memorial plaques to honor veterans who served at the Thurleigh Air Base. Forms for ordering plaques and additional information were made available in the Hospitality Room and are available on the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA website and in the most recent copy of *Echoes*.

Website and email communication improvements are pivotal as the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA looks toward future enhancements that will continue to be meaningful to current members and attract future members' attention, including succeeding generations. Because it is our duty to remember, the organization believes the website must be an official location of information relative to the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group and a secondary resource for such primary materials as documents, photographs, and oral histories.

To ensure members and potential members are engaged with the mission and vision of the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA, the Board of Directors has created a Mission Statement and Vision Statement. These will appear on the website's home page and be published in *Echoes* periodically.

Also discussed was the possibility of establishing a mentorship program to introduce prospective leaders to the organization by onboarding them with Board members and providing them with the opportunity to help support the organizational goals of the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA into the future.

Work continues on the creation of updated Folded Wings Scrolls. The scrolls will feature a new design and will contain a listing of nearly 900 names of those 306<sup>th</sup>

bomb group crewmen who died during the war in the service of their country. These scrolls will be available for display at the 2025 Colorado Springs, Colorado reunion.

As the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA moves into the future, additional updates and modifications to the organization to assure members and future members of its viability were discussed, and suggestions were offered. These items will be addressed at forthcoming Board and General Membership meetings. Members are encouraged to watch for *Echoes* articles, website postings, and emails containing proposed changes. These changes will be a foundation for the organization's continued growth and success. ■



### ***306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association Mission and Vision Statement***

#### **Mission Statement:**

The 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association is committed to honoring 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group veterans and preserving the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group historical records.

#### **Vision Statement:**

To ensure the intent of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association continues, this organization shall pursue the following core values:

1. Encourage the involvement from descendants of our veterans and from anyone interested in the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, the support of which is crucial to our mission.
2. Promote military historical research, provide continued education for current and future generations, and support outreach activities, including reunions and other events, via the organization's social media, periodic emails to membership, presence at annual reunions, and the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA newsmagazine, *Echoes*.

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## From the Editor



National World War II Museum:

### **A Sobering Reminder**

by Nancy M. Huebotter  
*(Editor's contact information  
on page 2)*

The opportunity to spend five days roaming through the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, during the recent Eighth Air Force Historical Society/306 BGHA reunion was a thrill beyond all measure. Overwhelmed by the magnitude of the museum's collection of artifacts documenting the war that changed the world, I could not help the emotional realization of the unprecedented extent of destruction and loss of life caused by the war. Viewing so many exciting displays gave me an appetite for learning more about the global conflict between the Allies and the Axis Powers. Knowing this was the most significant and deadliest war the world has ever known was reflected in the myriad displays that not only relayed the stories of each theater but told of what was happening on the home front and what inventions came out of the need to forestall the enemy. At one display, the placards read, "More than any conflict in history, World War II was a war of technology; a war of science. In the Second World War, all sides sought new and innovative ways to defeat the enemy. Victory in World War II required an unprecedented mobilization of brainpower, human power, and resources." At another display, the posted information read, "Hitler said, 'Germany believes Americans only know how to build refrigerators and make razor blades.'" Below this pronouncement was a display of the many inventions that came about because of the necessities identified by World War II's effort to end the threat of the Axis powers.

Even the casual observer would be reminded that innovation fueled America's manufacturing capabilities. Some companies, such as Motorola, Kodak, Frigidaire, RCA, Dow Chemical, Chrysler, and International Harvester adapted existing production techniques to meet defense needs. Other manufacturing methods made the construction of complex weapons and vehicles more efficient. Ford applied its automotive assembly line system to the

production of airplanes.

America's heartland, supported by government initiatives, developed new technologies that resulted in an increase in agricultural production, ensuring Allied troops would be fed. Scientists developed high-calorie, non-perishable foods like Spam and C-rations to nourish and fuel troops on the front lines.

What visitor to the National World War II Museum cannot fail to be reminded that the memory of World War II continues to shape our world, inspiring American people in their pursuit of peace, justice, and freedom.

The National World War II Museum tells the story of the American experience in the war that changed the world, why it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today.

Observing the reactions of others visiting the same displays as I was a lesson in itself. Most individuals were captivated by what they saw, reading the placards at many displays and watching the many video presentations strategically placed throughout the venues. It was equally fascinating to watch the reactions of the various school-aged children as they visited the displays while their parents did their utmost to explain what the child was seeing. Most demonstrated a vested interest in what lay beyond the glass-enclosed exhibits. At one display, I had the opportunity to share the dog tag printing machine concept with an elementary school student. To someone who obviously knew more about today's technology than I, the method used regarding how the metal tags were embossed for every Armed Forces member almost seemed to be a foreign concept to him. But I want to believe the young student left the area with a new-found knowledge of what it took to ensure every soldier or airman was adequately identified.

Of course, a few individuals wandered around the museum, obviously not interested in what they were there to see and experience. I overheard one teenager say, "Why do we have to look at all this old stuff?" and I observed one bored young lady who would rather capture the attention of the male species of her age group than casually view any of the displays. Thankfully, these incidents were surpassed by other youngsters enthusiastically regarding the exhibits they encountered.

It is a sobering thought that many students wandering through the museum may only have a basic understanding of World War II and its

implications. The dedicated individuals and combat heroes, the stories of bravery and sacrifice, and the war's profound impact on today's world may be lost to them. With their core curriculum mandates, teachers often lack the time or resources to educate students about this pivotal moment in history. Such a situation only reinforces the belief that it is our collective duty to remember, and it is up to us to ensure that this part of history is never forgotten. ■

### Attention Journalists and Non-Journalists:

Do you have an article you would like to submit to *Echoes*? If the answer is YES, I am interested in hearing from you. Please submit all articles as a Word file attached to an email. Do not use .pdf or any other format when providing your word document to me. Save all images as high-resolution photos attached to the email in .jpg format. Do not imbed the images in the text. Including notations in the Word submission draft where the image should be placed is suggested. Remember – submission does not guarantee publication. Due to size constraints of the magazine, the publication of non-solicited materials may be held for a future issue.

The editor reserves the right to modify the article as appropriate.

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Articles relative to World War II, the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, and individual veterans are acceptable subjects. The focus should be on raising awareness and enhancing the education of second, third, fourth generations and beyond.

Send your articles to:

[nmhuebotter306@gmail.com](mailto:nmhuebotter306@gmail.com)

*Echoes*  
Article Due Date for  
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3 May 2025

## Jean Buford Presented with Quilt of Valor

Jean Buford is a remarkable woman from Haskell, Texas, who turned 101 earlier this year. Her late husband, Forest Buford, served in the US Army Air Corps, Eighth Air Force, 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group during World War II before he was discharged in 1946.

Mrs. Buford grew up in a military family and followed in the footsteps of her father, who had served in World War I. After graduating college in 1944, Jean enlisted in the Navy, joining the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), a role she described as “auxiliary to the military.”

Jean was recently presented with a beautiful quilt from the Quilts of Valor Foundation for her dedication and tenacity in the face of adversity. Cecilia Buckholz, QOV Group Leader of the Fort Worth Quilt Guild, made the presentation. The quilt was pieced by Laurel Grannan of Benbrook, Texas, then quilted and bound by Mrs. Buckholz.



The Quilt of Valor Foundation began in 2003 with a dream—literally. When QOV Founder Catherine Roberts's son was deployed in Iraq in 2003, Roberts dreamt one night of a young man sitting on the side of a bed, hunched over. The next

scene showed that same man wrapped in a quilt, changing his demeanor from despair to hope.

Roberts wrote, “The message of my dream was ‘Quilts = Healing.’”

Each handmade quilt is awarded to a service member or veteran who has been touched by war as a way to thank them for their service and sacrifice. ■

*Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the October 15, 2024 issue of the Weatherford Democrat. Permission for article reprint was provided by the publisher.*



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# Snyder Family Attends 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations in Belgium



*Snyder Family at Susan Ruth Memorial: Basil Davis, Clayton Snyder, Steve Snyder, and Doug Snyder*

*By Steve Snyder*

At the end of August, my family attended four days of events to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation of Belgium and ceremonies to honor and remember my father's 369<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron B-17 *Susan Ruth* crew and other US airmen written about in my book, *Shot Down*. Our family has attended previous anniversary celebrations; this was my seventh visit. Over the years, we have developed deep friendships with many Belgian people. Attending the events is very special; reuniting with friends makes them even more so.

The events occur in the rural countryside and farmlands of Wallonia just north of the French border in the municipalities of Momignies and Chimay, where several memorials have been erected to commemorate events during World War II. To this day, the Belgian people are still so thankful and so grateful for the US Army's liberation of this area after four years of Nazi occupation and Nazi oppression.

On August 30, ceremonies were held at the *Susan Ruth Memorial* in Macquenoise, near where the B-17 came down after being attacked by two German Focke-Wulf 190 fighters on February 8, 1944. USAF 424<sup>th</sup> Air Base Squadron members attend and provide the color guard. Ceremonies followed at memorials in the woods outside of Chimay to remember April 22, 1944, when eight US airmen

(three from the *Susan Ruth* crew and three from the 368<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron *Rationed Passion*) were captured, taken to the Chimay schoolhouse for interrogation, and then driven back to the woods where all eight were murdered. *Susan Ruth* navigator Robert Benninger was among them, and his great nephew James "JJ" Jeffrey and his family from Virginia Beach, VA, were in attendance to witness the moving and emotional programs. The day's events ended with a wonderful reception at the Chimay Town Hall.

On August 31, there was a ceremony at the gravesite of Paul and Nelly Tilquin, who were among the many Belgian people who helped my father evade capture by the Germans. My father, Howard Snyder, was missing in action for seven months and was finally liberated when the US Armies liberated the area on September 2, 1944. At the ceremony, I met Paul and Nelly's grandchildren, Yvan and Vincianne, who gave me a piece of my father's parachute cord. There followed a barbeque lunch outside the little Museum 40-44 at Monceau-Imbrechies, which contains information, artifacts, and memorabilia related to the B-17 *Susan Ruth* and its crew and others related to Lt. Claude Cook, who was the first US soldier killed liberating Belgium on September 2. It was wonderful to reunite with the family of Jean-Jacques Gaudry, whose grandmother and mother were other people who hid my father from the Germans.

On September 1, there was a reenactment of the US 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry military vehicles crossing over the Wardoise River from France into Belgium to liberate Cendron, the first village in Belgium to be liberated. During the anniversary events, huge tents were set up at Cendron, which held hundreds of people, and a festive lunch was served with lots of music, lots of Chimay beer, and lots of fun.

The most important day is always September 2, the liberation of Cendron. As of August 30, the US military, the Belgian military, and the French military are represented, and the US Ambassador to Belgium attends. In the morning was a ceremony at the Monceau-Imbrechies Memorial to the first twelve GIs who were killed liberating Belgium. A ceremony at the Cendron Memorial preceded another big celebration luncheon party in the tents, during which everyone had a grand time. ■





*Cedron Memorial*



*Clayton and Steve Snyder with US Ambassador Michael Adler*



*James Jeffrey Family*



*Monceau-Imbrechies Memorial*



*Families of US soldiers who fought in Belgium attended a memorial in Cedron. Included in this photograph are Clayton, Glenda, and Steve Snyder and Basil Davis.*



*Museum 40-44 at Monceau-Imbrechies*

*School children, dignitaries, military personnel, and descendants of US soldiers who fought in Belgium attended a memorial in Cedron, honoring the first American troops who entered Belgium to liberate the country from Nazi occupation 80 years ago.*





# Sgt. Earl Schwab and the B-17 *Steady Hedy*

Historically, the combat crews have received and continue to receive all the recognition. However, the combat crews would have had no planes to fly without the ground crews.

After bombing missions, ground crews would stay up all night working on the planes so they could fly again the next day. Usually, in very inclement weather (rain, snow, sleet), the ground crews worked tirelessly to maintain the planes and repair battle damage. They took great pride in the aircraft they were assigned to and considered it their plane. They just loaned it to the combat crews to fly on missions. The ground crews were the unsung heroes, and Earl Schwab, father of 306<sup>th</sup> member Linda Schwab, was one of them.



Earl was inducted into the army on June 3, 1942, and reported for training at MacDill Airfield in Florida. He was first assigned as part of the signal corps but then was transferred and assigned to the 369<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group and reported on February 28, 1944.

On April 25, 1944, B-17 *Steady Hedy*, Aircraft #42-97181, was assigned to the 369<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron. Supposedly, the plane was named after Hedy Lamarr. Everett Daniel, the ground crew chief assigned to the aircraft, and Earl Schwab, his assistant crew chief, would become lifelong friends.



*Steady Hedy's* first combat mission was on April 28, bombing the airfield at Avord, France. The pilot was Richard Buttorff, who went on to fly thirty-five missions, twenty-two of which were on *Steady Hedy*. *Steady Hedy's* last combat mission was on April 18, 1945, to Rosenheim, Germany, piloted by Ray K. Schieb. The next day would be the last of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group's 341 missions during the war.

Through the loving care of Everett Daniel and Earl Schwab, the B-17 *Steady Hedy* would fly 118 combat missions (some sources have recorded 139 missions) without a mechanical abort: a fantastic accomplishment. According to 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Historian Cliff Deets, approximately 500 B-17s were flown by the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, of which only 13 flew over one hundred missions.



Both Earl Schwab and *Steady Hedy* would continue to serve after the war in Europe ended, participating in the early stages of the Casey Jones Project, which was aerial photo mapping of Western Europe and Northern Africa. Earl would be honorably discharged on October 10, 1945. *Steady Hedy* was severely damaged on an April 18, 1945, mission and salvaged on October 31.

Earl's daughter, Linda, reported her dad was one of the founding members of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and attended its first reunion in 1975 at the Marco Polo Hotel in Miami, Florida. Linda accompanied her father to the reunions every year but three before he died in 1991. ■



# Denny Boy Descendants Mark 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Crash Landing

By Richard Weaver

July 16, 2024, marked the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the crash landing of the B-17G *Denny Boy* over occupied France following its completed mission over Munich, Germany. Flak damage and engine failure had forced the plane to make an emergency descent, landing on a field (Cenyor Plateau) that overlooks Lake Geneva and is within the municipality of Féternes, France. The crew consisted of the following members: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Fred Jones (Pilot); 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Cliff Hammersley (Co-Pilot); 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Charles Weaver (Navigator); 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Robert Stalnaker (Bombardier); Staff Sergeant Woodie Rose (Ball Turret Gunner); Sergeant John Griffiths (Engineer); Sergeant Arthur Flores (Tail Gunner); Sergeant Robert Price (Radio Operator); and Sergeant Harold Katz (Right Waist Gunner). They were all subsequently rescued, hidden, and ferreted safely to Switzerland by the Maquis, villagers, and local residents from the surrounding area before being able to return to their base in Thurleigh,

England, some ten weeks later. In 2003, a plaque honoring the crew was dedicated and mounted on the wall of the existing chapel at the crash site.

With the assistance of Sue Moyer of the 306<sup>th</sup> BG Historical Association, five descendants of the crew (Phil Hammersley and Janet Hazen, son and daughter of Co-Pilot 2nd Lt. Cliff Hammersley; Carol Scott and Marilyn Walker, daughters of Ball Turret Gunner S/Sgt. Woodie Rose; and Richard Weaver, son of Navigator 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Charles Weaver) were contacted and extended an invitation to attend the planned celebration hosted by Mayor Maxime Julliard and the people of Féternes. Tim and Gail Kay, English-French-speaking residents, served as conduits to coordinate event and logistical details between local planners and the descendants.

Three days prior to the anniversary celebration, the five descendants, three of their spouses, and two close friends of the co-pilot's family from the US arrived and were greeted by the Kays (who graciously hosted the visitors throughout their stay) along with the Mayor Julliard and Michel Michoud (a local expert on WWII B17s, the driving force behind both 2003 and 2024 anniversary celebrations and custodian of recovered parts of the plane). Over the next three days, the American

contingent of ten visited the crash site, was honored at a dinner hosted by the Mayor and Town Council, and was able to retrace the escape path taken by the crew who had traveled through mountain passes and the village of Abondance, France before reaching the Swiss border and eventually quartered in Glion at the far end of Lake Geneva before returning to England.

The Anniversary celebratory event held on Tuesday, July 16, was magnificent beyond description – a highlight of a lifetime for the descendants, their spouses, and friends who were all treated like celebrities. A formal flag ceremony was held, national anthems of France and the United States were sounded, honorary wreaths were laid at the base of the plaque, which was temporarily displayed on an easel, and WWII military vehicles were prominently showcased. Nearly 1,000 were estimated to be in attendance, gathered on the Chablais between Lake Geneva and the French Alps, including two French senators (one of whom was representing President Emmanuel Macron), many other VIP dignitaries, several journalists, and dozens of French military and Foreign Legion in full uniform. Some villagers who were alive back then and had a role in assisting the crew after the crash landing were also amongst the crowd. Mayor Julliard and Michel Michaud gave speeches before Richard Weaver, the son of *Denny Boy*'s Navigator, spoke on behalf of the descendants and presented a plaque of appreciation to the town of Féternes for rescuing their fathers. This concluded the formal ceremony and was preceded by the highlight of the day – two flyovers: first, two French Mirage and second, a DC3 – each passing several times over the chapel and the cheering crowd below. Finally, hugs, handshakes, mutual exchanges of heartfelt gratitude, music, joyful chats, and the raising of glasses filled the air and continued well into the afternoon.

All in all, it was a remarkable day of remembrance and an emotional tribute to all those who, many years ago, banded together to support each other and preserve the freedoms and liberties that our respective countries enjoy today. ■



Descendants (left to right): Marilyn Walker, Carol Scott, Janet Hazen, Phil Hammersley, and Richard Weaver





*Formal ceremony with speeches by Mayor Feternnes Maxime Julliard, Michel Michoud, and Richard Weaver.*



*French military assembled in formation, flags displayed, and national anthems played following wreaths being laid at the base of the Chapel.*

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# Barbara Cartland and the American Cup for Gallantry

*Lt Col Alan Sharkey MBE CStJ TD*

*Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from an article originally printed in **One St. John**, Volume 8, 2022. The **Echoes** editor sincerely wishes to thank the author, Lt. Col. Alan Sharkey, who granted permission to reprint the information. Lt. Col. Sharkey is a Whittlesey, England, resident and a friend of the 306<sup>th</sup> Museum in Thurleigh.*

The American Cup for Gallantry was one of the most prestigious of awards for St John Ambulance Brigade cadets, surpassing even the Grand Prior's Award. Widely mentioned in cadet literature, every cadet knew that it was an award for gallantry presented by the Eighth US Army Air Force. It was awarded after the Second World War for the most outstanding act of gallantry by a cadet throughout the UK annually, subject to an act of sufficient merit having been executed. Throughout the late 1940s to the 1960s the cup was usually presented at the cadet rallies that were so popular then, or at the national competitions, by Princess Margaret in her role as Commandant in Chief of Cadets.

Ronnie Cole-Mackintosh in his book *A Century of Service to Mankind* says, "In 1947 the Eighth United States Air Force, stationed in Britain, presented a trophy to be awarded annually for gallantry." In fact, the Eighth US Army Air Force presented the cup in 1944 and left Britain in 1945. The remarkable true story of how the cup came to be presented by the Eighth US Army Air Force has never been told.

The cup was the symbol of a grateful nation for the hospitality given to US troops stationed in England throughout the closing years of the war. It reflected a story of kindness, hospitality and service given by cadets of the St John Ambulance Brigade to their American allies. It originated from a friendship between Mrs. Hugh McCorquodale (better known as Barbara Cartland), and an American serviceman. Major, later Lieutenant Colonel, Thurman Shuller, a doctor, was the officer in charge of the base 'hospital' of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bomb Division of the US Eighth Army Air Force, based at Thurleigh, five miles north of Bedford in North Bedfordshire near to Barbara Cartland's home at River Cottage in Great Barford. The 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group ('First Over Germany') with its four squadrons of Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses arrived in Britain during the first week of September 1942.

Barbara Cartland, who served the Order of St John

for much of her life, had already established a reputation as an author by the start of the Second World War with around twenty novels to her credit. At the start of the Second World War, she and husband Hugh McCorquodale moved to the comparative safety of River Cottage, a picturesque 400-year-old cottage on the banks of the Great Ouse in Great Barford, Bedfordshire.

Early in 1941 Barbara enlisted with the Women's Voluntary Service (WVS) initially taking on the role of distributing books to searchlight units, camps and aerodromes in Bedfordshire. Twelve months later she was 'commissioned' into the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) as a 'Junior Commander' (equivalent to Captain) serving as Lady Chief Welfare Officer in Bedfordshire tasked with looking after the welfare needs of 20,000 service men and women.



One of Barbara's early St John commitments was a visit to 'an American aerodrome in the Home Counties' (Thurleigh) on Sunday 30 May 1943. At the invitation of Commanding Officer Colonel Claude E Putnam (probably at Barbara's instigation) over 300 St John Ambulance cadets were entertained at the base. Trucks picked up the cadets from Bedford Town and London Road, Kempston, Stewartby, Houghton Conquest and Barbara's home village of Great Barford. Barbara escorted Colonel Putnam and introduced him to the cadet officers. The cadets were then able to enter and view a Flying Fortress before being given lemonade and doughnuts in the Red Cross canteen. The event was planned by Barbara and was assisted from Thurleigh by Major CG Duy, the Adjutant and Lieutenant Darrell S Mattoon, Special Services Officer.

The immediate result of the visit to the airbase was the 'adoption' by the Great Barford nursing cadets of the 'hospital' at the base. Welcomed by the surgeon in charge, twenty-nine-year-old Major Shuller, the cadets with their Lady Cadet Superintendent Mrs. Barbara Wormington visited the hospital every weekend taking eggs from their own hens, fruit, flowers, magazines and homemade cakes. A few weeks after the aerodrome visit, on 23 July 1943, Major Shuller accompanied Barbara to the parish church in Great Barford where she conducted an enrollment ceremony for the Great Barford cadets. The cadets then gave a first aid display in the nearby school and were inspected by Major Shuller.

Thurman Shuller later said about the hospital –  
*Though the medical facility at 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group or any other such combat unit was called a hospital it was not actually that. We had about twenty beds for minor illnesses and short stay emergencies, but any serious*



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*injuries or illnesses were taken to Evacuation Hospitals or Station Hospitals in the area.*

In October 1943 Major Shuller was promoted Lieutenant Colonel and moved to a new post as Chief Surgeon of the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Division. He later wrote to event organizers -

*On behalf of the patients and hospital staff I wish to express my profound appreciation for the noble gesture that you and your cadets initiated in making of the medical department. I don't know what we have done to deserve this kindness but I assure you that it is deeply appreciated. There is nothing that cheers these lads in hospital, a long way from home, so much as a bit of home cooking. This is just one more of the innumerable ways in which you have shown your hospitality to our Forces in your country. These kindnesses will not be forgotten.*

In 1949 the film *Twelve O'clock High* starring Gregory Peck was based on the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group at Thurleigh and the Flight Surgeon in the film particularly based on Thurman Shuller.

The Great Barford cadets continued to support the hospital. At Christmas 1943 the cadets filled a large number of muslin stockings so that every patient had one. The US doctors took a keen interest in the first aid training of the cadets and gave lectures in Great Barford and other villages as well as being present at many practices and parades. One former cadet describes how over the winter lectures were often held at Barbara Cartland's River Cottage home.

In 2014 Vera Heath described how as a cadet in 1944 she cycled from her home in Great Barford to Thurleigh to help out at the hospital with Barbara Cartland.

*Glenn Miller used to come and speak to us cadets in the Thurleigh Hospital. He seemed a very nice person but I never thought anything of it and I threw away all my photographs from those days.*

Glenn Miller, recently promoted Major in the US Army Air Force, and his band arrived in the UK on 28 June 1944 and within days had moved to Thurleigh where they gave their first performance. On 9 July 1944 the band gave its first broadcast from the Corn Exchange in Bedford and Vera Heath, then Bufton, remembers being there to dance to his music. During his stay in Bedford, Glenn became acquainted with and enjoyed certain British customs including eating fish and chips out of newspaper, which he bought from the fish and chip shop in Queens Park. He also enjoyed the British pub traditions and often drank at the Swan Inn at Radwell and the Queens Hotel at Milton Ernest, popular with Eighth Army Air Force personnel. Following the Liberation of Paris the band was to give a performance there on Christmas Day. Glenn Miller was to fly out on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1944 from Twinwood Farm Airfield, a few miles from Thurleigh. Thick fog covered most of

England. His aircraft took off at 1.55pm and was never seen again.

It was on 11 March 1944 in Bedford that the 'American Cup for Gallantry' was first presented. Lieutenant Colonel Shuller as he now was, accompanied by Colonel Rapier (Commanding Officer at Thurleigh) presented the cup on behalf of the US Eighth Army Air Force to County Commissioner WC Knight and Mrs. McCorquodale (Barbara), announcing the first winners for 1943 as the Great Barford Nursing Cadets for 'Anglo-American friendship.' Colonel Shuller explained that the US Eighth Army Air Force had agreed with General Sir Clive Liddell, Chief Commissioner of the St John Ambulance Brigade, that 'when the war is over the cup shall be presented annually for the finest act of individual gallantry by a Cadet in the British Isles.'



*Colonel Thurman Shuller presenting the American Cup for Gallantry*

The Bedford meeting was by no means Colonel Shuller's last links with Barbara and the Great Barford cadets. In July 1944 Barbara organized a flower show and fete in aid of the Red Cross. Guests included Colonel Shuller.

Colonel Shuller maintained close links with the St John Ambulance cadets until the Eighth Army Air Force left Britain in 1945. On Sunday 25 February 1945 at a meeting at the Town Hall in Bedford Colonel Shuller once more presented the American Cup for 1944, still at this stage for Anglo American friendship, again to the Great Barford cadets.

Colonel Thurman Shuller did not get to see the cup presented for its intended final purpose and it seems the Eighth US Army Air Force had no connection after the war, but in later years it was on one occasion presented by the Army Attache from the US Embassy.

Wednesday 1 August 1945 was the 38<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Eighth US Army Air Force. They threw a party at Thurleigh attended by 8,000 people from Bedford and North Bedfordshire including Barbara Cartland and the Great Barford nursing cadets. They departed from Thurleigh and Britain on 1 December 1945, their task

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finished and permanent bonds of friendship established, not least of which was the American Cup for Gallantry that recognized those early acts of kindness by the nursing cadets of Great Barford.

Initially presented as a token of friendship between the Bedfordshire St John Ambulance Brigade cadets and the US Eighth Army Air Force, the American Cup for Gallantry was first presented to the Great Barford Nursing cadets in 1944 for their hospitality to the US airmen. The cup was again presented to the Great Barford cadets in 1945. The body of the cup is engraved:

1943 Cadet Nursing Division Gt Barford

1944 Cadet Nursing Division Gt Barford

These are the only inscriptions on the cup itself, subsequent winners being engraved on the collar and then the base. As in later years the cup was presented in the year after that for which it was won.

The US Eighth Army Air Force agreed with General Sir Clive Liddell, Chief Commissioner of the St John Ambulance Brigade, that ‘when the war is over the cup shall be presented annually for the finest act of individual gallantry by a Cadet in the British Isles.’ Until that time the cup was to be used to repay the debt that the Eighth Army Air Force felt they owed to the St John Ambulance Brigade cadets ‘for the innumerable ways in which you have shown your hospitality to our Forces in your country.’

The cup was awarded to 32 recipients over the 38 years 1947-84, but the award of the cup became scarcer over the 15 years 1970-1984 when it was awarded seven times, possibly because worthy events became less frequent.

[After 1984,] no trace could be found of the cup itself. Then on one morning in November 2019 the American Cup for Gallantry was located in a safe in the basement of the Clerkenwell museum. It was in a red bag but with no label and was not on the museum’s inventory.

On 3 December 2022 the American Cup for Gallantry was placed in a display at a reception in London’s Guildhall to celebrate the Centenary of the St John Cadet movement. Perhaps one day it might again be used for the purpose for which it was presented by the Eighth US Army Air Force!

### **There Is More to This Story**

In the book *Flight Surgeon: A War Diary, 1941 – 1945*, by Dr. Thurman Shuller and edited by Dr. Vernon Williams, which was published only after the principal individuals characterized in the diary were deceased, thus attempting to avoid any disparaging statement, Dr. Shuller candidly described his encounters with Mrs. McCorquodale (Barbara Cartland) as “stressful” due to her dominance in organizing events. Dr. Shuller met with Ms. Cartland several times during the war, primarily

due to his volunteer work with the St. John Ambulance Brigade (similar to Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, only co-ed). Dr. Shuller helped the Brigade with first aid projects by giving a limited number of lectures and joining in community events in an effort to raise money for this group. However, Dr. Shuller objected to requests expressed by Ms. Cartland, considering them unethical and not in compliance with Military Officer protocol.

According to Dr. Shuller’s diary, on March 11, 1944, he presented a silver cup at a meeting in Bedford, England, to the Nursing Division of St. Johns’ Ambulance Brigade of Great Barford for “doing most toward making our service men feel at home in their country.”

The cup, which became known as the American Cup for Gallantry, was bought and paid for by Captain Jerry O’Sullivan (further identification unavailable) to give the cup anonymously to Great Britain.

Dr. Shuller recorded in his diary that Ms. Cartland seized the opportunity to have the cup presented by the Eighth Air Force. However, Dr. Shuller’s diary states that Eighth Air Force personnel decided a lesser unit should give the cup, and the words “Anglo-American relations” were not to be used. Nonetheless, the cup was presented on behalf of the US Eighth Air Force and Ms. Cartland declared the winners exemplified “Anglo-American friendship.”

Despite the issues surrounding the inception of the award, the American Cup for Gallantry continued to be one of the most prestigious awards ever presented to St. John Cadets. The award continued to be given to the Cadet performing the most outstanding deed for gallantry or courage until 1984, which was the date the award was last presented. ■





# In Memoriam

*Obituaries – Veteran death information should be submitted to Barbara Neal, P.O. Box 682530, Park City, UT 84068, barb306neal@gmail.com, cell (435) 655-1500.*

**Capen, Alfred R**, waist gunner (367<sup>th</sup>, Harold Barrett crew), **POW**, of Manchester NH, died 25 December 2007. His aircraft was shot down on the 12 September 1944 mission targeting Ruhland and he became a POW until the end of the War. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, Last Man's Club, and the Jutras Post. He owned and operated Al's Mobil Service Station in Manchester. At the time of his passing, surviving were sons Norman and Robert and daughter Joan Daigle, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

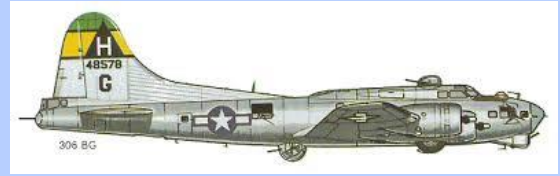
**Jordahl, Myron J**, clerk typist (414<sup>th</sup> Air Service Group Hq) of Neillsville, WI, passed away November 14, 2011. He received a BA degree in accounting from the University of Minnesota. He briefly worked for the Soo Line railroad then opened Gambles Hardware Store and later opened and operated Jordahl's Furniture Store in Neillsville. He was a member of the VFW, American Legion, Lions, Kiwanis, and other local organizations. At the time of his death, he was survived by wife Eleanor, four daughters: Jean; Janyce; Judy; and Joyce, and by five grandchildren.

**Vickroy, James G**, togglier (369<sup>th</sup>, Clifford Tinkam crew), passed away 5 April 2021, place of death unknown. 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA archives note that he lived in Conemaugh, PA, worked for Bethlehem Steel as a crane operator until retiring in 1983, and lists his wife's name as Helen with no further information.



It is time to renew your membership for 2025!  
Registration form is on page 27 or online.  
Do it today!

## Given In Memory Of...



### 2024

**Charles N. Barchard, 367<sup>th</sup> Pilot**  
by Terry Hersh

**Ralph E. Bordner, 368<sup>th</sup> Bombardier/Navigator**  
by Sally Smith

**John W. Corcoran, 367<sup>th</sup> Tail Gunner**  
by Kathleen Corcoran Job

**Gerald Weiler, 367<sup>th</sup> Navigator**  
by Kennis Weiler Jarvis

**Robert Folk, 423<sup>rd</sup> Engineer/Top Turret Gunner**  
by Sue Linton

**Virgil Jeffries, 368<sup>th</sup> Tail Gunner**  
by Christopher Thaiss

**Thurman Shuller, Flight Surgeon**  
by William Culp

*Gifts may be made in memory of 306<sup>th</sup> veterans or family by sending a check payable to the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association with the designation "306<sup>th</sup> Memorial Fund" on the memo line of the check. Send the check to Sally Hanley, Treasurer, PO 17163, Boulder, CO 80308. All gifts made will be recognized in the twice-yearly publication of **Echoes**. Expenditure of these funds is at the direction of the Board of Directors.*



# 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association Membership Registration Form 2025 Calendar Year

*Print all information.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address: (required if ordering *Echoes* print subscription) [Street Address] \_\_\_\_\_

[City, State, Zip Code] \_\_\_\_\_

WWII Vet or Spouse Yes\_\_\_

**If you have an interest in a particular WWII 306<sup>th</sup> veteran, please complete the following about him:**

I am not related to him\_\_\_\_. **OR:** This 306<sup>th</sup> WWII Veteran is my (relationship): \_\_\_\_\_

Veteran's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 306<sup>th</sup> Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Duty/Job Title or Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF YOU ARE NOT of the WWII generation AND you want US-MAIL copies of *Echoes*, there is a \$20 per calendar year charge to cover cost of *Echoes* printing and mailing. Donations are also welcome.**

Membership registration remains free.

Check: Payable to 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association; on memo line write "2025 *Echoes*." Please mail (with or without this form) your check to:

Sally Smith, Treasurer  
PO BOX 17163  
BOULDER, CO 80308

PayPal Donations can be made on-line at [www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us) using the yellow "Donate" button.

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH**

**Membership Registration forms should be mailed to:**

Mr. Bruce Chase, Membership Chairman  
2324 HATCH HILL RD  
NEW ALBANY, PA 18833-8887

**We ask that you renew (free) each calendar year to confirm your continued interest in the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA and to verify your current phone number and email address.**

A free electronic version of the 306<sup>th</sup> *Echoes*, our official publication, is available via [www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us).





# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion



# Colorado Springs, CO

October 1-5, 2025 | DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel



Join us October 1-5, 2025 in Colorado Springs, as we commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the 8th AFHS.

Look for more information as we plan for a memorable Reunion in 2025!  
Society website: <https://www.8thafhs.org>

**P**lans are underway for an outstanding Reunion... in beautiful Colorado Springs, CO, in early October, when the fall foliage is at its peak!

Colorado Springs is home to both the U.S. Air Force Academy and the National Museum of World War II Aviation.

The mission of the U.S. Air Force Academy is to educate, train and inspire men and women to become officers of character motivated to lead the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force in service to our Nation.

The National Museum of World War II Aviation houses an extensive collection that includes more than 4,000 artifacts and historical documents from one of the most crucial periods in America's history.

**Reunion details to be published in *Echoes* and on the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA website ([www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us)) as they become available.**