

# 306th Bomb Group Historical Association and Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association

## 2018 Reunion Events Schedule

### Thursday, 25 October – Queen Mary Tour



The *Queen Mary*'s creation and launch was nothing if not extraordinary and her story is rich with history, elegance and grandeur. From the time her construction began in 1930 in Clydebank, Scotland, the *Queen Mary* was destined to stand in a class all her own. Despite suffering economic setbacks during the Great Depression, which stalled construction on the ship for several years, Cunard Line spared no expense on building the *Queen Mary* – which was originally known as job #534.

#### ***THE LEGEND BEHIND THE NAME***

Legend has it that the board of directors at Cunard had decided to name the ship the Queen Victoria, which would have been in keeping with the tradition of Cunard ships having the "ia" suffix (Mauretania, Aquitania and Berengeria). As per protocol, legend states that the Cunard directors went to ask King George his blessing of the ship's proposed name saying, "We have decided to name our new ship after England's greatest Queen," meaning Queen Victoria, the King's Grandmother. Upon which the King is reported to have stated, "My wife (Queen Mary) will be delighted that you are naming the ship after her."

#### ***THE MAIDEN VOYAGE OF THE QUEEN MARY***

On May 27, 1936, the *Queen Mary* departed from Southampton, England embarking on her maiden voyage. She quickly set a new benchmark in transatlantic travel, which the rich and famous considered as the only civilized way to travel. She seized the hearts and imaginations of the public on both sides of the Atlantic, representing the spirit of an era known for its elegance, class and style.

#### ***FROM THE HEIGHT OF LUXURY TO WWII***

For three years after her maiden voyage, the *Queen Mary* was the grandest ocean liner in the world carrying Hollywood celebrities like Bob Hope and Clark Gable, royalty like the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and dignitaries like Winston Churchill. During this time she even set a new speed record, which she held for 14 years. But when the *Queen Mary* docked in New York in September 1939 that would be the last time she would carry civilian passengers for many years.

As World War II started, the *Queen Mary*'s transformation into a troopship had begun. She was painted a camouflaged grey color and stripped of her luxurious amenities. Dubbed the "Grey Ghost" because of her stealth and stark color, the *Queen Mary* was the largest and fastest troopship to sail, capable of transporting as many as 16,000 troops at 30 knots. After the end of WWII, the *Queen Mary* began a 10-month retrofitting process, which would return the ship to her original glory. On July 21, 1947, the *Queen Mary* resumed regular passenger service across the Atlantic Ocean, and continued to do so for nearly two more decades.

For additional information, go to <http://www.queenmary.com/history/timeline/>

## Friday, 26 October

Friday events will include the traditional General Meeting, Folded Wings Tribute, and Veterans Round Table.

Friday night's buffet dinner commemorates the 306<sup>th</sup>'s distinction of being "First Over Germany." The "Honey Whiskey Trio," a Los Angeles-based group that tells stories through song, will be the featured entertainment. Ann Louise Thaiss, a member of the trio, is the granddaughter of Virgil Jeffries, pilot the 423<sup>rd</sup> squadron's *Las Vegas Avenger*.

## Saturday, 27 October

### Lyon Air Museum Mission



Founded by Major General William Lyon, Lyon Air Museum is collocated with Martin Aviation, an award winning jet, turbo-prop and piston-powered aircraft repair facility established in 1923 by famed aviation pioneer Eddie Martin.

The Lyon Air Museum exhibit is comprised of authentic aircraft, rare vehicles and related memorabilia, with emphasis on the defining event of the 20th century – World War II. Through captivating and thought provoking exhibits based in historical scholarship, visitors gain a better

understanding of the important role the United States plays in shaping world history.

The Mission of Lyon Air Museum is to provide a quality venue of inspiration where the stories of aviation's past can touch the lives of its visitors through educational exhibits, authentic historical aircraft and related memorabilia.

This 30,000 square foot hangar features a pristine collection of historic aircraft and classic vehicles from the World War II era. On exhibit some of the rarest operational aircraft and vehicles in the world. The B-17 Flying Fortress, *Fuddy Duddy*, was used as a VIP transport in the Pacific at the end of World War II. It once carried General Dwight D. Eisenhower who later became the 34th President of the United States. In civilian life, it worked as a fire bomber and was occasionally used for motion picture filming, flying on screen in movies such as the 1962 Steve McQueen movie, "The War Lover" and the 1970 blockbuster, "Tora Tora Tora." These exhibits are true pieces of living history and provide a wealth of knowledge that fascinates and inspires visitors of all ages.

For additional information, go to <http://www.lyonairmuseum.org/>

### Heroes Hall

Santa Ana Army Air Base (SAAAB) was an air base without planes, hangars or runways. It was a huge basic training camp where newly inducted soldiers, earmarked for the Army Air Forces, were given 9 weeks of basic training and then testing to determine if they were to be pilots, bombardiers, navigators, mechanics, etc. From SAAAB, they went on to other bases for training in their specialties. The base was dedicated in March 1942 and



grew rapidly as the need for pilots and air crews sky-rocketed. Turnover was rapid so that by the end of the year 23,470 soldiers had passed through SAAAB. By the end of 1943 that number jumped to 57,895.

Now known as Heroes Hall this free, permanent, year-round museum and education center with exhibitions, performances and educational programs celebrates the legacy of Orange County veterans and others who have served our nation. Housed in a renovated 1942 Santa Ana Army Air Base barracks building, Heroes Hall consists of 3,600 square feet of exhibition space as well as the Medal of Honor Courtyard and Walk of Honor.

For additional information, go to <http://www.militarymuseum.org/SantaAnaAAB.html> and <http://ocfair.com/heroes-hall/>.

Saturday night's dinner honors the men of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group and the Second Schweinfurt mission. Typical attire is jackets for men, evening wear for women.

### **For those extending their stay, other attractions in the area include –**

- Disneyland, Anaheim
- Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park
- Richard Nixon Library, Yorba Linda
- Discovery Cube [Family/Children's Museum], Santa Ana
- Chapman Library, Chapman University, Center for American War Letters, Orange
- March Air Field Museum, March Air Force Base, Riverside
- Planes of Fame Air Museum, Chino Airport, Chino
- Long Beach Aquarium, Long Beach
- *USS Iowa*, Long Beach
- Universal Studios, Los Angeles
- Hollywood
- Ronald Reagan Library, Simi Valley
- Legoland, Carlsbad
- San Diego (Zoo, Sea World, and *USS Midway*), San Diego
- Palm Springs Air Museum, Palm Springs
- Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Palm Springs
- Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, Palm Desert