



HERITAGE HERALD

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One Man's Story— Heavies Bombing Germany after D-Day

by Tom Eisele with assistance from brothers Tim, Ted, and Mike

My father, Karl Eisele, Jr., served aboard a B-24 Liberator as a bombardier. He was stationed with the 93rd Bomb Group, based in Hardwick, on the east coast of England. While he rarely spoke of his war service to his family afterwards, it was clear to all of us that it had profoundly moved him, changing him in many ways.

After Dad returned from the war, my brothers and I appeared in rapid succession—1946, 1948, 1951, 1956, and 1959. Five sons are naturally inquisitive about the wartime exploits of their father, and we five pestered him endlessly to tell us about his adventures during that period. We eventually came to know the basics of his service: Dad had flown in B-24s in the 8th Air Force; he had had several close calls; Mom had gotten a terrifying telegram from the War Department that Dad was “missing in action.” Beyond those bits of information, however, we equally knew that Dad was reluctant to share (he even seemed uncomfortable whenever he tried to share) his thoughts and feelings about those times and places.

Dad passed away in 1988. We five sons inherited, among the items that he possessed at his death, a scrapbook with a voluminous collection of news articles clipped from the wartime “Star & Stripes,” and a treasure trove of photographs from that era. Since that time, we have pored over these materials many times. They enable us to piece together



Dad's original ship with crew, which went down on their 12th mission. Our dad Karl is standing directly below the propeller in the back row. USAAF photo via Tom Eisele.

at least a portion of what it was like to be engaged in the tremendous effort, via strategic long-range bombing, to liberate Europe.

All of Dad's bombing missions came after D-Day. He flew from September, 1944, into January, 1945, being a part of the Allied effort to shut down German industries and transportation facilities, crippling the Nazi war economy. Despite Dad's reticence about his wartime experiences, he did once mention to me that in one respect he regretted missing D-

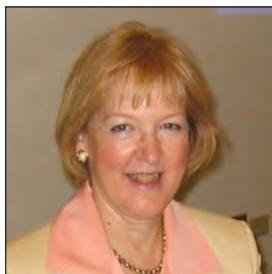
Heritage League Convention Sept. 14-18, 2016
Register NOW & mark your calendar. Details on pgs. 15-17

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Welcome to our second Heritage Herald of 2016—the issue with the details of our ***Heritage League 2016 Annual Reunion which will be held in Washington, DC from September 14-18, 2016***. Details and sign-up forms for the reunion are in this issue. So mark your calendar, plan to attend, and register now! You can also access the forms on the Heritage League website at heritageleague.org by clicking on “Reunion.”



Speaking of our ***website***, congratulations to Vice-President and webmaster Mike Simpson for moving the Heritage League site onto a new, easier to update, web software platform. Most of the content is the same, but information will be more current going forward, and we hope you will like the new look of the pages.

Secretary Brian Mahoney has tackled the challenge of ordering ***Memorial Day or D-Day flowers at all of the American Cemeteries in Europe where members of the 2nd Air Division are buried***. The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) no longer handles the ordering process for organizations or families, so we are working directly with a variety of vendors in Europe, which also means a variety of languages. For more on the change: <https://www.abmc.gov/about-us/our-services/order-floral-decoration>

If you are interested in volunteering to help in this area in the future, please fill out the “Contact Us” form on our website.

I was delighted to have the chance to visit two of the American cemeteries in Europe, to honor our 2nd Air Division fallen, during an April vacation tour of Belgium and Holland. You can see more about those visits in this issue.

The ***Southern California Annual Luncheon*** will celebrate the 72nd anniversary of D-Day at the 94th Aero Squadron in Van Nuys, CA. I will attend and read some passages from my Dad’s book, “Replacement Crew.” Many thanks to Peggy Learman for organizing the Luncheon and to Galpin Ford for co-sponsoring it.

Again this year, I attended the *Memorial Library Trust Governor’s meeting on May 16* electronically, using Skype. In November, I will travel to England to attend the Trust’s Annual General Meeting on November 14 and Norwich-area Remembrance Day events in person as I have in prior years.

Our Facebook page [Heritage League of the Second Air Division-USA](https://www.facebook.com/HeritageLeagueoftheSecondAirDivision-USA) is building a strong following, with 275 “Likes.” Those who “Like” our page get our updates in their Facebook News Feed. That page is administered by members of the executive committee of the Heritage League and is the Facebook presence of our organization. We hope you will visit the page, “Like” us, and enjoy the interesting updates.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Heritage League, fill out the “Contact Us” form or the new volunteer interest form on our website.

If you buy things on Amazon.com, please contribute to the Heritage League by selecting us as your charity of choice on Amazon Smile at smile.amazon.com

I look forward to seeing you in Washington, DC this September for our Heritage League Annual Meeting!

Beverly Baynes Tomb

President, Heritage League and Governor, 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust

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Day. The bombing missions to interdict the Normandy beaches—their defense installations and the hardened areas behind the five beaches where the Allies would eventually land in June, 1944—tended to be comparatively short flights with strong fighter escorts protecting the bombers. After D-Day, however, the American bombing missions switched back from France to Germany itself, requiring deeper flights penetrating into the Ruhr industrial area, or even deeper into the heart of the beast. These longer missions exposed the bombers to the full force of the Luftwaffe fighter pilots, as well as to the deadly flak concentrations of the German 88s. No one realistically wanted to run that dreadful gauntlet time after time—and my father was a realist.

When my father served as a bombardier, 30 missions were the standard tour of duty in the 8th Air Force. Some men volunteered for more, but they were not the norm. From what I can tell, reading the eyewitness literature after the war, most fliers seemed willing to do their duty, but not necessarily to go beyond that. And when you consider the odds, why should they? The 8th Air Force had one of the highest attrition rates in WWII among the American fighting forces. “More airmen with the Eighth Air Force lost their lives than in the entire Marine Corps, whose enrollment included 250,000 more people.” [Gerald Astor, *The Mighty Eighth*, (Donald Fine Books, 1997), p. 420.]

I mentioned that my father’s Bomb Group was the 93rd in Hardwick, England. That group comprised four Bomb Squadrons: the 328th, the 329th, the 330th, and the 409th. My Dad’s plane was a part of the last named Bomb Squadron, the 409th. After their long training period in the States, Dad and his crew members flew their brand-new B-24J from Topeka, Kansas, to England. He told me that the jaunt over the Atlantic seemed a bit harrowing; that is, until he experienced the bombing missions into Germany, after which the Atlantic crossing seemed, comparatively speaking, more of a boring milk run.

The crew members for his ship comprised a group of regular American guys. Leo Baumann was the pilot and crew commander; he hailed from Peoria, Illinois. The co-pilot, Bernie, came from Vallejo, California; Hank, the navigator, from Chicago, IL. Ed, the radio operator, came from upstate New York; Leo Henry, the tail gunner, from Madison, WI; David, one of the waist gunners, from NYC. I never found out the hometown of Steve, another gunner; or of Hart, their crew



War bride Janet Monsen Eisele with her young lieutenant before he shipped out.

chief and engineer. The men seem, then, to have been a cross-section of American males drawn from around the US. (My father was born and raised in Madison, WI.)

One of the original crew members, Hank, the navigator, was pulled from the crew soon after their arrival in England, apparently as an emergency measure. Hank ended up flying on a plane to re-supply the airborne troops dropped at Arnhem in September, 1944 (depicted in the movie, “A Bridge Too Far”). This was a failed attempt to shorten the war, first by punching a hole in the line, then by-passing the Nazis in the Netherlands, with the hope of securing a bridge and quickly getting over the Rhine. Unfortunately, Hank’s supply transport plane was shot down, and he spent the remainder of the war in a German prison camp.

The rest of the men in the original crew, including my Dad, set to work flying their missions. The first came on September 21st, when they bombed rail yards in Coblenz. Soon after, they hit industrial targets near Kassel. Then, on their 3rd mission, they returned to the rail yards at Coblenz. In October, 1944, they bombed truck factories in Gaggenau; later, they raided the Luftwaffe station at Paderborn. Their 6th mission was a visit to the Rhenania oil refinery at Harburg. And, after once again hitting targets in the Coblenz area, they later went

on to bomb the marshaling yards at Osnabruck.

This stretch of bombing amounted to eight missions in some twenty-odd days, almost one mission every three days. It was a weary group of airmen who then received a two-to-three week break from flying. The respite proved, however, to be all too brief. On October 30, 1944, the crew flew its 9th mission, which was to bomb oil refineries near Hamburg. Their 10th mission saw them hitting rail facilities in Bielefeld; and, on November 4th, their 11th mission targeted synthetic oil facilities in the Misburg-Hanover vicinity.

The medical aftermath of their 11th mission probably saved my father's life and the life of the co-pilot, Bernie. Due to inner ear problems caused by the lack of a pressurized flight cabin, both men were grounded by the flight surgeon, thereby missing the 12th mission for the rest of the crew on November 5th. The crew's 12th mission took them to Karlsruhe, where they hit rail yards and oil refineries. But their plane was badly damaged over the target, and they slowly limped back to Allied territory. At the time, there were Allied-controlled areas aplenty on the continent. My Dad learned later that, despite having the ability to land in (or bail out over) one of those areas on the continent, the replacement bombardier urged the pilot, Leo Baumann, to try to return to the base at Hardwick. The replacement had a hot date in London that evening, and he didn't want to miss it! Sadly, Leo made the attempt; but the plane ran low of fuel and crashed in England. Some of the crew bailed out prior to the crash, but several crew members died, including Leo the pilot and the replacement co-pilot for Bernie.

With most of his original crew either dead or recovering from the November 5th crash, Dad became a loaner or floater, filling out flight crews that needed a bombardier. In November and December, 1944, Dad flew six more missions deep into Germany, bombing targets in Misburg-Hanover, Munster, Bingen, Bonn, Coblenz, and other cities. On his 15th mission, December 24, 1944, he was the bombardier in the lead plane for the entire 20th Combat Wing.

As the war ensued into 1945, Dad flew three more missions, totaling twenty in all. On January 17, 1945, his 20th mission, which was flown against U-boat pens and oil factories in the Hamburg area, Dad was flying with the crew of the "Full House," a B-24J in the 329th Bomb Squadron. After their bomb run, they were hit by flak and lost power in two of their four engines. Not wanting to be taken prisoner, the men coaxed their



Dad in 1984 at Hardwick, upon re-discovering the remnants of his airfield.

wounded plane over the Baltic Sea toward neutral Sweden. As they passed a German naval vessel, the ship fired its guns at them, but missed. As they slowly approached the coast of Sweden, Swedish fighters rose to meet them, and escorted the wounded American bomber to refuge at a nearby airfield. The crew of the "Full House" crash-landed at Bulltofta, with one fatality. (This incident is listed as Case 232 in the book by Bo Widfeldt and Rolpf Wegmann, *Making for Sweden, Part 2* [Air Research Publications, 1998].) Dad spent the rest of the war in an internment camp at Humlebacken in Falun, Sweden.

When Dad came home and began his life again in post-war America, he rarely spoke of these things, his harrowing adventures and narrow escapes. Forty years later, however, in 1984, stricken with an incurable disease and starting to fail physically, my father journeyed with my mother, my wife, and me to Europe, first to England, then to Sweden. He wanted to visit those old haunts one last time.

Returning to East Anglia, we located the run-down airfield at Hardwick. Where heavy bombers once had rolled down the concrete runways, we found cracked cement aprons with over-grown, weedy runways, where English cows were now sedately grazing. And, at the site of the old airfield, we even managed to meet a man from Norwich who, 40 years before, had helped to pour the concrete runways for this airfield. Later on, when visiting Sweden during our Europe trip, we also located the site of Dad's internment camp in Falun, even though it had since become a housing development. These sporadic forays and unplanned discoveries—including some serendipitous meetings with people who shared some of my father's memories

of those past times—were important to Dad, and they were moving for us to witness.

Everything in our visit paled, however, in comparison with our visit to Cambridge, England. Outside that august university town, there lies Cambridge American Cemetery, a cemetery dedicated in 1956 for American service men and women who died in the British Isles during World War II. It is as fine and serene a locale as the more famous American cemetery behind Omaha Beach in Normandy. In the UK cemetery, back in 1984, my father found the grave of Leo Baumann, the pilot of his original crew. Leo had been the best man at my parent's wedding before they left the States. When

Dad found Leo's grave, he knelt and said a brief prayer, while my mother, my wife, and I stood quietly and respectfully in the background. I have to imagine that, as with so many survivors of the war, my Dad was visited with the thought, "Why did I survive, and Leo die?"

Dad never made it back to Europe after that visit in 1984. Four years later, he died on his 66th birthday. I have heard it said about the men and women who fought for America in World War Two, the Greatest Generation, that "uncommon valor was a common virtue." Knowing my father as I do, and having learned something of his war record and experiences, I can't find anything to change in that assessment.

389th BG Museum at Hethel

by *Albert (Al) Palmer*

At the 389th BG museum at Hethel we have a small but dedicated team of volunteers that made a decision a few years ago to improve the displays and increase the exhibition area. With this in mind, we have built two Nissen huts. It's been a long haul with many hurdles to jump, like getting planning permission, finding the WWII hoops that make the backbones of the hut, and, of course, the big one, raising the money.

We finished the first hut in 2014, and decided to dedicate the building and have an opening ceremony. The decision was made to name it to honour 2nd Lt. Lloyd "Pete" Herbert Hughes, the 389th Medal of Honor recipient. We were also lucky to get the retired chief of the general staff (the head of the British Army) General the Lord Richard Dannatt, GCB, CBE, MC, DL, to do the opening ceremony.

We are now nearing the completion of the second Nissen hut. It's taken a long time to get to this point, and we are all proud of what we have achieved. With every penny being collected by fund raising and donations from generous local people, some of whom can remember the Yanks at Hethel. During the build, we had regular visits of help from the base chaplain, and young airmen from RAF Lakenheath. We were also approached to see if we would display some artifacts from the 466th BG, which in the spirit of the Second Air Division we have, and gained two more volunteers in the process.

A few years ago, we started having a Memorial Day service at Hethel on the Saturday nearest to the 11th November, to remember the brave members of the 389th, and the Second Air Division. It started with a few people plus the volunteers, soon the local people got to hear about it, and they would also turn up. Now we get mem-

bers of the USAF from RAF Lakenheath, and British Standard Bearers. The Heritage League folks have made a visit, with Beverly Baynes Tomb and Irene Hurner, to name two. If any of you are ever in England, you can be assured a warm welcome at Hethel.

We, the volunteers at the 389th BG Museum at Hethel, are trying to make contact with the children of Tec Sgt Earl Zimmerman. He had a daughter, Roberta Russell, and a son, Myles Zimmerman. They may live in the Indianapolis area. The reason for the request is because we would like to name the new Nissen hut exhibit area of the museum in his honour. If anyone can help, it would be appreciated. My email address is alsue.palmer@btinternet.com.

Shopping Alert

The Heritage League is participating in the Amazon Smile



program. The idea is simple: you shop Amazon Smile and they donate a portion of the proceeds to the Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division—USAAF.

Here is how it works: visit <http://smile.amazon.com>. Log in with your Amazon account username and password. If you don't have an account, create one.

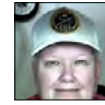
Select the (charity) Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division—USAAF.

In the future, whenever you shop Amazon, shop smile.amazon.com, the Heritage League (name) will be on the top.

Best part—every eligible purchase is a donation. It's easy and we all win. Thanks for the support.

What Saying 'Thank You' Means to a Veteran

by Mike Simpson



We all love to see the outpouring of affection for our troops returning home from a deployment. I thought that I might try to tell you what that support means from the view of a veteran.

If we look back over the past three-quarters of a century, we can see that the roughly sixteen million men and women who served in the various armed forces of the United States received a rousing welcome home by their civilian counterparts. This welcome home, in the opinion of the author, was due to the shared commitment of both sides. The sacrifices made on the home front, while not as life threatening as those made by the military, bonded the two separate entities together.

Less than five years after the end of World War II, the US got involved in another war in the Pacific. This time we were not attacked like we were at Pearl Harbor, but we became involved as a result of our actions during World War II. We became the 'peacekeepers' of the world. The Korean War or 'Conflict' was not a popular war and many Americans, both military and civilian, thought this was a fight that we should not have gotten involved in. When the Korean War veterans came home, there was not the outpouring of affection that the troops received just 8 years before.

Starting in 1959, the United States became embroiled in a conflict that would nearly tear the country apart—Vietnam. This war, started during the Eisenhower administration, was a civil war between North and South Vietnam. The US was initially supporting the South only in an advisory role. It wasn't until Lyndon Johnson came into office after the death of John Kennedy, that the United States' role changed. Massive troop deployments, the military draft, and civil unrest by anti-war demonstrators really rocked our country. This was my war! From 1959 until 1975, for sixteen years, US military forces fought and died in a conflict that wasn't all that much different from World War II—except that, like Korea, there was no direct threat against the US.

This time, the reception the Vietnam troops received was far from what they deserved. I can only speak of the reception I received when I landed at Oakland, CA airport. I was greeted by a mob of war protestors calling me a baby killer, was spat on, and had trash thrown at me. As I was wearing my uniform, complete with green beret and jump boots, I was singled out for attention. This is the reason so many vets felt disconnected from the America we served.

On that fateful day in September, 2001, we again were struck at home, as we had been back in December, 1941. This time America pulled together and the wave of gratitude, respect, and the outpouring of love for the troops coming home brought back memories of sixty years before.

For this old vet, I have come to grips with my service. I proudly wear a vest with my unit patches and a large map of Vietnam on the back; honoring the 58,479 brothers and sisters who died serving our country. I'll never forget the day, when at the local grocery store, I had a woman come up to me to say thank you for my service. What she did next just blew me away. She asked if it was okay if she gave me a hug. I said yes and she gave me a bear hug and kept repeating "Thank you" and "God bless you." We were both in tears when she let go. That one hug meant more to me than earning the Medal of Honor!

So, the next time you're out and you happen to see a vet from any of our wars, take a moment to say thank you to them for their service. It means so much to them. When you see their eyes light up, it might even make you feel a little better.

Thank you for your support!

A Thought for Today

by Irene Hurner

Our convention committee was meeting via Skype recently. I pulled out the binders with my notes from our Heritage League convention held in Norwich, England in May, 2014, to review some information. Tucked into one of them was a folder given to me by Francis Cartier, 453rd BG, one of the veterans who joined us there. Francis had traveled alone from California to be with the group and to see again where he had been stationed so long ago. Francis gave me this poem that he wrote and suggested that, at some point, I might like to share it with our members. What better time than now? We are planning a reunion in September, 2016, near Washington, DC and a visit to the National Archives. People will be introduced to the wealth of information that exists relative to World War II and, more specifically, to learn how to find data on a particular veteran. Do you know how to find the names of your veteran and his crew? The name of the crew chief and men who kept the planes flying? The names of the commanding officers at your veteran's base? Francis's poem makes me think about the past, and thankful that my father came home.

One of That Crew was a Friend of Mine

By Francis Cartier, 453rd Bomb Group
Submitted by Irene Hurner

*As always with the forty officers
Who also live in your barracks,
You know a few,
You nod to a couple more,
You recognize the faces of three or four,
and you just seem to have seen the rest before.
There were ten on that other B-24 bomber crew.
One was a friend of mine.*

*He was their navigator, who had the habit of tapping
the toe of his flying boot idly
with a navigator's ruler he called a Weems Plotter.
I remember his name, but I won't tell you.
The names of the dead are charms.
Even the names of their cities
have incomprehensible power.*

*He kept sharp pencils and crisp charts
that he'd lay out flat on the barracks floor.
He snapped straight lines off his ruler
and traveled a thousand miles before your eyes
by intricate mathematics, just for fun.
He loved the steel and accurate stars
as points to draw clean lines between.
He had a favorite star,
but I will not tell you which one.*

*He wore a watch on either wrist;
An airman knows that space is time.
Even in a jeep, if you asked, "How far now?"
He'd look at his left watch.
The other was for the stars.*

I will not tell you the jokes we laughed at together.

*It was different for you guys in the infantry.
It's a lot the same, yeah, and I can understand
about your buddy who bought it beside you in the mud.
But lots different, too.
You could hear the shots and the scream-grunt
of sudden disbelief.
You saw the ungraspable blood seep through his fist,
You heard him draw breath, and the slow sigh.
These ten airmen dressed quietly in the morning dark,
the nine and the one I knew,
Flew up and east...And just didn't come back.*

*I will not sing you the drinking songs we sang.
I will not tell you how
briefly
we were friends.*

Happy Mix: Vacation with a Bit of Heritage League

by Beverly Tomb photos: Beverly and Doug Tomb

My husband Doug and I took a long-planned vacation river cruise in April sponsored by my college and by the Smithsonian Institution: "Exploring the Riverways of Holland and Belgium." We had several opportunities to include Heritage League activities, and it made for a very happy mix.

We flew into Brussels, got to our hotel, and were delighted to spend our first day with Belgian researcher Luc Dewez. Luc was an amazing personal guide, driving all over to show us the lovely French-speaking part of Belgium. And the first place he took us was to the American cemetery at Ardennes.

Luc knew that William Sheely, father of past HL President Billy Sheely Johnson, was buried there, but didn't recall where. We were already far past the Visitor's Center, where we could have looked up the information, so we walked around, reading the names of our WWII Heroes lying at peace in the beautiful setting. We saw one gravesite with flowers and went to look at it. Miracle of miracles, it was William Sheely's!! The flowers were placed for what would have been William Sheely's 92nd birthday on April 16th, had he survived WWII.

Later that day, we were thrilled to meet Luc's father, Lucien Dewez, a Belgian Resistance Fighter during WWII. Luc opened some champagne, so we could celebrate Lucien's 94th birthday. But there was a surprise reason to toast again. The Heritage League board had voted unanimously to make Lucien an Honorary HLM (Honorary Life Member), and I had the deep honor to present him the award in person.

Several days later, once our ship had taken

us to Maastricht in the Netherlands, our tour included a visit to the American Cemetery at Margraten. Our tour planners had arranged for our group to place a wreath, and I had an opportunity to share a bit about the Heritage League as well as thank our Dutch guide and the Dutch people for keeping the cemetery and the graves so beautifully. Our excellent local volunteer guide, Arie-Jan van Hees, has adopted an American grave at Margraten, and visits and places flowers

on special holidays. He also has an interest in the US 8th Air Force, and the 466th BG in particular, and he will be



Volunteer guide, Arie-Jan van Hees shares stories about the Americans buried at the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten, and the Dutch families (his included) who adopt a grave and visit to place flowers on special holidays.



HL President Beverly Baynes Tomb and Belgian researcher Luc Dewez at the gravesite of William Sheeley in the Ardennes American Cemetery. William was the father of HL Past-President Billy Sheely Johnson.



Lucien Dewez, 94-year-old Belgian Resistance Fighter during WWII, accepts a special Heritage League award from HL President Beverly Baynes Tomb with a champagne toast.



In walking the grounds of the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten, we found this 2AD gravesite for SSgt George Irogov, aboard one of two a/c the 44th BG lost on a mission to Bremen.



HL President Beverly Baynes Tomb poses with the wreath placed by the tour group after saying a few words about the Heritage League and thanking the Dutch for the beautiful way they care for our war heroes.



Volunteer guide, Arie-Jan van Hees explains the WWII activities affecting the Netherlands at large map at the entry of the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten.

The Executive Committee of
The Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF)
take great pride and pleasure in welcoming

LUCIEN DEWEZ

as our *first-ever*

HONORARY

Honorary Life Member.

Our organization is comprised of brothers, sisters, spouses, sons, daughters, and other proud relatives and appreciative friends of the **heroic men and women** who served on the ground or in the air, as part of the **Second Air Division of the Eighth US Army Air Force in WW II**. Starting in 2005, to show our high esteem and abiding gratitude for their service and sacrifice, we invited these VETERANS to be our *Honorary Life Members*. It is our practice to bestow each invitation in person, so that the VETERAN may know our true heart, and we may show our individual regard.



served in a Red Cross unit; the second was a ground crew chief. Their legacy will not be relegated to the shadows, but rather will glow in the same golden light as the combatants, for their part in restoring peace and freedom to all.

The first to honor us with acceptance was a woman who harassed the fascist invaders, but also to aid and shelter the Allied soldier and airman avoiding capture.

Lucien, as a young man, you led others in effective organized resistance, shortening the war, improving chances for downed fliers, and setting an inspiring example for generations of freedom loving citizens of every nation.

To you and your fellow résistance fighters, as to our esteemed veterans, we offer our sincerest gratitude and friendship, humble in the knowledge that these can never equal your extraordinary courage.

Beverly Baynes Tomb
President
Brian H. Maloney
Secretary / Past President
Mayanth Piyas
Membership VP / Past Pres.
Billy Sheedy Johnson
Past President



Michael S. Simpson
Executive Vice President
Susan K. Kusley
Treasurer
Chris Clark
VP for Volunteers
Jane Turner
Past President

Long Odds!

by Brian Mahoney

I have just returned from the joint reunion, in Seattle, of my late father's two bomb groups, the hard-luck 492nd (with 46% casualties in its short 89 days in combat) and the very ship-shape 467th. We had 6 vets and 65 attendees, many of whom were first-timers now able to join because of the overlooked Pacific Northwest location.



Pat and Roby Scott, Banquet Staffer John, Daisy and Bonnie Scott.
Photo: Brian H. Mahoney.

While reunion committee members were setting up, one of the hotel staffers, John, identified himself right away as the proud son of a 305th BG veteran (8th USAAF B-17 outfit based at Chelveston). John was keenly interested in our vets and history, and the displays of books, videos and albums. The next day, John contributed, for our silent auction fundraiser, a neat silk-screened fabric banner, vaguely familiar, depicting the 5 principal fighter and bomber aircraft of the 8th against a map of East Anglia with 40 heavy bomber bases shown. My first reaction: how neat that the Liberator shown is from one of the two groups present, the Rackheath Aggies (467th)! I presented John with a hat from the 492nd BG as a thank you gesture, while thinking it really should have been a 467th hat. (Small coincidence #1, 1-in-7 odds that either of two groups would be picked out of 14 available for B-24 representation. No big deal!)

The next day, when one of my researcher friends, Doug Kim-Brown arrived, I pointed the banner out to him right away. His father, radio operator on Ernie Haar's crew, also served in both bomb groups. (Our fathers and Ernie were part of a squadron movement to the 467th when the original 492nd was broken



Alice about to touch down at North Pickenham.
Photo: USAAF via Arnett brothers.

up in early August, 1944.) Doug pointed out that the plane had squadron and serial number markings...and I asked another 467th son and researcher, Peter Horne, to consult the wonderful data set he had brought as part of his substantial display. He immediately knew that the 'X 7' indicated 'our' squadron, the new 788th at Rack-

heath. Now Doug and I started to pay real attention! Peter then stunned us: that serial number aircraft had moved to Rackheath from North Pickenham with my father's squadron in the huge 8th AF movement order of August, even though it did not come from his disbanded 859th Bomb Squadron, but its sibling squadron, the 857th. We went to the great 492nd website—<http://www.492ndbombgroup.com/>— and looked up B24J 145-CO 44-40140 (hence '140' on plane). One of the 857th BS crews that flew her, the Harris Crew, had as its tail gunner the late great Willis Beasley, who with his surviving widow (and former Heritage League officer!) Norma, launched the 492nd BG Association as a stand-alone entity.

One of the other crews was that of Bob Scott, who died last year, having been a reunion regular, and pilot of the last of only 6 crews that finished a tour with-



Odds defiers. Scott Crew finished a tour together without injuries, highly unusual in group with 46% casualty rate. Posed in front of good luck plane 'Alice,' at end of 30 mission tour. Photo: USAAF via Arnett brothers.

in the hard-luck 492nd. I purchased the banner and presented it to his son Roby, Roby's wife Pat, the convention co-chair, and their daughters Bonnie and Daisy, who volunteer in honor of their beloved grandfather.

Approximately 3,000 B-24s served in the 8th during the war...about 20 of these had the distinction of serving in both the original 492nd and the 467th. Against 1 in 150 odds, this banner depicts a plane that reflects the connection between these two groups.

Further investigation shows that 'Alice,' as she was known in both groups, flew 10 missions from North Pickenham, including the Scott Crew's historic 30th. She flew another 10 missions with eight other 492nd crews, every single one of which managed to finish a tour or find safe internment in Sweden, in their subsequently assigned groups. (This is incalculably improbable when 46% of all 492nd combatants were either KIA or PoW.)

Only six crews in the 492nd finished a tour within their short and fiery 89 days of combat. But two of these, Bob Scott's and Danny O'Sullivan's, flew in 'Alice.' An exceptionally lucky crew for the 492nd was that of George Haag. They flew in, and survived, all four of the devastating missions that define the "Happy Warriors" as the hard luck bomb group of all time. Near the end of their time at North Pick, they had a safe mission flying 'Alice.' Somehow, Alice herself avoided all four of those horrible air battles. In so many senses, she was a 'good luck' ship, and it is fitting that she went to the best-luck group in the 8th to sweeten the deal when the 467th absorbed a squadron worth of seemingly cursed men.

'Alice' flew another 70 missions with the 467th and got everyone home safe and sound, and even brought a planeload home at the end of the war!

Research Basics 101

by Chris Clark

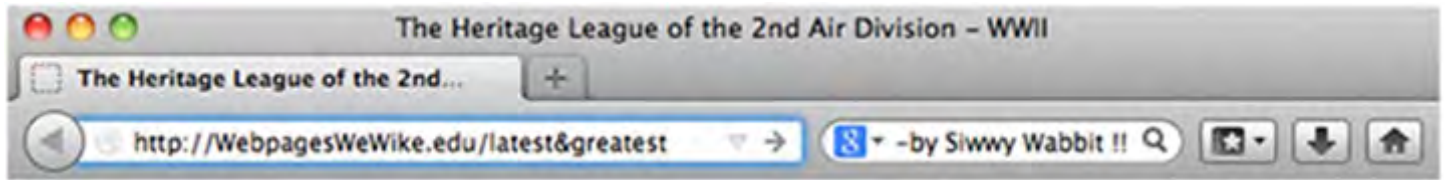
When asked to write about research, I was at first a little apprehensive, but then I said, "Sure, why not?" Some background information, however, first.

I started doing research on my Clark Family history on the first of April, 1990. By August, 1992, I was focusing on the members who served in the Armed Forces. My family has had someone serve in the American Revolution, War of 1812, Civil War, Spanish-American, WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and Gulf War I.

One day in August, 1992, I came home from work early and started reading the letters my uncle had written home during WWII. In one of the letters, he talks about how good his crew is, and sends home a picture of them, with the names and cities they were from. The outside of the envelope, on the top left corner, tells me the name of the soldier, his ASN (army serial number), the bomb group and squadron. So I thought, "Why not call and see if I can talk to any of the crew?" (This was BEFORE smart phones and desktops.) I used the land-based phone line to call the operator for information about phone numbers. I learned that I could get three numbers per request, so I started from there. The first try was a no-go. Second try also was a no-go. The third try was a hit. I talked to the veteran's wife first, then to the vet himself. The vet's wife asked me whether I had the book that was written about the 489th? I said, "No." She gave me the information and I called the operator again. This time I learned that the group historian lived in the adjoining county from me. This is a big country, and to live in the next county was real cool. So, within an hour, I had a signed Group History book on the 489th Bomb Group by Charles H. Freudenthal. (Folded Wings, 19 April, 2016, just 6 weeks short of 100 years old!)

I used the letters written home as a start. Then I went through the 489th historian to research the other groups, and met Will Lundy, the 44th BG historian. I asked him what he was referring to when he said he could prove that a specific man had flown in which plane on what date, with whom, at what altitude, dropping what kind and how many bombs, and so forth. Will Lundy then taught me about what is in the Archives in College Park, Maryland and the Interrogation Reports. This proves that, for any given date, we can document a mission. When I started, I knew that my uncle was in WWII, and flew in a B-24, that was it. I remade his Combat Flight Record from scratch.

I have been in many libraries in the Washington, DC area, the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration in DC, and in College Park, Maryland, and libraries at the county level and state level. My research has taken me to the Chairman of the Senate Armed Forces Committee in the US Capitol, the White House, and to England. I have helped research for people in almost every state in the US, in England, France, Belgium and even Germany. Research is as easy as getting started. (*Ed. Chris' contact info on back page.*)



Hey, gang- It's been a while, and the web moves on, so lots of catch-up to do with you! In this installment, you will see the inroads that social media—at least Facebook—are making into our 'virtual awareness' of historical subjects along with just about everything else. You can always write to me, courtesy of the Editor, with your own ideas for sites to list here. Thanks! —SW

heritageleague.org Webguy and Executive VP Mike Simpson has recently reworked the coding to make future changes easier, and to allow us to keep our content fresher and more responsive to changing needs. He has brought in a new look, and now is swapping in updated content as supplied by others. All 'born-digital' 2AD Journals are viewable there now, news on the Mighty D8a Project can be found on its own page, and volunteers will soon have multiple ways to effectively interact with VP for Volunteers, Chris Clark, on worthwhile projects that support our mission. Mike has added a slew of researcher resources. Keep watching! The wonderful work done for years by his predecessor in both roles, Bob Books (392nd Gold Star son) raised a high bar to clear, and a technically difficult one too. Thanks to both, for their great service in connecting our Heritage League 'family' in a practical and beautiful way.

2ndair.org.uk The 2nd AD Memorial Library (in Norwich, England) is rather accessible to us 'on this side of the Pond' via this intuitive and pleasing portal to the programs, holdings, and missions of this 'unique living memorial.' Just as the physical library in the key Second Air Division City should be one of your touristic destinations, their website deserves regular checking for its expanding archival, gallery, linked items, and the 2nd Air Division Digital Archive, launched on May 19, 2016. www.2ndair.org.uk/digitalarchive Libby Morgan and team, keep up the awesome work!

heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/home We like this site for more than its name. If you are inclined to visit East Anglia—a very rich, very affordable, very welcoming destination for vacation—this site gives you archeological perspective, guidance and resources, including, through the recent 'Eighth in The East' project, the remnants and impact of heavy bomber and other bases that turned this part of England into history's biggest aircraft carrier. (Look for it under the 'Current Projects' tab.) While the navigation is not intuitive, and the organizing scheme challenging, you will be rewarded for your efforts, even if your travel will be merely virtual.

www.abmc.gov The American Overseas Battle Monument Commission oversees the meticulous and respectful maintenance of combatants' graves from both theatres of WWII, as well as from WWI. Their website has a searchable database that gives the basic information on burial sites by named individual, but does not offer added personal or historical context. The recently revised page now presents good history lessons on major campaigns related to the honored dead, and these are very worthwhile.

Your HL data manager has harvested all 2nd Air Division individuals to a local database, which is held available for searches on request. As the tabular information is in database form, complex searches are possible. For example, if you want to know which 93rd BG combatants are buried (or commemorated as MIA on the Wall of the Missing) at Epinal, it is easily answered. Brian's contact info is on the back cover.

fieldsofhonor-database.com/index.php This site is about 'back story' and human interest, not to be confused with other sites related to 'adopt-a-grave' programs. If you know of a combatant buried in one of the American Cemeteries in central Northern Europe, chances are better than even that you can get some added info, not necessarily from first sources, and definitely not 'guaranteed accurate.' Your own input (of photos, accurate stories, personal reminiscences, etc.) will be appreciated by the committed Dutch volunteers. Their prime focus is on Henri-Chapelle, Ardennes, and Netherlands (Margraten).

We appreciate the generous gifts from members inspired by an individual to whom we are all connected. We wish to thank members who have given the Heritage League recent contributions as follows:

—Folded Wings—

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| <i>Lt. Col. Charles Freudenthal</i> | 04/19/16 | 489 th |
| <i>Harold McMahon</i> | 06/01/15 | 492 nd |
| <i>Harold S. Podolsky</i> | 08/02/15 | 448 th |
| <i>Robert Victor</i> | 02/16/16 | 453 rd |

IN HONOR OF

Robert and Frank Birmingham (Shary Whalen/Jean Coghlan)
George Michel (Patricia Merrifield)

IN MEMORY OF

Lt. Col. Ralph and Mrs. Virginia Belward (Carly Belward)
Alfred F. Brunner (Patricia Botic)
Bill Campbell (Beverly Tomb)
Clarence “Bud” Chamberlain (Dana Chamberlain)
George H. Finch (Jim Turner)
Frank Koza (Susann Scavone)
Harold McMahon (Brian H. Mahoney)
Richard I. Ramp (Viola Ramp)
William F. Sheely (Billy Sheely Johnson)

Volunteer Projects

by Chris Clark

The Heritage League is actively looking for people to help in three areas. Can you take on a project, help set it up, run it and get it done? If so, then the Heritage League needs you!

The Heritage Herald newsletter needs help with layout of photos, graphics, and text submitted to our Communications VP, Lisa Niehoff. Editing skills (spelling, grammar, proofreading) and ability to communicate clearly with teammates are also important. The Heritage Herald is primarily distributed via email, but a printed copy is also mailed to those who pay an additional sum.

The Heritage League Flower Program needs a volunteer to place the orders and to make sure flowers from the Heritage League are placed on Memorial Day at the Walls of the Missing in the 13 American Battle Monument Commission cemeteries holding members of the 2AD. On Veterans Day, flowers for the Cambridge American Cemetery also need to be ordered. Ability to speak and understand French is a plus.

The Heritage League Digitization Project needs a volunteer Project Manager and Grant Writer to help us digitize the paper 2ADA Journals—the newsletters of our parent veterans-only organization, the Second Air Division Association. The volunteers will need to create a plan, set a schedule, find the best originals to digitize, line up a vendor to do the work, determine costs, write up a DAR Special Projects grant, work with the vendor and HL board members to get the Journals digitized, and work with the HL webmaster to get them posted on our website.

If you are willing and able to help the Heritage League by volunteering for one of these jobs, please contact Chris Clark, ClarkHistory@aol.com

Old Bomb Group Numbers Still in Use! Part Two

by Chris Clark

I will have to thank Mike Simpson for that GREAT article, in Heritage Herald issue 58, he wrote about the current status of the 14 groups that make up the Second Air Division of the Eighth Air Force. It is a scholarly study and very well told. I have already used it for research a few times. Thanks Mike.

Now for the second part. Can you imagine my surprise last October when watching TV, reading the trailer of news at the bottom of the screen, that a Second World War bomb group was being reactivated. The 489th Bomb Group. As many of the readers know by now, my uncle, Staff Sgt. Charles F. Clark was in the 489th and 44th Bomb Groups. Hence, my excitement about reading that the 489th was being called back to duty.

As we learned from Mike Simpson, of the 14 groups in the Second Air Division, five are currently active. Two of the five were my uncle's bomb groups, the 44th and the 489th. The entire Clark Family has always been proud of Charles and his service to the Second Air Division. With the reactivation of both of his bomb groups, I am sure that other families will have the same pride as we have in these two groups.

Heritage League Convention 2016

Research and Reflection

America is the great country she is because of her many abounding heroes and legends who served during the War—their past accomplishments and present activities have served this country well indeed. We remember these heroes. We hope that they will be able to be with us when we observe the significance of their sacrifices at our Heritage League reunions and special events. It's the ultimate sacrifice of this greatest generation who 'donned the fabric' by fulfilling their civil duty, serving our nation during the world's darkest hours. Each and every one of these decent and honorable men and women made a difference in the outcome of our nations' history as they proudly served their country with dignity and distinction.

Thanks, Lisa



The Air Force Memorial as viewed from Arlington National Cemetery. Photo: Beverly Tomb.

Wednesday, September 14

- Opening reception—complimentary beverage and hors d'oeuvres, plus cash bar, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm.
- Dinner on your own at any of several nearby restaurants, then walk back to the hotel or use the courtesy van.
- Hospitality suite at hotel.

Thursday, September 15

After breakfast (free each morning), board coach for EITHER:

- **National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)** in College Park, MD. Board 8:45 am for a day of guided expert historical research in Record Group 18 (concerning 8th AF operations in WWII). Dutch-treat cafeteria lunch there (very reasonable, pleasant and sociable!). Continue research until 5:00 pm departure back to hotel. OR
- **Mount Vernon Tour.** Departs 8:30 am, followed by lunch on your own in Historic Old Town Alexandria (then coach tour of historic sites with professional guide), returning to hotel 4:30 pm.

Dinner on your own at hotel or in the neighborhood; many walkable delightful options! Hospitality suite open late tonight!

Friday, September 16

- After breakfast, Annual Meeting followed by extended coach tour.
- Board coach 12:30 pm for **WWII Memorial**. Box lunch at Memorial. Reboard coach 2:00 pm for **Women in Military Service to American Memorial (WIMSA)**.
- Reboard coach at 3:45 pm for very special coach tour of **Arlington Cemetery**, pointing out burial sites of Second Air Division “greats,” including step-off rose placements at several sites.
- Light snacks and water available on coach for this long day.
- 6:00 pm arrive at **USAF Memorial** for stunning views of city, Pentagon, Medal of Honor listing.
- Reboard coach 6:45 pm to visit **Pentagon 9-11 Memorial** (if time allows), then drive past **USMC Iwo Jima Memorial** at dusk, returning to hotel at 8:15 pm.
- Dinner (self-pay) reserved in a private dining room at a restaurant near hotel, or hop off bus at hotel stop before dinner. Walk or courtesy van back to hotel.
- Hospitality Suite after dinner.

Saturday, September 17

Following breakfast:

- Board coach 9:00 am to see **National Air and Space Museum's Udvar-Hazy** facility.
- Cafeteria lunch there on your own.
- Reboard coach 2:00 pm for return to hotel.
- Alternative to excursion - return to **NARA** to continue in-depth guided research, using available public transit.
- 5:30 pm cocktails (first drink is on us!), group photo at 6:15 pm, Candle Lighting Ceremony at 6:45 pm, followed by Banquet.
- Final night of Hospitality Suite...we will go late again!

Sunday, September 18

Free departing breakfast...“Until we meet again!”

HOTEL INFORMATION

Hilton Garden Inn/Arlington Courthouse Plaza
1333 North Courthouse Road, Arlington, VA 22201

Make your own reservations before August 26, by either calling (888) 370-0984 or going to our special group website from <http://hiltongardeninn3.hilton.com> and using our group code, HLT. Group rate extendable three days before and three days after our reunion dates.

Research Skills Learning Opportunities

Please contact Chris Clark (clarkhistory@aol.com) to review your specific **NARA Research** subject(s) and ideas for practicality. Start the conversation with him early if you want to get maximum value from this extraordinary research opportunity. If we have already “pulled relevant boxes” at the Archives, in advance of your arrival, we will be able to save time. You will be trained in special procedures by Archive staff and issued a Researcher ID. Chris can coach you on what to bring and what to leave at home, and how to maximize your experience with definitive original records.

Please contact Brian Mahoney (archivist@brianhmahoney.com) if you would like to participate in an actual **records processing workshop** during the reunion based at the hotel. We will have personal collections of at least 3 WWII veterans on hand, with various collection guidelines from suitable institution. Many of you are now contemplating this work within your family, and this is your chance to learn how to do it, or oversee it, with confidence.

On Your Own

Our hotel is within walking distance of MetroRail and MetroBus, for activities on your own if you like. The immediate neighborhood offers very good shopping, dining and “brew-pubbing” experiences. It is a great base and lodging price for accessing highlights of our nation’s capital, and extending your vacation. Your welcome packet will have guidance, and Brian and Chris are ready to answer your specific questions between now and the reunion!

Questions:

| | | |
|----------------------|--|-------------------|
| Brian Mahoney | archivist@brianhmahoney.com | or (202) 232-1423 |
| Chris Clark | clarkhistory@aol.com | or (703) 944-6585 |
| Sue Risley | Skrisley@aol.com | or (847) 571-4405 |

**Heritage League
Convention****Washington, DC****September 14-18, 2016**

| Item | per person | # of people | line total |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|
| Registration—covers all common activity fees, reception, snacks, hospitality suite, etc. | \$200 | | |
| Mt. Vernon/Old Town Excursion—Thursday, Sept. 15 | \$ 22 | | |
| Udvar-Hazy Excursion—Saturday, Sept. 17 | \$ 16 | | |
| Banquet—Saturday, Sept. 17 <i>please indicate quantity for each meal choice HERE</i> ↓↓↓↓ | | | |
| Roasted garlic marinated salmon | n/c | | |
| Lemon ginger chicken | n/c | | |
| Upgrade to tenderloin beef filet | \$ 18 | | |
| <i>Total Remittance</i> | | | \$ |

Special needs

My party will need (this many) _____ wheelchair(s).

(This person) _____ is allergic to (food items): _____

Any other special need we can help with? _____

Information for badges:

| Name | Bomb Group | Related 2 AD Veteran | Relation to Vet |
|------|------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

*Please attach sheet if needed for larger party. Checks payable to **Heritage League**. Please include:*

Your Address: _____

Your Phone Home: _____ Cell: _____

Your email: _____

Emergency contact and phone: _____

Remit check, payable to **The Heritage League**, to:

Sue Risley, Treasurer, 682 Slade Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120

Alternatively, see <http://www.heritageleague.org/reunions.html> where you may fill out the form online, and use PayPal securely.

Sites to visit during our Reunion, September 14-18



*I'd like to have a moment, Sir,
Up here so close to you,
To talk about the things I've done
And things I've yet to do.*

*At times I've left formation,
Peeled off and slipped away,
When "move in, close that gap up"
Was the order of the day.*

*I didn't need my compass,
No, not me, I thought I knew,
So, I've cursed and made excuses
When my field was over due.*

*Each time I've lost my way Sir,
From my flight with fellow men,
You've found and brought me safely,
To formation once again.*

*As I know that you are watching Sir,
As I stalk Your halls of air,
For the majesty of Heaven
Is about me everywhere.*

*And when you form Your Squadron Sir,
And lead these men who fly
On their last and final mission
To Your Airfield in the sky.*

*I ask that I may be there Sir,
To make that journey too,
With throttles to the firewall Sir,
Let me follow You!*

Last Formation



*Richard A. Emmons May 1949
Reprinted from Spring 1994, Daedalus Flyer, with
permission from the Order of Daedalians.
(Colonel Emmons was my friend)*

Heritage League of
the Second Air Division (USAAF)
Marybeth Dyer (458th BG)
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