

## Secretary Barbara Neal's recap of 2014 Colorado Springs reunion:

We had a great Reunion in Colorado Springs! With us were 23 WWII veterans (listed at the bottom, here), 2 of whom are members of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association [SSMA] and flew with the 94 BG. Attending our various events were 140+ family members and friends. At Friday night's First Over Germany Dinner, we had 46 AF Academy Cadets, 11 AF officers of the AF Academy's 306 Flying Training Group (with 3 of their wives) with us. Cadets and officers were each seated at tables with WWII veterans. All tables had plenty of lively discussions, learning of WWII history first-hand from the veterans. At our Saturday night Banquet, we had 16 Cadets and the head of the 306 Flying Training Group, Col. Burgh and his wife, were with us. Again all were seated with WWII veterans. We had fewer Cadets Saturday, as some were shifted to Friday, because the hotel had a Saturday military wedding that limited space for our Banquet.

Three veterans' roundtables: one each afternoon. Two tours: Garden of the Gods on Thursday, and the Air Force Academy on Friday. At the Academy Friday morning a special Folded Wings Memorial Service was held in the Academy Chapel. A Cadet color guard presented the colors and AF Academy Chaplain Captain Michael Carey addressed us. The manuscript of his remarks is available from our '14 Reunion Chairman and new Historian, Cliff Deets ([cldeets@att.net](mailto:cldeets@att.net)).

Our new webmaster, Charles Neal, will be posting many Reunion photos at our website, [306bg.org](http://306bg.org). He welcomes anyone sharing their photos from the Reunion. Email your photos (or a link to them) to him at [charles306@earthlink.net](mailto:charles306@earthlink.net). Great Reunion coverage will also be found later this year, in an issue of Echoes created by our new Editor Nancy Huebotter, in conjunction with departing Editor Dr. Vernon Williams.

Our Brit reps, Ralph and Daphne Franklin, celebrated 61 years of marriage Sept. 5. Sadly they missed this Reunion. Daphne's doctor said the long trip would be too difficult for her. Ralph told us Daphne's new medication is helping, and he hopes they'll be with us again next year. In his message, Ralph assured us that they're both still fully engaged at their Museum at Thurleigh. The Museum is opening a small addition, where exhibits will include Dr. Thurman Shuller's uniforms, and a refurbished WWII bomb-trailer. Ralph has a standing offer to meet any visiting 306th-related visitor at the Bedford train station who wants to visit the Museum; he'll drive them to Thurleigh, and return them to the Bedford train station afterward.

At Saturday morning's Business meeting, all heartily endorsed the Board's recommendation to hold our 2015 Reunion in Salt Lake City, with a visit to Wendover Field where many men were stationed prior to heading to England. The Reunion will be in September; dates will be announced as soon as hotel arrangements are set. From the floor, a trip to England was suggested for next year; many were interested. Dr. Vernon Williams will plan a trip and alert us when dates and itinerary are set. Since planning depends on the number who would go, anyone interested who didn't sign the trip-interest list in our Hospitality Room, should email him at [vwilliams@acu.edu](mailto:vwilliams@acu.edu) with "2015 England trip" in the subject line of the email.

Saturday morning, the new Board was approved by all present. Officers: Charles Neal, President; Steve Snyder, Vice President; Barbara Neal, Secretary; Judith Hermley,

Treasurer. Elected Directors: Les Stellish in a new 3-year term to expire Fall 2017; and continuing in 3-year terms to expire in Fall '16, are John J 'JJ' Gaydosh (WWII veteran), and Marty Lenaghan. Directors by Position are Nancy Huebotter, Echoes Editor; Cliff Deets, Historian; and Walter Rozett (WWII veteran) continuing as Past President. An additional member of the Board by position was soon added: Thomas "Thom" Mindala volunteered to be Reunion Chairman for 2015. Thom (pronounced Tom) is the son-in-law of WWII veteran Clayton Nattier.

At Saturday's Banquet, an impressive wooden plaque was presented by the Association to the 306th Flying Training Group, to be placed at the AF Academy. It bears a wide gold B-17 image and wording re the heritage of the 306th Bombardment Group having flown the first mission over Germany, and the legacy of the 306th Flying Training Group.

The Thurman Shuller Award was created by our Board in 2012, to be the Association's highest award, in recognition of Dr. Shuller's widely recognized outstanding achievements to the men of the 306th Bomb Group. Anyone selected for this award must have made particularly notable and long-term contributions to the 306th BGHA and/or achievement in the preservation and dissemination of 306th Bomb Group history. Earlier recipients, chosen by the Awards Committee, have been Dr. Thurman Shuller himself; Ralph Franklin; and Dr. Vernon Williams.

At Saturday night's Banquet, the Thurman Shuller Award was presented to Bill Houlihan, recognizing his many years of service, both at Thurleigh as 367 Squadron NCO medic for the entire period of 306 BG presence in England during the War, and for 40 years to the Association, as a Past President, a long-time Director, and a valued Board advisor. Bill continues to graciously share his personal recollections of numerous 306 men with many of their family members. This is especially appreciated by younger generations not blessed with hearing service recollections from our own family members who served.

The 23 WWII veterans with us in Colorado Springs were:

- Anderson, Jack L: 306 BG, 423 Sq tail gunner, Thomas Hedley crew. Rpt. 28 Nov-44.
- Blucher, Vernon T: 306 BG, 367 Sq tail gunner, Joseph Couris crew. Rpt. 11 Jun-44.
- Carlile, William C: 306 BG, Hq flying control officer - tower. Rpt. Jan/Feb-44.
- Coberly, Jay G [SSMA member]: 94 BG bombardier, James 'Pete' Mullinax crew; POW 14 Oct-43 (Schweinfurt).
- Engstrom, Fred: 306 BG, 423 Sq pilot. Rpt. 10 Feb-45; dep 23 Feb-46
- Gaydosh, John J 'JJ' [306th BGHA Board member]: 306 BG, 369 Sq pilot 'Deanna D.' Rpt. 9 Apr-45; dpt. 12 Jun-46 after Casey Jones Project.
- Gerlach, James Wm: 306 BG, 368 Sq ball turret, Ben Olsen crew. Rpt. 13 Dec-44; dpt. 13 Apr-45.

- Groesbeck, Carl A: 306 BG, 368 Sq navigator, Roy Ranck crew. Rpt. 15 Sep-43; POW 9 Oct-43 (Gydnia).
- Haase, William J: 306 BG, 369 pilot. Rpt. 21 Aug-44; dpt. 7 Oct-45.
- Harter, Loren F: 306 BG, 368 ball turret / togglier, James Burgess crew. Rpt.30 Dec-44; dpt. 19 May-45.
- Houlihan, William 'Bill' F: 306 BG, 367 Sq medic NCO "306th Original" Dpt.Aug-45.
- Jones, Ralph W: 306 BG, 423 Sq pilot & co-pilot David Steele & Raymond 'Pappy' Check. "306th Original" 24th officer to complete tour (4 Jul-43).
- Ketcham, Gailard 'Red' T: 306 BG, 369 Sq ball turret, Donovan Holve crew. Rpt. 4 Apr-45; dpt. after Casey Jones Project.
- Lawson, Allan A: 306 BG, 369 Sq pilot & co-pilot on JJ Gaydosh crew. Rpt? 9 Apr-45; dpt?
- Leben, Joseph J: 306 BG, 369 Sq navigator Ted Czechowski crew. Rpt. 20 Feb-44 & to 305 BG; dpt. 7 Sep-44.
- Lissner, Roland 'Ron' A: 306 BG, 367 Sq pilot. Rpt.9 Dec-44; Internee Sweden 3 Feb-45 (Berlin).
- McDermott, Dillon J: 306 BG, 369 Sq ball turret, JJ Gaydosh crew on 'Deanna D.' Rpt. 9 Apr-45; dpt. 3 Jun-46 after Casey Jones Project.
- Mullinax, James 'Pete' A [SSMA member]: 94 BG pilot; POW 14 Oct-43 (Schweinfurt).
- Mundell, Philip: 306 BG, 369 Sq ball turret on Wm Hilton crew on 'Fightin Bitin' & togglier on A.Kata crew on 'Dam Yankee.' Rpt.19 Nov-43 with Schoch. Evadee on 8 Aug-44 (Caen) for 1 day.
- Nattier, Clayton A: 306 BG, 369 Sq pilot 'Duration Plus.' Rpt. Jul-44; POW 13 Sep-44 (Merseberg).
- Rozett, Walter P [306th BGHA Board member]: 306 BG, 369 Sq pilot. Rpt.25 Sep-44; dpt. Oct-45.
- Sandini, Edward J: 306 BG, 369 Sq pilot. Rpt.2 Mar-45; dpt?
- Sawicke, Nicholas M: 306 BG, 423 Sq flight engineer top-turret on Raymond 'Pappy' Check crew. "306th Original" completed tour May-43.