



303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.

*Might - In - Flight*

## "HELLS ANGELS" NEWSLETTER

VOLUME VI NUMBER 4

NOVEMBER 1982

### "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" - CINCINNATI

More than 2,000 members and guests descended on "The Queen City" for the Eighth Annual Stateside Reunion of the 8th AF Historical Society, Oct. 7-10. It was an action-packed, fun-filled program.

It got "airborne" on Wed., Oct. 6th with the AIR-WAR SYMPOSIUM sponsored by the 8 AF Memorial Museum Foundation. It presented an AF Escapees and Evadees/POW session with 29 members of the WW II Belgian, Dutch and French Underground, plus 6 members of the RCAF Escaping Society as special guests. Think there were any emotional reunions in that group?

The highlight of Thursday's program was the evening AERO CLUB DANCE. It was amazing how many attendees showed up in their WW II uniforms! There were prizes for the best WW II dress and also for singing groups. The "volunteers" from the 303rd took 3rd place in the singing contest. (There were 3 entries!)

Friday A.M. was devoted to the General Membership Meeting. The 114th General Assembly of the State of Ohio sent a Resolution of Recognition; the Honorable David Mann, Mayor of Cincinnati proclaimed Oct. 8, 9 and 10 as Official 8th AF Days. The Mayor of Cambridge, England sent greetings to the group as did Sir Arthur Havers, Marshall, Royal Bomber Command. It was announced that, as of meeting time, Membership in the 8th AFHS stood at 10,920. At the first reunion in

1975, membership was 390! Friday P.M. was reserved for unit rendezvous while the "gals" enjoyed a River Boat Cruise on the Ohio.

Saturday, October 9 was the big day. A 35-bus caravan hauled attendees the 50 odd miles to Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton. Outside the AF Museum, in a drizzling rain, the impressive 8th AF WW II, England, Monument was dedicated. The outdoor seating area for 2,000 and the speakers platform were protected by a huge tent. The dedicatory address was by Lt. Gen. Robert Herres, Commander 8th AF(SAC). The triangular monument is topped by a 3-blade, B-17 prop. One side of the base carries the 8th AF Insignia. One side, a map of England with all 8 AF, WW II bases located. The third side bears the dedication plaque with this text:

"The heritage of free peoples in their quest for world peace against tyranny and suppression was honored by the courageous sacrifices of over 300,000 men and women during World War Two who served in the Mightiest Air Combat Striking Force ever committed to battle - the U.S. Eighth Air Force. To these many, and the nearly 50,000 who were killed or did not return from their missions, this memorial is respectfully dedicated."

The Eighth Air Force  
Historical Society

Saturday night was the Memorial Reunion Banquet and Dance which officially wound up the activities. Breakfast was served on Sunday A.M. and then, after a bit more "hanger

flying", headed their separate ways. It was a memorable reunion!

### 303RD MINI REUNION

66 members and guests of the 303rd were pre-registered at Cincinnati and we wound up with about 75. That was a good group, but far short of the pace set by the 34th BG which had 191 pre-registered. Of the 56 operational groups in attendance, we were 9th in number of advance registrations.

On Friday, Oct. 8, a 303rd business meeting was held. Plans for the 1983 reunion were discussed. It will be held Sept. 22-25, 1983 in Washington, D.C. Tentative plans indicate the full reunion "package" (hotel, some meals, tours, etc.) will cost about \$270 single, \$380 double. This is not a firm price, but will give you an idea so you can start saving your pennies. We had a great reunion in '81 with 288 in attendance. Let's have a greater one in '83. An event-filled program is being planned for you. The full agenda will be released well in advance. Meanwhile, block out the dates - Sept. 22-25. You'll want to consider arriving early or staying after the reunion to enjoy more of the sights and history in the D.C. area. The special convention room rate will be extended to you by the reunion hotel for extra days. Joe Vieira reported that total membership was 929. We should have well over 1,000 before the '83 get-together. With that kind of a number, we should turn out at least 400 in W.D.C. Make your plans now to be in the group!

A couple of new suggestions came out of the business meeting. Malcolm Magid would like to see us organize a group tour to re-visit Molesworth. Several other groups have done this successfully. The Board of Directors would like to know how you feel about this idea, so please fill out the "Molesworth Coupon" elsewhere in this issue and mail it to the Pres. He will tabulate the returns and report to the Board. If you have additional suggestions or comments, enclose a note to Dick Waggoner.

General Lyle suggested that, whether or not we make a pilgrimage to Molesworth, we might consider some lasting record of our presence there from 1942-1945. He suggested memorial plaques to be installed in the two churches nearest the base; one in Molesworth, one in Brington. This possibility will be studied and a report issued in a future edition of the Newsletter.

The Friday night dinner was a rendezvous affair with all 303rds together in our own hospitality room. Entertainment for the evening was provided by Coleman Sanders who regaled the group with his personal "memories" and assorted "tall tales" of life at Molesworth. Next time you run into Coleman ask him to explain "negative pressure"!

Saturday, at Wright-Patterson, following the 8 AF dedication, we held our own, 303rd. Memorial Dedication. We dedicated a Living Tree Memorial and a bronze plaque in front of the planting. Several groups held similar ceremonies. Chaplain Skoner made the dedicatory remarks. Those attending may have been damp on the outside as the drizzle continued, but all were warm and proud on the inside.



Part of the crowd under 2,000-seat tent at the 8th AF Dayton dedication.



### FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

Following is a first-person, eye-witness account of life at Molesworth with the 303rd. This story was submitted by retired M/Sgt., Nathan E. Smith of Albuquerque, NM. Nathan has sent several stories of his recollections of the days at Molesworth. More of them will appear in future issues. Shared experiences make interesting reading and will add to your enjoyment of this Newsletter. How about sharing some of your Molesworth memories? Send them to Bud Klint

5728 Walla  
Ft. Worth, TX 76133

I can't guarantee publication and I promise I'll edit them, perhaps drastically. You may remain anonymous if you wish or I'll print your name in ALL CAPS! Either way, send in a story about things you remember!

### THE KING'S MEN

When the 303rd ground echelon arrived at Molesworth, I was riding in the first lorry of our convoy. We had R.A.F. drivers who, of course, were driving on the wrong side of the road. Our GIs were pounding on the roofs of the lorry cabs and shouting: "Get Over, Watch Out, Stop, Damn it!" and other assorted suggestions.

In spite of our drivers, we arrived safely at Molesworth and, after wandering all over the base, pulled to a stop along side of the mess hall. This was about half a mile north of the Headquarters Building. We climbed out, unloaded our A and B bags and took a look around.

Along the south side of the mess hall road was a group of about 15 men in very shabby clothing. They were standing about watching 2 men digging a ditch about two feet deep. There was another man with a wooden wheelbarrow. That was our first look at "The King's Men", imported Irish laborers.

The man with the barrow went about a hundred feet along the ditch to a stack of clay tiles about 12 inches

square by three feet long with four round holes running from end to end. He studied the pile carefully, selected one tile, picked it up and placed it lengthways on the wheelbarrow. He eyed the tile from several angles and adjusted its position to be sure it was perfectly centered. Finally satisfied, he pushed the rickety wheelbarrow back up the road. He stopped, lifted the tile and placed it gingerly on the bank of dirt alongside the ditch. He aligned the tile carefully with those placed before it and then slowly returned to the pile of pipe.

Another Sergeant and I watched this performance. We looked at each other almost in disbelief and then both yelled: "Come on guys, let's move that pipe". About 50 GIs stepped out. Each of us shouldered a piece of the pipe and strung it out along the ditch.

Suddenly, all of the King's Men, including the on-lookers, came at us in a group. They were shaking their fists and yelling: "You bloody Yanks! You're taking the bread from our mouths. You bloody fools, go home!"

I had seen a few Edward G. Robinson movies and having been issued a Thompson sub-machine gun, and backed by 50 or more GIs with rifles, I wasn't about to be intimidated. I stepped into the road and gave them my best impression: "Youse guys get lost or I'll use dis typewriter on ya." They got lost, especially when 50 GIs rattled the bolts of their rifles!

About that time, the mess hall door opened and we all crowded in. The menu was brussel sprouts, boiled potatoes and boiled mutton. The tables were long and greasy. There were unstable benches at the tables. If two guys got up from one end of the bench, two on the other end wound up on the concrete floor.

After we finished eating, an R.A.F. officer stood up and welcomed us to England. He informed us that we were at Molesworth, an R.A.F. base named for the local town whose only claim

to fame was a well-known dog cemetery. He told us some more about the history of the base and then asked if there were any questions. One of our guys responded: "We came through a lot of towns getting here. All of them were named Hovis, Borvil or Oxo. How do you tell them apart?" We promptly found out that one was a brand of bread, the others were bouillon cubes!

After that brief orientation, we left the mess hall and were led to a group of round-roofed, tin buildings which we were told were Nissen huts, named for a British Lt. Col., P. N. Nissen who had designed them. Scattered about, between the huts, were a number of concrete slabs. Each was about 10x24 feet. Near each slab was a large pile of red brick and a pile of dirt on each side. There were several mortar boxes, hoes and shovels lying about. We also noticed about a dozen arched forms with 4 screw-pipe jacks under each one.

About the second day after our arrival, a crew of about 20 King's Men appeared. They brought several truckloads of sand on trucks whose beds tilted sideways. They also brought lots of sacks of mortar. Presently, they mixed some mortar and some of them began laying bricks. They built an 8-inch wall, four feet high around the edge of the slab, leaving a gap at one end, apparently for a door. As the wall was being built, the arch forms were set inside and raised on the jacks about two feet. At this point, the King's Men knocked off for the day.

Almost as soon as the laborers had cleared out of the area, a bunch of GIs fell out and began mixing mortar. Three or four, who knew how, began laying brick on the next slab. Before long, a wall was up, just like the one the Irish King's Men had built. We even set up the arched forms.

Next morning when the King's Men showed up, they were more than just a bit confused. They paced back and forth around the two brick walls and argued with each other. I've never heard the word "Bloody" so many times, before or since! Finally, they went to work mixing mortar and mostly watching

while two or three of them laid brick up and over the arched forms. That's when we found out they were building bomb shelters for us.

When they knocked off that afternoon, we went to work again. We had a bigger crew that evening and organized the work. Our experienced bricklayers pronounced the mortar set and a "keystone effect" in, in the first shelter built by the King's Men. We unscrewed the jacks and eased the forms to the floor and out the doorway. We set them up on slab number 3 where new side walls were already going up. Our bricklayers went up and over number 2 and then moved right on to number 3, whose walls were now completed. While the roof was going on number 3, we set the side walls for number 4.

On the morning of the third day, the King's Men were beside themselves. They walked back and forth, around and around. They counted and they cursed. About noon they calmed down a bit and started shoveling dirt on the sides, ends and top of shelter number 1. They also installed a metal door.

As soon as they left for the day, our crew got going again. By bedtime, we had accomplished quite a bit. We had put on two roofs, built two more 4 foot brick walls, installed doors on shelters number 2 and 3 and covered number 2 with dirt. Everyone slept well that night in spite of those three-piece, excelsior-stuffed mattress pads and those hard canvas rolls called pillows.

By now you can guess what happened the next morning. Those Irishmen were wild! I can't remember them doing one lick of work. They spent the entire day walking from one shelter to the next. They counted the structures over and over. They argued and shouted at each other until it was time to go home. I really believe they were more tired at the end of that day than at any other.

That evening we completed all but one shelter. The crew was just ready to start on that last one when an

R.A.F. officer appeared on the scene. We confessed and told him what had been going on. Between fits of laughter, he asked us to please lay off. He explained that England had a real need for the King's Men to do construction and general labor. This freed up Englishmen to devote all their energies to the war effort. We bought that and agreed to stop harassing the Irish King's Men. We even made friends with some of those "blokes" after that and they were quite helpful around the area.

#### MEDAL OF HONOR HOLDERS SALUTED

In September, the Air Force marked its 35th anniversary as a separate branch of service. Rome, NY joined Griffiss AFB for a community-wide program named Project Odin. In Norse mythology, Odin was the chief deity, a god of art, culture, war and the dead. As part of the program they hosted 17 of the 22 living Medal of Honor recipients who served in the Army Air Corps or the Air Force. Among the 17 was our own 303rd member, Forrest Vosler.

To commemorate the occasion, the local paper, THE ROME DAILY SENTINEL, published a special section dedicated to the Medal of Honor holders. One page was devoted to each of the honorees with pictures, a brief account of his heroism and some current comments. Here is part of what was written about Vosler:

Forrest L. Vosler was born in Lyndonville, NY, July 29, 1923. He enlisted at Rochester as a private in the Army in 1942. He was trained as a radio operator, mechanic and gunner. In 1943 he was assigned to Europe as a radio operator and aerial gunner on a B-17.

On his fourth mission, the bombing of Bremen, on Dec. 20, 1943, Sgt. Vosler was hit in the legs and thighs when a 20 mm shell exploded in his compartment. The plane was forced out of formation. The tail guns became inoperative, so Sgt. Vosler kept up a steady stream of fire to protect the vulnerable tail of the ship. Another

enemy shell exploded, wounding him in the chest and face.

With pieces of metal in both eyes, he could distinguish only blurred shapes. In spite of this he continued firing and refused first aid. The pilot decided to ditch.

Working by feel, Sgt. Vosler repaired the damaged radio set and sent out distress signals. When the ship ditched at sea, he managed to get out on the wing by himself and held the wounded tail gunner from slipping off until other crew members could get them into the dingy.

And...here's what "Woody" Vosler has to say today about the future of our democratic values:

"In spite of everything we hear about draft evaders, if the challenge was there I don't think there would be any question. I think if an emergency arose we would have as many patriots as we ever did," Vosler explains. He noted that Marine enlistments doubled during the Iranian hostage crisis.

"I think we have to work for it," he says of keeping our freedom. "It's not something you can turn on and off." Vosler emphasizes that it requires vigilance, but believes an underlying American strength of spirit remains today.

#### LIGHTNINGS IN THE SKY

Oh, Hedy Lamarr is a beautiful gal  
And Madeleine Carroll is, too,  
But you'll find, if you query, a different theory

Amongst any bomber crew.  
For the loveliest thing of which one  
could sing  
(This side of the heavenly gates)  
Is no blonde or brunette of the Hollywood set -  
But an escort of P38s.

Byron, Shelley and Keats ran a dozen  
dead heats  
Describing the view from the hills,  
Of the valleys in May when the winds  
gently sway  
An army of bright daffodils.  
Take the daffodils, Byron - the wild  
flowers, Shelley  
Yours is the myrtle, friend Keats,  
Just reserve me those cuties - American beauties -

An escort of P-38s.

DUES DUE???

Sure, we're braver than hell; on the  
 ground all' is swell,  
 In the air it's a different story;  
 We sweat out our track through the  
 fighters and flak,  
 We're willing to split up the glory.  
 Well, they wouldn't reject us, so  
 Heaven protect us  
 And, until all this shooting abates,  
 Give us courage to fight 'em - one  
 other small item -  
 An escort of P-38s.

Author Unknown

Don't be a delinquent! Don't let your  
 membership in the 303rd Association  
 lapse! Check your membership card,  
 NOW! It shows an expiration date.  
 If that date has passed, or is coming  
 up soon, renew today! Send your check  
 or money order for \$10 to Joe Vieira.  
 That will extend your membership for  
 FIVE years. If you joined the Assoc-  
 iation in 1977, membership numbers  
 278-418, you were due for renewal  
 this year. The class of 1978 will  
 need to renew beginning 1/1/83.

**FINAL TAPS**

We extend our deepest sympathy to the families of  
 these 303rdrs who have answered their final roll call:

- STEPHEN BALOGA, 421 Morris Rd., Apt. C-74, Wayne, PA 19087 358th Sqdn.
- CLARENCE BRACKETT, 830 William St., Bridgeport, CT 06608 360th Sqdn.
- ARTHUR SLATER, P.O. Box 921, Lone Pine, CA 93545
- JOHN BARKER, 6803 S. Detroit Circle, Littleton, CO 80122 427th Sqdn.
- CHARLES MARSON, 612 N. Missouri, Roswell, NM 88201 427th Sqdn.
- RUSSELL WARREN, 730 Dahlia St., Denver, CO 80220 358th Sqdn.

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**OPINION SURVEY - 303RD CHARTER TO MOLESWORTH**

Please complete  
 and mail to: Richard Waggoner  
 10728 Stargate Ln.  
 Cincinnati, OH 45240

There is nothing binding about your  
 comments on this form. It merely is  
 an attempt to determine the interest  
 in such a trip.

Are you interested in the possibility of a trip to Molesworth? \_\_\_\_\_

How many would there be in your party? 303rd members \_\_\_\_\_ guests \_\_\_\_\_

Remembering that we have a reunion scheduled for W.D.C. next September,  
 would you prefer to plan a trip to Molesworth in 1983? \_\_\_\_\_ or 1984? \_\_\_\_\_

If 1983, immediately before \_\_\_\_\_ or immediately after \_\_\_\_\_ the W.D.C. reunion?

How many days should the tour last? 6 \_\_\_ 14 \_\_\_ 21 \_\_\_

Besides Molesworth and London, where else would you like to visit? \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

303rd BOMB GROUP(H)ASSOCIATION, INC.  
MIGHT-IN-FLIGHT

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION  
\*\*\*\*\*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Military Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Ext: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Crew and/or Duty \_\_\_\_\_ Retired Military \_\_\_\_\_ Pilot's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sqd. \_\_\_\_\_ Grade if Any \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00-Dues(5yrs) \_\_\_\_\_ \$2.50-Patch \_\_\_\_\_ \$1.50-Pin \_\_\_\_\_ \$1.00-Roster  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00-First 300 Mission Book \_\_\_\_\_ \$1.00-Official 303rd Decal  
 (Includes 303rd Decal)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Amount paid:\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*\*\*\*\*

DO NOT SEND CASH THRU THE POSTAL SERVICE: IF you are a member, please pass  
 this application on to another 303rder that is not a member, THANK YOU.  
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MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: 303rd Bomb Group(H)Association, INC., and Mail to:  
 JOSEPH VIEIRA  
 6400 Park Street  
 Hollywood, FL 33024

303rd BOMB GROUP(H)ASSOCIATION, INC  
 P. O. Box 8531  
 PEMBROKE PINES BRANCH  
 HOLLYWOOD, FL 33024  
 ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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