

Ball of Fire QUARTERLY EXPRESS



NEWSLETTER OF THE 93rd BOMB GROUP
2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force, Hardwick, England
www.93bg.com

Vol. 25 No. 2

Summer 2017

New Orleans Reunion 2017

Organizing the 2017 reunion has been a privilege and honor as we have worked our way from joining with the 8th Air Force Historical Society for a completely consolidated event to holding our own separate event as we have done in previous years. As part of the long term strategy approved by the membership at the 2016 business meeting, a test pilot of affiliating with the 8th AFHS was attempted. There were several reasons the combined event would not work in spite of the best efforts of the 8th's event team as follows:

The 8th AFHS Board decided to ask the Armed Forces Reunion, Inc. to coordinate their reunion increasing the coordination complexity.

Our requirements could not be accommodated.

- There was no guarantee that all 93rd attendees would be in the same hotel.
- A memorabilia room of the size needed was not available in the main hotel and, if there were, the 93rd would have to pay the rental fee.
- Our group would not be guaranteed seats or to sit together at the Gala dinner.
- A two-step registration process would be required.

The premier of "Hardwick Aerodrome 104" could not be added to the 8th AFHS schedule.

After working several months to solve these challenges our officers decided to proceed with a separate reunion held at the same time but not in conjunction with the 8th AFHS. The movie premiere will be held in the theater of the National WW II Museum, a world-class facility. Because the theater was available on Thursday evening only, we decided to stay with the extended five-day schedule.

Our goal was to accomplish two major objectives:

First, premiere our movie in a great venue and in the best way possible.

Second, spend quality time in the National World War II Museum.

We hope you will have a great reunion in New Orleans. See you in September!

93rd Bomb Group Association 2017 Reunion
Wednesday, September 27 – Monday, October 2

Step #1 - Make hotel reservations now, but not later than **August 28th** to obtain the group rate.

Hotel: *Crowne Plaza New Orleans Airport*
 2829 Williams Boulevard
 Kenner, LA 70062

Our Crowne Meeting Director: Logan Weatherly

Phone: 1-504-467-5611 - Hotel
 1-800-227-6963 - Reservations

Reservation Weblink: <https://aws.passkey.com/go/93rdbomb>

To secure the group rate, tell the reservationist you are with the **93rd Bomb Group**.

Room Rate: \$129.00 for room, plus 14.75% tax/occupancy fees = \$148.03
(Rate good from Sunday 9/24– Wednesday 10/4)

Includes:

Complimentary airport shuttle
Complimentary self-parking
Complimentary internet access
Complimentary breakfast for 2 guests per room
(Additional guest breakfasts are \$10 per day)
Fitness Center
Outdoor Pool
The Landing Restaurant & Lobby Bar

Complimentary Airport Shuttle: If you are arriving by air, the hotel shuttle picks up at the airport transportation center (located across the driveway from baggage claim 6.) The shuttle arrives on the 15 and 45 of every hour starting at 4 a.m. until midnight. For departure the shuttle leaves the hotel to the airport on the hour and half hour.

Cutoff date: **August 28th**

Questions: **John Marx - 412-327-1909**

Step #2 - Complete Registration Form below, **for each attendee**, and submit with your check not later than August 28th. Make your check payable to **93rd Bomb Group**.

Step #3 - Make travel arrangements to arrive in time for registration between 2:00 - 5:00 PM on Wednesday, September 27th. Our welcome dinner starts at 6:00 PM.

Step #4 - Mail completed forms (one for each attendee) to:

Gerald Veteto
9018 Rich Trace
San Antonio, TX 78251
210-681-7922
gveteto52@gmail.com

REUNION FEE REFUND POLICY

Last minute cancellations can cause significant loss to the 93rd Bomb Group Association. This loss results because we must guarantee your attendance to the hotel relative to all meals and other related costs. When you don't show, we still get charged for meals and other charges related to those meals.

We recognize that there will always be unforeseen events beyond your control, and we truly regret your personal inconvenience. However, your executive committee has decided that we must stay with our policy of "pay as you go" for reunion costs.

We have reviewed the choices: we can either add an extra amount to everyone's fees to cover last minute cancellations, or we can set a deadline date for cancellations after which the fees paid cannot be refunded.

In order to keep our reunion fees as low as possible, your executive committee has chosen the deadline date choice. Therefore, a deadline date, based on hotel contract requirements for each reunion will be provided to you at the time you make your reservations, and included in our reunion announcements in the Ball of Fire.

New Orleans Reunion Fee Refund Policy: No refund will be made after August 28th.



REGISTRATION FORM

One per guest

Name: _____

Address: _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Emergency Contact:

(Someone not traveling with you) (Name) (Phone Number)

Meal choices: Circle one entrée per meal (Food descriptions follow):

(If Special need is circled, please identify the special dietary need)

Friday Lunch:

1. Chicken Marsala
2. Catfish Almondine
3. Pasta Primavera - Vegetarian
4. Special need _____

Saturday Box Lunch:

1. Blackened Chicken Breast
2. Mile High Roast Beef
3. Vegetable Wrap - Vegetarian
4. Special need _____

Saturday Memorial Dinner:

1. Cajun Stuffed Pork Loin
2. Atlantic Salmon
3. Stuffed Artichoke with Ratatouille - Vegetarian
4. Special Need _____

Calculate your registration fee:

The registration fee includes: Dinner for 4 evenings, 3 lunches, Memorabilia room, Color Guard dinners, transportation, education sessions, business meeting, National WW II Museum entry and *Beyond All Boundaries* 4D Movie.

The reservation fee does not include your hotel rooms or optional trips

Basic registration fee: \$375

Trip #1: \$66 \$ _____

Trip #2: \$60 \$ _____

Sub Total _____ times number of guests _____ = **Total**

enclosed _____

Please complete form and enclose check payable to the 93rd Bomb Group for the total amount.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Optional Trip #1 – Friday Evening – The National WW II Museum Stage Door Canteen and Show - **\$66.00**

6:00 PM Remain at the museum for dinner and a show

6:00 PM Three-course plated dinner with a glass of wine

First Course: Salad

Second Course: Choice of two entrée's

Third Course: Dessert

8:00 PM **Spencer Racca & The Victory 6** –



This exciting swing band features some of New Orleans' finest musicians, dedicated to preserving the sound and style of the memorable big bands of the 1940s. Complete with period costuming, signature bandstands and an abundant library of dance favorites, the band brings to life the music of Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Harry James and many others, The Victory Six is the Gulf South's premier 1940s swing band ensemble.

9:30 – 10:00 PM Return to hotel

Optional Trip #2 – Sunday morning/afternoon – Steamboat Natchez Jazz Cruise and Jackson Square - **\$60.00**



Welcome aboard the most unique blend of "real New Orleans". Combine a two hour cruise on the iconic Steamboat NATCHEZ with traditional live jazz by some of the most talented musicians of the genre- The Steamboat Stompers. For the crowning achievement, add a delicious casual New Orleans Brunch. Brunch is a staple in New Orleans life – a time to enjoy food, music, and refreshing beverages with friends and family.

Cap off the afternoon with free time in Jackson Square for walking or shopping. Set in the heart of the French Quarter over-looking the Mississippi River, Jackson Square is one of New Orleans' most recognizable landmarks. Also known as the Place d'Armes, Jackson Square received National Landmark status in 1960. In 2012 it was chosen by the American Planning Association as one of its "Great Places in America" for beauty, accessibility and being a "place where people want to be."



Depart hotel at 10:30 AM and return at 3:30 PM – 5 hour excursion

Food Descriptions

Wednesday Welcome Dinner - New Orleans Barbeque



Tossed Garden Salad with Assorted Dressings
Southern Style Potato Salad / Country Style Cole Slaw
Cochon de Lait / BBQ Baby back Ribs / Southern Fried Crispy Chicken
Corn on the Cob / Fried Okra / Southern Baked Beans
Basket of Cornbread and Biscuits
Pecan Pie / Fresh Fruit Cobbler
Freshly Brewed Coffee, Iced Tea, & Water

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday Breakfast Buffet

Chef's Selection of Danish, Bagels, and Muffins
Sliced Seasonal Fruits
Individual Yogurts
Scrambled Eggs
Bacon & Sausage
Hash Brown Potatoes
Pancakes
Southern Style Buttered Grits
Assorted Fruit Juices
Toast and Biscuits
Freshly Brewed Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee
Assorted Hot Teas



Thursday Lunch - Executive Deli Buffet

Fresh Garden Salad with Assortment of Dressings
Marinated Julienne Vegetable Salad, Spicy Cole Slaw
Seafood Gumbo with Rice
New Orleans Classic Muffaletta
Blackened Chicken Sandwiches on Kaiser Roll
Mile High Roast Beef on Onion Rolls
Grilled Ham & Cheese on Croissants
Gourmet Turkey Wraps, Vegetable Wraps
Assorted Gourmet Desserts
Freshly Brewed Coffee and Iced Tea

Thursday Dinner - American Sector Atrium at The National WW II Museum

Victory Garden Salad
Sausage Jambalaya
Chicken Alfredo Pasta
Assorted Cookies & Brownies
Freshly Brewed Iced Tea

Friday Lunch

House Salad, Chef's Selection of Starch & Vegetable, Rolls & Butter, Chef's Selection of Dessert, Coffee, Hot Tea, Iced Tea plus choice of:

Chicken Marsala - Sautéed Breast of Chicken with a Wild Mushroom Cream Sauce
or

Catfish Almondine - Filet of Catfish Lightly Battered and Sautéed with Lemon, Butter, Garlic, and Toasted Almonds
or

Pasta Primavera - – Tri-colored rotini tossed with a rich marinara and a selection of grilled fresh garden vegetables

Friday Dinner – Optional

Stage Door Canteen and Show at the National WW II Museum

or

Dinner on your own at the hotel's Landing Restaurant

Saturday Box Lunch (After the Business Meeting) Each box contains Bag of Zapps Potato Chips & Fudge Brownie or Cookie plus a choice of one sandwich:

Blackened Chicken Sandwich - Blackened Chicken Breast, Swiss Cheese, Crisp Bacon
Lettuce, Tomato, Kaiser Roll
or

Mile High Roast Beef - Slow Roasted Shaved Roast Beef, Cheddar & Swiss Cheese
Lettuce, Tomato, Kaiser Roll
or

Oven Roasted Vegetable Wrap - Large Flour Tortilla Filled with Oven Roasted Vegetables, Hummus Spread Shredded Lettuce & Tomatoes

Saturday Memorial Dinner

House Salad, Chef's Selection of Vegetable & Starch, Rolls & Butter, Chef's Selection of Dessert, Coffee, Hot & Iced Tea plus choice of

Cajun Stuffed Pork Loin - Pork Loin Stuffed with Louisiana Sausages, Crawfish, Crab and Shrimp & Topped with a Spicy, Creole Veloute

or

Crab Stuffed Salmon - Grilled Fresh Salmon Filet Stuffed with Sweet Onions and Crabmeat, Lemon Buerre Blanc Sauce

or

Stuffed Artichoke with Ratatouille - Grilled artichoke served over a bed of sautéed tomatoes, garlic, onions, zucchini, eggplant with French herbs

Sunday Lunch

Optional Steamboat Natchez Jazz Cruise

or

Lunch on your Own

Sunday Farewell Dinner- Soup and Salad Buffet

Soup Trio

Shrimp and Corn Bisque
Chicken Andouille Gumbo
Minestrone Vegetable

Garden Salad Buffet

Romaine Heart Caesar Salad
Garlic Croutons, Caesar Dressing, Grated Parmigiano

Spicy and Peppery Garden Green Balsamic Vinaigrette, European Cucumber, Roma Tomatoes, Goat Cheese, Shredded Carrot, Mushrooms, Black olives

The Wedge Salad - Iceberg Lettuce, Blue Cheese, Red and Green Onion, Boiled Eggs and Creamy Blue Cheese Dressing

Assorted Desserts Bars

Lemon, Brownies, Cheesecake and double Chocolate Cake

**93rd BOMB GROUP 2017 REUNION
NEW ORLEANS, LA (DRAFT)**

Day 1 – Wednesday, Sep 27th

10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration / Memorabilia Room Setup – Everyone is welcome!
2:00 – 3:30 PM	Officer's Meeting
6:00 – 8:00 PM	Welcome Dinner - Attendee Introductions

Day 2 – Thursday, Sep 28th

7:30 – 9:00 AM	Breakfast - Hotel
9:30 – 11:00 AM	Educational Session #1 - Veteran Snapshots (15 minute vignettes)
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Buffet Lunch
1:30 – 2:30 PM	“Veterans Only” Roundtable
4:15 – 4:45 PM	Transportation to the WW II Museum
4:45 – 6:00 PM	Dinner at Museum - American Sector Atrium
6:00 – 6:15 PM	Guest Introductions and Film's Historical Perspective
6:15 – 7:45 PM	World Premiere “Hardwick Aerodrome 104” - The Solomon Victory Theater
7:45 – 8:15 PM	Audience Q&A
8:30 – 9:00 PM	Transportation to hotel

Day 3 – Friday, Sep 29th

7:30 – 9 AM	Breakfast - Hotel
9:30 – 11:00 AM	Educational Session #2 - Veteran Snapshots (15 minute vignettes)
12:00 – 1:15 PM	Lunch
1:30 – 2:00 PM	Transportation to WW II Museum
2:00 – 5:00 PM	Tour WWII Museum
5:00 – 6:00 PM	4D Movie - Beyond All Boundaries - The Solomon Victory Theater
6:00 – 6:30 PM	(Those not staying for Canteen Dinner & Show)
	Transportation to hotel – Dinner on your own
6:00 – 9:30PM	Museum Canteen Dinner & Show (Plated Dinner) (Optional)
9:30 – 10:00 PM	Transportation to hotel

Day 4 – Saturday, Sep 30th

7:30 – 9 AM	Breakfast – Hotel
9:30 – 11:30 AM	Business Meeting - Hotel
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Box Lunch – Hotel
1:30 – 2:30PM	Veteran's Q&A
2:30 - 4:00 PM	Educational Session #3 - Veteran Snapshots (15 minute vignettes)
5:00 – 5:30 PM	Group Photo
5:30 – 6:00 PM	Reception
6:00 – 8:00 PM	Memorial Dinner and Program

Day 5 – Sunday, Oct 1st

7:30 – 9 AM	Breakfast at Hotel
8:30 – 9:30 AM	Religious Service (non-denominational)
10:30 AM	Bus departs for Steamboat Natchez & Jackson Square (Optional) Sign up required
11:00 AM – 1:30PM	Cruise and Sunday Brunch
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Lunch – On your own – (If not touring)
1:45 – 3:00 PM	Visit Historic Jackson Square – Walk & Shop
3:00 – 3:30 PM	Bus Returns to Hotel
6 – 8 PM	Soup and Salad Dinner at Hotel
8 PM - Closing	Memorabilia Room Pack-up – Everyone is welcome!

Day 6 – Monday, Oct 2nd

6 – 9 AM	Breakfast at Hotel
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Table of Contents

93 rd BG Reunion New Orleans, LA	1
President's Corner	11
Upcoming Reunion Options.....	12
93 rd BG Film Project Fundraiser.....	13
Debriefing	14
Folded Wings	15
Greetings from the 93 rd BG Historian (Request for information)	17
Newsletter Editor.....	17
Hot Stuff Memorial Monument Project Update	18
93 rd BG Website.....	21
Hardwick Documentary	21
Membership.....	22
93 rd BG Ball of Fire Quarterly Express Subscription Form	23

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Almost half-way through 2017 already! Reunion planning continues for what is shaping up to be a fabulous reunion in New Orleans this fall! John Marx, and the reunion committee have finalized all the costs, and you can find the registration information in this issue of BOF. It is a full and extended schedule, with many exciting activities planned. The main highlight will be our World Premiere of the film, Hardwick Aerodrome 104, at the World War II Museum ! Thanks to everyone in advance for volunteering to help with our 2017 reunion planning! Hope to see everyone there!

Three very important items to highlight for everyone:

1) Our social media page on Facebook, the 93rd Bombardment Group now has a total of 564 members! Thank you to everyone who responded to the "poll" I created to get more information on the activities of the FB page. Many great comments posted as well!

The following are the results total (responded = 136 people):

Are you directly related to a 93rd BG Veteran (family)? = 90 people

You do not have a direct connection, to the 93rd BG, only historically interested? = 28

Are you a friend of a 93rd BG Veteran or family? = 12

Are you an original member of the 93rd BG (Veteran)? = 3

Other interest? = 3

2) We are "kicking off" a 2nd fundraising effort, necessary to support the final production and legal aspects of the Film. Look for additional information further in the BOF. We appreciate everyone's help and support of this fantastic effort to preserve the legacy of the 93rd Bomb Group!

3) The Education Committee will be reaching out to any interested individuals who would like to share 10 - 15 minutes of their Veteran's family stories at the reunion. Rather than use an outside historical expert this year, our (3) education sessions format is to allow for 93rd BGA members to share stories, photos, video, or memorabilia about their Veteran. We will be looking for 18- 20 member, separate from the Veteran stories themselves. Dee Friesen is leading the Education Committee for us this year!

See you in New Orleans!

Jim Root
President, 93rd BGA



Come join the Party

UPCOMING 2017 AND 2018 REUNION OPPORTUNITIES

2018 Dedication of the Hot Stuff Memorial: All are encouraged to travel to Iceland for the dedication to be held on the 75th Anniversary of the “Hot Stuff” crash that took place on May 3, 1943. After a lengthy fund raising drive spearheaded by Jim Lux, we will gather with United States and Iceland officials, the crew’s family members and others for the Memorial dedication on May 3, 2018 to remember the tragic accident 75 years before. If you would like more information please express your interest to Jim Lux at hotstuff.memorial@gmail.com.

2018 National Capitol Region: At our annual Business Meeting in San Antonio, the members voted to visit the WW II Memorial and Air Force Monument in Washington DC in 2018. Many consider DC the center of the world and it’s certainly full of monuments, museums and other sight-seeing opportunities. Served by three airports, National, Dulles and Baltimore – Washington access is easy from most places in the US. Planning will begin soon. Anticipate dates in October 2018.

2018 Hardwick, England: We are looking at the idea of a trip back to Norwich and Hardwick in May of 2018. Please let Don Morrison (phone 330.415.2222 or Doniac1967@sbcglobal.net) know if you are interested in this trip, and if you are also interested in going to Iceland Memorial Dedication.

WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT



Emma Rose Marx and Steven Kyle Hinkle are engaged to be married on July 1, 2017 in Raleigh, NC. Emma is a recent graduate of North Carolina State University with degrees in both Genetics and English. She has been accepted into a five-year doctoral program at the University of North Carolina to study Cancer Epigenetics. Steven graduated from North Carolina State in 2016 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He is employed by Touchstone 3D, a 3D prototyping company. The newlyweds will reside in Durham, NC. Emma previously served as the web master of the 93rd BG Web site and has attended reunions since 2006. Emma is the granddaughter of John and Rayann Marx and the great, great, niece of 1LT Robert W. Marx, Pilot 409th Bomb Squadron, Killed-in-Action, December 19, 1944.



93rd BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

TO ALL 93RD BGA VETERANS, MEMBERS & FRIENDS!

The Association wishes to thank you for your generous support for the documentary film, **Hardwick Aerodrome, 104** so far. With your financial and creative support, we have come very far with our production, but we need to ask for your HELP again.

We are currently on budget based on our estimates of 2 years ago. However, as we move into the final portion of the film, we estimate the continuing expenses for post-production and legal support costs will be an additional \$20,000.

This world-class documentary film about Hardwick and the 93rd Bomb Group, includes vintage footage, interviews with veterans and family members, new video taken at Hardwick and stories of the daring missions of the 93rd. Using state of the art film techniques, we can see what Hardwick looks like before and after the War.

Frankenbite Productions, owned by our own, Michael Sellers, is nearly complete with the production of the film. In conjunction with many other resources and talent, including the 93rd BGA Officers and key members, the collaborative product is entertaining, informative and compelling. The completed film will be shown at the National WWII Museum, at our New Orleans reunion on September 28, 2017! An exciting culmination for our project!

To honor the heritage and maintain the legacy of the 93rd Bombardment Group, distribution of this film is key. Further distribution to public venues, such as PBS, major networks, the internet, or public sale of the DVD requires legal considerations. Proper due diligence needs to be followed and is the cause for the legal costs. Estimated legal fees alone may be \$10,000.

We are asking for your additional support by donating any amount to the project, either through our websites, www.93bg.com, OR www.hardwickfilm.com, (view the film info & updates here!) OR checks may be made payable to *93rd BG Association-Film* and sent directly to:

Wally Brown, Treasurer, 717 Pinebrook Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23462

As a THANK YOU, there will be SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR DONATIONS TO THE HARDWICK FILM PROJECT as follows:

Donation of \$250 to \$499 Choice of Vet's books listed on web site

Donation of \$500 to \$999 A 93rd embroidered hat (blue or khaki)

Donation of \$1,000 to \$1,499 A copy of Ted's Travelling Circus Book

Donation of \$1,500 to \$2,499 A copy of Ted's, a 93rd hat or B-24 Travel Mug

Donation of \$2,500 or more A copy of Ted's, a 93rd hat and a B-24 Travel Mug

Thank You for helping the 93rd BGA – from our veterans and members!

DEBRIEFING

This section will bring to light short stories about certain missions or events as recalled by our 93rd Bomb Group Veterans. Historian Don Morrison and Jim Guddal are collaborating to bring you those memorable moments in time as experienced by our guys based at England's Hardwick Aerodrome 104 during the early 1940s, a life surrounded by the B-24 Liberator and thousands of miles away from home.

It gives us great pleasure to present such a story as told by Vernon Swaim of the **329th Bomb Squadron**. His job on the B-24 was tail gunner. Regretfully, Vernon left us February 17, 2017! He was a faithful attendee to every reunion and often came by train. Vernon, you will be missed!

April 7, 1945: Here's my version of the famous "Ramming" mission. Think Kamikaze! I was tail gunner on King's lead crew. Dan Roure was in the waist of the ship in the bucket position right behind us and slightly below. He wrote a long description of this "Ram" mission in the 2nd Air Division quarterly in maybe 2007. The highlight was the ME-109 that I watched come in fast from 7 o'clock past the bucket ship and hitting their left wing tip, past their nose. The B-24 rolled up to the German's right and Dan bailed out a hundred feet from my tail turret. His speed took him out of my view in another second. I called him out as he approached and the flight deck/nose crewman soon picked up the description. He unfurled his shots just ahead of us as the ME fell away and our P-51s followed him down. Others in my crew were very impressed and thought it was an FW-190! We completed the mission, were debriefed with not much extra fuss and I never heard "Ramming" mentioned till the 8AF News, maybe 8 years ago. It has a letter asking for any details anyone had of the April 7th mission over Germany. The writer was an MD in St. Louis. I think I wrote to him of what my diary mission log and memory recalled. I don't think that he wrote back, but, for sure a younger German air nut did with info on the German pilot! He was then a real character: flew 350 missions over the Russian front as an engineer. He got pilot training in 1944-45 and into single engine fighters later in the war. Somewhere I have a photo of him, his medals, etc. from the younger German I mentioned above. He asked me what I recalled. He knew the members of the Roure crew and their story. He sent me a new 10 Euro note also. The No 2 man is the waist of the Roure ship. He remembered more exciting details than Dan R did. I never talked with him. He may have been at Pratt AFB Kansas in August 1945 where I met Dan. I saw him again at Hardwick in 1995.

Submitted by Vernon Swaim

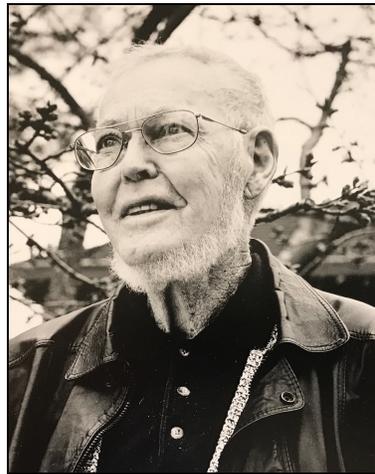
Additional details from the archive:

On April 7, 1945; 1st Lt Guenther Christiansen of the 328th BS makes an emergency landing. The airplane (42-109989 Letter "J") was borrowed from the 330th Bomb Squadron. The damage consisted of the loss of approximately 6 feet of the left wing tip due to the intentional ramming called "Ramstaffel". The FW-190 was lost when the pilot bailed just before impact with the wing. Later in the fight, #3 engine died and was feathered. This was the Luftwaffe last ditch effort to control the skies over Europe. As seen in the photo the B-24 and the crew returned home to Hardwick safely. Proof of a skilled crew and the strength of a B-24! The aircraft (989J) was later repaired and flown back to the USA at the end of the war.



42-109989 on final approach

FOLDED WINGS



Vernon (“Red”) Swaim died on February 17, 2017, in Vancouver, Washington, at age 92. Vern was born on October 27, 1924, in Kellogg, Idaho. The youngest of three children, he grew up on a small family farm near Rose Lake, Idaho. After graduating from high school, he enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps in December 1942. He entered active service in October 1943 and was assigned to the 93rd Bomb Group at Hardwick England in November 1944. Vern flew 21 missions as tail gunner with Merle King’s crew (both lead and non-lead) with the 328th and 329th squadrons until V-E day. He then joined the B-29’s at Pratt, Kansas, until V-J day.

After the war, Vern returned to Lewiston, Idaho, where he earned a college degree and married Verna Chapman in 1950. Vern and Verna settled in Vancouver, Washington, where they raised three children. Vern taught high school math and science until 1963 and then worked as a specifications/construction engineer with Bonneville Power Administration until he retired in 1986.

Vern was an avid outdoorsman and environmentalist who loved camping, hiking, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, and bicycle riding. After he retired, Vern and Verna traveled widely in their Toyota Land Cruiser, camping their way from northern Canada to Central America and across the United States multiple times. They also traveled to Europe, Turkey, Australia and New Zealand. After Verna died in 1995, Vern continued to travel widely in the US and globally, including Africa, Asia, South America and Antarctica.

Vernon reconnected with the 93rd Bomb Group at Hardwick in 1995 at the 50th anniversary of V-E day. He remained active with the group through the following decades, attending most of the reunions across the U.S., plus returning to Hardwick four times. The May 2015 Hardwick reunion at age 90 turned out to be his final reunion with the 93rd Bomb Group.

Vern will be remembered by his family and friends for his spirit of adventure, fierce independence, quiet strength, subtle wit, humility, non-judgemental acceptance of others, and willingness to lend a helping hand.

He is survived by three children (Robyn, Paul and Doug), five grandchildren (Kyle, Reid, Dru, Blake and Allison), and one great-grandchild (Leo) born on his 92nd birthday in October. His children and grandchildren are grateful for the opportunity to have joined their (grand) father for one or more 93rd BG reunions. They came away with a greater appreciation for his experience as a young man, and more broadly for the sacrifices made by his generation during WWII.

Vern’s family will gather this summer to spread his ashes on the same peak in central Oregon where they climbed with Vern 22 years ago to spread their (grand) mother’s ashes.



Robert "Bob" Warren Brown, 98, of Springfield, Missouri, passed away on Monday, April 25, 2016, in his home. Bob was born in Springfield, Missouri, February 23, 1918, to Frank and Marion Brown. Bob spent the majority of his childhood in Springfield, Missouri. September, 1942 Bob met Florence Frances Pienkos; they were married February 18, 1943. Bob served in the 8th Army Air Corp, 93 Bomb Group during World War II; he was active duty 5 years and 3 months. He piloted a B24 Liberator and was shot down over Brugge, Belgium on June 19, 1944. He was a prisoner of war in a German prison camp for 11 months. When he returned state side, he served in the Air Force Reserve for 22 years. He retired in 1967 as a Major. Bob worked for the Missouri State Highway Patrol for 30 years, from March 1st 1948 and retired on March 1st 1978 as a Sergeant.

Bob and Florence had 66 wonderful and blessed years together. They took an active role raising grandchildren, worked as volunteers for 12 years in the Gift Shop at St. John's Hospital. He loved spending time with his wife, family and friends. Bob and Florence enjoyed square dancing, traveling and fishing together. Bob was an extremely compassionate, caring man and wanted to help people to the best of his abilities. He was deeply loved and will truly be missed.

Bob is survived by his sons, Larry Edward Brown Milliger, Christopher Scott Brown, and their spouses; eight grandchildren and their spouses, 24 great grandchildren, 2 great-great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, many friends and some wonderful neighbors.



They will be missed!

GREETINGS FROM THE 93RD BG HISTORIAN!

Recent trip to England and France

In early May 2017, Colin and I visited many WW2 sites in England and Northern France. We had a great time hitting many historically important location such as Hardwick Airfield, Battle of Britain Memorial, D-Day beaches (Omaha, Gold, Sword and Juno), The American Cemetery at Omaha Beach, Pegasus Bridge, Several V1 and V2 site, and the British tank museum at Bovington. We also visited several WW1 battlefields/Memorials in the Somme, a Roman villa and the Ruins at old Sarum.



Colin at one of the many German coastal defence postions located on Omaha beach. Several of these massive structure remain. It is amazing that anyone was able to survive crossing the beach. The 93rd BG flew its first mission of D-Day over this area of the beach head. My grandfather (S/Sgt Melvin Morrison) was flying as a waist gunner on 1st Lt Ed Devon crew in 42-99937 "Reddy Teddy" on this mission. They dropped their bombs at 0556, 4 minutes ahead of plan.

Don on top of the Siracourt V-1 bunker. The allies bombed it several time during the construction and luckily it was never placed into service.

The 93rd BG visited here on Jan 31, Feb 8,11,12,13, March 13, May 2,6,15,21,22, June 16 (sautrecourt), 20, 21. It is unclear if the Sautrecourt is Siracourt or another location. I have not been able to find a location by that name. If you have any information about Sautrecourt, please let me know. My grandfather was on May 6, 22, 1944 and June 16 missions.

I did bring home a small bit of concrete from one of the many bomb impacts.



FREE Memorabilia cataloging and Research

I am willing to scan any documents, records and photos of a 93rd BG veteran and return ALL of the original items (unharmred) along with CDs of all scans/jpeg images, along with any additional information I can add regarding names, plane serial #, artwork and places. There is NO charge for this service! I can also make extra CDs copies for family members. I have done this for several veterans over the years. My contact info is shown in the Officer Directory.

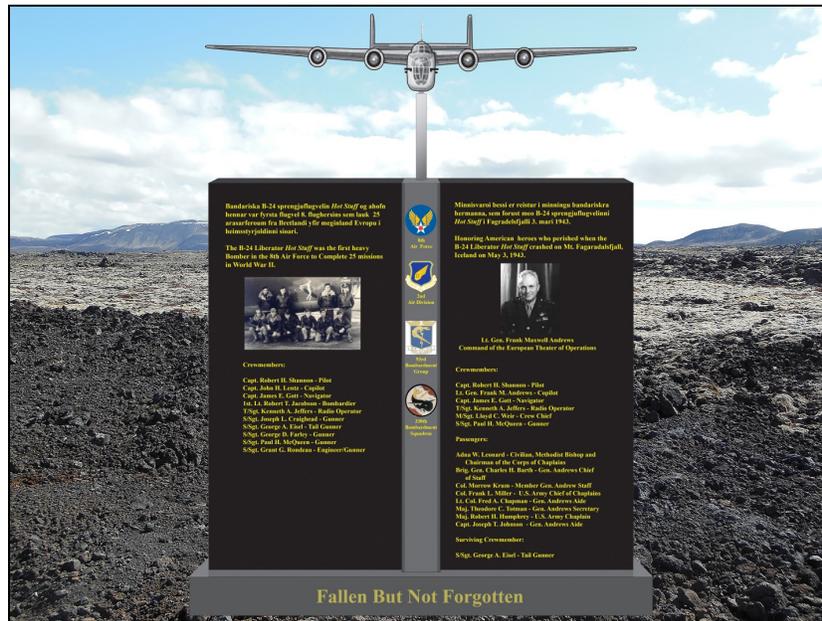
Message from the Editor

I am always looking for any articles about any event that involved the 93rd BG. These can be short stories written by the veteran or family. If it is interesting to you most likely it will be interesting to all of us too! This is YOUR Ball of Fire Newsletter. Please send any article submittals or Letters to the editor to my attention for inclusion in future Newsletters.

Cheers, Don Morrison

HOT STUFF MEMORIAL MONUMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Memorial Monument Dedication Tour Set for May 2 - 5, 2018



GT Travel of Iceland was selected to set up a three day, three night tour with an optional fourth night for the Memorial Monument Dedication. On-line registration is now available at: <https://www.gttravel.is/imdt>

A 10% down payment is required upon registration and full payment is due by February 9, 2018. Please read the "Terms and conditions" before registering.

There are several options available for additional cost. GT Travel can also arrange for extra days and additional tours. The hotel has agreed to offer the same discounted room rate for additional days.

Please note there are only a few extra beds available for those of you who would like to have three people in a room so register early.

Tour prices listed include transportation, most meals including brunch and dinner on arrival day, three breakfasts, two lunches and a banquet after the monument dedication and memorial service.

The Fosshotel, where we will be staying, is four-star hotel and is located only a short walk to the center of Reykjavik.

Airline Reservations

Please note that flights scheduled on Icelandair or JetBlue Airways from the United States arrive in Iceland between 6:15 AM and 6:45 AM. Tour buses will be available for those arriving during those times. Those who schedule flights with arrival times after 7:00 AM will have to make their own arrangements for ground transportation to the hotel at their own expense and will miss the brunch and first day tour.

The month of May is the beginning of tourist season in Iceland so it is advised that airline reservations be made either when you make your tour reservation or soon after.

Banquet Reservations For May 3, 2018

The banquet on the evening of May 3 is included as part of the tour. Jim is working with GT Travel and Fosshotel to determine whether or not those who will not take part in the tour but plan to attend the monument dedication can make reservations to attend the banquet for a fee. The size of the banquet facilities may be a limiting factor.

If you have questions, you can contact Sigurður Júlíusson via email at: gt@gtravel.is

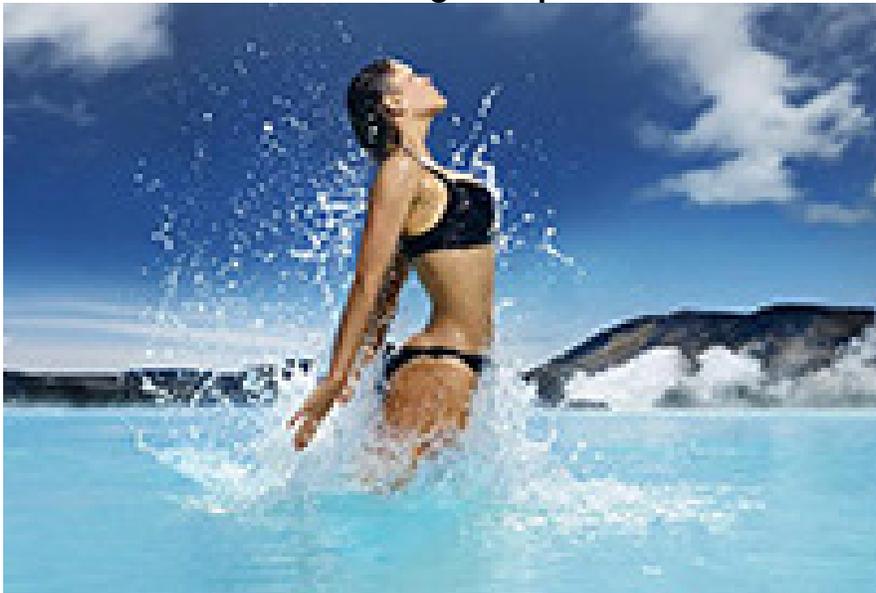
Tour Options for Additional Fees Golden Circle Tour

The Golden Circle tour is highly recommended. It's a one day guided tour of the many beautiful sites in the area including several spectacular waterfalls.



Gullfoss Waterfall

Blue Lagoon Spa



Another option is the Blue Lagoon spa, the most popular tourist attraction in Iceland. **Please note that reservations for the Blue Lagoon must be made on Blue Lagoon's website:**

<http://www.bluelagoon.com>

Crash Site Tour

The optional visit to the crash site will be for the more adventuresome. The site is not far from the main highway. However, the three mile road to the base of the mountain is unimproved. That's an understatement! For those intending to climb the 850 feet to the crash site, boots with good ankle support are recommended.



Small Rocks Cover Crash Site

The climb is quite steep (33 degrees) and the mountain is covered with small rocks that make climbing difficult. To get an idea of the terrain, watch the video "A Story of Triumph & Tragedy" on the *Hot Stuff*/Gen. Andrews website:
www.b24hotstuff.wikispaces.com

Helicopter Tour



Nordurflug Helicopter Tours

An optional helicopter tour is available. In addition to seeing many of the beautiful sites in the area from the air, the helicopter will land near the *Hot Stuff* crash site. For more information on Nordurflug helicopter tours, you can visit their website at: <http://helicopter.is>

93RD WEBSITE & FILM PROJECT

Website Update

I just checked our stats and we had someone all the way from Belrose, New South Wales, Australia click on the 93rd BG website!

In the months ahead please look for reunion updates on the website. Go to www.93bg.com and click the REUNIONS tab on the left side of the homepage. There you will see the postcard of the next city the reunion will be at. This year it will be New Orleans!! Below that will be '17 Reunion Schedule, Why New Orleans and About Reunion links. Hover your mouse down to a toggle switch and click the section you want to read about. As soon as the officers lock down a schedule for the reunion you will see it in the '17 Reunion Schedule link. Any updates on activities and educational sessions will be under the Why New Orleans link.

We also have a new video added to the homepage. Look to the bottom right and click the small TV icon. Our President, Jim Root edited together a 4 minute video answering the question of - Why should you attend 93rd BG reunions? Check out the video and then copy and paste the URL from your browser and share it with people that might be interested in going. Thanks Jim for getting the word out!

Hardwick Aerodrome 104 - Documentary Film Update

One of my favorite film directors once said "The entertainment is in the presentation" (anyone who is interested it was John McTiernan the director of Die Hard, Predator and The Hunt For Red October most notably). In simple terms he is saying, if you want an audience to sit down for a film and enjoy themselves they should see an exciting, informative and thought provoking film from the first frame when the lights go down to the last frame when the lights come up. This is what sets a film apart from ones that are great and ones that are just okay. I think the 93rd Bomb Group is aiming to make this film "great"! Over the last few months I've been concentrating on one of the themes for the film - passing on the legacy of the 93rd BG to future generations. I think it will be very important to have audiences come away from the film wondering how they can help to pass on the history to a younger generation. It's something I've been hard at work on getting that message into the film. This then got me thinking, what else does the association need to be prepared to work on once the film is complete? People outside of our group that watch the film will want to know how they can help and I'm hoping that we will have the answers and resources. I have my hands busy with the completion of the film but hopefully starting the conversation now will allow members and officers to think about how to move forward with this. We are setting ourselves up to "get the word out" and we want to be ready.

Thank you!

Michael Sellers

www.93bg.com www.hardwickfilm.com



MEMBERSHIP

The 2017 membership drive has been going great. We currently have a total of 199 members including 44 veterans and 12 new members. Reminder letters went out recently and hopefully we will have over 200 members. Don't forget, we are all part of the membership committee!

Welcome to our new members!

Mark Anderson
James Evans
Carly Fasano
Katy Glenn
John Huffman
Kyle Jung
Joe Kingston, Jr.
Susan McLean
Anne Pancella
Susan Steichen
Robert Timmer
Kendra Trexler

A new member recently asked me why I became a member. My Dad, Henry Nykamp, was a nose gunner who flew 35 missions from July 1944-February 1945. Several years ago, he invited me to the reunion in Tucson and I joined him. My family and I had gone to Dayton with my Mom and Dad back in 2004 and we had talked about reunions many times over the years. The reunions and organization had always been my Dad's thing but Tucson was different. The members were welcoming and I had a great time. I learned a lot about the 93rd, the War and my Dad's role in it. I began to realize that if the next generation didn't continue to pick up the reins, and further the mission the 93rd BGA, the legacy of our veterans would be lost. I couldn't see that happening. I am lucky that Dad included me in his group and now I can give back.

I asked Nick Timmer, our Recording Secretary to answer: Why are you a member? The following is his response.

Growing up, I knew that my uncle, Robert Timmer, was a pilot in WWII and I vividly remember the sadness in my family when he was listed as MIA/KIA. My grandmother and aunt had some letters and photos, but other than that, the family knew very little about his service or how he died. We knew that he flew Liberators, but no one seemed to know the bomb group or where he was stationed. I had always planned that when I had time, I would begin researching his life on behalf of my family; however, that did not happen until I retired. My first step was to send for Bob's records and through them I learned that he flew with the 93rd Bomb Group. My second step was to find out all I could about the 93rd. I got lucky because my first contact person was Joe Duran and through him a wealth of information came flowing my way. Joe and Phyllis also encouraged me to attend the next reunion and, again, I was lucky because the Savannah reunion was coming up. That was the one where we dedicated the stained glass window for the chapel, and it seemed like we had forty or fifty vets in attendance. What timing—I had struck the mother lode of information! I think I talked to most of them during our time there, but the highlight was sharing a seat with pilot Lew Brown on the bus back from town one evening. All of them were so gracious and informative in helping me put together my uncle's story. So I became hooked on the 93rd, not only because of its great history, but also because of the people Michele and I have met through the years. We ninety-thirders have a strong bond; we share a commitment to remember the courage, and honor the sacrifices, of the men from Hardwick.

--- Nick Timmer

93RD BG MEMBERSHIP FORM
&
BALL OF FIRE QUARTERLY EXPRESS SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Year 2017

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

93rd BG Connection: (please circle appropriate) **Vet is/was-self, father, uncle, grandpa** or **I am a Historian.**

Name of 93rd veteran _____ Rank _____

Squadron _____ Time period in Service: _____ 19____ to _____ 19____

Airplane Name(s) _____ Pilot(s) _____

Crew Chief(s) _____ Comments (list crew if known) _____

Thanks!

(use back side for more info)

Annual Membership	\$25 \$ _____	
2 year discount rate (2017 & 2018)	\$45 \$ _____	
Tax deductible Donation	\$ _____	(The 93 rd is a 501(c)(3) Organization)

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____

___ *Please MAIL newsletter* ___ *Please E-MAIL newsletter*

Make checks payable to: 93rd BOMB GROUP (Also pay by PayPal through the 93rd Bomb Group website)

Mail to: Jean Koznarek
 93rd Bomb Group Ass'n.
 2644 West Park Blvd.
 Shaker Hts., OH 44120

KEEP OUR HISTORY ALIVE!

Consider a membership for a friend or family member.
 (Make a copy of this form for additional memberships. **Thank You!**)

PLEASE NOTE – MEMBERSHIP IS ON A CALENDAR YEAR BASIS