



Echoes

First Over Germany



Reunion 2026: Destination - San Antonio



The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association, in conjunction with the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, is slated to convene this year’s reunion from 14 - 18 October 2026 in San Antonio, Texas. The site was selected for San Antonio’s deep military roots and its historical ties to the Eighth Air Force. It provides a suitable backdrop for veterans, thousands of whom were trained in San Antonio during World War II, as well as their descendants, to honor the Mighty Eighth’s legacy.

San Antonio, often called “Military City USA,” has a 300-year-old, deep-rooted connection to the armed forces and serves as a critical location for military training, medical care, and cybersecurity. Today, it hosts Joint Base San Antonio, the Department of Defense’s largest joint base, which houses major Army and Air Force installations. Joint Base San Antonio is comprised of Fort Sam Houston, Lackland Air Force Base, and Randolph Air Force Base.

During World Wars I and II, the area acted as a pivotal military hub, often referred to as “the Army’s City.” Kelly Field was a major center for aviation

and aircraft repair training. The field underwent a massive transformation, shifting from the nation’s premier location for pilot training into a powerhouse of military logistics and maintenance. Kelly Field functioned as the principal Advanced Flying School for the U.S. Army Air Service and Army Air Corps from the early 1920s through World War II. As the “Cradle of Early Military Aviation,” it specialized in advanced training for pursuit, bombardment, and attack aviation, graduating nearly 7,000 pilots between 1939 and 1943. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the need for more pilots, bombardiers, and navigators resulted in the rapid expansion of the flight school. Night flying was added to the school program, and the amount of training time doubled.

Military flight training centers, like Brooks and Kelly Army Airfields, significantly drove San Antonio’s growth in the 1910s and 1920s. Established in 1916 and 1917 to train aviators for World War I, Brooks began as a flight instructor academy and had 16 hangars by 1918.

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306th Museum Thurleigh

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The 306th 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.



A Message from President Steve Snyder

Greetings! I hope this message finds you well.

Last fall in Colorado Springs, we concluded our 50th anniversary celebration of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, founded in 1975. Planning is now well underway for our upcoming gathering in San Antonio, Texas, on October 14-18, as detailed in this issue of *Echoes*.

The 306th BGHA will again have a dedicated Hospitality Suite and a private room for the Rendezvous Dinner on Thursday evening, followed by our Membership Meeting.

We have arranged tours, including a visit to the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, the boyhood home of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. Nimitz served as Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas during World War II and was promoted to Fleet Admiral in December 1944, overseeing all Allied forces in the Pacific. Additionally, a narrated San Antonio City Tour will showcase the city’s heritage, traditions, and natural beauty.

We are pleased to announce our speakers. On Thursday evening, Major General Ty Neuman, Commander of the Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center, Barksdale Air Force Base, will present on the current 8th Air Force. At Saturday’s Gala, Lieutenant General Thomas Hensley, Commander of the Sixteenth Air Force, Air Forces Cyber, and Joint Force Headquarters-Cyber (Air Force), Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, will discuss modern cyberspace operations and his command’s role in delivering multi-source intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

In the last issue of *Echoes*, I shared that the 306th Board of Directors was working to redesign our website for improved appearance and usability. I am pleased to announce we have engaged Flint & Flux, who also redesigned the 8th Air Force Historical Society website, for this project. Chuck Roskovich will provide further details in an article in this issue. I would like to thank Chuck, *Echoes* Editor Nancy Huebotter, and Facebook Administrator Sue Moyer for their significant efforts as the Redesign Committee. They will collaborate with Flint & Flux to implement these changes. We are confident members will be pleased with the results.

Please visit the 306th BGHA website to register your 2026 membership. We also encourage you to consider making a donation, as member contributions are essential for funding *Echoes* and supporting ongoing improvements, including the website redesign.

It is our duty to remember.

Steve Snyder, President ■



Committee Shares Website Redesign Update

This issue of *Echoes* presents an update on the progress made by the Website Redesign Committee in modernizing the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association website.

In recent months, committee members Nancy Huebotter, Sue Fox Moyer, and Chuck Roskovich have evaluated ways to preserve decades of historical content. With support from 306th BGHA President Steve Snyder, the committee prioritizes enhancing usability, accessibility, and sustainability. The aim is not to replace existing content, but to strengthen it, ensuring the legacy of the 306th Bomb Group remains accessible to current members, researchers, and future generations.

A central focus of this effort is content preservation. The current website holds a vast archive of irreplaceable mission records, personal accounts, photographs, and *Echoes* issues. We are taking deliberate steps to ensure that all content is protected, properly organized, and carried forward without loss.

First Look: New Homepage Design

The Website Committee has completed its initial review of the proposed homepage redesign, representing significant progress in the project.

Key features of the redesign include:

- A structured nine-section grid layout that organizes major content areas
- Expandable sections that reduce clutter while keeping all content easily accessible
- Increased visibility for *Echoes* and other core historical resources
- A refined archival design style that aligns with the history and legacy of the Group

This structure streamlines user navigation while preserving the material's depth and integrity. Building on this foundation, we are refining the design based on committee feedback.

Concurrently, we are developing several key improvements, including:

- Enhanced Navigation: We are simplifying how content is organized. Members will be able to locate squadrons, missions, and historical records more easily.

- Improved Search Functionality: Users will be able to quickly locate names, aircraft, missions, and topics using an updated search tool that queries the entire website and delivers relevant results.
- Refined Content Organization and Clarity: We are reducing duplication and clarifying sections. Research Archives and media collections will be especially improved.
- Expanded Media Access: We are integrating audio, video, and transcripts more effectively. These resources will be easier to discover and use.
- Incorporated Mobile-Friendly Design: Ensuring the website performs well across tablets and smartphones (mobile-friendly means the website adjusts for easy use on small screens).
- Ensured Preservation of Legacy Links: Maintaining access to long-standing reference links while improving overall structure behind the scenes.

Alongside these technical changes, our focus also extends to narrative style and overall presentation. By making these elements more consistent, we aim to transform the website from a static archive into a compelling, readable historical resource.

To ensure solid progress, the committee is working with our web development partner on a structured plan with phases: Protect, Build, Validate, and Launch. We schedule regular review checkpoints to ensure alignment with Association expectations throughout.

We are closely managing this project with careful oversight and budgeting. The Board approved initial funding, and the committee continues to monitor progress, scope, and costs as the project advances.

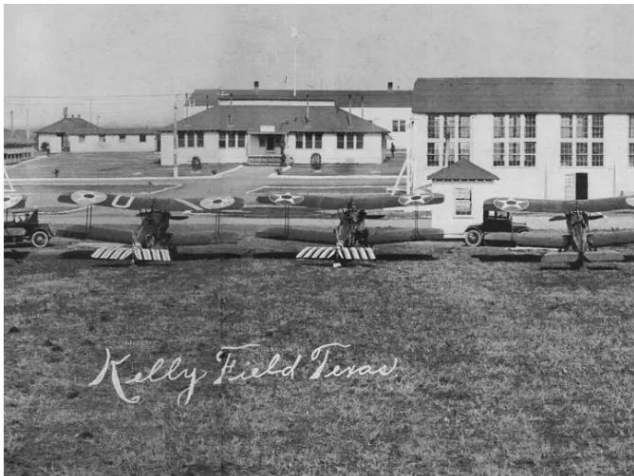
Looking Ahead

As we near project completion, we expect to launch the redesigned website this summer. We encourage all members to explore its structure and rediscover the 306th Bomb Group's remarkable stories and history.

We proudly honor the 306th Bomb Group's legacy through this project. Our goal is to create a more engaging resource that will be accessible for years to come. Watch for emails and social media posts announcing the website's availability for review. As you explore the new website, please share your feedback with any committee member. ■

2026 Reunion Continued

(continued from page 1)



Kelly Field, shown here circa 1925, was a training center for military aviation. Planes in the foreground are Curtiss P-1 Hawks, pursuit aircraft ordered by the Army Air Service.
UTSA Special Collections

In 1919, it shifted from flight instruction to dirigible and airship training; in 1922, it became a primary flight school. The field then continued as both a primary flight school and an aerial observation school through the 1930s, operating as a crucial training center for the United States Army Air Forces, focusing on flight training and specialized instruction. The base expanded significantly to meet wartime demands, training thousands of military personnel and hosting aerial camera training in 1943.

World War II sparked a boom for the city as wartime production and military training attracted new residents and revived commerce and industry. The city, already home to several military bases, saw increased activity and personnel at existing facilities, as well as the creation of many auxiliary fields. Thus, the war cemented San Antonio's identity as a military town, influencing its growth for decades.

Lackland Air Force Base was established in 1942 as the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center, an independent organization separated from Kelly Field. It was later renamed Lackland Army Field in 1946 and officially became Lackland Air Force Base in 1948.

Randolph Air Force Base was formally dedicated in June 1930. Conceived in the mid-1920s as the "West Point of the Air," the base was established as a premier flight training facility for the U.S. Army Air Corps.

Fort Sam Houston was originally established in 1845 as a Quartermaster Depot following the annexation of Texas. Permanent construction of the landmark Quadrangle began in 1876. It was befittingly named Fort Sam Houston in 1890. Today, it is a National Historic Landmark added to the National

Register of Historic Places in 1975. It is part of Joint Base San Antonio.

During the interwar years, Kelly Field operated as a private airfield. This changed in 1942, when the Army requisitioned it, constructing barracks and other military structures between 1942 and 1946, and using it as an auxiliary field for Brooks Army Airfield. After the war, Kelly Field reverted to private use. However, Brooks Army Airfield soon shifted its training from aerial observation to B-25 bomber pilots. During this transition, the Department of Defense renamed Brooks Field to Brooks Air Force Base, reflecting the Army-Air Force split. The base continued to provide flight training until 1960, when its mission changed to medical research, development, and education.

As part of the reunion's activities, Thursday's excursion to the National Museum of the Pacific War, located in Fredericksburg, Texas, less than a 90-minute bus ride from San Antonio, is the boyhood home of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. While still a teenager, Chester was accepted into the United States Naval Academy, where he graduated seventh in a class of 114. Nimitz rose to the rank of Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet, and was soon afterward named Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, during World War II. Nimitz died in February 1966.



Charles Henry Nimitz, the grandfather of naval officer Charles William Nimitz, was a German immigrant to the United States in 1844 who moved to Fredericksburg in 1846 and built the Nimitz Hotel in 1852. Its remarkable steamboat superstructure was added sometime after 1888. The hotel closed in 1963 and was sold to the non-profit Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz Naval Museum in September 1964. The hotel was renovated and opened as a museum in February 1967. Ownership of the hotel was transferred

to the Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz Memorial National Museum Commission in June 1970. In 2000, the complex was renamed Admiral Nimitz State Historic Site – National Museum of the Pacific War, and is exclusively dedicated to telling the story of World War II in the Pacific Theater.



Spanning six acres, the National Museum of the Pacific War connects us to those affected by World War II in the Pacific Theater. The museum's archives hold thousands of manuscripts, documents, photographs, and recorded interviews with Pacific War veterans. Recognizing that these collections are an invaluable resource for historians and students of history, the museum established the Center for Pacific War Studies to educate and inspire present and future generations about World War II in the Pacific Theater and the relevance of its lessons.

Not to be missed by visitors to the museum is the Admiral Nimitz Gallery, which explores the life and career of Fleet Admiral Nimitz through interactive multimedia exhibits and artifacts.

The Japanese Garden of Peace was a gift from the people of Japan to the people of the United States. The garden symbolized the complicated but firm friendship between the two countries.

The George H. W. Bush Gallery honors the late President, who flew as a Navy pilot in the Pacific Theater during World War II. The exhibits epitomize the courage, leadership, and sacrifice of that generation. The Bush Gallery provides a chronological walkthrough of the war, using displays and audio to educate visitors on the experience of combatants.

When the town fathers approached Admiral Nimitz about converting his grandfather's hotel into a museum in his honor, Nimitz declined the offer. He later changed his mind, on the condition that the

museum honor all the men and women who fought in the Pacific Theater during World War II. The Veterans' Wall of Honor is paved with bricks inscribed with tributes to those who contributed to the war's efforts.

The Pacific Combat Zone is a re-creation of a Pacific island battlefield and includes a Quonset Hut, a PT boat and base, a Japanese tank, palm trees, and machine gun emplacements. This exhibit provides insight into the strategic challenges of fighting an island enemy over thousands of miles of open water. The Quonset Hut now serves as the museum's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) Lab.

The outdoor Plaza of the Presidents was dedicated on September 2, 1995, the 50th anniversary of Fleet Admiral Nimitz's acceptance of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender aboard the *USS Missouri*. The plaza is a tribute to the ten United States Presidents who served during World War II: Franklin D. Roosevelt (Commander-in-Chief), Harry S. Truman (Commander-in-Chief), General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower (Army), John F. Kennedy (Navy), Lyndon B. Johnson (Navy), Richard Nixon (Navy), Gerald Ford (Navy), Jimmy Carter (Navy), Ronald Reagan (Army), and George H. W. Bush (Navy).

In addition to the permanent exhibits that pertain to the Doolittle Raid, Pearl Harbor, Iwo Jima, Medal of Honor Recipients, and "Children on the Homefront: Growing Up With War," there are several online exhibits that address WASPs of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and "Imprisoned: Incarceration in the Pacific War."



Thursday night's dinner speaker is Major General Ty W. Neuman, Commander, Eighth Air Force and Commander, Joint-Global Strike Operations Center (J-GSOC), Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. The J-GSOC serves as the central command and control node for all

operations within Air Force Global Strike Command, orchestrating warfighting and readiness activities for the Commander, Air Force Strategic.

Major General Neuman's focus is on leadership and strategic operations. He has extensive experience in

military logistics and planning. He has held various command positions, demonstrating effective leadership in diverse environments. He is passionate about training and mentoring junior officers to enhance their military readiness. His contributions include joint operations with allied forces in support of Operations Allied Force, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. He emphasizes the importance of innovation and technology in modern warfare. He is a Weapons Systems Officer with over 3,000 hours in highly specialized strategic heavy bombers and strategic command-and-control aircraft.

On Friday, those attending the reunion will have the opportunity to experience a fully narrated city tour that will give visitors the opportunity to engage in the city's unique heritage, traditions, and natural beauty with stops at various points of interest, including Mission Concepcion, San Fernando Cathedral, the historically registered German neighborhood of King William, and enjoy time at the San Antonio River Walk. San Antonio, a city rich in colonial heritage, was named by a Spanish expedition in 1691 in honor of St. Anthony of Padua, and the locality ultimately became the first chartered civil settlement in what is now Texas. The Alamo, an 18th-century Spanish mission preserved as a museum, marks an infamous 1836 battle for Texan independence from Mexico. Following the San Antonio River, the miles-long River Walk is a landmark pedestrian promenade lined with cafes and shops. HemisFair Park's 750-ft Tower of the Americas overlooks the city.



Saturday night's Gala Banquet featured guest speaker is Lieutenant General Thomas K. Hensley, Commander, Sixteenth Air Force and Commander, Air Forces Cyber, Joint Force Headquarters-Cyber (Air Force), Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.



Lieutenant General Hensley is responsible for more than 49,000 personnel conducting worldwide operations. Sixteenth Air Force Airmen deliver multisource intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance products, applications, capabilities, and resources. In addition,

they build, extend, operate, secure, and defend the Air Force portion of the Department of Defense global network. Furthermore, Joint Forces Headquarters-Cyber (Air Force) personnel perform operational planning as part of coordinated efforts to support Air Force component and combatant commanders and, upon approval of the President and/or the Secretary of War, to execute offensive cyberspace operations. In this position as Sixteenth Air Force Commander, Lieutenant General Hensley also serves as the Commander of the Service Cryptologic Component. In this capacity, he is responsible to the Director, National Security Agency, and Chief, Central Security Service, as the Air Force's sole authority for matters involving the conduct of cryptologic activities, including the spectrum of missions related to tactical warfighting and national-level operations. The General leads global information warfare activities spanning cyberspace and information operations, electronic warfare, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, targeting, public affairs, and weather for nine wings, one technical center, and an operations center.

Lieutenant General Hensley supported contingency operations during operations Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, and Inherent Resolve. His leadership focuses on operationalizing science and technology to characterize the battlespace, with a particular emphasis on deterring threats from modernized nation-states.

Daily during the reunion, the Crockett Room of the LaQuinta Hotel, our reunion headquarters, is a versatile meeting and event space that will be available to showcase memorabilia, feature authors and their books, and offer a comfortable space for friendly conversations. Various bomb groups will also be hosting their own hospitality rooms. ■



52nd Annual 8th AFHS Reunion 2026 October 14-18, 2026



*Reunion Headquarters
LaQuinta by Wyndham
303 Blum
San Antonio, TX 75205*

*For Registration and
Reunion Activities
information
refer to pages 8 thru 11*

LaQuinta by Wyndham San Antonio Riverwalk

Location

303 Blum
San Antonio, TX 78205

Reservation Information

To make reservations by phone:
Dial 800-753-3757 and reference Group Code: 101426AIR

OR

<https://www.wyndhamhotels.com/hotels/53402?checkInDate=10/14/2026&checkOutDate=10/18/2026&groupCode=101426AIR>

Group Name: 8th Air Force Historical Society

Reunion Rates Available: Wednesday, October 14 – 18, 2026. Discounted rates are not guaranteed on pre- or post-reunion dates but can be extended based upon availability.

**If you wish to book your reservation, to arrive earlier than October 14th or you wish to stay past October 18th, please make your initial room reservation within the reunion dates (October 14th – 18th) then call Jesse Garcia at 210-222-9181 (option 2 for the Sales Dept.). You will need to provide your confirmation number and the additional dates you would like to add to your reservation. You may also email him at jesse.garcia@highgateselectservice.com*

Room Rate: \$149.00 for standard rooms plus applicable taxes (Currently 18.73%). **“Destination Fee”** does not apply to group rates.

Hospitality Suites - \$169.00 plus applicable taxes (Currently 18.73%). To book a hospitality suite, please contact our AFR planner, Kelly Bridgeman, at 757-625-6401. Please note that suites are limited and on a first-come, first-served basis.

Restaurant: Complimentary breakfast buffet for up to two guests per room is included with the guestroom rate. The breakfast buffet, near the hotel lobby, is served Monday – Friday, 6:30am – 9am and Saturday – Sunday, 7am – 10am.

Cut-Off Date: 9/23/26. After the group cut-off date, the Hotel will accept additional group reservations at the contracted rate or at market rates based on room availability.

Cancellation Policy: Cancellation must be received 24 hours prior to arrival date or there will be a charge of one night's room plus tax.

Parking & Shuttle Information: A 25% discount will be applied to the standard parking rates, currently \$36+ tax per day, upon hotel check-in. There is no shuttle service provided.

Wheelchair Accessible Rooms: If you need a handicapped accessible guestroom, please call the hotel directly for assistance. **Call Jesse Garcia at 210-222-9181 (option 2 for the Sales Dept.). You will need to provide your confirmation number for your reservation. You may also email him at jesse.garcia@highgateselectservice.com.**

Wheelchair Rental: Scoot Around rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Please call (888) 441-7575 or visit www.scootaround.com for details and to make reservations.

Reunion Registration: To register for the reunion online please visit:
<https://www.events.afr-reg.com/e/8AFHS26>

**52nd Annual 8th AFHS Reunion
October 14-18, 2026
San Antonio, TX**

Reunion Schedule

***Bold** = Ticketed Event*

Wednesday, October 14

Time	Event	Room Name
8:00am – 5:00pm	Reunion Registration Open	Fiesta Ballroom Foyer
6:00pm – 7:00pm	Welcome Reception, followed by dinner on your own	Fiesta Ballroom
7:00pm – 9:00pm	8 th AFHS Board Meeting	Bowie East
	Group Hospitality Suites – Open Evenings and During Non-Event Hours Throughout Reunion	To Be Posted On-site

Thursday, October 15

7:00am – 8:30am	Breakfast on your own	
8:00am – 5:00pm	Reunion Registration open	Fiesta Ballroom Foyer
8:00am – 5:00pm	Reunion Memorabilia/Authors/Conversation Room	Crockett Room
9:00am – 4:00pm	Fredericksburg/National Museum of the Pacific Museum	
6:00pm – 9:00pm	Cash Bar Open	
7:00pm – 9:00pm	Dinner Buffet and Program with Maj. Gen. Ty W. Neuman, Commander, Eight Air Force and Commander, Joint-Global Strike Operations Center	Fiesta Ballroom

Friday, October 16

7:00am – 8:30am	Breakfast on your own	
7:45am- 8:45am	Group Meetings	
8:00am – 5:00pm	Reunion Registration open	Fiesta Ballroom Foyer
8:00am – 5:00pm	Reunion Memorabilia/Authors/Conversation Room	Crockett Room
9:00am – 3:00pm	City Tour	
6:00pm – 9:00pm	Cash Bar Open	
7:00pm – 9:00pm	Rendezvous Dinners	Will Be Assigned On-site

Saturday, October 17

7:00am – 8:30am	Breakfast on your own	
8:00am – 5:00pm	Reunion Registration open	
8:45am – 10:15am	General Membership Meeting	Fiesta Ballroom
12:00pm – 4:00pm	8 th AFHS Board Meeting	Bowie East
12:00pm- 5:00pm	Reunion Memorabilia/Authors/Conversation Room	Crockett Room
2:00pm – 4:00pm	Panel Discussion	Crockett Room
6:00pm – 10:00pm	Cash Bar Open	Fiesta Ballroom Foyer
7:00pm – 10:00pm	Gala Dinner and Program with Lt. Gen. Thomas K. Hensley, Commander of the Sixteenth Air Force; Commander, Air Forces Cyber and Commander, Joint Force Headquarters-Cyber (Air Force)	Fiesta Ballroom

Sunday, October 18

7:00am – 8:30am	Breakfast on your own and Farewells	
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CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY FOR ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date of **September 14** Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less the non-refundable Group registration fee (**\$45 per person**). Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less the non-refundable Group registration fee. For addition mistakes by the user that incur charges above the intended amount that require a refund, user will be responsible for additional credit card fees. Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9am until 5pm Eastern Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities. Refunds will be processed 4-6 weeks after the reunion. Canceling your hotel reservations does not cancel your reunion activities.

***TOUR BUSES WILL LOAD AT THE FRONT OF THE HOTEL. Please be at the bus loading location at least 15 minutes prior to departure**

TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour price and are at the discretion of the individual

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15:

FREDERICKSBURG/NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

Enjoy a scenic ride to Fredericksburg, the boyhood home of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. Tour the National Museum of the Pacific War, which is dedicated to everyone who served in the Pacific under Admiral Nimitz. Nimitz served as CinCPAC, commander in chief, United States Pacific Fleet, and was soon afterward named commander in chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, during World War II. The Museum, once a hotel owned by Nimitz's grandfather, now includes over 34,000 square feet of indoor exhibit space including the George Bush Gallery, Admiral Nimitz Museum, Plaza of Presidents, Veterans' Walk of Honor, Japanese Garden of Peace, Pacific Combat Zone, and the Nimitz Education and Research Center. A 43,000 square foot expansion was added in 2010, where you can explore the impressive display of Allied and Japanese aircraft, tanks, guns and other artifacts made famous during the Pacific War campaigns. Enjoy lunch at one of several restaurants or delis located on Fredericksburg's downtown Main Street. There is shopping nearby on Main Street for those interested.

9:00am board bus, 4:00pm back at hotel.

\$74.00/Person includes bus, guide, and admission. Lunch on your own.

Please allow 15-30 minutes between bus arrival if more than 1 bus.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16:

CITY TOUR

From the earliest Spanish Missionaries in 1691 to today's traveler, San Antonio's appeal continues to draw attention. Relax and enjoy a fully narrated tour of San Antonio's unique blend of rich heritage, traditions and natural beauty. Points of interest include stops at the Mission Concepcion, which is the oldest unrestored stone church in America, San Fernando Cathedral, the original church of the Canary Island settlers. Enjoy a short visit to the historically registered German neighborhood of King William. **From there you'll enjoy some time at the San Antonio River Walk.** Enjoy lunch on your own, possibly at Casa Rio, the first Mexican Restaurant on the River Walk. Its beautiful location and colorful umbrellas have come to symbolize the serenity and romance of the San Antonio River Walk.

9:00am board bus, 3:00pm back at hotel

\$55.00/Person includes bus and tour guide. Lunch on your own.

There is a limit of one hydraulically lifted scooter or wheelchair per handicap accessible bus. Please note the combined weight of the passenger and motorized wheelchair or scooter may not exceed 500lb due to lift limitations. If you use a scooter or motorized wheelchair but can climb the steps to board the bus, either you and/or a person travelling with you must be able to put the scooter or wheelchair in the bus's luggage compartment. Due to liability issues, drivers and tour guides cannot assist with scooters or motorized wheelchairs.

52nd Annual 8th AFHS Reunion Registration Form

Listed below are all the registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter a quantity for each event you and your guests wish to participate in. Then total your costs and send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of a check or money order. You may also register online and pay by credit card at <https://www.events.afr-reg.com/e/8AFHS26> (online registrations have a convenience fee of 4%). Registration form and payment must be received on or before 9/14/26. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of your completed form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment with this form. (Returned checks will incur a \$20 fee) **PLEASE REFER TO REUNION PROGRAM FOR CANCELLATION POLICY.**

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
 Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
 322 Madison Mews
 Norfolk, VA 23510
 ATTN: 8th AFHS Reunion

OFFICE USE ONLY Check # _____
Received _____ Inputted _____

<i>Don't forget CUT-OFF date is 9/14/26</i>	Price	# of Ppl	Total
MANDATORY FEES:			
Dues – Principal attendee MUST be a member of the 8 th AFHS to register for this reunion. If you are NOT CURRENT or a member, please pay your yearly dues.	\$60		\$
NON-REFUNDABLE Registration Fee – EVERY Attendee MUST pay registration fee	\$45		\$
Total number in your party (including members, spouse, and guests)	-----		-----
TOURS:			
Thursday, 10/15: Fredericksburg/National Museum of the Pacific War	\$74		\$
Friday, 10/16: City Tour	\$55		\$
MEALS:			
Wednesday, 10/14: Welcome Reception – Please indicate total attending	N/C		-----
Thursday, 10/15: Smokehouse Dinner Buffet	\$67		\$
Friday, 10/16: Italian Dinner Buffet	\$67		\$
Saturday, 10/17: Gala Banquet (please select your entrée selection):	-----		-----
Beef Tenderloin	\$77		\$
Salmon Filet	\$77		\$
Vegetarian	\$77		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.	-----		\$

PLEASE PRINT. If registering for a WWII Veteran here, please list their name first. MAXIMUM FOUR (4) people per form:

MEMBER FIRST NAME (for badge) _____ LAST _____

BOMBER GROUP/FIGHTER GROUP/OTHER (for tag seating) _____

VETERAN? YES NO IF YES, WWII POST WWII (CONFLICT OR ERA): _____

BRANCH OF SERVICE: AIR FORCE ARMY COAST GUARD MARINES NAVY

SPOUSE / GUEST NAME(S):

#2 FIRST NAME (for badge) _____ LAST NAME _____

#3 FIRST NAME (for badge) _____ LAST NAME _____

#4 FIRST NAME (for badge) _____ LAST NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____

EMAIL _____ CELL # _____

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(Special hotel room requirements must be conveyed by attendee directly to the hotel staff upon reservation)

REGISTER ONLINE AT: <https://www.events.afr-reg.com/e/8AFHS26>

306th Bomb Group Significant Achievements

- First bomb group to train at Wendover Army Air Base, Utah - April 6, 1942



- Longest serving bomb group in the 8th Air Force - September 7, 1942 - December 25, 1945
- 367th Bomb Squadron suffered the heaviest losses in VIII Bomber Command - October 9, 1942 to August 31, 1943
- Modified M1 helmet to create prototype flak helmet that led to the standard issue M-3 Anti-Flak Helmet – January 1943



- Armorer James Green and welder Ben Marcilonis fashioned a .50 caliber machine gun port in the nose of a B-17 F Model, which eventually led to the inclusion of a chin turret in the B-17 G Model – January 1943



- First bomb group to bomb Germany: Wilhelmshaven on January 27, 1943
- The 369th Bomb Squadron "Fightin' Bitin" established the record of completing forty-two consecutive missions without a loss in 1943. The streak began on January 27, with the first American raid on Wilhelmshaven, Germany, and continued until it was broken on July 29. After D-Day several squadrons in many groups finally surpassed it.



- War correspondent Andy Rooney flies on combat mission - February 26, 1943



- First airman in to complete 25-mission tour: TSgt Michael Roscovich April 5, 1943



- First officer to complete 25 mission tour:
1st Lt Eugene J. Pollock - April 19, 1943



- Flight Surgeon Col Thurman Shuller responsible for the implementation of a mission limit – Spring 1943



- First enlisted airman to receive the Medal of Honor: Sgt Maynard H. Smith - May 1, 1943 mission



- Princess Elizabeth christened B-17F 42-102547 the “Rose of York” - July 6, 1944



- Glenn Miller’s first concert in the U.K. at Thurleigh - July 14, 1944



- First bomb group to complete 300 missions – February 22, 1945
- After the war ended, the 306th participated in the Casey Jones Project photo mapping Western Europe and Northern Africa. ■


Echoes Marks 50th Anniversary

August 2026 marks the 50th year *Echoes* has been in publication. Produced on a typewriter, and printed through the efforts of Harold Lightbown, who operated a printing business, Russell Strong, Editor, published *306th Echoes*, Vol. 1, No. 1. In it, there is news of the forthcoming "Second Annual Reunion," the search for 306th veterans, and announcement of Strong's goal of publishing a book on the detailed history of the 306th.

Russell Strong produced 122 issues of *Echoes* between August 1976 and July 2007. In 2008, through the efforts of Dr. Vernon Williams and his students at Abilene Christian College in Abilene, Texas, another 24 volumes were published. In the Fall of 2014, Nancy Huebotter was named Editor and currently holds that position.

For your interest and reading pleasure, the first issue of *Echoes* is reproduced below. ■

2973 Heatherbrae Drive
Poland, Ohio 44514



August 1976
Vol. 1, No. 1

SECOND ANNUAL REUNION

Although there are small reunions of 306th personnel in restricted areas, or involving groups who served together, only the second national reunion of the Group ever organized will be held Oct. 15-17 in Dayton, Ohio.

The first reunion last October in Miami Beach brought 45 men from coast to coast. Although small, it was an unqualified success to those who attended, and it was the single largest contingent showing up for the 8th Air Force reunion.

Those who attended were thrilled by the enthusiasm, and to a man commend your attendance at Dayton this year.

Dayton was chosen because of the USAF Air Museum, and if you haven't seen a B-17 in 30 years, you won't want to miss this chance. All of the other WWII planes are also on display, and there's even a Thurligh picture on display.


THE LONG SEARCH

For more than a year, Bill Collins of Poland, O., has been heading up the 306th veteran identification movement. It is slow, tough going, and thus far only a little over 400 addresses have been unearthed. We think about 7000 men served with the 306th, and that probably about 4000 survive today. We need your concerted help in searching memories, old address books, scrap books, your present locale, etc., to find even more veterans.

If you were on a combat crew, what do you know today about those who flew with you--where were they from? where might they have gone to college?

What about the men in your barracks? Or your office or shop? In the bomb dump? Etc.

We need names, addresses, leads, and a little of your time. Write a letter or two. Make a phone call. Perhaps get a note in your local newspaper. Check with your library, the American Legion and VFW groups. If you have a WATS line available, make some phone calls for the 306th, and send your results to Bill Collins.



because they are important, tended to amplify the very early, hectic days, and to omit the later months when people were still being killed and the war had not yet been won. Strong hopes to strike a better balance, and also to picture in more detail the work behind the scenes that kept the planes in the air.

He wants to know more about YOUR role, and would appreciate hearing from you.

PRODUCING THE NEWSLETTER

This first newsletter comes to you through the combined efforts of Russ Strong, as editor; Bill Collins, as leader of the identification effort; and Harold Lightbown, who has operated a Boston printing business since leaving the 306th.

Two addresses you may need are:

Mr. M. Collins, Jr.
2973 Heatherbrae Drive
Poland, Ohio 44514

Russell A. Strong
St. Andrews Presbyterian College
Laurinburg, NC 28352

AVAILABLE READING

Of course, many of you have seen *First Over Germany*, the work of Art Bove and others which appeared in 1946. This is the basic book today on the 306th.

If you haven't seen it, *The Mighty Eighth* is well worth looking up and I bet you'll want your own copy!

Skyways to Berlin and *First of the Many* are two classics, long out of print, with tales of the 306th.

The entire record is to be found on microfilm, available from the USAF Historical Center at Maxwell Field, Ala., for \$17. But, you need a reader and its mighty hand on the eyes to work with it.

Many records are still extant, at the National Archives in Suitland, Md., and the USAF Historical Center. They are great browsing, but it is expensive to get copies and takes a great deal of time.

OTHER RESEARCH ON THE EIGHTH

The nostalgia wave hits at about 50, or so, say the experts, and in the case of the Eighth Air Force has brought forth a rash of books and research projects. Despite all that has been printed, there is still a great deal to be done. Hence, the work being done on the 306th, on other groups, on specific missions, etc.

##One British 306th devotee is working on a listing of plane names, but needs plane numbers to go with them. Can you help?

##Another Britisher is working on a book on the Hamm mission of 22 Apr 44. He is in touch with some of our people. Col. Robinson was the air commander that day and Maj. Cheney was the lead navigator. Maj. Phillips was the lead bombardier. The 306th lost no planes on a rough raid, with only Lt. Curtis having serious difficulty.

DECEASED SINCE 1 MAY 1945

In trying to bring the record up to date we must publish a list of those whom we know have died since 1 May 1945. This is by no means complete, nor is all pertinent information about individuals available at this time.

We would appreciate names and details on others who should be listed.

Robert Knox Andrews, GPHq
L/Gen Frank Armstrong, Group CO, Aug 69
Joseph L. Brennan, 423rd, 13 Feb 76
Ivan Brill 423rd
George R. Buckley 367th, 13 Mar 70
Ernest G. Cayard 367th, 22 Nov 64
John S. Chalfant 368th 423rd, GPHq, 22 Jun 75
Richard H. Claes 368th, 19 Aug 46
Douglas R. Coleman GPHq, 7 Nov 69
Peter Ferrari 367th, 1972
Frank E. Ford 367th, 17 Dec 67
Harold R. Fossum 423rd
Rudolph Horst III 369th, 2 Oct 45
John C. Joplin 369th, 2 Oct 45
Howard M. Kelly 367th, 16 Jan 69
Jack Earl Klutz 367th, 12 Jun 74
Phil G. Kraft 423rd, 24 Dec 75
William Leiser 367th, 1965
William A. Lindsey 367th, Jun 61
Alfred S. Lubojacky 369th, 15 Feb 46
Edward W. Magee 367th, 6 May 66
Richard H. Metzger 367th
Ronald F. McCormack 367th, GPHq, 60
William I. Osgood 369th, 2 Oct 45
Marion C. Plumb 367th
B/Gen Claude E. Putnam Group CO, May 65
Anthony Rastenis 367th, Jul 73
Edward N. Ryan 369th, 2 Oct 45
Henry H. Schmitz 369th, 2 Oct 45
Ralph E. Simester, chaplain
Adam L. Snavely 367th, 22 May 69
John Stanko, 369th, 19 Jun 76
Clifford J. Stanton 367th, 72
Leroy C. Sugg 423rd
Joseph L. Threlkeld 369th, 2 Oct 45
Hudson H. Upham Group CO, 1 Nov 46
Alfred W. Weid 368th
Frank E. Wright 369th, 2 Oct 45

Please send any additions to the editor.

July 1942 - May 1945	367th
Wendover Field, Utah	368th
Thurleigh, Beds., England	369th
	423rd

and service organizations

“82 Years Later, Our Two Families Are Forever Linked”

[Editor's note: This article was originally printed in a newspaper that was published in French in the Loire-Atlantique area of France. English translation copy was provided by George and Patty Woodall]

Sainte-Pazanne – In the fall of 1943, Annick Garand-Guilbaud's grandparents and father hid two Allied airmen. The women from Saine-Pazanne found one of her nieces after ten years of searching.

Saturday, September 6, 2025, will remain an unforgettable date for Annick Garand-Guilbaud. That day, in the Tuileries Gardens in Paris, accompanied by her husband, Gerard, her granddaughters, and her sister, she met Patty Woodall. The American is the niece of aviator Lionel Drew, who was staying with his family in Sainte-te-Pazanne from September 17 (or 18) to October 6, 1943. But before getting to that point, Annick had to be tenacious: “Several times, I even told myself that I had to resign myself, that I wasn't going to succeed,” she confides. Her research began in 2014 while emptying the family home after her mother's death, where she discovered two books on the war in Brittany. She then embarked on an investigation that came to nothing, but the spark caused by the find was not about to die out. “In 2021, I discovered a book on the Alliance network. Contacted, the wirer confirmed that my family was not part of it, but advised her to go to the Municipal and Departmental Archives. My husband and I took photos of the items that seemed interesting to us. The couple scoured museums, historian' exhibitions, and went to the National Archives in Vincennes in January 2022. Intense emotions, when I was given the three files of the heroes of my heart! Annick Garand-Guibaud then discovered their role, their actions, names that echo family events. Two resistance fighters staying with my grandparents are the godfathers of two of my brothers and sisters, she confides.



Annick Garand-Guilbaud has written three booklets containing period documents and the chronology of her research.

A message from a niece of the English aviator

The research continues. One of her sisters give her a book on the Burgundy network, of which her family was a part. It allows me to establish the career paths of Allied officers Lionel Drew and McGourlick.

Insatiable, Annick Garand-Guilbaud continues her investigations by contacting associations in Burgundy, Brittany, and Normandy. In 2024, she receives an invitation from the Department of Archives for an exhibition on the Second World War.



The grandparents of Annick Garand-Guilbaud, Renee and Robert Garand, born in 1897 and 1896 respectively, alias Grive and Grole, in their resistance network.

We hit it off immediately

She was then given the name of Benoit Baquet, president of the Breton Association of Aerial Remembrance (ABSA) 39-45, who confirmed that he was launching research. After several exchanges, nothing progressed. A twist last December, when she received an email from a niece of Lionel Drew. This was the beginning of a long correspondence with Patty Woodall. The two women hit it off immediately. She told me that in October 2025, she would be taking a cruise on the Seine. Across the Atlantic, Annick and Patty exchanged photos and many elements of my research.

Her duty to remember

For ten years, all of Annick Garand-Guilbaud's research has been recording in writing. In it she recounts her journey, supported by all the period documents she has recovered. She began the process alone. “I knew very well that they had been involved in the Resistance. In Sainte-Pazanne, my grandfather was the first to have a car in which he transported weapons.” Very early on, she realized that she must share her research with her brothers and sisters. “I was

16 when my father died and my younger brother was 4,” she reveals. “When he saw my father’s handwriting in the booklets, he was very moved, because he had few memories.



Armand Garand, Annick Garand-Guilbaud’s father, was born in 1920. Risking his life, he transported weapons and prepared landing strips for the allies.

Annick Garand-Guilbaud’s granddaughters, Clemence, 18, and Camille, 14, encouraged her to never give up. In fifth grade, Camille came to me and asked me to help her prepare a presentation on the Resistance. “I want to do it on your family,” she told me. Clemence also motivates her grandmother: “We have to find the airmen, I speak English, I can help you.” Drawn into the story, they traveled to Paris and read, in English, the text prepared by Annick for Patty Woodall. “This unforgettable moment in Paris is a recognition of our unsung heroes, and Patty also shared this feeling with me.” The emotion was, of course, present, but with the feeling of having succeeded, 82 years later! A bond has been rebuilt between our two families. We are linked forever. ■



Patty Woodall and Annick Garand-Guilbaud, in Paris, on September 6. We felt like we knew each other and didn’t want to leave each other after our meeting.



Lionel Drew was a Bombardier on the 26 June 1943 mission to the Tricqueville airfield, France, on board B-17 #42-3172. The Fortress was attacked by fighters and the Pilot, Captain Raymond Check (on his 25th and what had to be the last, mission of his tour) was killed by shrapnel. Co-Pilot Lt. Col. James Wilson was severely burned. When he heard the alarm bell sounding, Lionel Drew bailed out of the Fortress, which was brought back safely

to England, piloted by Ray Check’s regular Co-Pilot, William Cassedy, who had taken the Waist gunner position that day. Drew went out via the nose hatch, becoming an evadee for several months, of which three weeks were spent in Annick Garand-Guilbaud’s grandparent attic. Drew was returned to England in December 1943. ■

Thurleigh Notes:



The Museum is now maintained and operated by volunteers who, under UK law, in 2019 formed a limited company: “306th Bomb Group Museum Limited.” An appointment system arranges visits to the Museum by advance reservations at mutually agreeable times, via the

Museum Facebook page or email.

(306thbgmuseumuk@gmail.com).

Key contact personnel are:

Chairman: Mark Fussell

(fuss306thbg@outlook.com)

Secretary: Peter Worby

(peterworby@yahoo.co.uk)

Treasurer: Phil Darrington

(philldarrington@yahoo.co.uk)

The general email address for the Museum is

306thbgmuseumuk@gmail.com

The 306th UK Facebook page is

<https://www.facebook.com/306thmuseum/>

The current team will always ensure that Veterans and their families can visit the museum at the time requested by the guests. ■

Fort Shot Up Often, But Cook Always Brings 'Em Back Alive

[(Editor's Note: The following article was published in the Tupelo Daily Journal, Monday Morning, December 6, 1943.)]



You wonder how anybody can live through it, yet there he is - red hair, friendly grin, low voice.

One time, 30 Nazi fighters "escorted" his Flying Fortress away from Bremen after it had already been knocked out of formation with two engines gone.

Over Hannover one day, the tail of his big ship got hit; he momentarily lost control but

managed to make it back to the base. Landing, he found that 2,000 holes had made a super sieve of the tail.

Such as that - sometimes worse, sometimes not so bad - went on for 25 missions, and Capt. Louis Greer Cook of Tupelo is still able to say that neither he nor any member of his crew got a scratch the whole time. He won't admit it himself, but it would probably be putting it mildly to say that those boys think this 23-year-old pilot is about tops. A Fort with its average crew of about 10 men is something like a ship. The pilot is responsible for all hands, and if the ship goes down, he sees that all the other men jump, then bails out himself - if there's time left.

Capt. Cook is home for a while after eight months of intensive duty with the Eighth Air Force in England. He will report to Miami after Christmas for further assignment. Meanwhile, he is visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Cook, catching some extra sleep, and expecting to spend a good many hours swapping stories with Maj. Jake Epting, Jr., and arguing the respective merits of the Fort and the Liberator. Maj. Epting, who reached New York the same day as Capt. Cook, arrived home late Saturday. He has also completed a 14-month tour of duty with the Eighth Air Force.

"You get excited before you take off on a mission," Cook said Saturday, in an interview. "The closer you get to the target, the more excited you get. Then, when the anti-aircraft fire starts bursting, and the enemy fighters start coming at you, you just get mad."

That white-hot anger is the factor that saves the day, according to the young veteran, because it keeps fliers from getting scared. "By the time you cool down, they're usually on the way back to their base, their work done, and they

laugh, and joke, and sing, and gab."

Capt. Cook wasn't long in learning the rudiments of battle. If ever anybody got a baptism of fire, he did. His first mission almost came so near being his last. It takes our breath away to hear him tell about it.

He arrived in England in March. It was on the night before April 17 that he was first 'alerted.'

"I was pretty excited," he related, "and as the hours passed, I got more excited."



(GPR-24-1-306)(27-4-43)(COMBAT CREW + SHIP)
Front Row: Maynard Dix, Louis Cook, Joe Graziano, Gerald Stroud. Back Row: Louis Hlavac, Herschel Ezell, Elwood Brotzman, Maxwell Judas, Gerald Barnt, Lee Kessler

"They rolled us out of bed before daylight, and we ate breakfast. It was still dark. We went into the briefing room to find out where we were going. Everybody was smoking and talking nervously, and wondering what our mission would be. Then the chart was pulled down, and -"

"Gentlemen, your target for today is the aircraft factory at Bremen."

"We were told it was the Focke-Wulf plant, where Germany's famous fighter planes are made.

"Then the officer went on to explain what we could expect in the way of anti-aircraft and fighter opposition and so forth. I didn't pay much attention to him because that was my first time, and I didn't know any better.

"The sun was just coming up when we took off. Soon, we rendezvoused with groups from other bases. Then we flew out over the North Sea. I kept looking out for enemy planes and getting more and more excited.

"But I forgot about it pretty quickly, when the fighters started coming, about 25 on each side and 30 or 40 in front. The flak (anti-aircraft fire) was thick, and those fighters kept diving and rolling and cavorting around every kind of way, trying to break the formation.

"They came so close you could see the eyes of the pilot. I saw the Fort on my wing tip go down. It was the crew I had brought over to England, and the fellow flying it had been my co-pilot.

"I felt pretty bad when I saw that happen. A thousand things about those boys flashed through my mind, but suddenly we were over Bremen. The flak was like a big black cloud, and we had a job to do.

"Greer steered his Fort over the objective, and the bombs were loosed at the aircraft factory. Just as the ship headed away from the target, you could very well say – if you used the understatement fliers are famous for – that 'business picked up.'

"A fighter came straight in at us," the captain continued, "with a second one right behind and another one behind that.

"I saw those orange flames, and then it happened – they knocked out our No. 1 and the No. 2 engines, and they knocked holes in the propellers. I had to drop out of formation."

Dropping out of formation is like stripping a cowboy of his six-shooter. When Forts fly without fighter escort, their formation is their chief defense. And the Forts that went for Bremen had no fighter escort.

It was then that about 30 Focke-Wulfs and Messerschmitts formed what Capt. Cook somewhat grimly termed his Nazi 'fighter escort' that obligingly tried to blow him and his crew to bits.

They came from all directions. The tail gunner got two, the top turret gunner got a pair, and the whole crew kept battling against seemingly hopeless odds.

The fighters knocked the bomb doors open. They put 20 cannon holes in the *Little Savage*, the name the fighting Fort bore.

"There wasn't much else left to do, so we started diving," Greer said. "And I guess the Nazis thought they'd shot us down for good because they went off and left us.

"We leveled off, though, and did some real hedge-hopping. People on the ground kept shooting at us, some with rifles, but we made it to the coast all right and 'rode the waves' back to England."

"We kept talking all the way back about how the rest of our squadron would be waiting – wondering if we were going to make it back. We figured they would have been in a good while and might be beginning to count us out.

"But when we got in, we found that we were the first ship to return. None of the others in our squadron ever got back."

Fliers don't allow themselves to think too much about their comrades who don't come back. "We talk about them some," Cook said, "and we go around to the empty rooms in the barracks to do what we can about getting their belongings together to send to their folks. Then the next day new crews come in, and it isn't long until we're off on another mission."

"Fliers don't spend as much time talking about the raids as you might imagine," Greer said. "When they come in, they go straight to an intelligence officer, who interrogates them from A to Z to determine the extent of the damage to

the target, our losses, and enemy losses, and to pick out the fine points that may be useful in later attacks."

The men may talk some among themselves about the enemy fighters or make a few nonchalant remarks about the 'nice little scrap' they just went through, but they don't 'talk shop' all the time.

The American sense of humor is, in itself, a potent weapon in war, judging from some of Cook's observations. "The Nazis must think they're fighting a crazy bunch," he commented.

A classic example of the value of a well-timed wisecrack was the one that the tail gunner on Cook's Fort pulled when the ship was in the midst of its battle for survival. Tension was tighter than a G-string, the air thick with foreboding, when suddenly the gunner spoke: "Let's go home," he said. "I'm hungry."

The tension snapped; the whole crew got a second wind. It was just the touch they needed.

Capt. Cook wears a ribbon for the Distinguished Flying Cross and two Oak Leaf Clusters denoting two more DFCs.

He won the first DFC on a Hannover raid, in which he led his squadron. That was the time the tail of his ship got hit. In fact, it was so full of holes that 'riddled' is not adequate to describe its condition.

The Fort wavered when the tail got peppered, and Cook sent the engineer back to tie the control together. Some cords from a parachute, a stray piece of wire, and a little ingenuity turned the trick. Despite the 2,000 holes in the tail of the plane, the pilot returned it to its base – all hands safe.

A mission to Gdynia, Poland, stands out in Cook's mind along with Bremen and Hannover. On the return leg of the journey, fighters riddled the nose and cockpit of Cook's Fort, but he outmaneuvered them and got away. Nobody was hurt then, either.

He won his first Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC on a mission to Schweinfurt, not the much-publicized one in which 60 heavy bombers were lost, but an earlier attack about which the full story has never been told. The other Cluster to the DFC was awarded upon completion of 25 missions.

Cook has been to Frankfurt, Stuttgart, the Ruhr valley, and other important targets in Europe. The Ruhr is "covered with anti-aircraft," he said. "One of the best-protected industrial areas in Germany."

Greer also has the Air Medal and four Oak Leaf Clusters, each signifying five missions. He also wears the American and the European theater ribbons.

His missions were not over too soon for him to encounter the German rocket. "We didn't know exactly what it was at first," he said. "But it didn't take us long to get used to it."

"It's not so bad. The enemy planes just stay out of range and lob the rockets over into the formation to try to break it up. That's about all they can do with it."

Greer praised British hospitality. "The British treat us

swell,” he declared. “The food is fine, and we couldn’t ask for more cordiality.”

What’s happening back in the United States is a favorite topic of discussion among the men overseas, he reported.

“When we hear about trouble at home – strikes and such – we get really mad. We sometimes wonder if the people know there’s a war going on.”

The young captain had only praise for the men he left behind him. “Those boys are doing a fine job,” he said.

“There’s a team spirit that is great. When we take off on a mission, the ground crews and the fellow who aren’t going all line up and cheer you when you leave and wave until you get out of sight.

“They’re right there waiting when you come in, too. It’s pretty tough when they wait for a ship that doesn’t come in, and they stay there after dark plenty of times, just hoping.”

Cook explained that the many return trips to a single target are part of a systematic plan of destruction, which American precision bombing makes possible.

“We go to hit a certain target, and we hit it. The next time we may return to the same city, but have a different target.”

Cook said that he did not know enough about internal German conditions to say whether the Reich could be bombed out of the war.

“All I know is that we’re beating the Germans in the air now,” he said, “but we can’t let them down.”■

From the Editor



Accepting AI, But With Caution

by Nancy M. Huebotter

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is undoubtedly a permanent fixture in our lives, but it should not be

mistaken for “Automatic Genius.” AI serves best as a tool that enhances productivity – acting as a co-worker – rather than as a replacement for human reasoning. When conducting research, it is essential to “fact-check” any information obtained from databases, as AI can produce false information, misleading citations, or inaccuracies. Additionally, AI poses a risk to traditional historical research methods by prioritizing speed over accuracy. Generative AI has the capability to create convincing but fake primary sources, such as documents or photographs, which can distort our understanding of historical events. Anyone researching our veterans or significant events related to World War II, particularly the 306th, is encouraged to visit the 306th website, which offers a wealth of primary information. ■



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. Once the article has been submitted, it becomes the property of the editor and will not be returned for rework. If the editor has any questions and requires clarification, the author will be contacted.

To avoid copyright infringement, any copyrighted materials, including reprints of articles previously appearing in other publications, will not be included in *Echoes* without the expressed written consent from the author and/or editor of the original publication. This information must be included with the article submitted to the *Echoes* editor for consideration.

Articles relative to World War II, the 306th 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

Echoes

**Article Due Date for
Summer/Fall
November 6, 2026**

In Memoriam

Obituaries ensure our loved ones are remembered and their stories are preserved. Please send obituary information regarding 306 veterans, wives, and friends of the 306th BGHA to Nancy M. Huebotter, Echoes Editor, 508 Lee Place, Placentia, CA 92870 (nmhuebotter306@gmail.com)

George Roberts: Proud Veteran Dies at Age 105

George Roberts, a longtime resident of Gulfport, MS, passed away on April 13, 2026, in D'Iberville, MS, at the remarkable age of 105. He maintained a longstanding affiliation with the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association and the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association.

Born in Lancashire, England, in 1921, his parents decided the family should immigrate to the United States, settling in Pennsylvania in 1924.

In August 1943, George was employed and working what he believed to be a good job when he was drafted and called to serve. He did not realize he was in the Air Force until he was in the midst of basic training. Next on the training regimen, he was sent to radio school at Scott Air Force Base in Southwestern Illinois. Given the option, George elected to fly rather than attend "radio tower school." As a radio operator, he learned how to fire and clean machine guns, operate the Sperry ball turret and upper turrets, and, more importantly, provide essential communication for bomber aircraft, and served as an aerial gunner. Upon completion of his training, he was issued a flight jacket, a .45 semiautomatic pistol, and a watch, then sent to Salt Lake. After a short stay in Salt Lake, he was sent to Blythe, California, a vital military hub where thousands of heavy bombardment crews were training. It was here that George was assigned to a crew.



George and his crew reported to Thurleigh and Station 111 on September 11, 1943. He was scheduled to fly his first mission on October 4, 1943. But shortly after take-off, the mission was aborted due to a supercharger malfunction, causing a technical failure before the crew could rendezvous over the airfield. Four days later, the call came for a

mission to Bremen, which proved to be a rough trip. In the beginning, the crew was assigned to one particular plane,

which they named *Cavalier*. It was heavily damaged on the first mission and was not available for use until a week later for the crew's fourth mission. On October 14, the William Kirk crew, with George as radio operator aboard the B-17 *Cavalier*, took part in the "Black Thursday" Schweinfurt mission, a mission that would be remembered as one that demanded the utmost courage despite the losses suffered. On that day, the 306th lost 10 planes, with *Cavalier* the only Flying Fortress to return from Schweinfurt.

On the crew's fourth mission, the plane was so badly damaged that they were never able to fly it again.

Following the Schweinfurt mission, there were insufficient crews and planes to conduct missions. All of the original crew were killed while flying with other crews. The right waist gunner and George were the only ones to stay together and complete the combat tour.

Due to heavy losses in the squadron, George began flying in the lead aircraft, flying only when this squadron led the group. His last 24 missions were flown in the lead plane of the 306th Bomb Group.

In January of 1944, when George had completed 11 missions, he was informed that the combat tour had been increased from 25 to 30 missions. When he reached 28 missions, the tour length was increased to 35.

In March 1944, George was assigned to a new B-17G named *Princess*, which had arrived at Thurleigh, assigned to the 367th Bombardment Squadron, and commanded by Captain Perry E. Raster. After one mission, the plane was renamed *Princess Elizabeth* in honor of the daughter of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Crew Chief Master Sgt. Edward S. Gregory requested that Princess Elizabeth christen the bomber as part of her 18th birthday celebration during a Royal tour of American air bases in Britain. Although the Royal family agreed to the christening by Princess Elizabeth, they asked that the bomber's name be changed. Officials believed that if the aircraft were shot down, it would be seen as a bad omen and a propaganda nightmare. As a result, the B-17 was renamed *Rose of York*. Others participating in the christening ceremony included King George VI, Queen Elizabeth, and General Jimmy Doolittle, Eighth Air Force Commander.

On D-Day, June 6, 1944, George flew in the radio operator seat aboard the *Rose of York* as they flew in the lead position to support beach landings.

George flew his final 16 missions as the operator aboard this plane. His A-2 flying jacket, which he wore while assigned to the B-17 *Rose of York*, is on display at the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force in Savannah, Georgia. In addition, battle honors on the rear of the jacket include some of Roberts's missions flown prior to his assignment on *Rose of York*. Roberts flew his last mission on 9 July 1944. He completed his combat tour a few days later and was returned to the States. He was discharged from active duty in September 1954.



In recognition of his wartime service, George was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters, European Theater Ribbon with three battle stars, Good Conduct Medal, and two Presidential Citations. Foreign awards included the French Legion of Honor from the President of the French Republic and a letter of thanks and appreciation from Sir Winston Churchill for his participation in the great 8th Air Force battles of October 1943.

Upon discharge from active military duty, George worked for the Department of the Air Force as an electronics instructor at Scott Air Force Base, IL. In September 1958, he was transferred to Keesler Technical Training Center in Biloxi, MS where he served as a Communications Electronics Specialist and Training Evaluator in the technical school. His last assignment was as an Electronics Programmer in the Plans and Programs Division of the Center Headquarters.

Following 31 years of government service, he worked for the City of Gulfport at the Herbert Wilson Recreation Center. He was a Little League coach for 25 years and a volunteer worker for the Gulfport VA Hospital and the American Red Cross.



He was a past Director of the 306th Bombardment Group Association and President of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association.

George was predeceased by his wife of 72 years, Norma (nee Junck) Roberts. He is survived by his daughter, Ellen Louise of Columbus, GA; son, Gary Lee of Gautier, MS;

grandsons, Haydn (Morgan), Winston, and Quincy; and great-grandchildren, Mary Milton, Sarah Elizabeth, John Stuart, and George. ■

Given In Memory Of . . .



John W. Corcoran, 367th, Tail Gunner
by Kathleen Corcoran Job

Kenneth A. Wait, 368th, Pilot
by Carol Sewell

John R. Grimm, 367th Armament Officer
by John and Susan Grimm

Robert H. Wood, 369th, Pilot
by Barbara Wood

*Gifts may be made in memory of 306th veterans or family by sending a check payable to the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association with the designation "306th Memorial Fund" on the memo line of the check. Send the check to Matt Ferrari, Treasurer, PO 290643, Port Orange, FL 32129. 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.*

306th BGHA TO DO LIST



1. Make Reunion Hotel Reservations
2. Submit Reunion Registration Form
3. Order Memorial Plaque for posting at Thurleigh Museum
(see Summer/Fall 2025 issue of **Echoes**)
4. Renew 306th BGHA Membership
5. Subscribe to **Echoes**

Donation Update:

Your Dollars Sustain the 306th 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 or mailed to the Treasurer at the address below. Many thanks to those of you who have donated to date in 2026. As of 31 May 2026, the association has received a total of \$4824.42.

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.

Many companies offer a "Matching Gift Program," a charitable donation program designed to encourage employees to donate to qualified non-profit organizations. Check with your employer to see if a matching gift program is available.

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 306th family by noting "306th Memorial Fund" along with the veteran's 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 21 of this issue of *Echoes*.

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

**DONATION FOR THE
306TH BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

Make checks payable to:

306th Bomb Group Historical Association

Send to:

Matt Ferrari, 306th BGHA Treasurer

PO Box 290643

Port Orange, FL 32129

Name: _____

By initialing here (_____), I hereby confirm this current contact information should be used for my FREE membership registration/renewal for 2026, indicating my continuing interest in the 306th BGHA.

Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone Number(s): _____

This donation is being made in memory of:

Name: _____ **Relationship to 306th:** _____

Date: _____



306th Bomb Group Historical Association Membership Registration Form 2026 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 306th veteran, please complete the following about him:

I am not related to him _____. **OR:** This 306th WWII Veteran is my (relationship): _____

Veteran's Name: _____ 306th 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 306th Bomb Group Historical Association; on memo line write "2026 *Echoes*." Please mail (with or without this form) your check to:

Matt Ferrari, Treasurer
PO BOX 290643
PORT ORANGE, FL 32129

PayPal Donations can be made on-line at 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 submit your (free) membership renewal each calendar year to confirm your continued interest in the 306th BGHA and to verify your current phone number and email address.

A free electronic version of the 306th *Echoes*, our official publication, is available via www.306bg.us.

2027 Eighth Air Force Historical Society Reunion Destination: Savannah, GA and the



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE
MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE



**Reunion details to be published in *Echoes* and on the
306th BGHA website (www.306bg.us)
as they become available**