

306th Echoes

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A Letter from Pamela Austin

Dated 15 February 1993

By way of introduction, Miss Austin of Cambridge, England, made contact with people in the United States connected with the 306th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force. They in turn searched records and furnished her with the name Walter Keilt, former pilot of the B-17 plane 'Weary Bones.' He was also given information for contacting her. Correspondence ensued and Walter Keilt decided to go to England to visit with Pamela Austin. He stayed for quite some time and eventually a romance blossomed that languished over unyielding decisions for either to leave their country for the sake of the other. In time, Walter gave Henry and Lillian Larwig the information needed for contacting Miss Austin. Lillian initiated correspondence which led to the following insightful letter from Pamela explaining, among other things, her special interest in Weary Bones.

Lillian,

You ask about 'Weary Bones.' She was, as you know, on the crash dump here in Cambridge, behind Marshall's aerodrome, in the autumn of 1944, where I used to visit her. The dump was cleared, I am told on good authority, by March 1946, so she would have been there just over a year. Civilians were not allowed on the crash dump, of course, and the main gates were guarded by armed sentries.

I had always gone along the stream, before the war, to visit the poor old horses in a field there, awaiting slaughter, and was fascinated one day to find all these crashed aircraft had suddenly materialized on 'my patch.' Some were almost complete, and some were just small bits and pieces. I remember climbing onto a plane named Typhoon, which was perched on top of another aircraft, and my light weight made it rock precariously which scared me off. I had visions of being buried underneath and not discovered for days!

As far as I know there were only two Fortresses, the one Weary Bones, and the other was from the 303rd Bomb Group, then called Tugboat Annie, but she had previously been 'Bat Outa Hell.' I have since met a man who remembers her...but not Weary Bones...and who had done some research on her. Tugboat Annie was up on the back of another aircraft; Weary Bones was down on her belly on the ground. I used to go inside Weary Bones through a gash at the wing root by the radio operator's station I think, and up into the pilot's seat. For some strange reason I never did sit in the right-hand seat. Many of the dials were still in situ, but there were no wings or engines of course. I expect she had been cannibalized before leaving Thurleigh. The chin (nose) turret was gone, and the upper (top) turret. I remember one day sitting in the pilot's seat in the cool shady interior, with the hot sun blazing on the back of my neck from where the turret would have been.

You ask about photographs. The only photograph I have is the one you will have seen of the tail damage taken after the crash at Thurleigh. We had been at war for five years when Weary Bones appeared on the dump, and as far as I am aware there was no film available for the civilian population. We certainly didn't see any. Several years ago I looked through war photographs at the Cambridgeshire Collection, but there was nothing on the crash dump. Now there is a road through those fields running almost exactly over the place where she ended her days. And for years that road was known at 96, our home residence, as 'Weary Bones Road.' In fact, I don't think my mother knew its correct appellation!

I was very interested in aircraft then, and it was absolutely vital to be quick on aircraft recognition and get under a hedge if you couldn't identify it! We were machine gunned once at school. Our school was a new one, just finished in 1939, and was situated on the



Site Six (368th Bomb Squadron) on a winter's day at Thurleigh, circa 1944-1945. Robert L. Dodge Historical Collection.

ATTENTION: Stay Connected Group

By Em Christianson
Board Member, 306th BGA

Whether you are a widower or widow, or a family member of a 306th veteran, you are an honored member of the 306th Bomb Group Association. Let's make this 2010 Reunion a big success by attending -- and bringing your family. You are welcome to join our family, and see old friends, and make new friends.

I've been assigned to the Stay Connected Project, which is to encourage YOU to attend. If you can volunteer to help me make some personal calls on this, please call me:

Em Christianson
3871 Boca Bay
Dallas, TX 75244;
Telephone: (972) 241-4649

outskirts of town beside a railway line and road bridge. When we went out onto the hockey pitch, after the all clear, there were scuff marks all over the field where his bullets had gouged out the turf.

Weary Bones was my favourite of all the planes there, and it was a huge dump. Weary Bones fascinated me. I used to wonder where she had flown and how she came to be there. After the publication of Roger Freeman's *The Mighty Eighth*, I began to wonder whether it would be possible to trace her, and, amongst many others, wrote to him. He had noted that she was from the 306th Bomb Group, BUT GAVE ME THE WRONG SERIAL NUMBER, so, for about five years, I was trying to trace something that did not exist. I felt it was a faint hope, as I was really only certain of her name, and originally didn't even know she was a fortress. The tail, then chopped off, made her look so different somehow. I remember she had, I think, 35 bomb symbols on the fuselage along with her name and the dice, and five swastikas denoting enemy fighters shot down. To me she was an unsolved mystery.

Cliff Bishop, author of *Fortresses of the Big Triangle First*, was instrumental in putting me on the right track. He is probably the foremost authority on the B-17 over here. He insisted that there was NO B-17 with the serial number 42 34943, but that the 306th had 42 37943, although he remained unconvinced for simply ages that the serial number and the name were one and the same. John Mills at Thurleigh eventually clinched it; he had her catalogued by name and number, although had no other information about her. He did, however, give me some crew addresses which I kept for a long time. I had never had any intention of trying to contact the crew, as I had always thought I could write to some USAAF records centre to obtain her operational history, but I now know that is not so!

Continued on page 5



A Red Cross Clubmobile on an airfield somewhere in England. Ronald McAuliffe Historical Collection



Officers:

Sheldon Beigel, President
president@306bg.org
 Judy Hermley, Vice-President
vice-president@306bg.org
 Barbara Neal, Secretary
secretary@306bg.org
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treasurer@306bg.org

Directors: Em Christianson, Grover C. Goode, J.D.; William Houlihan; Walt Lubojacky; Charles Neal; Robert Rockwell; Walter Rozett; Vernon Williams.

Past President:

John Hickey, past-president@306bg.org

Long-Range Planning Committee:

Charles Neal, Chairman
Long-RangePlanning@306bg.org

Secretary:

Handles all changes of address, current records, obituaries, and correspondence.
 Barbara Neal
 P.O. Box 682530
 Park City, UT 84068-2530
secretary@306bg.org

Editor/Echoes and 306th BG Historian:

Dr. Vernon L. Williams
 ACU Box 28203
 Abilene Christian University
 Abilene, TX 79699-8203
vwilliams@acu.edu
 (325) 280-3399

Treasurer:

Send checks to:
 Joel LaBo
 875 S. Worth
 Birmingham, Michigan 48009
treasurer@306bg.org

British Representative:

Ralph Franklin
 National School Cottage, Mill Hill
 Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
 Telephone from U.S. 011-44-1234-708715
306museum@nscmh.fsnet.co.uk
 Website: www.306bg.co.uk

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The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association is a Federally tax-exempt organization and as a veteran's group is classified as 501 © (19).

Obituaries

Please send the Association details of deaths, or complete obituaries if available, including city, state, and name of publication for any published obituary; having the publication information in our 306th Archives will assist generations yet to come. Further, the secretary would be glad to receive and file **for future Echoes use**, any information important to include in future obits for anyone wishing to provide such advance information. Send all obituary-pertinent info to:

Barbara Neal
 P.O. Box 682530
 Park City, UT 84068-2530
secretary@306bg.org

The secretary has learned of the following deaths:

- **Beres, Robert D.**, 423rd bombardier (Ragnar L. Carlson crew), died 23 Feb 10 in Copley, OH. He flew more than 50 missions. Post-war he worked for B.F. Goodrich Tire Co, retiring as supervisor in the maintenance department. He was an avid landscape photographer throughout his travel with his wife of more than 67 years, Hilda, who predeceased him in Jul 09 (see Jan 10 Echoes).
- **Columbus, Joseph M.**, 423rd bombardier navigator (Vernon K. Cole crew), of Oviedo, FL, died 23 Sep 09 at 88. He was POW from the 14 Oct 43 Schweinfurt mission until liberated in May 45. He continued to serve in the Air Force until he retired in 1968; his medals included two Purple Hearts. He left his wife of almost 63 years, Kathryn, 2c, 6gc, 3ggc.
- **Conroy, Anthony Joseph**, 368th ball turret gunner (Lester A. Evans crew), died 7 Feb 10 in Portland, OR at 84. He completed 35 missions. Post-war he earned degrees at University of Oregon, and co-founded Conroy Packing Co with his brother in 1955. He was a personnel manager for General Foods Corp. until retiring in 1987. He was in the USAF Reserve until retiring in 1985, and remained active in Air Force life by serving as President of our 306th BG Association (in 02-03 after being elected VP, due to death of Leland Kessler soon after he had been elected President), and President of the Oregon Chapter of 8th AF Historical Society. He served as Treasurer for St. Vincent de Paul Society. He was predeceased by 1c. He left his wife since 1951, Patricia; 4c, 4gc.
- **Dunlap, Curtis**, 369th bombardier [crews of (1) Gustave Holmstrom; (2) Charles Schoolfield group leader on 14 Oct 43 Schweinfurt mission as tail gunner & observer; (3) Richard S. Wong on 3 Feb 44 Wilhelmshaven mission that went down], died 22 Sep 09 at 91 in Lodi, CA. The second time he went down he was POW in Barth, Germany until liberated by the Russian Army. Post-war he worked as a timber faller until losing an eye in that work in 77. Afterward he worked the walnut orchards on the family Dunlap Ranch in CA until a few weeks before his death. He was predeceased by his wife of more than 60 years, Jayne, in Apr 06. He left 2c, 4gc, 8ggc.
- **Franzino, Raymond A.**, 369th pilot & co-pilot (Robert Stewart crew), died 26 Oct 09 in White Plains, NY. He flew 35 missions from 12 Jul to 6 Nov 44. Post-war, he entered the graphic arts industry, eventually becoming Vice President of Sales for the book manufacturing division of Rand McNally until retiring in 1987. His wife, Rita, predeceased him in 2004 after 54 years of marriage. He left 4c, 7gc, 1ggc.
- **Harris, William V.**, 423rd waist gunner (J.P. Toombs crew), of Greenville, MS, died 30 Jan 97, at 80, according to publicly available info at the Social Security Death Index. In the 22 Feb 44 mission to Bernburg, he and two crew members survived when Toombs' B-17 went down. The survivors were POWs for 14 months (story re that mission and subsequent POW time appeared in Echoes Apr & Jul 89, written by the crew's ball turret gunner Calvin T. Brend, whose obit was listed Apr-91). His survivors included his wife Irene, who later died in 2005, and 1c.
- **Horgan, William R.**, 423rd, died 29 Mar 03, last residing in Cape Coral, FL., according to publicly available info at the Social Security Death Index. He was predeceased in Feb 02 by his wife Muriel Lucille; survivor info unknown.
- **Larwig, Henry J.**, 368th engineer / top gunner (Walter H. Keilt crew), 87, died 21 Oct 09 at home. Born in Germany, in 1927 at age 5 he came to Oklahoma City with his parents. He enlisted in the Air Corps in 1942 and flew his combat missions on "Weary Bones." Post-war he worked for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company for over 38 years. In retirement they traveled extensively to other countries, especially Germany, and he was a busy volunteer with many organizations. He served as president and vice president for many years of Immanuel Lutheran Church. He left his wife since 1944, Lillian, 3c, 6gc, 2ggc.
- **Liles, Walter A.**, 369th tail gunner (Irving Dudley crew), 89, died 7 Feb 10 at his home in Ellendale, TN near Memphis. He flew 35 missions. Post-war he was a bus driver, a member of Ellendale Baptist Church, and past Master of Bartlett Masonic Lodge. He left his wife of 61 years, Bobbie, 4c, 5gc.
- **Meaux, Allan F.**, 367th radio operator / waist gunner (crews of C Dale Briscoe and William J. Casey), 87, died 12 Jan 10 in Oconomowoc, WI. He enlisted in 1941, and flew a total of 60 missions in Europe 1942-45, of which 25 were while stationed at Thurleigh Oct 42 to Aug 43. He was a radio instructor in Galveston and El Paso for a year, and in Aug 44 went with the 9th as a port waist gunner, stationed at Amiens, France. Post-war he was employed by Kraft Food Company for 30 years, after which they spent 10 winters in Ft. Myers, FL. In 91 they moved to Cherokee Village, AK. His passion was golfing and fishing until he became ill in Nov 06. In May 07 they moved to WI to be closer to the family. He left his wife Genevieve, 5c, 13gc, 6ggc.
- **Orlando, Nicholas A.**, 423rd ball turret gunner (Ragnar L. Carlson crew), of Cedarhurst, NY, 87, died 27 Feb 10. Arrived at Thurleigh Nov 43. On his 15th mission, the 22 Mar 44 mission to Oranienburg and Basdorf, when it seemed clear that their severely-hit "Able Mabel" was going down, he and the four other crew members in the back with no communication bailed out. He was POW in Stalag 17B Krems, Austria, liberated Apr 45. Post-war he was an administrator with the U.S. Postal Service, and worked 30 years at the Lawrence Post Office. He served as the devoted Adjutant of his American Legion Post. He left his wife of 65 years, Katherine, 2c, 7gc, 3ggc.
- **Sarver, George L. Jr.**, 369th ball turret gunner (Edward J. Sandini crew), 84, died 29 Nov 07. Native of Pittsburgh, PA. USVA Cemetery info lists him as MSgt, USAF, WW II, Korea, Vietnam, buried in Grants Cemetery, Grants, NM. Survivor info unknown.
- **Scherer, Spencer H.**, 369th tail gunner (Edward J. Sandini crew), 82, of West Lawn, PA, died 13 Dec 2008 at his residence near Reading, PA. He had 23 combat missions as tail gunner. Retired from a Reading newspaper. His wife Jean died earlier, in Jun 2000. He left only distant relatives.

President's Corner

Greetings,



I am happy for this opportunity to discuss with you your BGA's intended program for 2009-2010. For those who don't already know, 1942 was our first year of life as the 306th BG, and it has been going as an association since 1976. We plan to continue as you know it until 2012, our 70th year. At that time, it will be largely up to you and the second generation to determine where we go from there.

Your choices are to continue under the 306th BGA name with the 8th Air Force Historical Association, continue as it is, or close it down. The present leadership has proposed an option to continue as an organization with the other bomb groups who have already faced this issue and continue to meet under our banner within the 8th AFHS umbrella at designated reunions. We have two years to discuss this and decide.

Meanwhile, we are asking all of you to recruit members of your family and our gallant widows to return to our reunions. Don't forget the many children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As well as cousins, aunts and uncles and friends who are interested. All are most welcome.

Continue reading your *Echoes* for follow-up news. If you have any questions, please contact the Secretary, Barbara Neal who will answer or direct you to the member who can answer. In the meantime, think of joining us in Washington, D.C. for our next reunion (see page 7 for details). You are cordially invited.

Shel Beigel
 President

Obituaries continued on page 3

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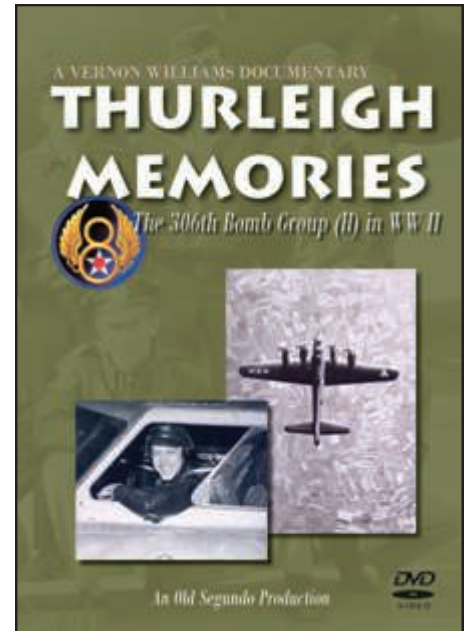
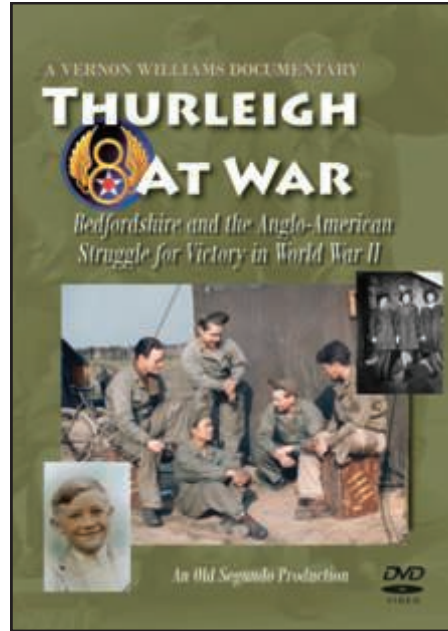
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FOR REUNION DETAILS, SEE PAGE 7



It's a long way from Thurleigh..... Left to right: Dr. Thurman Shuller, Group Surgeon and William "Bill" Houlihan, medic with the 367th BS, Little Rock Reunion.

Two Thurleigh Films Benefit East Anglia Air War Project

The sequel to *Thurleigh Memories* finally made its appearance recently in Abilene as the interested crowd gathered together on a rainy and cold Thursday night for a special viewing of *Thurleigh at War*. With bags of popcorn and steaming hot coffee, the story of Bedfordshire and World War II unfolded on the screen before them.

In *Thurleigh at War*, 306th veterans and British families remember Thurleigh and the area around Bedford during the war. The film includes British Land Army girls stationed at Milton Earnest and Bolnhurst near Thurleigh and young boys who lived adjacent to the Thurleigh base on nearby farms and in the surrounding villages. Together, with 306th men who served in the air crews and in the ground element, they give voice to the human story of the war and the impact that the Americans made in the skies over Europe and in the countryside throughout Bedfordshire. Using newly discovered wartime footage and surviving photographic archives at the National Archives, both these two Thurleigh films place the story of the 306th Bomb Group in its rightful place in history.

Proceeds from the sale of both films benefit the East Anglia Air War Project and assists in the preservation of the history of the Eighth Air Force in World War II England. Either film can be ordered online at www.oldsegundo.com or by calling the order line at 325-676-1200.

Visit the 306th Website
www.306bg.org

DONATIONS FOR THE 306TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Those who are able are asked to make an annual contribution to keep everything running smoothly in our Association. There are no dues—so your gift is needed to support the 306th operations. Your gift is tax-deductible.

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Send to:
Joel LaBo, Treasurer
306th Bomb Group Association
875 S. Worth
Birmingham, Michigan 48009

Date

Obituaries continued from page 2

- **Thompson, Loren W**, 423rd / 369th co-pilot (David Weed crew), 89, died 6 Mar 10 in Harper, KS. Arrived at Thurleigh 27 Mar 45. Upon returning home he continued to farm in Harper County, KS, and worked at Cessna. He was proud of his 'wings' and the significance of their association. His wife Dorothy died in Jul 94, according to publicly available info at the Social Security Death Index. He left 2c, 2 gc.
- **Wright, Adrien H**, 423rd waist gunner (Vernon K. Cole crew), 75, died 12 Dec 1998 in Wiscasset, ME, according to publicly available info at the Social Security Death Index. USVA Cemetery info lists him as T Sgt, U.S. Army WW II, buried at Greenlawn Cemetery, Wiscasset, ME. Successfully bailed out on the 14 Oct 43 Schweinfurt mission before Cole's plane exploded, so likely was POW. Survivor info unknown.

306th Family

- **Hess, Mary Katherine**, wife of Francis J. Hess, Sr, 367th radio operator (John R. McKee crew), 87, died 19 Jan 10 at the Boise V.A. Nursing Home after a courageous battle with cancer. She enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1943 and was sent to NY where she attended IBM business school; transferred to Oakland, CA and spent two years working at Naval Supply. During her first marriage she spent 13 years in bookkeeping with First Security Bank. Later moved to Boise where she and Frank met, and joined in a second marriage for both. They loved dancing and touring the USA. She devoted many hours to the Eagle Senior Center. In addition to her husband, she left 2c, 4 gc, 2ggc, 6 Hess step-c, several Hess gc & ggc.

306th Bomb Group Historical Collection is Growing

Veterans and families add new original photographs and documents recently

Many new items have been received for the 306th Bomb Group Historical Collection in recent days. Some of these important photographs and documents are included here on this page. The editor continues to urge families to consider sending their World War II collections to the 306th Project as a donation to be retired into the 306th BG Historical Collection or to be copied with the originals returned to the family. Either way, sharing your family memories will insure that your veteran will be represented in future histories and exhibitions on the 306th Bomb Group and World War II.

Please take time to check each new historical item and see if you can identify any of the “unknowns” listed in the legends. If you can provide any additional information for any item, please contact Dr. Vernon L. Williams in Abilene at vwilliams@acu.edu or call (325) 280-3399.

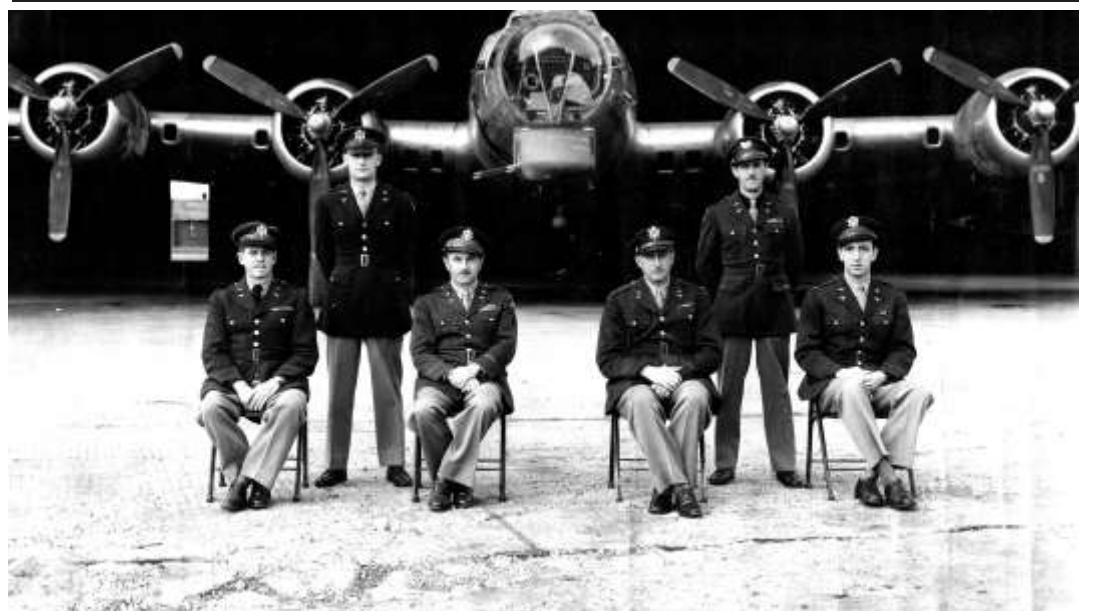
If you have materials you wish to donate or have copied, please send them to Dr. Vernon L. Williams, ACU Box 28203, Abilene, TX 79699 ~ Telephone (325) 280-3399.



Control Tower Personnel, Thurleigh Control Tower, April 28, 1944. Front row, left to right: William Martin, Carl Crozier, Earle Goodwin, Howard Hodges, George Bass, Captain William Peterman, Gerald Blaise, William Carlyle, Ronald McAuliffe, Myron Clark, Wayne Stellish, Taylor. Back row, left to right: Edwin Dow, Fred Naylor, Roger Stanhope, William Niblett, Paul Campbell, William Horner, Herb Vetterman, Woody Randolph, Cain, Sgt. E. A. Williams, Don Lawley, William Cook. Ronald McAuliffe Historical Collection



The Guy Burnett, Jr. Crew: Knelling, left to right—Guy Burnett, Jr. (P), Vernon L. Rasmussen (CP), Charles F. Handler (N), George H. Blahnik (B). Standing, left to right—Eli Barnett (E/TG), Edward L. Favors (R), R. Donald Cox (BTG), Edward R. Bell (WG), James L. Peltz (WG), John E. Buckley (TG). Peltz arrived at Thurleigh as an extra gunner and was immediately transferred to the Gates crew. Editor's note: This is the new original photograph donated by Mrs. Vernon L. Rasmussen. See below.



Left to right: 449th Sub-Depot—Major Robert Stevens, Captain Donald F. Sheridan, Major Henry J. Schmidt, Major William B. Sory, CWO William Fyfe, Jr., and Captain Arnold Sherman. Ronald McAuliffe Historical Collection

Dear Sir:

I am the widow of Vernon L. Rasmussen and was so delighted to read in the latest 306th Echoes the experiences of my husband. He sent this in before he passed away on September 23, 2004.

I am sending you an original photo of the one you requested (in January Echoes). I want you to how grateful I am that you printed his experiences—it means a lot to me.

I want you to know how much I enjoy the Echoes. I receive. I read every word and it makes me so proud that my husband served with so many dedicated and brave men. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Vernon L. Rasmussen

P.S.: I am donating this picture (see above) to the 306th BG Historical Collection.



Left to right: Roy Buchanan, Sq. Navigator and Robert Dodge (P), 368th BS. Robert Dodge Historical Collection



Sitting: Sgt. Louis D. Mueller. Back row: unknown, unknown, Ronald McAuliffe, Charles J. Mulvey. Ronald McAuliffe Historical Collection

Back row, left to right: Leon B. Dorich (P), Bill Wilson (CP), Murry Hipple (N), Bill Dugard (E), John Reelly (R), “Smoky” Deminago (BT), “Minnie” Menncci (TG), Bob Schuberg (TG), Jack Shacklett (Radar). The three ground crew are unknown. Robert Schuberg Historical Collection

Pamela Austin continued from page 1

I have been in touch with Robert Edwards now for several years; he was the pilot on the day of the crash, but although he has given me his five missions before that date, he doesn't know which plane he flew, so I was not much further forward. I now have 10 of her 70 missions (including the last which she didn't actually fly), most from Walter Keilt. Does your husband remember ANY of the missions he flew in her? If so, I should be most interested to hear. After all this time I am amazed at how much I have discovered about my old lady...and the crew photographs Walter sent me are an added bonus. Mr. R. Strong (historian of the 306th Bomb Group in the United States) is unable to help.

Thank you for your Christmas card; I was amused by all the EATs. I have absolutely no interest in food and I cannot cook, probably because my youth was spent during the war years when there was very little food available, and what was, was severely rationed (we had 2 ounces of butter and 2 ounces of sweets a week for a period of time during the war). So, I shall never be very fat and can worry weight off easily.

To return to my main theme, I was absolutely enchanted with the story of how she was named, and am sorry that 'Old Weary Bones' herself is no longer with us. I think probably it was partly the name which intrigued me; if she had been called Anytime Annie or Impatient Virgin, I should not have been interested. But the dog story disgusted me. To think that the crew of 'my' B-17 could have been so stupid to have parachuted a dog out of the aircraft was beyond me.

Over the years when I have been to the town of Madingley, I have often wondered whether any of her crew were there, and now I know that her navigator was indeed buried there but was returned to the United States before I had progressed enough with my investigations to be able to visit his grave.

Did your husband finish his tour after Walter? If so did he fly in her with another pilot? Does your husband remember the ground crew at all? Any tiny piece of information helps in the jigsaw I am trying to put together.

With good wishes,
Pamela Austin

Dean C. Allen Interview

Interviewed by Russell A. Strong
January 27, 1978

Editor's note: Below are Russell Strong's notes on his interview with Dean C. Allen in Atlanta, Georgia on January 27, 1978. Allen was a pilot in the 368th BS, joining the 306th on 5 June 1944 and was MIA on 26 August 1944 on a mission to Gelsenkirchen, Germany. Allen died two years after this interview in a civilian small plane crash. His obituary appears in Echoes, October 1988 (Volume 13, Number 4), page 7.



Front, left to right: Dean C. Allen (P), Charles U. Rapp (CP), Charles F. Donahue (N), Michael N. Huebotger (WG). Back, left to right: Harvey J. Purkey (E), Robert Newsbigle (RO), Eugene LeVeque (BT), Robert Huebotter (WG), Charles Reinartsen (WG), and James R. Carey (TG).

On August 26, 1944, on a mission to Gelsenkirchen, Dean C. Allen's plane was hit by flak at about 30,000 feet. The first burst hit the left wing tip, shredding the wing inboard to the #1 engine. The plane flipped to the left, and while the wings were vertical, a second burst hit in the area of the bomb bay doors, driving the doors inward. A third blast tore off the rudder. The plane turned completely over, then upright, and went into a flat spin.

At this point, five of the crew members were alive and were able to exit the plane. The navigator, pilot and engineer went out the hatch on the left side of the plane, just behind the nose compartment bulkhead. The bombardier and co-pilot were dead.

The engineer had opened the bomb bay door before leaving the area of the top turret, and was singed by flames from the fire in the bomb bay. The radio operator later reported that the catwalk in the bomb bay was melting when he opened the rear door to the bomb bay. It was very difficult moving about in the plane when it was in the spin, but the three finally escaped from the front.

Allen was quickly captured. He was lying on the ground after his descent, and a German soldier came over to him, put his boot on Allen's chest, and removed Allen's escape packet from his pocket, and then walked away.

On the night of the 27th, they were all (five) being transported from Cologne south along the Rhine River. At a small town the train stopped in the middle of the night. The guards were all asleep, so the navigator and engineer got off the train and walked into the darkness. Allen never saw them again, but after the war saw a news item from the town which told of the mayor, police chief and three others being tried, convicted and executed for the beating deaths of two American airmen. Later check proved that these were Allen's navigator and engineer.

Around the eighth air force

Special Dispatch to the 306th Echoes

Jami Harp

*Peg Haapa Intern
Reporter At-Large*

Greetings from Abilene, TX! Here is a brief update of upcoming events with the Eighth Air Force that hopefully will be of interest to you.

The Heritage League, a sub organization of the 2nd Air Division Association, will be holding the 2nd Air Division Annual Reunion at the Omni Royal Orleans Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana on September 10-13, 2010. More information about what is sure to be a memorable gathering will be made available at www.heritageleague.org/

The 36th Annual Reunion of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society will be held July 21-25, 2010 in Tucson, Arizona at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites. The suggested tours scheduled for this reunion include a visit to Old Tucson Studios, the Sonora Desert Museum, and to Pima Air Museum (a museum for which I myself created a Public Service Announcement in Dr. Vernon William's Historical Documentary Production class last semester). Information and forms for the reunion can be found at www.8thafhs.org. Registration forms are due by July 1, 2010.

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society is also hosting a special event called "Thunder Over Michigan." The event will be held this August 5-8 in Michigan just outside Detroit. According to the event website "the Air Show organizers are expecting 8 to 10 B-17's to attend, 2 B-24's, 12 P-51's, the usual cadre of other WW-II aircraft, as well as a flying ME-262 and an ME-109." More information can be found at <http://www.8thafhs.org/detroit.htm>. The 8thAFHS notes that this special event is not exclusive to members of the historical society.

The National Museum of the U.S. Air Force is hard at work restoring the Memphis Belle, which the 306th Bomb Group had the privilege of touring at the 2007 reunion in Dayton, Ohio. In a recent article written by Staff Sgt. J. Paul Croxon titled "Heritage: Celebrity Aircraft, Air Force museum brings famous aircraft back to life" the Staff Sgt. notes, "In 2005 the Belle was delicately transported to the museum where she became a top priority. But she isn't just undergoing a cosmetic application of new paint. She's being reborn." The museum is devoted to pacing themselves in the restoration process to ensure detailed attention and accuracy.

Plans are under way for our own reunion, which will be held October 6-10 in Washington, D.C. A tour of the Air and Space Museum has been scheduled for Friday the 8th and a trip to the World War II Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, and the Air Force Memorial has been planned for Saturday. All of us with the 306th Bomb Group hope to see you in October!



Left to right: Robert Dodge (P) and Sam Hatton (B), 368th Bomb Squadron.



Top left, clockwise: 1) A mission briefing reenactment of the Second Schweinfurt mission to Germany, performed at a previous bomb group reunion, 2) Some members of the Capital Wing pose in front of Yankee Lady in full combat gear, ready for a mission, 3) Capital Wing members pose in a variety of uniforms used during the war. Notice that even Rosie the Riveter is on hand to show her "uniform" for her war work, 4) and finally, the group will set up a similar display of wartime gear and equipment in our exhibits area in the Hospitality Room at Washington, D.C.

Capital Wing of the Airman's Preservation Society to Honor 306th BG with Preservation Displays and Reenactment at Washington, D.C. Reunion

By **Dr. Vernon L. Williams**
Reunion Chairman/Historian

The men and women of the Capital Wing of the Airman's Preservation Society has agreed to bring their mission briefing reenactment to our reunion. The group will reenact the early morning briefing that took place on 14 October 1943 at Thurleigh. The mission that day was slated for Schweinfurt, Germany and some of you may have been there and flown the mission. For the veterans and our families, it will be a real treat to travel back in time and be on hand as the Second Schweinfurt raid begins with the early morning briefing. The crews will be flying into history that morning, a mission never forgotten by those who were there or the American people who heard the terrifying details later.

These dedicated individuals will also set up special displays of memorabilia and World War II equipment and gear in our hospitality and history room to help bring back special memories of the Thurleigh years. Each member of the Capital Wing attending our reunion will be uniformed in the appropriate dress of the military and/or the home front representing the World War II era. Each participant is a specialist in preserving the history of the air war and the people who made our victory possible.

Each 306th Bomb Group family should make plans to attend this special Washington, D.C. reunion and help us celebrate the service of our veterans and our World War II families who sacrificed greatly for our nation during a time of grave crisis. Make your reservations today.



2011 Tour

May 30-June 7, 2011

"I'll Be Seeing You"

A Tour of the Airfields of the Mighty Eighth

Dr. Vernon L. Williams and the East Anglia Air War Project will be leading a tour of World War II England next summer. Williams has spent the last decade working on Eighth Air Force film projects in East Anglia and brings much to this tour. Follow in Williams' footsteps, along the back roads of England and discover the people who lived near their "Yanks" during the war and encounter the airfields that remain scattered across the landscape of rural England. There is much left of the "community" that developed between the Brits and the Yanks so long ago. Soon to be the subject of the first book to come out of Williams' decade-long research, join him in retracing the story of the 306th and many other bomb groups who flew their missions from these small villages and towns scattered across East Anglia and the Midlands.

All proceeds from the tour will benefit the East Anglia Air War Project and Williams' efforts to preserve the history of the men of the Eighth Air Force and their contribution to the victory won over the skies of Europe. The East Anglia Project is the driving force behind the preservation of the 306th archives and the work of 306th student interns at Abilene Christian University. This tour will help fund their work.

**London - Dover - Churchill's Estate - Cambridge
Airfields in the Midlands - Airfields in East Anglia
Thurleigh Memorial Museum - Bedford - Norwich**

Tour Website: www.oldsegundo.com/tour

Deposit Deadline is December 1, 2010

Contact Dr. Williams at (325) 280-3399 or vwilliams@acu.edu

Website: www.oldsegundo.com/tour

Registration Form

306th Bomb Group Association Reunion
 Hyatt Regency Crystal City — Arlington, Virginia
 6-10 October 2010

Registration fee (per person)..... x \$35.00 = \$_____

Friday, 8 October

Ladies Breakfast (7:30-9am)..... x \$28.00 = \$_____

Air and Space Museum Tour (9:30 am-3 pm)..... x \$35.00 = \$_____

First Over Germany Dinner (7 pm)..... x \$45.00 = \$_____

Saturday, 9 October

World War II Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, x \$32.00 = \$_____ and Air Force Memorial Tour - (1:30am-5:00 pm)

Banquet (7 pm)..... x \$49.00 = \$_____

Everything else on the schedule is free!

Total.....\$_____

Name _____

Address w/ City, State, Zip _____

Phone # (____) _____ E-Mail _____

Squadron _____ Assigned Duty _____

*Please make checks payable to: 306th Bomb Group Association Reunion and mail to:
 Joel LaBo, 875 S. Worth, Birmingham, Michigan 48009*

Please list the names and hometown for each person registered.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Is this your first reunion? _____ Veteran? _____ Family? _____

**Please call the Hyatt Regency Crystal City direct to make reservations:
 1-888-421-1442 or 1-402-592-6464
 Ask for 306th Bomb Group reunion rates:**

\$99.00 (plus tax) Single or Double Rooms—All One Price

*Deadline for registration and hotel reservations is 15 September 2010.
 Please help your 306th Bomb Group reunion planning,
 register and make hotel reservations early. Do it today!*

Reunion Schedule At Washington, D.C.

Wednesday, 6 October

- Arrival - Pick up registration packets - Tidewater Foyer (2 - 6 pm)
- Sign up for Oral History interviews (2 - 5pm)
- Hospitality Room and Exhibits Setup Tidewater 1 and 2 (2 - 5 pm; 7 - 10 pm)
- Dinner on your own (hotel restaurants and other food venues close by)

Thursday, 7 October

- Arrival - Pick up registration packets - Tidewater Foyer (8 am – 6 pm)
- Board Meeting Arlington Room (10 am)
- Sign up for Oral History interviews (8 am-6pm)
- Hospitality Room and Exhibits Tidewater 1 and 2 (8 am - 5 pm; 7 - 10 pm)
- Thurleigh at War film (10 am)
- 306th BG Web Demonstration - What's new on the 306th BG web and how to do research from your computer - Dr. Williams (2-3 pm)
- World War II Air War Gear Demonstration (3:30-5:30 pm)
- Dinner on your own (hotel restaurants and other food venues close by)

Friday, 8 October

- Ladies Breakfast - Arlington Room (7:30-9am)
- Arrival - Pick up registration packets - Tidewater Foyer (8am-5pm)
- Oral History interviews (9am-5pm)
- Hospitality Room and Exhibits- Tidewater 1 and 2 (8am-5pm; 7-10 pm)
- Thurleigh at War film (10 am)
- Air & Space Museum Tour (9:30am-3pm)
- Second Generation meeting - (4 pm)
- First Over Germany Dinner, Regency AB (Cash Bar 6-7pm, Dinner 7-9pm)

Saturday, 9 October

- Arrival - Pick up registration packets - Tidewater Foyer (8am-5pm)
- Memorial Service—Tribute to the Fallen and Folded Wings Memorial, Regency AB (8:00-9:30 am)
- Business Meeting, Regency AB (10-11:45 am)
- Oral History interviews (11:30 am-5pm)
- Hospitality Room and Exhibits Tidewater 1 and 2 (1-5pm)
- World War II Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, and Air Force Memorial Tour - (1:30 pm-5:00 pm)
- Thurleigh at War film (3 pm)
- Cash bar (6 pm – 9 pm)
- Veterans-only Group Photograph Regency AB(6:45 pm)
- Widows Group & Next Generation Photograph Regency AB(6:50 pm)
- Banquet, Regency AB (7 pm) (Special Program Planned)

Sunday, 10 October

- Farewells
- Check out
- Travel Home — See you next year!

**Dr. Vernon L. Williams
 Reunion Chairman
 vwilliams@acu.edu
 325-280-3399**



HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Hyatt Regency Crystal City

Please call the Hyatt direct to make hotel reservations

1-888-421-1442 or 1-402-592-6464

Ask for 306th Bomb Group reunion rates:
\$99.00 Single or Double Rooms—All One Price

**FLY INTO REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT!
 THE HYATT REGENCY HAS A FREE AIRPORT
 SHUTTLE EVERY TWENTY MINUTES.**

Museum Notes

Thurleigh Airfield 306th Bomb Group Museum

Welcome to Bedfordshire's Childrens University by Ralph Franklin Keysoe, England

My article for this issue is somewhat different from those in the past and a lot shorter than the January entry, thank goodness I hear you say.

In early January we were approached by the Learning Enrichment Manager for the Children's University, saying they had been informed of the quality of our museum, and suggesting it would make an ideal Learning Destination. To be registered as such would entail a visit of a validator to ascertain that the information they had been given met their requirements, this process should take approximately thirty minutes, a Record of Validation could then be agreed. If and when our museum was approved as a Learning Destination full details will be posted on their website.

On the 18th January the validation took place, the 30 minute time scale as predicted extended into 2 hours. In the words of the inspector, "It is an amazing place". With the many aspects of the happenings in the vicinity of a WW11 airfield being displayed in a very logical manner. Visitors will leave the museum with a greater understanding of what life was really like both on and around a busy American airfield during those traumatic times, with displays depicting the rural atmosphere surrounding the base, and how the local population and the servicemen integrated so well.

Daphne and I are delighted and proud to know our museum has now been approved as an Official Learning Destination of the Children's University, yes I am able to refer it as such as the Bedfordshire branch are now members of the National Schools University, which means that children can receive National certificates for achieved learning hours. As I said earlier we are delighted with what is a pat on the back for what we have achieved over the last eight years, but most of all it means so much to us that the WW11 exploits of the 306th will be spread to the younger generation through our hard work and members of our immediate family.

Now that we are in this position can I ask if you have any items that we could use to inform our younger students of your times at Thurleigh, small personal items would be ideal, that is of course if all your family agree.

To end this article I believe it is worth a brief look back in time over the last ten years with photographs. Many of you Second Generation families may not know much about how the 306th Museum came into being. We hope many of you will be able to come to Thurleigh for a visit sometime soon.

1. Jonathan Palmer hands over the keys of a very overgrown building, 6 June 1999
2. The crowd begins to assemble for the museum opening ceremony, 27 July 2002
3. Total surprise to all, the B-17 *Sally B* announces her arrival over Galsey Wood
4. The R.A.F. pilot Jim Jewell gives us a wonderful 20-minute display
5. Time to perform the opening, Johnthan Palmer cuts the ribbon, our grandsons open the doors and the 306th Museum is open to the public
6. Time now for a celebratory drink, note who holds the first glass

