



Attlebridge Notes



Summer 2020

Illustration: "Home At Last" by Bill Curtis, 466th BGA

75 YEARS

APRIL 21, 1945

PERRY AND THE BLACK CAT



Sgt. Perry Kerr, 1945



This USPS stamp featuring the Black Cat was issued in 2005. For more information, see Page 4.

Aviator Perry Kerr scrunched into his nose gunner's compartment on Earthquake McGoon, the B-24 heavy bomber flown by the Richard Koch crew. Or maybe it was The Joker, one of the other ships that Perry and the others had flown on combat missions from Attlebridge, England, to Germany starting on March 30, 1945. McGoon was the "world's dirtiest rasser," a creation of cartoonist Al Capp. The Joker was a villain in the Dick Tracy comic strip.

Whichever aircraft the Koch crew flew on April 21, 1945, it was part of the 466th Bomb Group sent to destroy a railway bridge near Salzburg, Austria. But they had to abandon the mission because of thunderstorms. The formation was returning to home base near Norwich.

Perry had a front-row seat in the compartment below the B-24's cockpit. As the toggler, tasked with releasing bombs, he had to have a view of the aircraft ahead to know when to drop the bombs.

On this return flight, Perry watched in horror as an anti-aircraft shell struck the left wing of the B-24 just ahead of him. It was the Black Cat, decorated with a menacing panther painted on its fuselage. The aircraft fell to the earth, killing 10 crew members. Two others survived and were taken to a German POW camp, only to be released a few weeks later. The war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945. - Continued on Page 10

From the Editors / Vice President

This issue of “Attlebridge Notes” comes with some uncertainty. Namely, at press time it wasn’t certain that the 2020 reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Society would take place in Memphis, Tennessee, this October 21-25 as planned.

The coronavirus and resulting caution about large gatherings of people raises questions about having the reunion. The Society’s officers are in touch with Memphis officials and will let us know as soon as decisions are made. Of course, if the reunion goes ahead as scheduled, it’s still up to every individual whether to attend. We would all like the virus to go away, but it doesn’t look like that will happen. We both will be 74 by then, and Helen has multiple pre-existing conditions that call for extra caution. We have cancelled three trips already since March. We are certainly looking forward to the 2021 8th AFHS Reunion in Savannah, including the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force. Please check our website and the website of the 8th Air Force Historical Society for updates.



Helen & Steve Jordon

In the meantime, please enjoy the stories and information in our summer edition. We have wonderful correspondents from around the country and abroad, and it’s a joy to send this newsletter to the dozens of remaining 466th veterans and their families and descendants — in all, a mailing list of 500 addresses.

Whatever happens with your travel plans this year, please know that the 466th Bomb Group Association is alive and well and will keep you informed and enlightened. If the reunion does not take place, the Board of Directors will meet remotely to handle the business of the BGA. Among the agenda items will be electing a new president to succeed Frank Youngquist, who, for six years, served in that capacity with dignity and resolve.


This newsletter cannot be published without your help. As always, we appreciate your financial support for the mission of keeping alive the memory and history of the bomber base at Attlebridge, England, and the Americans there who fought and helped win World War II. In the meantime, remember the words of a theme song of that period, made famous by Dame Vera Lynn, who, at age 103, died this June 18, 2020:

*We’ll meet again,
Don’t know where,
Don’t know when.
But I know we’ll meet again
Some sunny day!*

**Steve Jordon, vice president and co-editor
Helen Jordon, co-editor and publisher**



Brian, David & Steven Jordon at Attlebridge, 2014



Helen’s sister Karen Caldwell is the director of a Barbershop Chorus in the Seattle area. Watch what her chorus is doing to celebrate July 4, and Google this:
Harmony Kings Virtual Chorus - “America the Beautiful Medley”



This sweet photo didn’t make it into our January issue, and it’s too good to miss! Jim Melnyk took this at the banquet in October in St. Louis. Left to right: Marcia Melnyk, Beverly Tomb, Earl Wassom, Cindy Wassom and Bill & Martha Curtis.

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Treasurer’s Update

Bill Curtis

1-1-2020 to 6/1/2020

Income
“Non” Dues. \$663.00
Book Sales. 541.70
Video Sales. 125.00
Total \$1,329.70

Expenses
Newsletter \$1,695.69
Flowers. 48.59
“Arsenal” book storage 303.60
Total \$2,047.88

Bank Balance \$7,515.97



Get “Attlebridge Notes” by e-mail!

To ALL Members of the 466th Bomb Group Association:

The biggest expense of the 466th BGA

is the printing and mailing of our bi-annual newsletter, “Attlebridge Notes.”

Many organizations are moving from printed mailings to delivery by e-mail.

If you would like to help pare down our costs or would not mind having less paper come into your home, please let us know and send us your e-mail address so that we can be sure

that you receive the digital file. Contact secretary Beverly Tomb:

Secretary466thBGA@gmail.com



Fred in 2017 with his daughter, Martha Fox, in his 'War Room.'

466TH BG BLACK CAT STAMP!

by Marcia Melnyk

Did you know that the person responsible for the issuance of that 2005 stamp is still living? He is **Fred Gerritz**, R/O on the John Suchiu Crew #725. They were shot down in the "Lady Lightning" on August 15, 1944. Suchiu, Jerome Samburg, Bob Abbott and Lowell Stiles were KIA. My dear friend, Arthur Palladino, (bombardier) was taken as a POW. Fred was one of the three evaders in the four crews that were shot down that day. It was Fred who finally, after bugging the Post Office for several years, managed to get the stamp made to honor the planes from the WWII era. He is quite proud of that achievement. He lives in Anaheim, CA. So, it was a 466th BG soldier who got the stamp produced! He has a framed first edition signed by the U.S. Postmaster.



Fred Gerritz

Rhoda Leopold

By Beverly Tomb

Rhoda Leopold, the lovely wife of 466th BG Bombardier Herb Leopold, passed away peacefully at home in her sleep in late April. Herb and Rhoda organized the last 466th BG stand-alone reunion, held in San Diego, and attended every 8th AFHS reunion I attended. Rhoda and her daughter Cathy also attended the Heritage League Reunion in Washington, D.C., in 2016. Those who knew her and would like to send a card to their daughter can use this address: Ms. Cathy Leopold, 15565 Walton Heath Row, San Diego, CA 92128



At the 8th AFHS Gala Banquet in 2013.



Rhoda and daughter Cathy Leopold, 8th AFHS Reunion, New Orleans, 2017.

"The Madame"

In the Summer 2019 issue of Attlebridge Notes, we included an article by Carlo Kuit about the Kessenger Crew, who crashed on April 8, 1944, near Mensinghausen, Germany. The B-24 out of Attlebridge was "The Madame." Carlo sends this follow-up:



This drawing depicts B-24H "The Madame." The drawing is by Dutch artist Anneke Helleman. On April 8, 1944, during the return of a mission to Brunswick, "The Madame" was struck by anti-aircraft fire. Pilot Kenneth "Bob" Kessenger was able to keep the aircraft in the air to allow some crew members to

escape. The aircraft crashed near Mensinghausen, Germany. 1st Lt. Kessenger, 2nd Lt. Roland Boulter (navigator) and Sgt. Albert English (gunner) were not able to get out. They are buried at the Ardennes American Cemetery in Belgium. The fourth member killed in action, Sgt. Joseph Lombardo, is buried at the Franklin Cemetery in St. Mary's Parish, LA. Crew members 2nd Lt. Wallace Tyner (copilot), Sgt. Russel Medico (gunner), Sgt. David O'Rear (gunner), S.Sgt. Fred Homner (radio operator) and Sgt. Lewis Straw (gunner) all were taken captive. In March 2019 Carlo visited the crash site near Mensinghausen. Artifacts had been recovered from the aircraft a week before that. The drawing, which shows the names of the four men killed, is framed in a display that includes two .50-caliber bullets and a small piece of armored glass found at the site.



As a resident of the Netherlands, I joined the grave adoption program in 2014 to care for the grave of 2nd Lt. Roland "Chappy" Boulter, the Navigator of "The Madame." The aircraft pilot, 1st Lt. Kenneth Kessenger, is one row behind Boulter in the Ardennes Cemetery. I adopted his grave in 2017.

– Carlo Kuit





Elmo Maiden

ELMO'S WORLD



Elmo & Jeanne Maiden's wedding, Elmo and son Tom, Elmo and Daughter Nancy.



Elmo



My Memories of Elmo Maiden (1919-2019)

By Bill Curtis

We were attending our fourth 8th AFHS Reunion in 2006 in Bossier City, Louisiana. On the first day, Martha and I were getting on the hotel elevator and there was a pleasant looking white-haired gentleman with a 466th name tag. As we got on, he looked at my name tag, which included my hometown. "Lawrence, Kansas," he said. "Are you from Lawrence?" I replied in the affirmative and he said, "I was born in Lawrence, Kansas." That was how we met Elmo Maiden, and he became a wonderful friend. Our son had attended Pinckney School, and our house was only five blocks from Elmo's family home. We were all avid Kansas Jayhawk fans, and it turned out that he played basketball for Phog Allen at KU. He also was on both the football and baseball teams at the University of Kansas. Over the years we got to know him better. There is an old photo of Elmo

and his crew standing in front of the airplane after a crash landing in France. (Upper left.) Elmo's brother Clint, also a WWII pilot, said, "This was one of Elmo's better landings!"



Bill Curtis & Elmo

Elmo was on the board of the 466th BGA and was the treasurer, among other offices. One year he invited me to become a member of the board -- with ulterior motives. As soon as I was sworn in, he nominated me to take over his job as treasurer. He had been handling several bomb group offices and wanted a break. Elmo mentored me in the treasurer position. In 2010 the reunion was held in St. Louis, and his friend, Peter Helm, drove him all the way from California. On their return they stopped by our house for a visit. We considered Elmo to be a very close friend and will miss him a lot. (See "TAPS" Page 19 for more.)



2018 Dayton

2017 New Orleans



2018 Dayton

2014 Nashville

The Smallest Army In Norfolk

by Mark Mattison

466th BGA Member in Oslo, Norway



Mark Mattison and Paul Hindle

It was a blustery, chilly, wet English day in early March when my English friend James and I visited Attlebridge. We drove through the village of Weston Longville, past the church, around the perimeter where the Liberators headed for takeoff on Runway 27.

Then it was a turnoff toward the old air tower, now the offices of the company that uses the three runways for the placement and supply of turkey sheds. On the grassy areas between the runways there are now banks of solar panels, with huge white wind generators towering above -- not what the aviators of WW II could have imagined. But even though the face of the airfield has been transformed, other changes are taking place to bring vestiges of the past back to the present.

Yes, a tiny army of volunteers has excavated bomb shelters, restored and rebuilt buildings, and kept the 466th BG Memorial in good repair. When there's a

special occasion, even more people come out to celebrate the rebirth of the airfield. They come in Jeeps and Dodge personnel carriers, sporting American and British flags, and wear uniforms from 75 years ago.

James and I followed Paul Hindle into the operations building, which is undergoing restoration. Through the windows we could see the wind turbines above the runways and a tiny wheelchair-accessible latrine building behind, in the forest.



A wood fire was blazing in the cast-iron stove, fighting what felt like a losing battle against the chill. A Tortoise-brand stove stood in another corner, awaiting refurbishing, and ready to soon add to the heat in the old brick ops building. The three rooms were full of equipment and furniture.

Although it was a jumble, it was easy to see that the makings of a Visitor Centre were there, just waiting for Paul and his varying band of volunteers. He laid out plans for display cases, furnishings, heating and water supply, and explained that many of the building supplies had been donated by contractors and building company people who understood the tremendous rebirth that was occurring at Attlebridge.



Bomb-shelter entrance



In excavated bomb shelter

Paul was understated and as far from bragging as possible. Yet we could hear the pride in his voice as he guided us around the area and pointed out the work that had been done with the assistance of Barry Beck, Keith Osborne, Lisa Mansfield, Mark Emms, Paul Mansfield, Peter Woodcock, Shaun Hindle and Tony Emmerson. These individuals together comprised the smallest army in the county, armed only with their enthusiasm and an interest in revealing what had once played a part in the winning of WWII in Europe.

Because it was not yet spring, foliage had not yet concealed the entrances to the bomb shelters spread around the area. Paul pointed out sites, one after the other, where the American mechanics had kept the bombers flying. He pointed out the hardstand where my bombardier-navigator father's plane had stood. He showed us the few remaining remnants of the white middle stripes on the perimeter roads, where the pilots had guided their planes to the runways and back to the hardstands.

When I first visited the airfield in the 1980s there was little to show visitors except the runways and control tower. Now it is possible to view the headquarters building (even though it's a private residence), several Nissen huts, the ops and other buildings under restoration, an excavated bomb shelter, a rebuilt latrine that had to be restored from an overgrown foundation, and more. By the time the global travel restrictions (at the time of this writing) due to the corona virus have allowed travel to return to normal, there undoubtedly will be even more work completed at the site.

Paul and his army are dependent upon contributions for the purchase of materials that are not donated by contractors. Paul never asks for contributions, but I could see how much they are appreciated and how well utilized they are. I had visited the airfield 18 months ago, and even in that time I could see the strides forward that this army of volunteers has made.

Therefore my contribution this time was not only monetary, but the base will also be receiving a copy of my newest novel, in part based on wartime experiences both at Attlebridge and in civilian Norwich in 1944-45 (see a review of the book on Page 22.)

Thank you, Paul Hindle and your volunteer army, for all you have done and for what you continue to do to enable the remaining wartime participants and their children and grandchildren to experience the airfield from which many departed and too many never returned.

From Paul:

Donations are best using PayPal to eileenhindle@talktalk.net If cheques are sent, my bank charges £7 for foreign cheques.

Paul Hindle, 9 Hawthorn Road, New Costessey, Norwich, NR5 0LT, UK.



Captain Mahlor Mattison (left), standing with an unknown officer, was the 784th BS Bombardier before helping form 464

The author's father, Bombardier Mahlon Mattison, at left, from "Attlebridge Arsenal"

Continued....

Continued....



Author and James at memorial



100th mission: Glenn Miller played.



*Cottage, once security storage for Norden bombsights
(Nissen hut in background)*



*Nissen hut
adjacent to
headquarters
building*



*Operations Building,
finished exterior*



*Paul with the
Tortoise Stove*



Ann Reeve

Eyewitness
*Our Correspondent
Who Grew Up
at Attlebridge*

Remember when in 2016 we ran a photo of men at Attlebridge sitting with their mess cups and a little girl sitting with them? That little girl was Ann Reeve, who is one of our regular foreign correspondents!



How we celebrated VE Day in our village.

On the first Monday in May every year Britain takes a day off. It's a Bank Holiday, so called since the 1800s because it was an opportunity for the banks to close for day. We usually enjoy eight Bank Holidays every year unless HM The Queen announces an extra holiday for one of her Jubilees or a Royal Wedding. We had a Bank Holiday for the wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton in 2011 but not for the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

We always have two Bank Holidays in May. The first one is on the Monday closest to May 1 and is referred to as May Day when young people had, and sometimes still do, a dance round the Maypole celebrating the coming of spring. The second one is the Spring Bank Holiday on the last Monday in May coinciding with the Church's Whitsun. May Day 2020 should have fallen on Monday, May 4, but it was announced that this year it would be moved to Friday, May 8, to coincide with VE Day.

Normally, each year for that weekend our village holds the Scarecrow Festival with a Fun Fair on the village green. This year a VE Day theme has been planned, not the least including entertainment by my 13-year-old granddaughter, Hannah, with her singing group performing the music of Glen Miller and the Andrews Sisters.

Sadly, none of that was to be, as Covid-19 intervened and everyone was in lockdown. Not to be outdone, our parish priest, Rev. Sivyer, encouraged everyone to consider having a celebratory picnic in their front garden. To this end I ordered an afternoon tea to be delivered by the local bakery and we set up the table. We opened a bottle of champagne and enjoyed our sandwiches, brownies and scones, a nice mix of British, American and Northern France produce. A number of our neighbours did likewise, and Rev. Sivyer and his family, who live opposite, provided the required music of Glen Miller and the Andrews Sisters. The weather was perfect and we all had such an enjoyable afternoon while maintaining a social distance from everyone.

We raised a toast to my late Uncle Peter of whom you have previously read and then a further toast to peace in the world in the hope that a war like that never happens again.

Here's Toni enjoying his tea, wearing his Union Jack hat. I hope you note my replica GI's hat on the arm of my chair. In Britain we usually remember VJ Day on August 15, but I've not heard what form any celebrations might take. We just work from month to month hoping the Covid restrictions will be able to be lifted.

Wishing my U.S. friends all the very best. Keep well. Stay safe.



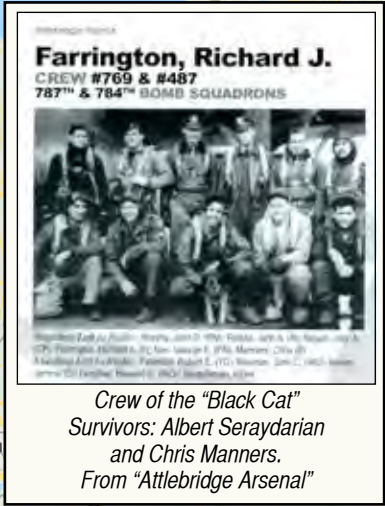
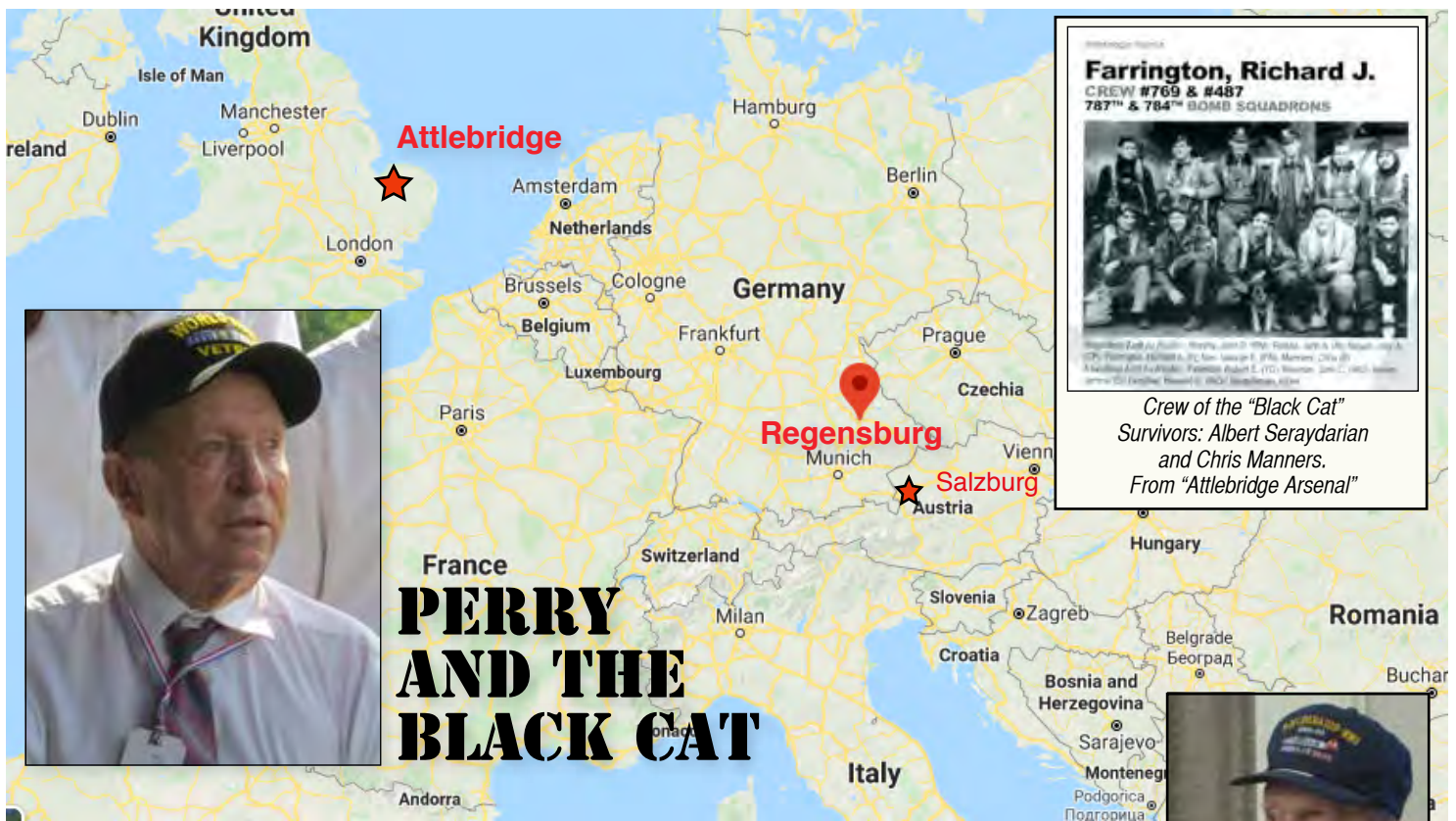
Do you have YOUR copy of this vital book?

With crew photos, names, facts, figures all from Attlebridge Field during WWII, every member of the 466th BGA needs a copy of this. Everyone in your family needs one, and your local library needs one!

\$58 each

Send check only to:
Bill Curtis
515 W. Ariel Ave.
Foley, AL 36535-1617





From "The Attlebridge Arsenal." Perry Kerr is in front, far left.

Continued from the cover

In telling the story, Perry raised questions others also had asked: Why did the formation's leaders choose to fly directly over Regensburg, Germany, a heavily defended city, when everyone knew the end of the war was at hand?



St. Louis, October 2019

Perry had the good fortune to survive his crew's 11 combat missions, return home to Texas and civilian life and, over the decades, tell his stories to the world, including attendees at many reunions of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. The 2019 reunion in St. Louis was Perry's last. He died Feb. 5, 2020. He would have been 95 this summer. (See TAPS, Page 18.)

In 2012 Perry gave an oral history interview to the National Museum of the Pacific War, based in Fredericksburg, Texas. He was born in Baird, Texas, on August 4, 1925, to Samuel Kerr and Millie Josephine Wallace Kerr. In 1943, at age 17, Perry enlisted in the Army Air Corps before graduating from high school, but stayed home until he turned 18. Once called to duty, he trained as a cadet at the aviation center that is now Lackland Air Force Base.

In navigation school he struggled with math — "I just wasn't mature enough," he told the interviewer — but he loved armament school in Denver, Colorado, learning about machine guns, bombing systems and gunnery. He was promoted to corporal and headed for overseas training in Charleston, South Carolina. He joined a crew, flew a brand-new B-24B to Attlebridge and entered combat both as a gunner and toggler.

During his crew's bomb runs, Perry said, "we all kind of dropped at the same time and got a better pattern on the target. I never did fire at an aircraft," nor did he drop bombs knowingly on non-military targets.

Another incident he won't forget: A German fighter jet made a pass at the squadron near Regensburg. "We'd never seen a German jet before," and the speed of the novel airplane scared the Americans. "He was well within range, had a big old cannon, but he didn't fire a shot," Perry told the Kerrville Daily Times in 2019. "Our gunner is back there screaming and hollering, and they didn't fire a shot at him, either."

Perry said his crew actually flew 12 missions but didn't get credit for one because they didn't drop their bombs or come under fire. "We brought the bombs back because they were running short," he said.

"I was sure glad to help put old Hitler out of business," Perry told Daily Times reporter Ariel Lutnesky, shaking his head. "He killed all those Jewish people, even babies."

One of the crews that shared a barracks with Perry's crew didn't survive the war. "You couldn't get too close to each other because we were in combat. We didn't associate much," he said. Avoiding close relationships with other crews was a common self-preservation practice because so many men died.

On June 12, 1945, Perry's crew left Attlebridge and flew one of the B-24s back to the United States, part of the "Home Run" mission that brought many American servicemen back from England. He stayed in the military for six months after the end of the war, then returned home and got a job with a highway construction crew before joining a gas and oil company, retiring after 34 years and eventually moving to Kerrville, Texas.

Back home, Perry didn't dwell on the tragedy of war, instead allowing his natural Texas personality to shine as a board member of the 466th Bomb Group Association. At last year's reunion, for example, it took awhile to get everyone arranged for group photographs in the hospitality room. After the pictures were snapped and people began to move about, Perry piped up: "Wait a minute! I only had one eye open!" Everyone knew his left eye had been removed and the lid sewed shut some time ago.

Perry also brought his own artwork to the reunions. He had found a stamp of a B-24 and put it to good use, inking 16 airplanes per sheet of paper, with the tail insignia and other markings accurately colored in according to the 2nd Air Division's different bomb group colors. Perry's wife, Joyce, and daughter Pam came with him to the reunions, bringing a sense of joy and good humor to the proceedings.

Of such men was the American war effort successful. And of such men is the 8th Air Force Historical Society and the 466th Bomb Group Association grateful. We miss Perry Kerr.

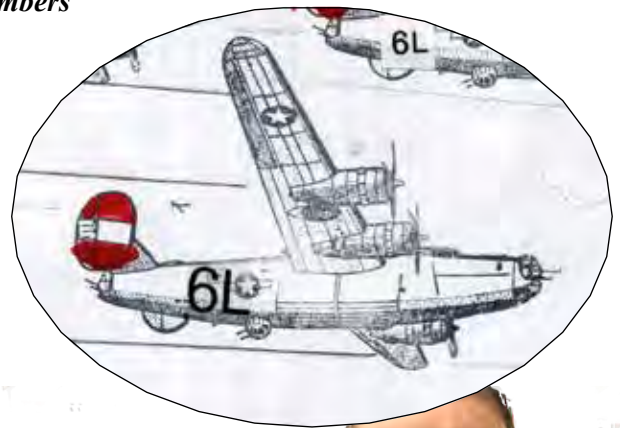
*By Steve Jordon and David Smith
466th BGA Board Members*

*Perry, Pam and Joyce Kerr
St. Louis, October 2019*

*Pam & Perry Kerr
Dayton, Ohio, October 2018*



*466th BGA Veterans
October 2019 in St. Louis, MO
L-R: Earl Wassom, Perry Kerr,
Donald Miller, Elmo Maiden*





Across the Pond....

Paul Hindle's brilliant news from Attlebridge

Summer 2020

Due to Covid-19 here in the UK we have just come out of a ten-week lock-down, which means we are way behind our schedule with the Visitor Centre project. Some good has come out of all this, though: being tagged as a vulnerable 76-year-old person and having to stay at home has enabled me to catch up on jobs like building a new front garden wall, which was long overdue.

With a few rules in place we, the volunteers, are now back working on the project when we can, which is great. The photos show that we have installed an old refurbished Tortoise Stove in the front room of the Visitor Centre, which will be the "Chow Hall." The three windows in the room look out across this historic airfield, and the stove is in the same place as the one during the war. All the rooms in the building had a Tortoise Stove. The concrete base on which the stove is standing was found by our dear friend Peter Woodcock, who could remember a Tortoise Stove being in the RAF Guard Post hut near where he lived as a schoolboy. Nice find, Peter!



Some of the original cream and green paint on the wall behind the stove was found after stripping layers of paint off the walls. Unfortunately we haven't found any war-time art as yet.





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 or on Facebook

The newly painted kitchen area was done by Lisa and Paul Mansfield. They are planning to do the “Chow Hall” next, and when all four rooms are finished, the floor can then be painted, which will be great.

The VE-Day 75 Years celebrations photo shows what we did during lock-down with safe distancing rules in place. The display was posted on our village FaceBook page which attracted many interested local people, and it turned out to be a brilliant day.

Many thanks to our dear 466th Bomb Group friends out there who continue to donate money which will make this “Awesome” project happen.

Best regards, Paul Hindle, project manager

From the editors: If you have never been to Attlebridge Airfield, go when you can! We went in June of 2014 and our lives will never be the same!. Paul Hindle is an incredible host and he will give you a much better idea of what our men did in WW II. This is where they ate, slept and worked, and what they called “Home” in the war.

Peter Woodcock with the salvaged base for the stove!

Below: The VE Day 75th Celebration Display

Yes, this is Paul, long ago!



Lisa Savory-Mansfield is a contributor to Attlebridge Notes, and with her husband helps Paul Hindle with the Visitor Centre at Attlebridge.

GEORGE "LEFTY" SAVORY

07/11/1932 – 01/02/2020

Since the last issue of Attlebridge Notes it is with deep regret that I have to inform you of the passing of my dad, George "Lefty" Savory on the 1st of February. George grew up on the edge of the Airfield during the war and was 12 years old when the Americans arrived. He was befriended by the ground crew of the "Snafu Snark," who nicknamed him "Lefty" because he was left-handed. He spent many hours with them and was very privileged to have been able to start the engines on Snafu Snark. He always spoke fondly of the Americans and had so many memories that he has shared on numerous occasions with his wife and five daughters.

When dad heard that my husband and myself were involved in the Visitor Centre, he was over the moon and enjoyed spending time up there with us. His last visit was spent donating the air raid siren and watching DVDs in the cinema that Paul Hindle had created in what is to be one of the main display areas.

He will be fondly missed by everyone.

Lisa Savory-Mansfield

*Photos top left: "Lefty" aged 3.
Middle: "Lefty" aged 9 with four of his sisters.
Bottom left: "Lefty" sitting in our jeep at the airfield.
Bottom right: Paul Hindle, Barry Beck, "Lefty", Paul Mansfield and Cynthia Savory (Lefty's wife).*



Attlebridge native George Savory, seated, was 12 years old when our crews came to the little town. George is with daughter Lisa and son-in-law Paul Mansfield, who donated this wonderful air raid siren to the Visitor Centre.



WWII DVD'S

466th Videos

Return to Attlebridge
Attlebridge Voices



466th Interviews

1. Group [-Earl Wassom, Elmo Maiden Bill Campbell, Frank Bostwick, Perry Kerr]
2. Herb Leopold-Fred Davis
- 3.. Elmo Maiden - Ralph Lynn
4. Dougherty Crew

8thAF Videos

Start Your Engines + 50 Years
Behind the Wire POWs held by Germans
American Indians in WWII *The Warrior Tradition*
Donald Miller- *author Masters of the Air*
The Big B - Seminar
POW Seminar-*Treatment of Prisoners Discussion*
B-24's in Combat- *Combat footage*
The B-24 Story- *Willow Run to Ploesti*
Jonna Doolittle Hoppes- *Granddaughter of Gen. Jimmy Doolittle*
Steve Ambrose - *Author- Band of Brothers*

ALL VIDEOS \$20/ea
Bill Curtis
115 West Ariel Ave.
Foley, AL 36535
(Checks only)





70 Years

Korean War Began

Many of our veterans also fought in the Korean War. Martha Horney Curtis, a 466th BGA board member whose father was at Attlebridge, has a personal tie to that Asian conflict, too. -- Editors

Some of our 466th BG Veterans served in other wars. Left, Martha Curtis' father, and Steve Jordon's father, right.

I was born at Clark Field in the Philippines to Capt. William G. and Jane T. Horney. My father had arrived first, and soon after my mother arrived from New Jersey he was shipped to Europe for the Berlin Airlift. For six months she lived alone in that rather dangerous foreign country, at first in a hut built by the Japanese during the war.

When I was born, my father had completed his two-year tour and was to return to the States. Our personal belongings were moved to the docks in Manila to be put on a ship. Unfortunately, I arrived two weeks late in a Quonset hut hospital. Dependents were not allowed to travel across the Pacific Ocean until they were at least 6 weeks old.

When the Korean War began on June 25, 1950, my father couldn't leave what was now a war zone. Even if my mother had waited to take me, she throws up just looking at a boat, so there would be no one to care for me. There was no choice but to re-up at Clark for another year. Their belongings were stuck on the dock for the entire year. The only thing to survive the heat and humidity was my mother's cast iron White sewing machine, which I still have.

My father figured there was no way he would survive two wars, and he thought it would only be a matter of time before he found himself in a bomber over North Korea. But then he heard through another officer that a general still needed a navigator for an old B-17 he had outfitted for his office and quarters. Dad got the job and spent the next year ferrying the general all over the Far East -- Tokyo, Hong Kong, Formosa, Australia, Indonesia, Guam and even Korea, but only for the general's meetings and observation of the war. Finally, we got to go "home," and as a 13-month-old toddler and new to walking, I mastered that skill on the deck of a ship, with everyone on board, practically, holding my hands. Arriving in San Francisco, my mother called her mother. They hadn't been able to talk to each other for three years, but she was so emotional she couldn't say anything. After a five-day train ride back to New Jersey, I got to meet my grandparents.

After a year at Westover, Mass., Dad left the service and eventually got a job with Owens, Illinois Glass Co., where he worked more than 30 years. And that's why it was common in my family to mention the anniversary of the Korean War.

FLASHBACK: Steve & Helen Jordon visited Attlebridge in June of 2014, with Steve's two brothers, Brian and David. Paul Hindle was a godsend, showing us all over the Norwich area. Paul was determined to re-create an old photo at Ye Olde Honingham Buck Inn near Attlebridge, so we took our places at the picnic table.

One of the factors that inspired the Jordons' 2014 trip to Attlebridge was this photo that had been sent to us in 2012. It's the Black Cat, and the fellow on the far right is Steve's father, Harold "Ken" Jordon. He was the co-pilot of the John C. Welsh



crew and had been there from October of '44 to April of '45. Ken retired as a Colonel from the USAF in August of 1975, moving with Steve's mom to Venice, Florida. He died in June of 2001.

In 2015 when the 8th AFHS Reunion was in Omaha, we were fortunate to meet Harold "Bull" Dietz, who had trained with Ken, flew over the Atlantic with him and served with him. We are so grateful to the 8th AFHS and the 466th BGA for keeping these memories alive! What inspired YOU to become a member of the 466th BGA? Let us know!

- Helen Jordon

TAPS



If you know 466th veterans or their family members who should receive the Attlebridge Notes, or know about one of our veterans who has died, please contact **Beverly Baynes Tomb** or **Martha Curtis** to update our mailing list and our TAPS record.

See Page 3 for their contact information. AND, if you have an e-mail address, please let us know.

These are the veterans of the 466th BG that we have lost in recent years. Several have been gone for quite awhile, but they had never been recognized in "Taps," so they are included also. There are air crew members and ground support personnel here. The stories are remarkable from these men's lives during their time at Attlebridge and then "after they came home." It has been fascinating and also very moving to read about them and visit with some family members too. We offer our sympathy to the families they represent and to the men who served with them at Station 120.

Martha Horney Curtis 466th BGA Board Member

and Daughter of Crew #633, Navigator.

TAPS - Summer 2020

William "Bill" Anciaux, Exira, Iowa, November 4, 2019, Crew #694, Navigator.

William Anciaux was born in Audubon County, Iowa. In school he played baseball and basketball and was valedictorian of Exira High School. He attended Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, until he joined the Air Corps. He was the navigator on Charles Lanham's crew. Their first and only mission on April 5, 1945, was a terrifying one, reaching the target and finding it completely cloud covered, being recalled, and then everything went wrong mechanically with "Laden Maid." Unable to return to base, Anciaux was able to navigate them out of German territory and into Sweden. After a crash landing there with the plane a total loss and on fire, remarkably only three of the crew were slightly injured. Officially they were interned in Sweden for the short remainder of the war.

Back home, Bill worked for the U.S. Postal Service as a rural mail carrier, farmed and raised dairy cows. He loved sports, especially baseball, and was a lifelong bowler with his wife, Joyce, who died before him. He is survived by a son and a niece and their families. Bill was buried in Exira Cemetery.

John Calvin Beil, Reading, Pa., March 27, 2019, 785th Squadron, Ground Support.

John Beil was born in Kreidersville, Pa. At Attlebridge he served as an airplane and engine mechanic with the 785th Squadron. Men with skills like John's were essential for the aircrews to fly successful missions and, hopefully, return safely from those missions. Back home in Pennsylvania, John lived in Reading and for forty years was a supervisor for Lucent Technologies. John also was a charter member of the Telephone Pioneers of America and was a 50-year member of the Masonic Lodge. His wife, Kathleen, died before him. He is survived by a son and daughter and their families. He was buried in Alsace Lutheran Church Cemetery in Reading.

Robert "Bob" G. Borst, Jessup, Md., April 16, 2014, Crew #730/747, Navigator/Bombardier.

Robert Borst was born in Roanoke, Va. The details of Bob Borst's time in the Air Corps make it appear that "his number was supposed to be up," but somehow he survived and lived into his 90s. He was assigned to the Adam Wunderlich crew as bombardier, but on July 13, 1944, he was at a dead reckoning navigation school when his crew left on their third mission, crashing shortly after take-off and killing all aboard. He flew the rest of his missions as a replacement navigator/ bombardier. On August 15, he was flying with a makeshift crew with Robert Harrington as pilot. Most of them were trying to finish up missions that they had missed. Their plane, "Ramblin' Wreck," was hit by fighters over Holland and within minutes they went down, along with three other 466th BG planes. Four men were killed, four ended up as POWs. Borst and the pilot, Harrington, were able to evade capture. Borst was credited for saving the life of the nose gunner before he parachuted to safety. He and Harrington were assisted and kept safe by the Dutch Underground for eight months until they were liberated by the Canadians on April 13, 1945. Incidentally, this last mission was Bob's 13th.

Back home, Bob was a long-time resident of Laurel, Md., and was employed by American Instrument and Electro Therm, a division of Baxter Laboratories. He is survived by his wife, Eileen, their three daughters, a daughter-in-law, and their families.

TAPS



John R. Chambless, Las Vegas, Nev., October 18, 2016, Duty unknown.

John Chambless was born in Chapel Hill, Tenn. He sailed on the Queen Mary to serve at Attlebridge. In civilian life, he became an engineer, specializing in Gulfstream Corporation aircraft. For years he worked at the Jet Center at Van Nuys Airport in California. After retiring from there, he was with the Federal Aviation Administration for many years, working with jets and helicopters. He retired to Nevada for the last 23 years of his life. John is survived by his wife, Donna. He was buried in the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

Richard F. "Dick" Chapdelaine, Jupiter, Fla., May 24, 2020, Crew #553, Tail Gunner.

Richard Chapdelaine served with the Melvin Westbrook crew, completing 35 missions between the end of August 1944 and the end of March 1945. They flew several planes, "Queenie" being their favorite. They were among the crews that struggled through an historically cold English winter while flying support for the advancing Allied ground troops when the weather allowed it. The Westbrook crew members kept in touch with each other throughout the years and attended reunions together. Dick Chapdelaine was the last surviving member of the crew.

Dick was a perfect example of the fact that in America anything is possible. It was said that Dick's life read like the script of a classic Hollywood movie. He was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., in very poor circumstances. His father died when he was only 6, and his widowed mother and family were supported by their local Catholic priests. He attended St. John's Prep in Brooklyn on a football scholarship. After the war Dick attended Niagara University on the G.I. Bill, earning a degree in economics. He went to work with the brokerage house J.J. Kenney in New York, remaining there for 17 years. Then he founded his own successful firm, Chapdelaine and Co. in New York.

Dick was known for his kindness, professional business acumen and his commitment to philanthropy. For example, he was a big contributor financially to the publication of the "Attlebridge Notes." As a result of the help his family received when he was young and the support he received throughout his life, he was a lifetime benefactor of the Catholic Church, St. John's and Niagara Universities. He and his wife were honored for this generosity and lives of service in 2004 at the President's Dinner of St. John's. He was the recipient of honorary degrees from St. John's and Niagara: Doctor of Commercial Science and Doctor of Laws. He served on boards of local banks and hospitals. He and his wife lived for more than 50 years at Manhasset, N.Y., before retiring to Florida. Dick, often called "Chappy" by his close friends, was an accomplished baseball player and sports enthusiast. He enjoyed many years of season tickets to St. John's men's basketball games. He also was an avid golfer and served on many golf course and country club boards. He is survived by his wife, Therese ("Terry"), and a son and daughter and their families.

John Philip "Phil" Harney, Peoria, Ill., April 22, 2020, Crew #564, Gunner.

John Harney flew 35 missions as a gunner on the Charles Saxon crew from October 1944 until April 1945, also experiencing that same bitterly cold winter. The Saxon crew was well known in the 466th, as their pilot was quite an accomplished artist, whose handicraft was seen all over the base. (When Saxon came home he spent many years as a cartoonist for the New Yorker magazine.) They were also one of the crews "adopted" by a local 12-year-old Weston-Longville boy, Eddie Brighty. He even appears in their crew photo, so they were quite attached to him.

John, who normally went by "Phil", was born in Bradford, Ill. After the war, he graduated from the University of Illinois and had a long career in advertising, working in Chicago, New York and Los Angeles. He then moved to Peoria, where he was active in the Illinois Alumni Association, the University Club of Peoria, the Knights of Columbus and the American Legion. He was also an avid golfer. His wife, Kathleen, predeceased him. He is survived by their eight children and their families. He was buried in St. John's Cemetery in Peoria.

H.L. Heafner Jr., Orlando, Fla., December 29, 2019, Crew #408, Left Waist Gunner.

H.L. Heafner was a gunner with the Frank Cotner crew, one the crews to fly the first missions from Attlebridge in March and April 1944. On their 11th mission on April 29th, their plane, "Playboy," was damaged by flak over Berlin and was unable to keep up with the group. Finally over Meppel, Holland, they were forced to bail out. One crew member was killed and seven became POWs. Heafner and the engineer-top turret gunner, Robert F. Pipes, managed to avoid capture. They spent the next year evading the Germans and participating in guerrilla activity with the Dutch Underground. Robert Pipes credited their successful evasion to the fact that they were the only Southern boys on the crew. Pipes was from Texas and Heafner was from Mississippi. Not surprisingly, they kept in touch over the next 70-plus years. H.L. is survived by his daughters and their families.

TAPS



Perry Kerr, Kerrville, Tex., February 5, 2020, Crew #792, Nose Gunner.

Perry Kerr joined the Air Corps when he was 17. He enjoyed armament training and was assigned to be a turret gunner right behind the pilot on the Richard Koch crew. However, the crew member assigned to be the nose gunner couldn't fit in that space, so Perry switched with him. He was also the toggler, releasing the bombs when the B-24 reached the target, as this crew didn't have a bombardier. They flew 11 missions in March and April 1945 until the end of hostilities.

Perry stayed in the service for six months after the war ended and then went home to Texas. He first worked on a highway construction crew and then got a job with Coastal States Gas Co, which became Valero Oil, and worked there for 34 years until his retirement. He lived in Tomball, Belleville, and Three Rivers, Tex., moving to Kerrville three years ago. Perry sang in his church choir. One year around Veterans Day, choir members were talking about who was a veteran. Perry mentioned that he had flown out of England in WWII, and another church member - Frank Bostwick (died Jan 4, 2020

and in prior Taps) said he had also flown out of England. As they narrowed down the details, they were delighted to learn that they had both served in the same Bomb Group, tho they had been in choir together without knowing that for several years! Perry served on the 466th BGA Board. His wife, Joyce, and daughter, Pamela Kerr Janwich, accompanied him to many 8th AFHS Reunions. He also is survived by his son, Jay, and daughter, Penny Kerr and Pamela's husband, Billy.

Philip Kessler, Winchester, Mass., June 2, 2020, Ground Support- Cryptographer.

Philip Kessler was a native New Englander, living in North Bradford and Westport, Conn., and finally Winchester. He was one of the men of the Jewish faith who chose to serve his country in the European Theatre of War. At Attlebridge he was part of base support personnel, as a cryptographer, communicating and deciphering codes. This was essential work to keep the missions secure and airmen safe. In civilian life, Philip wrote management publications. His wife, Patricia, predeceased him, and he is survived by a brother, two daughters and their families.

Charles Wesley Lanham, Wolcott, Conn., February 22, 2017, Crew #694, Pilot.

Charles Lanham was born to missionary parents in India. He recounted in "Attlebridge Arsenal" that he was determined to have a moment of prayer before each mission, even though the crew members were of different faiths. In the hectic time before take-off on their first mission on April 2, 1945, there had been no time for a prayer. So as they circled for altitude, he handed the controls to his co-pilot and said a brief prayer. It appears that his prayer was a good idea, as it turned out this was their first and only mission, ending up having to turn back because of bad weather over the target, then having engine trouble, and finally being forced to crash land in Sweden and be briefly interned there. Their plane, "Laden Maid", was total loss, but there were only slight injuries to three crewmen.

After the war, Charles received his theological education at Asbury College in Kentucky and Hartford Seminary. He became an ordained Methodist minister and served churches in Kentucky, Connecticut, New York and Florida for over 70 years.

Because most of his crew members were from New England, they often held their own reunions at each others' homes through the years. Charles is survived by his second wife, Margaret, four daughters, three step-children and their families.



The Grave Marker for
Elmo & Dorsie Maiden
in Oakwood Memorial Park Cemetery,
Chatsworth, California.

- Photo by Tom Maiden

TAPS



Elmo E Maiden, Winnetka, Calif., February 2, 2020, Crew #664, Pilot.

Elmo was born in Lawrence, Kan., and grew up in a home right behind the University of Kansas football stadium. He started college at KU, joined the ROTC and learned to fly. Before finishing, though, he decided to go to California and help build airplanes at Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego, in support of the British war effort at the time. As a result, he had not only helped build B-24s but also had flown them before he joined the Air Corps and arrived at Attlebridge. The Maiden crew flew 35 missions between October 1944 and early April 1945. On their 17th mission they lost two engines, and when another went to half power, Elmo realized they were facing a crash landing. He managed to bring their plane down outside of Paris, on the same field where Lindberg had landed. Elmo loved to tell the story of the crew getting to enjoy their time in Paris after the crash, while back at the base, they assumed the Maiden crew was lost. When they finally got back to base, he found that his clothes had been divided up in the barracks and other guys were walking around wearing them!



Elmo Maiden

When Elmo returned to the States, he came home to Kansas by train and was involved in a terrible train wreck. The only car that was upright on the track was the one he was in. Later on, he found it funny that he could survive all those combat missions in a B-24 over Germany and almost get killed on a train in the middle of Ohio. Elmo returned to KU, earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Mechanical Engineering. He played football, baseball and basketball at KU, playing for legendary coach Phog Allen. He continued playing softball for many years and coached his sons in Little League. Elmo and his wife, Jeanne, moved to Southern California in 1950. There, he worked for Hughes Aircraft, P.S.I. and T.R.W. and was involved with the invention of many small components like transistors and diodes. He and Jeanne and their four children made their home in Winnetka.

Elmo continued to serve his country after the war, remaining in the Air Force Reserves and retiring as a lieutenant colonel. He was a 466th BGA Board Member for many years and served as secretary-treasurer. Besides keeping track of "no-dues dues," he also ran "Elmo's PX," with caps, button, bumper stickers, etc. for veterans and their families. Elmo and his family attended many 8th AFHS reunions including the 2019 gathering after he celebrated his 100th birthday.

For almost 20 years he was involved with "Wings Over Wendy's," a group of WW II flyers and other aviators who meet Mondays for coffee and camaraderie at a San Fernando Valley Wendy's. Last year Elmo was honored for his military service and dedication to the university at a KU basketball game. An article about his life in the Los Angeles Times said that on February 2 he "flew west into the sunset." Elmo was predeceased by his first wife, Jeanne, his second wife, Dorsie, and a son, Stan. Two sons and a daughter and their families survive him, including his son Tom, a 466th BGA Board Member.

Stuart M. Peace Jr., Sacramento, Calif., May 9, 2013, Crew #732, Pilot.

Stuart Peace was born and grew up in Chattanooga, Tenn. Before the war he worked for Sherwin-Williams Paint Co. in Decatur, Ala., where he met his wife, Sara. The Peace crew arrived at Attlebridge July 4, 1944, and flew 32 missions between early July until the end of November 1944 on "Laden Maid," which later crashed with the Lanham crew.

On September 16, 1944, Stuart and his co-pilot, Fred Deck, along with 787th Squadron Commanding Officer John Cockey, were assigned to fly as observers on a practice mission in a lead plane with the Archibald Williams crew. Peace and Deck were sitting in the waist when turbulence from the squadron in front of them caused another plane with the Francis Bell crew and four observers to make contact with the Williams crew plane. Both planes went down. Only three men from the Bell plane and Stuart Peace from the Williams plane parachuted to safety. He recounted that the only reason he was able to survive was that the whole tail section came off, making a big opening for him to escape.

After the war, Stuart remained in the Air Corps and then the Air Force for 20 years, retiring as a lieutenant colonel. He was stationed at many locations, including Savannah, where he was a part of the Strategic Air Command. He then had a second career with the Federal Aviation Agency in Georgia.

He is survived by Sara, a son and a daughter and their families. Two other sons have died. His daughter, Norma Peace Chesser, was an 8th AFHS Board Member and also worked with 466th BGA Board Member Earl Wassom on the "Next Gen Initiative" to bring veterans' children and grandchildren into the BGA membership. Stuart Peace was buried in the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery in Dixon, Calif.

TAPS



Robert F. Pipes, Terrell, Tex., January 1, 2016, #408, Engineer/ Top Turret Gunner.

Robert Pipes was born in Frankston, Tex., and his family moved to Dallas in the 1920s. He graduated from St. Joseph's High School and spent the next three decades serving his country, first in the 112th Cavalry, then the Army Air Corps, then the US Air Force and finally the Air National Guard.

Robert held the rank of Master Sergeant. In his civilian life he worked as a jet mechanic at Dallas Airmotive and Solar Turbines. Needless to say, he loved airplanes! He also spent several summers in Arizona assisting the Apache Indian Forest Fighting Team.

Robert was the engineer and top turret gunner on the Frank Cotner crew. When their plane, "Playboy," was damaged by flak on April 29, 1944, and the nine surviving crew members were forced to bail out over Holland, only Pipes and gunner H.L. Heafner were able to evade capture, thanks to the Dutch Underground. After the war, Robert wrote a book about the crew's experiences, "The Playboy Crew, 1943-1944: The Men of B-24 Liberator 41-29399."

Robert was also the one who painted the Donald Duck nose art on their plane. Obviously he was a multi-talented man! Robert was predeceased by his wife, Betty. His three sons and a daughter survive him. He was buried in Calvary Hill Cemetery in Dallas.

James "Jim" B. F. Russell Sr., White Oak, Ga., January 25, 2020, Crew #761/482, Co-Pilot.

Jim Russell was the co-pilot for the Harold Anderson crew. They flew from October 6 through Christmas Day, 1944, with the 787th Squadron. In January 1945 they were made a lead crew and flew until the last mission for the 466th BG, on April 21, for a total of 31 missions. Jim's uniform cap from the Air Corps is on display with the 466th BG memorabilia collection in England. Jim witnessed the September 16, 1944 mid-air collision. (See page 21)

Jim was born in Camden County, Ga., and returned there after the war. He attended North Georgia College and Georgia Tech and became a surveyor. Jim was an expert land manager, drainage expert, road builder and heavy equipment operator. It was said that he could pick up a penny with the bucket of a backhoe and never disturb the dirt under it!

He worked as the Camden County road engineer and also oversaw operations at his family's timber operations. He loved history, music, the Boy Scouts, vegetable gardening and ballroom dancing with his wife, Elinor. Jim was always active in the outdoors, especially in the woods, and just last year he was able to go on a successful three-day deer hunting trip. Elinor died before him, and their two daughters. Their son and their families survive him.

Robert "Bob" Weihenmayer, Gahanna, Ohio, December 7, 2019, Ground Support, Safety Officer.

Bob Weihenmayer was born in Philadelphia. At Attlebridge he served with the 786th Squadron and was in charge of making sure all safety supplies were loaded on the planes before missions. He attended the Dayton 8th AFHS reunion in 2018 and talked about some of the essential items that he was in charge of, like oxygen tanks and fire extinguishers.

He mentioned that other items were found to be rather superfluous on missions, such as life rafts, since B-24 crews rarely survived crash landings in the North Sea. During the visit with Bob in the 466th BG Hospitality Suite, it was also discovered that the first building that we acquired on the old base to use as the new Visitor Centre was the one he worked in and where these safety supplies were stored for the squadron.

When Bob came home he attended Heidelberg University in Ohio and received a degree in business. He worked for Steam Economy Co. in Columbus, Ohio, and for 30 years was an usher at the Ohio State University football stadium. He continued working until he was 88, couriering nuclear medicine for Cardinal Health. Bob also was active in the Lions Club and Stonybrook Church in Gahanna and was an avid Buckeye fan. His wife, Helen, died before him. He is survived by his daughter and her family.

Wayne C. Vestal, Placentia, Calif., December 30, 2016, Crew #684, Ball Turret Gunner.

Wayne Vestal was born in Pittsburg, Tex. After high school, he joined the Air Corps and served on the William Grey Crew as a gunner. They flew 21 missions until the end of hostilities, from February 19 through April 17. Bill Grey's log recounted the terrors of their eighth mission over Germany, with one engine on fire and another one with lost pressure, dodging flak batteries and no fighters coming to help them. Remarkably they made it back to Attlebridge on three engines. After the war, Wayne went to St. Paul, Minn., and attended Macalester College, where he met his wife, Helen. They moved to California, where Wayne worked for Southern California Edison for 32 years. They lived in Yorba Linda and raised four children there. Wayne was always an avid reader, and after Helen died, he began taking Life Story Classes at Cal State-U.F. He is survived by a son, three daughters and their families.

TAPS



As we continue to update our 466th BGA mailing list, we have discovered more veterans who have died and have not been included in “Taps” in previous years, as far as we know. We printed a long list in the January, 2020, issue of this newsletter. This current list includes even more of these airmen, as we recognize their service and passing. In most cases, because of passage of time, the details are limited. If there are any updates, please let us know.

Martha Curtis, “Taps” editor

- Nolan P. Adams**, June 24, 2011, Schreiver, La., Duty unknown.
Elmer S. Anderson Jr., El Dorado Hills, Calif., 2007, Crew #778, Pilot.
Richard H. Bradley, July 28, 2012, Arlington, Tex., Crew #787/495 (Waterbury), Gunner.
Benjamin R. Buck, 2003, Lansdale, Pa., Crew #665 (McKnight) Gunner.
Jack D. Campbell, May 14, 2011, Dallas, Tex., Crew #482 (Gordon), Copilot. (Survived crash of “Pale Ale” 2/20/1945).
Frank Columbini, 2007, Mahopac, N.Y., Crew #715/443 (Woolnough), Gunner.
Albert W. Helsey, July 20, 2006, Eugene, Ore., Crew #740, Pilot.
Warren B. Hermes, February 3, 2011, Friendswood, Tex., Crew #404/733 (Baker), Bombardier.
Robert Himes, May 1, 2011, Crew #760 (Eisenhaure), Engineer.
John Jobanek Jr., March 11, 2006, Springfield, Ore., Ground Support- Ordinance.
John Kulishoff, September 27, 2005, Pottstown, Pa., Duty unknown.
David C. McKalip, June 24, 2011, Crew #678 (Joseph Lee), Radio Operator.
Joseph B. Morgitan, date unknown, Phoenixville, Pa., Crew Chief.
John P. Nulsen, date unknown, St Louis, Mo., Ground Support- Squadron Maintenance.
Donald E. Purcell, September 24, 2010, Marietta, Ga., Crew # 418, Pilot.
Stephen N. Reiter, July 25, 2005, Glenshaw, Pa., Crew #648 (Greenwood), Radio Operator.
Romeo Rondina, date unknown, Milford, Conn., Duty unknown.
Conrad J. Sedlak, June 29, 2007, Spotswood, N.J., Crew #774 (Walter Johnson), Radio Operator.
Rodney C. Wood, August 31, 2000, Vienna, Me., Duty unknown.

Tragic Practice Mission

On Sept. 16, 1944 a routine practice mission turned into a tragic mid-air collision over England. Watch the eyewitness accounts of 466th veterans James Russell and Herb Leopold interviewed in 2013 by Bill Curtis and Beverly Baynes Tomb. We are grateful to have their memories, since both have folded their wings since then.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNyU0uLAmFM>

The 466th Bomb Group Memorial
at Weston-Longville near Attlebridge.
Each Memorial Day we have Paul Hindle
pick up and place a wreath for us. Thank
you, Paul, for being so loyal!



Ann Reeve's Hibiscus, June 2020

★REVIEWS★

by Steve Jordon

Much Too Pretty

by Mark W. Mattison
published in 2020
by Mark W. Mattison,
243 pages, \$15 paperback,
Kindle Unlimited.



Masters of the Air:

America's Bomber Boys Who Fought the Air War Against Nazi Germany

by Donald L. Miller
Simon & Schuster, 2006, \$21, 672 pages.

Donald L. Miller, the teller of World War II and other epic historical events, captures the spirit and the stories of the American air bombardment that hastened the Allied victory over Germany and Italy in the European theater of the war.

Miller, who spoke to the 2016 reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Society, wrote what may be the definitive history of the U.S. bomb groups that flew from England and Africa once the United States entered the war in 1941.

He tells about the generals who plotted strategy, both successful and unsuccessful. Yes, American bombers could hit Germany targets in daylight raids. No, the machine guns that bristled from the top, bottom, sides, front and back of those bombers couldn't defend against German fighters. Yes, bombing oil refineries crippled the German war machine. No, bombing ball bearing factories didn't work.

Miller tells about the crews and how they learned to survive. He tells about the arrival of the P-51 Mustang, the toughest airplane of the war and the model that eventually destroyed the German Luftwaffe. He tells of the "Bloody 100th," the group that suffered ungodly casualties and yet, like the other bomber groups, continued to press the war to Hitler's fortress.

In Chapter 14, called "The Wire," Miller tells about Lt. Louis Loevsky of the 466th Bomb Group parachuting to earth during a bomb run to Berlin. "Even before I pulled the ripcord, it occurred to me that I risked being shot by the Gestapo or the SS if I kept on my dog tags, which were marked with an 'H' for Hebrew, to ensure that I received a proper burial," Loevsky said. "I also knew that if I ripped them off and threw them away, I risked being shot as a spy. Since our military briefings had not covered these minor details, I decided to risk being shot as a Jew."

Not all the stories have elements of humor. Miller writes about bombing strategies that killed civilians rather than destroying war-making factories, airfields or rail yards. It's the full scenario of war, terrible and brutal. The Americans and their British allies invented this style of war, and it was not an instant, efficient or completely effective way of winning.

The text ends with Airman Eugene "Wing Ding" Carson visiting the American cemetery at Madingley, outside Cambridge, to say goodbye to a crewmate, Mike Chaklos, who was killed on a mission in early 1944. Carson wrote his own story of the war decades later, closing it with a poem by an anonymous author:



Donald L. Miller

*Oh do not let the Dead March play
O'er these at Madingley do stay
For they were young and old-style gay,
Play their music of the day;
Tunes of Dorsey, songs of Bing,
Let them hear Glenn Miller's swing
Then, too, the crosses well may sway
With those at Maddingley do stay.*

In "Much Too Pretty," we meet Paul James, a conscientious objector working as an orderly at a Veterans Administration hospital in San Diego in 1975, when the Vietnam War was still on and fresh casualties mixed with aging veterans of earlier wars. And there's Marlon Adamson, an ailing "geezer" and World War II veteran under Paul's care.

Through Paul's challenging work at the hospital and through flashback scenes and quotes from Marlon's WW II journal, the two men guide readers of the fictional novel through the intersection of wars in Vietnam and Europe. We explore 1940s Britain and 1970s California, and both are fascinating places and times.

Mark Mattison is a member of the 466th Bomb Group Association and the son of Attlebridge bombardier Mahlon Mattison, who followed his WW II service with a career in the U.S. Air Force. Mark, who lives in Oslo, Norway, and has written for this newsletter, has volunteered for the Attlebridge Visitors Centre project under the direction of Norwich historian Paul Hindle.

Mark said Attlebridge and London are the settings for the English parts of the book. "I've spent 40 years researching it and four years writing it," he said. "Everything that happened in the book, happened in reality — if not exactly as portrayed, very close to it."



Mark Mattison

The name of Mark's novel comes from the name of the B-24 that Marlon's crew flew on their bombing missions. Their theory was that German pilots would see the pin-up woman painted to the side and decide the aircraft was "much too pretty" to shoot down. You'll have to read the novel (which is available from Amazon) to see whether the Americans' idea worked out.

Although it's packed with historical facts and true personal memories from the Americans who fought in the war, Mark's book takes advantage of the freedom of fiction to explore other truths — romance between American fliers and English women, fears of the air warriors, personal struggles and triumphs that come from the hell that is war.

Here's a scene from Marlon's time with Grace, the woman he met in England:

"He had a pass for the day and a bicycle borrowed from one of the mechanics; Grace had borrowed a bicycle as well. They met halfway between Stromford and Norwich, where a path led from the road and alongside a river lined with rushes. ... Adamson had borrowed a pole and a reel and had brought a wicker creel in case he was fortunate enough to catch a fish."

And this, as Marlon's B-24 turned toward England after dropping its bombs on Germany's Rhine Valley:

"The flak began exploding again, a veritable carpet of explosions around them. He heard a scream on the intercom, then another voice saying Roina, the left waist gunner, had just had his machine gun torn out of his gloved hands by a huge fragment of flak that slammed the Browning halfway through the ceiling, then dropped along with the machine gun back onto the deck. ... Roina was shocked, but had no wounds."

Reactions to the book from some other readers:

— "The author has taken the time to learn about life in Britain during the war, about what it was like to be on a World War II bomber, to fall in love during that difficult time, to be a casualty of the Vietnam War, about generational divide and how we're all connected by reaching out to others."

— "A well-written book for anyone interested in history, war, airplanes, romance and friendships. I found the book fascinating and educational."

— "A book that I found incredibly difficult to set down! The author offers an exciting story of adventure packed with informative historical detail and continuous quips that catch you off guard, all the while silently calling upon the reader to pause and reexamine one's moral convictions."

There's a twist at the end of the book, but that's for *you* to discover.

Memphis, or not?

From the 8th Air Force Historical Society, June 24, 2020

www.8thafhis.org

Important Reunion Updates!

At this point in time, we are still planning on moving forward with the reunion in Memphis this October 21-25, 2020. Of course, we will be watching and listening to recommendations, updates and advisories from local, state, and federal levels regarding the safety of everyone's health, which will absolutely dictate our decisions.

We are encouraging everyone to book their hotel rooms ASAP—as you know, the hotel has a liberal cancellation policy—and to go ahead and **register** for the reunion and activities. If you are flying to Memphis, we urge you to check directly with your airline(s) on their refund policies due to cancellations, and/or consider purchasing flight cancellation insurance.

ONLY in the event we are forced to cancel the Memphis reunion on-site, 8thAFHS plans to keep much of the same schedule but run the programs virtually on Zoom and adjust the timing for various USA time zones. We will plan to host additional presentations or veteran panels in lieu of the tours. There will also be opportunities for individual groups to have their own Zoom meetings. **You must still be an active 8thAFHS member and have paid the registration fee to partici-**

pate. If the onsite reunion is canceled, we will of course notify everyone who has registered, and refund monies for food & tours where possible. **Remember: canceling your hotel room does NOT cancel your reunion registration and vice versa.**

There is a vacancy on our Board of Directors which will be filled during our Annual Reunion in Memphis as well. The vacancy occurred AFTER the deadline for the "call for nominations" to be published in our March issue as per 8th AFHS bylaws, so there will be a call for nominations from the floor during the general membership meeting on Saturday, October 24th. Please note: **both** the person nominating and the nominee **MUST** be members in "good standing" (current on dues) in order to nominate and/or serve. If you are interested in serving on the BOD, please make sure your name is placed in nomination. The newly elected Board member must comply with all vetting procedures as stipulated in Standing Rules within 30 days of being elected.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or anyone on the Board about any questions or concerns.

Be safe. Be well. Hope to see you in Memphis!

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From 466th Bomb Group Association
Beverly Baynes Tomb
2122 Grayson Place
Falls Church, VA 22043

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**October 21-25, 2020, in Memphis, Tennessee
46th Annual Reunion
of the 8th Air Force Historical Society!
At the Airport Holiday Inn
- Depending on Pandemic Status -**

**SEE YOU IN
MEMPHIS?
- MAYBE -**

For updates, or to join the 8th Air Force Historical Society, go to: <https://8thafhs.org/join.html>, or call (912) 748-8884 or send \$40 and your contact information to:

Debra D. Kujawa, Managing Director, 8th Air Force Historical Society, P O Box 60369, Savannah, GA 31420-0369

Donations to the 466th BGA are needed to print and mail the newsletter.

If you receive our newsletter a suggested donation of \$20/year would cover expenses.

The 466th BGA has no dues, but to **donate to the 466th BG Association:**

Make checks payable to: "The 466th BGA"

and mail to: Bill Curtis, Treasurer
515 West Ariel Ave
Foley AL 36535

To donate to the Visitors Centre project:

via PayPal to: eileenhindle@talktalk.net or send check to:

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Address corrections:

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or via email to: secretary466thbga@gmail.com