



EIGHTH of MINNESOTA

NEWSLETTER

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AirExpo 2010 Memories Veterans Gather for Photos, Food & Fun



Thank you to the sponsors, supporters and volunteers who made this year's AirExpo at Flying Cloud Airport in Eden Prairie one of the best ever held. July 17 & 18, AirExpo gave the public a chance to get up close to see a wide variety of historic and current aircraft and to learn about the men and women who flew them.

The Evening With Eagles dinner at the end of the first day provided the opportunity to meet Air Force pioneers and heroes – to hear their stories. The group photo shows the range of attending aviators from (back row) Doolittle Raider Dick Cole and Vietnam's top ace Chuck DeBellevue,; (second row) WWII WASP Liz Strofus and Tuskegee Airman Joe Gomer; to Astronaut Curt Brown and Vietnam pilot Rick Adams in the front row, among many, many others.

"Look at the people in this room," exclaimed dinner host Bob Jaspersen – himself an AFA member and River Rat aviator alum from Vietnam.
"Some of the biggest names in aviation history!"



Air Expo 2010 Photos





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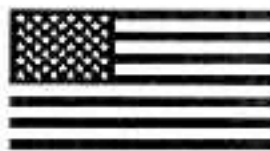
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Recte Faciendo Neminem Timeo – "I Fear None In Doing Right."





President's Report

I hope you all had a great summer. Some of us were busy representing the 8th AFHS of MN at AirExpo in Eden Prairie the weekend of July 17 and July 18 Thanks to all who participated in this great event. After expenses we didn't make any money this year. But the crowds responded well to your efforts in representing our organization and the legacy of the 8th Air Force.

We also had a great trip to Hinckley on July 11th. Our thanks to Dr. Tom Stillwell and the Club Cherokee Flying Club for providing planes and pilots. Dozens of people made the trip to Field of Dreams for breakfast and a private air show.

Brian Weidendorf, the owner of Field of Dreams, his family and flyers did a great job entertaining us with their vintage aircraft. They had the support of the local business community in Hinckley, as well. All of it, an effort to recognize and entertain members of the 8th Air Force Historical Society of Minnesota. A great time was had by all.

Plans are well under way for the annual Christmas Party at Mancini's Char House in St. Paul on December 5th. This year Bill and Kate Isles will provide the entertainment. They are a couple of singer/songwriters from Duluth. The form for making your reservations is at the end of this newsletter. Get your reservations in early. We are limited to about 125. Let's sell the place out like we usually do!

Until then, have a wonderful fall.

-Al Anderson

Chaplain's Message

You cannot discourage a grateful man.

Lou Gehrig, when he was dying of ALS, was serenaded at Yankee Stadium. He said to the crowd, "Today I am the luckiest man on the face of the earth."

Douglas MacArthur after being fired by President Truman stood before the United States Senate and said, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." In other words, he was grateful for serving duty, honor and country.

General Doolittle was grateful to his dying day for what he was able to do for the Air Force and the Air Force Association. He had integrity, excellence. He was grateful to service over self.

All had gratitude for their opportunities, faith and family. Those who are grateful are focused and anchored despite setbacks. They would not change a thing.

Isaiah 54-2 tells us to expand our horizons. Embrace the unknown. The rule for successful living is to grow. And to be grateful.

For you cannot discourage a grateful person.

-Donald Harlan, Chaplain Emeritus for AFA

Quotable

"Once you have tasted flight, forever will you look skyward. For there you have been, and there you will always long to be."

- Leonardo daVinci



Editor's Notes

-Lawrence Sagstetter

Two items of business to take care of.

Election of Officers for 2011

An annual membership meeting will be held Wednesday, December 8 at the first weekly luncheon after the Christmas dinner. The existing Board has developed a slate of new directors that it will recommend to the membership for ratification. At that time, voting will take place for a new Board Of Directors for 2011.

Letter to: Life Members

From: The Membership Committee of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society of Minnesota.

Thank you for your loyal support of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society of Minnesota. When you joined, you joined as a life member. That means you are not subject to pay any annual dues for the life of your membership. We have, however, a special request that we would like you to consider for the 2010 membership year.

Four times a year, a newsletter is sent to every member. Our costs to produce, process and send you these newsletters run about \$10 for each person, per year. This cost has historically been subsidized from earnings we've had from sponsoring and producing air shows.

But the earnings from this year's air shows will be almost nothing. Because of this, we are asking that you consider making a donation of at least \$10.00 to the Eighth Air Force Historical Society of Minnesota to cover the costs associated with the production and mailing of these newsletters. If this request is

something you can support, please use the return address on this newsletter to mail your donation.

Thank you for your continued membership and support. If you have any questions, you may call Ray Rau of the membership committee at 763-788-2591.



Bill and Kate Isles headline the entertainment at this year's Christmas Party at Mancini's on West Seventh St. in St. Paul. They are singer/songwriters out of Duluth. They play original compositions that have been described as light, inspired folk music. Reviews of their work are very good. So fill out the form on the back page and join us at Mancini's on Sunday, December 5. It will be a lot of fun.

Barbara Sommerville is writing a book about her father, Chauncey "Speed" Nelson, entitled; *"I Came Through Swell"*. The first of three excerpts from the forthcoming book is printed below. The others will follow in the next two newsletters. Thank you Barbara for providing this material for our newsletter.

Chauncey "Speed" Nelson flew the B-17 through 40 missions with the 15th Air Force,

earning the Air Medal with oak leaf clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

After the war, he joined the Air Force Reserves and eventually became the Commanding Officer of the Army Reserves 305th Aviation Company stationed at Holman Field, attaining the rank of Major before retirement in 1980. Equally important as flying to dad, was his family of ten children. He died in 1994 at age 74.

"I CAME THROUGH SWELL" Part I –Pre-Flight Training

by
Barbara Sommerville

The following are excerpts from a book I'm writing about my father,

"I have talked to fellows who knew friends of theirs that said they would never take this Pilot Training over again. It's just like hell all the time, you never do anything right, but if you can take it, you've got what the Army Air Corps wants... I don't know how I'll take it."



So wrote twenty-one-year-old Chauncey "Speed" Nelson in a letter from Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas to the folks back at St. Paul in August of 1942. "Speed" hoped that the Pre-

Flight Training about to begin would lead to something big—the very thing he'd longed for all his life—to become a "flying cadet."

The nickname "Speed" was no accident. His father dubbed him after "Speed Robertson" the heroic WWI flying ace characterized in the popular radio drama *The Air Adventures of Jimmie Allen*. Chauncey just had to succeed.

One of the first milestones on the road to that success was the examination desk at Wold-Chamberlain Field where Speed took his college equivalency test in order to qualify for the Air Corps.

After three hours of "severe brain work" Speed stood fifth in line having "done my best" to await his fate. "The four fellows in front of me failed," he later wrote. "I placed my sheets on the desk with my heart in my mouth, waiting the verdict." At last, after scrutinizing Speed's papers up and down, the official "picked up the rubber stamp and stamped the sheet, PASSED." Speed had scored 105 correct answers out of 110 questions.

The next stop on his journey took place on August 2 when the troop train from Minneapolis to San Antonio made a pit stop at Kansas City, MO. "I sure am having a good time," he wrote. "I bought a supper for \$1.75, a swell steak. We sure travel first class, nothing but the best."

At close to two o'clock in the morning on August 4 Speed expressed his newfound admiration for the army just before drifting off to sleep. He wrote from Kelly Field, "[I] was amazed at the efficient way they assigned us coveralls and a tent to live in."

So far, the tone of Speed's letters home sounded much like a boy having the time of his life at summer camp. "Do we ever have good food," he wrote. "Chicken, ice-cream, milk, cake, everything first class."

The commanding officer's mantra, "*Not all of you will become pilots, but if you work hard, you'll become officers*" rang in Speed's

ears. One day he met some cadets who were already in Primary Flight Training. "They said if they had to do it over again, they would never sign up as pilots because the grind is too tough.

"Two of three fellows classified as pilots washout," he wrote. "About 90 out of 100 fellows washout of what they are classified as. It is really a tough life, this cadet business, but I like it, only the sun is awful hot..."

On August 10, 1942, one week after arriving at Kelly Field, Speed learned his classification. "I nearly dropped over when they announced my name and after it, 'pilot!'" The highlight came when he received his cadet uniforms. "I certainly felt proud to wear them," he said. But summer camp was about to end.

"I was on brush cleaning detail for a day," Speed complained. "I swung an ax all day, dressed only in shorts. We eat breakfast in the dark, so you don't know what you are eating. The food is very bad and all in all, [we are] a very bewildered group of potential 'birdmen.'"

Yet Pre-Flight School soon began. Speed met his new commanding officer, Lieutenant Green, "a very hardboiled character indeed," thought Speed. "They work hell right out of us here, it's really a tough grind but I like it and I'm going to do my best to earn those wings!" Now he got his first taste of army discipline, which included "walking a tour."

It wasn't long before the new cadets moved into barracks, waking up at 4:30 in the morning and getting used to making right angled turns when strolling the grounds. Speed wrote one day, "This morning's inspection my bed was not made good enough so I'll have to do better tomorrow or else I'll get a few demerits. I'll be walking a tour one of these days."

And, sure enough, soon after receiving several demerits for not having his cap on straight he did indeed "walk a tour". In other words, he paraded the grounds, perhaps for hours, in one hundred-degree heat and his dress khakis.

By the end of August, "the boys from Kelly" moved again, this time to Santa Ana, California. If all went well and he didn't "wash out" Speed would earn his "wings" in roughly nine months. Though his grade average so far was a respectable 92.67, he acknowledged that things were "getting a little more difficult everyday" and resolved to "work harder and stay on the beam."

At last, on October 23, 1942 the pressure of "a very rugged week" that culminated in map reading, aerial photography and physics tests broke in relief like a giant wave against the rocks, ending Pre-Flight. The first leg of the journey behind him now, Speed wrote home simply to say, "I came through swell."

Next stop: Primary Flight Training and "wings".

8th Air Force Lecture Highlights

Special thanks to Kevin Callahan for transcribing the following luncheon lectures.

CLINTON JOHNSON, B-29 Navigator-Bombardier



On June 30, 2010, Clinton Johnson, an Army Air Forces veteran, was the featured speaker at a meeting of the *Eighth Air Force Historical Society*. Clinton gave a well-received talk describing some of his flying experiences and combat missions in the Pacific as a B-29² Navigator-Bombardier³ during WWII.

Clinton Johnson was inducted on September 1942 at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. In March 1943 he was called to active service.⁴ He took a troop train from the terminal at what is now the old Milwaukee Road building in downtown Minneapolis to Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas.⁵ He did his Basic Training at San Antonio, and requested Navigator School training. This was unusual at the time because most were requesting pilot training. He went to Houston, Texas for Ground School and San Marcos, Texas for more Ground School. He got his wings as a Navigator on December 4, 1943. He received orders to report on to Bombardier School in Roswell, New Mexico.⁹ He completed getting his wings as a Bombardier. At Clovis, New Mexico he got his crew assignment. Then he went to Kansas to the 73rd Bomb Wing.¹¹

Clinton finished 30 combat missions (some "turn-backs" did not count) and his last mission was on May 17, 1945. He was on Saipan up until June 16th.

Clinton received the Distinguished Flying Cross, presented on June 7, 1945, and an Air Medal, 3 Clusters. There was a photo taken of the presentation of the DFC. He said he was very glad there were no Purple Hearts on his 11-man crew.

RALPH PETTIJOHN, B-17 BALL TURRET GUNNER

Wednesday June 16, 2010, Ralph Pettijohn described his many experiences in WWII as an Aerial Gunner in a B-17 Flying Fortress and his later training as a gunner for the B-29 Superfortress² just before the war ended.

Ralph Pettijohn initially went into the Army Air Forces Enlisted Reserve Corps and did his flight training with the goal of getting into gliders. He did his Civilian Pilot Training at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin, and

at the end of it received a private pilot's license. He was then sent home until he was needed. He never did start the glider program.

He was called back by the Army Air Forces and went to Aerial (or Flexible) Gunnery school at Laredo, Texas and then went on to Kearney, Nebraska where his B-17 crew was formed. He was the ball turret gunner.



Ralph had three memorable missions. His third mission, on April 12, 1944, was memorable because of the Messerschmitt 109's and FW 190's. They lined up five abreast in head-on attacks and ten or eleven B-17s were lost on that mission. Ralph's 24th mission was on D-Day, which he remembers vividly for the size of the invasion force. His 26th mission was to Lyon, France where his B-17 made 500-foot drops of supplies to the Free French.

Ralph brought with him a list of missions he went on, which his bombardier had kept. He later made a copy of it for his own records. He also brought many photos of battle damage to his B-17. One showed damage to the oxygen tank just above his head when a 20 mm cannon shell passed through it and it exploded. He was clearly lucky to have been unhurt. He said he could just barely squeeze the chest parachute into the ball turret, if he put it by his side. He also had several photos of battle damage to the engines of his B-17, where they had been hit.

Dick Mann, Navy Fighter

Wednesday July 14, 2010, Dick Mann described his training as a pilot and his experiences in the Pacific during WWII as a Naval Aviator flying Hellcats on the *U.S.S. Saratoga* and *U.S.S. Monterey*.

"We were usually 150 or 200 miles off Japan when we'd go in for strikes. Then we'd come through the straits to come back when we were hitting them."

First Missions: Attacking Japanese airfields

"One of our first missions was working the airfields. We carried 2 five hundred pound bombs and six rockets. So we'd find an airfield, go bomb it; find another airfield, put a bunch of rockets there; and we would go in force, maybe twelve, twenty, twenty-four fighters would go in there. Never saw a Jap plane in the air. Their AA was not good at all. We could see a lot of stuff floating up at us, but by the time it got there, we were long gone."



Attacks on the *Saratoga*

"On the *Saratoga*, were going over to cover the Iwo Jima invasion. Some of our guys flew close air support for it. The *Saratoga* was about thirty miles from Iwo Jima when we took the first hits. It was late in the afternoon. They sounded general quarters. And I heard the five inch guns go off; maybe just fired a few rounds, and

"plam!" they hit the front of the deck right here, and a total of three of them hit us to begin with. One went into the hanger deck--set the whole hanger deck on fire, and these planes had a lot of gas in them, and they made a heck of a fire. One of them hit on the waterlines, so we were taking on water and went into about an eight degree list--something like that. "

"I was in the Ready Room, and we got smoked out of the Ready Room; so I ran up on deck and I started running around, I went around the island; I figured one way I'd get around on the other side of the island, you know, a big steel island, was very, very good protection. I got behind one of the five-inch; thirty-eighth had twin mounts on there. The guy in there said, "Hey, ya know, don't stand behind this thing because when we open fire the shells come out the back of this thing and they'll kill ya. They'll break your leg, or whatever." So, I got away from there."

[Asked about the subs "1000 yards off that beach, waiting for you guys."]

"I know it because I took some of our planes out to your subs. We knew where the subs were. We knew where you guys were. We took the cripples out there. I flew support on them, or guard on them, taking some of those guys out there. I saw several of them water land, and you guys picked them up."

[Asked about practice carrier landings in Lake Michigan and planes in the lake]

"There are a lot of Hellcats and Wildcats in the bottom of Lake Michigan."

Memories of meeting Nixon and Ford.

"Richard Nixon was on Ottumwa, I didn't know him personally. I did go away to his office with one of my friends--seemed like a very nice guy."

"On my second carrier, the Monterey, Gerry Ford was on that. I did get to know Gerry Ford pretty well on that because he was always bugging me to get a bunch of guys and have a basketball game. What they'd do is drop the elevator down and put a hoop up, and, of course, the deck was covered with oil and carbon from the stacks, so bounce on that and you got dirty grease--wipe it on your clothes--it was a disaster. Gerry Ford was a real nice, real sharp guy incidentally."

Wesley C. Borgeson, B-17 Tail Gunner

U.S. Army Air Forces, Eighth Air Force, 384th Bombardment Group (Heavy); Medals Received: *Purple Heart Medal, Air Medal, Prisoner Of War Medal*; Date Captured: 11/30/44 Camps Held In: Stalag Luft IV & IVF; How Long Interned: 137 days; Date Liberated: 04/16/45; Age at Capture: 19; Rank: Sergeant, B-17 Tail Gunner.

Shot down

I was shot down over Germany in November of '44. When I went down, the plane blew up in the air, and I came down in the tail section. Six of our crew were killed, and the bombardier got blown out of the nose when it exploded. The radioman got out just at that instant. He was back in the waist and was trying to rescue the waist gunner, who was sitting with an oxygen mask. He was all on fire. The radioman got all on fire too. So they just got out as she blew, and three of us got out.

Waking up

I woke up four days later in the hospital. It was an infirmary really, for POWs, in the region south of Leipzig about 35 miles. When we were first picked up, they found me in the tail of this airplane and hauled the aircrew to jail and took me on a tour there on a stretcher. The next day, they hauled us from that jail to the

infirmary, and I was still completely out. And while we were going, we were riding in a horse and wagon--or two horses--and I must have sensed that there was a horse and wagon; and being an old farm boy, why I just stood up; and I don't remember any of this, the radioman told me I did this; I sat up and yelled "Whoa! Whoa!" to stop. It turns out that to stop a German horse you say "Brrrrr!," so he didn't understand "Whoa," and I fell back down.

I was out for about another four days--or something like that--because we went down on Thursday, and this was Friday, and the French prisoner of war who was in that area that found me in the tail couldn't believe it, and so he came in and I spoke to him on Sunday, when he was able to get off from his prisoner of war work. He went to the infirmary, and he didn't believe that I could still be alive.

Stalag Luft IV-F

We were in the infirmary for about a week--or I think it was closer to two weeks-- and then we had to walk. I was up by that time. I was still kind of out of it. And we walked about 30 miles down the road to Stalag IV-F. That's where I got my dog tag, where they got our interrogation, and my radioman got his German dog tag; and where we were walked for about 35 kilometers, I think, which was probably about 20 miles. And all that we had was our flying boots, which were very uncomfortable. We were still dressed in our flying uniforms. The sleeve was burned off of my coat. The upper part was still showing the Air Force symbol, and we were in our flying boots and had helmets and all of that stuff, and so we got a lot of dirty looks.

We were interrogated. They were there about three days I think, and then from there they shipped us by train up to Stalag Luft IV up on the Baltic Sea. We stopped for them to change trains. While we were there we had to go to one train station, where we had to wait for our train. It was just about noon, and I was sure

hoping that that area wasn't on the bombing target for that day, and it wasn't. But I was all petered out then, and so I had to sit down.

We were in this big bombed out area in this rail station. I saw a box over there and sat down on it. The radioman said, "You better get off that box." It turned out that there was a German Colonel there that was waiting for a train, and he was armed with a sidearm and everything. It turns out the box was a Christmas present he'd bought for his crew. I was sitting on the Colonel's box. He never did see me, but that's probably the closest I come to getting killed because I think this Colonel, I'm sure, would have just hauled out his gun and let me have it. But I got out of that, and finally we got on another train and they hauled us up to Kreuzteilschall, which is up near Belgard, heading for the Baltic Sea.

Counting POWs

What we did there, in Germany for entertainment was we would all fall out from the barracks, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, and they'd count us. We had to line up by our room number, and they knew how many men were in each room. So what we'd do is line up in two or three lines, and when they'd go through and count us, "eins, zwei, drei, vier" in German. Sometimes they'd count us and then we'd step back into another line, and they'd count us twice--and we'd end up with *more* people. Then they said, "Well we're going to count you again," and they'd do that, and the next time they'd count our line, and then the guy would move up, so they got through and they were one or two members *short*. And this they used to get pretty upset about. Finally we were standing out there in the cold. We quit and let 'em count us correctly.

Reading

Always before we went to bed at night, the Germans would flip the switch. We had one little light bulb, about 25 watts, and you would

swear they had 25 cycles there. When you were sitting on the bed trying to read, that light was blinking like that, and your eyes would start going. But anyway, these Germans would come in and turn off the lights. Then they'd come in and flash a light around the room and see what you were doing. What we did a couple times was as they flashed the light around, instead of being in bed, we'd all be sitting on the edges of our bed reading in the dark and they'd go out and slam the door and they'd say, "Well how do they do *that*?" They'd come back in and we wouldn't pay any attention to them. We'd just sit there looking at our books, like we were reading in the dark. This used to get 'em pretty angry at us, and they'd leave and we'd have a laugh. That was our entertainment.

Evacuation of Stalag Luft IV

Then we went on this long march when the Russians started coming in and I went in the hospital. I went in a week or so before that, and I got bounced out, and then I got put back. I was supposed to stay behind in the hospital, and I got a list of the people that stayed behind in the hospital. Not only were we leaving for ten days, it turns out our camp was evacuated February 6th, 1945, and I was back in the hospital. We marched out on February 16th, ten days later. The Russians started getting closer and the guards that were left behind and some of the POWs that were in that area, we marched out.

SS and the guard

When we went across, out by Belgard, north by Peenemunde, where they had the V-1 and V-2 rockets, it turns out that that was a secured area and all the people in the guard shacks were SS. We were the people in the green uniforms and when we were leaving--I was riding in a sick wagon that day--and this German kid that was our guard at the sick wagon left his Russian machine gun that he used for guarding us. He had a side arm that he carried besides--a German pistol. He went

in to ask directions where the rest of the group marched and we were just lying in this wagon with a pile of hay and this kid left his machine gun in the wagon. It turns out that the guards came out with this kid, who was about as old as I was, about 19, and he had a side arm.

The guard chewed him out royally because here he is with a side arm and that's all he had to guard us with. And we thought he'd get in real trouble because he'd left his machine gun with us so we took this machine gun, it was like a Thompson submachine gun only Russian, and we put it up near the headboard and threw hay over it, and lined up with our backs against the thing, so when these guys came out, this guard was pretty apprehensive. We covered it up. He got back in the line and off we went and we took his machine gun out and gave it back to him. We didn't want to get in trouble with those SS people because we thought he was pretty good to us in providing this wagon for the ones who couldn't walk.

Shooting at a telephone pole

One day the guard was walking about five minutes from the group, and he went up to shoot his gun at a telephone pole. All the telephone poles were marked with a little metal tag. In Germany they are very meticulous and each telephone pole had its own number. This guy was shooting his gun at the pole and he couldn't even hit the pole, much less this little tag, and I said, "Well you let me try it." He gave me his gun, and I hit the pole with his Mauser and gave it back to him. I said, "You need a little practice."

Liberation and return home

Just a short time after that, in April, we crossed the Elbe River. We ended up east of Hanover about 35 miles. That's where we were liberated by Americans. From there they flew us back to Le Havre, France and we got on a ship and I was already on the ship going home when the war ended, which was the 8th of May.

The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner

by Randall Jarrell

From my mother's sleep I fell into the State,
And I hunched in its belly till my wet fur froze.
Six miles from earth, loosed from the dream of life,
I woke to black flak and the nightmare fighters.
When I died they washed me out of the turret
with a hose.

Ft. Snelling RoundTable

The Harold C. Deutsch World War II History Roundtable at the Fort Snelling Museum is presented the second Thursday of each month from September through May (some exceptions may occur).

MIA: The Aftermath of War

Dates: Oct. 28, 2010

Time: 7 p.m.

Emerson Wiles III, author of "Forgotten Raiders," will discuss his experience in locating and identifying the remains of the Marines from the 2nd Marine Battalion, who were left behind after the attack of Makin Island in 1942 and executed by the Japanese. Representatives from MIA Hunters, a civilian MIA search organization based in Minnesota, will talk about recent expeditions to New Guinea.

The Yalta Conference

Dates: Nov. 11, 2010

Time: 7 p.m.

S. M. Plokhy, Harvard University professor and author of "Yalta: The Price of Peace," will discuss the importance of the 1945 conference at Yalta that and how it led to controversial confrontations during the Cold War.

Forgotten Year on the Eastern Front

Dates: Jan. 13, 2011

Time: 7 p.m.

Dennis Showalter, author of "Hitler's Panzers," and Russian veterans of the war will discuss the Soviet counterattacks to defeat the Germans between the Battle of Kursk and Operation Bagration.

Return to the Philippines

Dates: Feb. 10, 2011

Time: 7 p.m.

George Eaton, command historian for the U.S. Army Sustainment Command and author of an upcoming biography on Gen. Walter Krueger, who led the U.S. Sixth Army in the Philippines, will discuss the retaking of the Islands lost to the Japanese in 1942. Sixth Army veterans who fought in the battles will be on hand.

The Role of the Coast Guard in Naval Operations

Dates: March 10, 2011

Time: 7 p.m.

Ken Wiley, author of "Lucky Thirteen" and a World War II veteran of the Coast Guard, will join other veterans to explain the critical role of the Coast Guard in guiding and protecting island landings in the Pacific.

Dates: April 14, 2011

Time: 7 p.m.

Flint Whitlock, author of "Rock of Anzio," and veterans of the Fifth Army will relate the bitter attacks against German defenses in the attempt to liberate the Italian Peninsula and take Rome.

Destroying the Armaments Industries in Germany

Dates: May 12, 2011

Time: 7 p.m.

Bob Mrazek, author of "A Dawn Like Thunder" and the upcoming "To Kingdom Come," along with veterans of the bombers of the Eighth Army Air Force will discuss missions on the

arms plants in Germany and the mission on Stuttgart in September 1943. As of the printing of this newsletter, there are three lectures remaining in this years' series. The cost to attend is \$5. All programs begin at 7 PM. Be sure to get there early to get a seat.

April 8, 2010 - The Invasion of Anzio; J. Paul Jeffers - Author of books on Truscott and Darby; Veterans of the 3d ID, 45th ID, FSSF, Rangers

April 22 - Battle of Normandy; Then & Now. Dominique Francois, Author, will present slides showing 'Then 1944' and 'Now 2010' with 50 matching of battle sites.

May 13, 2010 - Flying the HUMP - CBI Theater Air Operations; Al Lathrop - Author, Historian; Veterans of CBI Theater



Broken Wings

Kenneth Wofford, Tuskegee Airman

"How are you, young man?" Those are the words retired Colonel Ken Wofford would always speak to me, your editor, whenever I met him at a meeting or an air show. He was involved in a lot of events and meetings up until a few months before his death in early September.



His favorite activity was being involved in the education of our youth. Col. Kenneth O. Wofford was all about educating tomorrow's leaders and learning from yesteryear's experience. He encouraged young people to study hard for aviation or other career. And he shared the story of the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of young black men that included Wofford and that overcame prejudice to become top World War II pilots.

Wofford was inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame in 1999 and was an original board member of the group. He also was named an Elder Aviation Statesman by the National Aeronautic Association in 2001.

Colonel Wofford served in the 99th Fighter Squadron, which was featured in the 1995 movie "The Tuskegee Airmen. He often talked to school children and groups about the racial barriers the first black pilots had to overcome. He challenged them to follow the Tuskegee Airmen's motto, "Aim high."

Donald Butts Life-member, Bombardier



Don served with the 8th Air Force as a bombardier with the 398th bomb group during WWII. He had a couple of close calls in the air war. But he managed to complete his missions unhurt. He cared very deeply about his fellow crewmen who did not fare as well.

With the help of Randy Penrod, Don was able to record his memoirs on video for posterity. Thanks to his wife Mae for sharing photos of Don for this newsletter.

**The art of flying is
to throw yourself at the
ground and miss.**



8th AFHS of MN 2010 Holiday Party

December 5, 2010

Mancini's Char House

531 West 7th Street

St Paul, MN

11:30 - 12:15 Social Hour

12:15 - 1:00 Dinner

\$24.00 per person

Checks payable to 8th AFHS of MN

(Retain top portion for your information)

(Return this portion with your check to:)

Gary Birchem

28790 Ivywood Trail

Chisago City, MN 55013-9634

Name _____	Steak	Chicken	Fish
Guest _____	Steak	Chicken	Fish
Guest _____	Steak	Chicken	Fish
Guest _____	Steak	Chicken	Fish

Number of reservations _____ **Total \$\$** _____.



MINNESOTA CHAPTER
The Eighth Air Force Historical Society
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What is it?



Just one week before the outbreak of World War II, Germany flew the world's first jet aircraft. That plane was the Heinkel He-178, seen here. The tiny Heinkel HeS38 jet engine that powered the He-178 produced only 838 pounds of static thrust. The 4,400-pound Heinkel He-178 was literally built around the engine. The aircraft utilized the conventional three-point retractable landing gear. The He-178 ushered in the jet age. But its development by Germany was too late for use in WWII.