



In This Issue of Saving Military History One Soldier at a Time



As we adjust to the business climate of 2021 and hope for a return to familiar programs we are mindful that the world always changes and not just as a result of a war. We continue to explore new avenues to bring these American history stories to the public educating children and adults alike. Our primary mission is unwavering.

January was a great month for artifact donations and in this issue we will shine the light on a few. Thank you to those veterans and families for entrusting us to preserve this history; we are truly humbled.

In this issue read a fantastic story of brotherhood that will leave you saying a lot more than WOW!

Additionally, this second newsletter of 2021 has a lot of expanded stories and history and depending upon feedback we hope to continue with some of this material throughout the year. The first new section to the newsletter entitled "The Ultimate Sacrifice" is where we highlight a killed-in-action patriot and their artifacts in our collection. The honored and remembered is 1st Lt. Dana Barker (KIA, Vietnam). The second, "Missing In Action & Buried Unknowns" highlights a current status Missing in Action. This month it is Sgt. Charles Sciarra, USMC. Stories and donation artifacts continue to be highlighted with material from a Khe Sanh Marine, a member of the 401st Glider Infantry Regiment of WW2 and some beautiful watercolors of Adak, Alaska. Enjoy!

OOPS they did it again. Before you delve into the newsletter. facebook cut us off again without notice, warning or reason. We attempted to 'protest' but were notified that we could not do that as we had so egregiously done something, whatever that was. Mysteriously, a week later it reappeared. All must have been forgotten? We will see how long this lasts. But reliability with being able to contact our friends and followers is very important for us. If you know of anyone who follows us on social media but may not receive this or know about this newsletter, please have them signup. We don't want to lose contact!

Thank you for your support!

[Donate Now!](#)

We tell history! Saving Military History One Soldier at a Time.

Remember those that made the #ultimatesacrifice #mia #pow #kia #sonsofliberty. #patriots #army #navy #marines #aircorps #airforce #coastguard #merchantmarine; all those that have worn the cloth.

Join us on this journey.

In Their Memory,
Robert Coalter, Jason Weigler
Executive Directors

"Saving Military History One Soldier At A Time"SM
"Saving History One Soldier At A Time"SM

Visit Sons of Liberty Website

Visit Army Air Corps Library and Museum Website

The Ultimate Sacrifice



1st Lieutenant Dana Randolph Barker

Killed in Action - 13/Feb/1969
Kontum Province, Vietnam

UH-1H Pilot
Headquarters Company
198th Infantry Brigade
Americal Division

U.S. Army 1LT Dana Randolph Barker, Co-Pilot, 21 Jul 1947 – 13 Feb 1969, 21 y/o, SN O5261245, Helicopter Pilot, Flight Class #68-18, started his Vietnam tour on 30 Dec 1968 and was assigned to Headquarters Headquarters Company Aviation Section, 198th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal

Division (23rd Infantry Division). He was Killed In Action (KIA), on 13 Feb 1969 in Kontum Province, II Corps, South Vietnam and his wall location is Panel 32W - Line 24.

1LT Barker was born in Ritchie County, West Virginia. He enlisted in the Army, attended and graduated from the Armor Officer Candidate Course #29-67 G2. He was commissioned on 27 Oct 1968 and married Brenda J. Walker on 5 Nov 1967 and was then assigned to flight school. His Flight School Class was #68-18. After graduating from flight school, he was assigned to Vietnam. On 30 Dec 1968, he was assigned to the 198th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division (23rd Infantry Division).

Just two and one half months after arrival in country, 1LT Barker was flying Co-Pilot in a UH-1H Brigade Command and Control Helicopter delivering personnel and resupply to D Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, 198th Light Infantry Brigade when he was hit in the chest by automatic weapons fire and was Killed In Action (KIA) in the Kontum Province, II Corps, South Vietnam and his wall location is Panel 32W - Line 24. 1LT Barker is buried or memorialized at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, San Diego, California.

Special Thanks to the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA), Vietnam Veterans Memorial and HonorStates for information regarding the sacrifice of 1st Lt Barker.

#killedinaction #ultimatesacrifice



Medals of Lt Barker in the Sons of Liberty Museum Collection.

Missing in Action & Buried Unknowns

There are still thousands classified as Missing in Action or as Buried Unknowns. In our partnership with the MIA Recovery Network we have established data on our websites regarding MIAs. We are in the process of cataloging research materials instrumental to the researcher and families in this search. The quest to account for those of our nation's Missing in Action is one of the most noble of endeavors. There are also a large number of recovered remains that are buried in ABMC cemeteries where the identity is unknown.

The recovery of MIAs pose a number of challenges. For example, Navy or Merchant Marine ships that were sunk in are unrecoverable and thus ship manifests are the primary and often only source of names for those that have perished but are still accounted for as Missing In Action.

Each conflict has had its own challenges. At the end of World War II the military had established more than 360 temporary cemeteries, but the dead were being found continually, in farm fields, forests, small church cemeteries, and isolated graves and the shores of combat zones. These dead were collected and the remains consolidated into the fourteen permanent European, Mediterranean, and North African Cemeteries maintained

by the American Battle Monuments Commission, and two permanent cemeteries in the Philippines and Hawaii.

Sgt. Charles J. Sciara, USMC
VMSB 236
14 January 1944

Sgt. Sciara was a member of the two-man crew of a USMC bomber. On 14 January, Sgt. Sciara and his pilot were lost on a mission to Rabaul, New Guinea. Japanese records indicated that Sgt. Sciara died in captivity on 24 February 1944. In 1946 a set of remains was tentatively identified as Sciara. In September 1948 the American Graves Registration service recommended that the remains listed as unknown X-112, located in the Army Graves Registration Service located in Manila and formerly classified as X-203 and recovered from USAAF Cemetery # 5 in Finschafen, New Guinea, were to be identified as those of Sgt. Sciara based on place of death, dental and height data. The Marine Corps did not concur with the Army Graves Registration data and concluded that there was not enough information to claim a positive identification without additional substantiating evidence.

After a series of heart-wrenching bureaucratic problems, the identification was rescinded, and the justification was insufficient evidence. A brother survived at the time of this writing. He has sent blood samples to the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in hopes of effecting a comparison of his DNA with that of X-112 and either proving or eliminating X-112 as his brother. He has heard nothing in return.

The brother has investigated the possibility of examining the records of the Australian war cemetery at Bita Paka, in which there are an estimated 500 unknown Australian and Commonwealth soldiers, to ascertain whether or not Sgt. Sciara's remains might be found there.

Excerpted from:

"Known But to God; America's 20th Century Wars and the Search to Recover the Missing"
by Kenneth Breaux.

Due out in mid-2021.

The New Cinema



In November 2020 we launched our own virtual cinema. Another way to describe it is it's our own Netflix.

We have started out with 130 combat films represented by 209 clips and 1436 minutes of footage.

We will continue to add to the cinema as we have a lot of material and we will be generating much more for you to see.

**This is a subscription service of
\$14.95/month.**

Take a few minutes and go see what's "Now Showing" and decide if you want to signup and start watching. [Go now !](#)

[Sons of Liberty Virtual Cinema](#)

Sons of Liberty Museum



The Sons of Liberty has hundreds of uniforms and thousands of other artifacts in our collection from the U.S. Civil War to Present day. Our web presence now numbers in excess of 325,000 pages. We continue to accept new material for education and research programs; a number of these items will make their way on to the website. Our collection includes memorabilia from the front line soldier to the rear echelon clerk. Drivers, infantrymen, pilots, tankers, seaman, medical, artillery, armorers, engineers, quartermasters and much more. Those that were drafted or volunteered; those that did a single tour or made it a career. Those that returned

with all types of injuries and those that gave their full measure being killed in action (KIA). All MOS are welcome from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Marines. We are Saving Military History One Soldier At A Time. We are honoring the service of the Citizen Soldier.

#sonsofliberty

Private Wilmer Bailey Company G 401st Glider Infantry Regiment

Private Bailey was a rifleman with the 401st Glider Infantry Regiment. He was wounded in action on 30 September 1944. He was qualified to wear the Rifle, Marksman badge.

The 401st were assigned to both the 101st Airborne and 82nd Airborne Divisions during World War II.

This framed display of Pvt. Bailey's military history was donated to the Sons of Liberty Museum in January 2021.



Sgt. Edward Lawida H&S Battery 1st Battalion 13th Marines Khe Sanh, Vietnam

This month we welcome the uniform of Sgt. Edward Lawida, USMC into the collection.

Want to watch movie film footage of Khe Sanh? Join our Sons of Liberty Cinema for a low monthly subscription. Here are a

couple such films of

[Khe Sanh 3rd MARDIV 1966](#)

and

[Marine Base at Khe Sanh](#)

You can also watch footage of [Marines](#) at Con Thien and Cam Lo and other engagements.

Below L. to R. Craig Tourte, Edward Lawida at their Artillery position.





Volunteers

We need volunteers to transcribe award and roster documents. You will place the material into a spreadsheet where it will be added to our database and website. We welcome new dedicated volunteers to work from home and help us with this project!

Interesting Links & Resources

Researching History: <https://www.sonsoflibertymuseum.org/military-history-records.cfm>

Honor Roll: <https://www.sonsoflibertymuseum.org/honor.cfm>

Donations

We welcome donations of papers, books, photos, gear, uniforms, jackets, medals, ribbons, weapons, equipment, scrapbooks, biographies, diaries and more. Please [Contact Us](#)

Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Cold War, Gulf War and current conflict donations accepted. From small to large multi-item donations, they all tell a story.

We need you ! We need your help to further our mission of preserving and bringing this history to you and your families. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit your qualifying donations are tax deductible.



donations welcome!

Army Air Corps Museum

The Air Corps Museum online presence encompasses over 225,000 web pages with thousands of photos and other materials. Our artifact collection contains hundreds of uniforms, albums, logs, medals and more from the Army Air Service, Army Air Forces and U.S. Air Force.

World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Cold War, Gulf War and current conflict

Volunteers

We need volunteers to transcribe documents, placing the material into a spreadsheet. We welcome new dedicated volunteers to help us with this project! Work from home.

Interesting Links & Resources

Trace a Family Members Military

Service: <https://www.armyaircorpsmuseum.org/veteran-research.cfm>

Honor Roll: https://www.armyaircorpsmuseum.org/honor_roll.cfm

Donations

We welcome donations of papers, books, photos, gear, uniforms, jackets, medals, ribbons, weapons, equipment, scrapbooks, biographies, diaries, letters and more. Please [Contact Us](#)

You can make monetary donations through the following links. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit your qualifying donations are tax deductible.





**Captain Edmond Braun
US Army Air Forces
Medical Corps
11th Air Force**

The three watercolors depicted were donated by the family of Captain Braun. In the Medical Corps, Edmond Braun was assigned to the 11th Army Air Forces and stationed in Adak, Alaska during World War II. He obtained these three watercolor, painted in 1944, from the artist, Corporal Bernard Anastasia and sent them home instructing his sister to have them framed.

These items represent the variety of the types of material in our collection and we welcome these unique artifacts.

As Paul Harvey would famously say. "And now for the rest of the story...."

Corporal Bernard Anastasia was also stationed at Adak. He was on the staff of the US Army base newspaper known as the "Adakian", published in 1942-1945. He is listed as a cartoonist. Their staff may have been one of the first integrated units in the Army. The editor was Dashiell Hammett and a young staff writer by the name of Bernard Kalb who became a well known journalist becoming a household name for his work during Vietnam.

Items have a story, what tale do yours tell?

www.32ndbombsquadron.org

We have rescued this website. It was available for many years. The creator passed in 2016 and the website disappeared. Fortunately, we had a copy of the site and have recreated it in his and all the other 32nd Squadron members memory. re-launched November 2020.

Read one story below and others on the website.

[Visit the 32ndBombSquadron.org](http://www.32ndBombSquadron.org)





John Lehr



Herb Heilbrun

The Reunion: A World War II Bomber Pilot, His Fighter Escort, and One Whopper of a Coincidence.

by John Fleischman

HERB HEILBRUN KEEPS EVERYTHING. He has every canceled check he ever wrote. He has the manufacturer's manual for the B-17G he picked up at the Boeing factory in Seattle on October 12, 1944, and the flight log that records the 7,075 miles and 41 hours of his flight from Lincoln, Nebraska, to Foggia, Italy, via Newfoundland, the Azores, and North Africa. He has one of the 89 chunks of shrapnel that ventilated his bomber on Christmas Day 1944, while his squadron was attacking refineries at Brux, Czechoslovakia. He has the government-issue rubber oxygen mask and canvas flier's helmet that he wore 30,000 feet over Brux. And he has the diary he kept to detail his 262 hours in combat, piloting a B-17G from Italy up the Adriatic, over the Alps, and into the industrial heart of Nazi Germany. He knows to the minute how long he was in combat and on what dates he flew against which targets.

IN 1995, Herb read in the Cincinnati paper that the city was honoring the local chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. Red tails, Herb remembered. The Tuskegees were the all-black 332nd Fighter Group. They flew red-tail P-51s on missions escorting bomber squadrons from Italy into Germany. Herb could still remember hearing, amid the radio chatter over the target, the distinctive voices of the Tuskegee Airmen. He felt that his thanks were overdue.

"THE MAYOR WAS MAKING A PRESENTATION on Fountain Square," Herb recalls. "I went down to the hotel where they were having some sort of reception and I told somebody that I flew B-17s in Italy and that the Tuskegee Airmen escorted me. I said that if there's a flier around here that was over there, I'd like to give him a hug for saving my behind. Then someone said, 'There's a fellow over there. I think he did that.'"

THE MAN WAS NAMED JOHN LEHR. When the two were introduced, Herb hugged John and said: "I've been waiting 50 years to meet one of you guys. You saved my tail on many a day."

THE BLACK EX-FIGHTER PILOT AND THE WHITE EX-BOMBER PILOT BECAME FRIENDS. They went out for lunch. They visited each other's homes for dinner. They began matching up dates and other details of combat missions they'd flown. John had indeed flown cover on at least two of Herb's 35 missions: Brux on December 16th and Blechemmer on December 17th. Brux on the 16th was bad but not as bad as Brux on the 25th, Herb recalled. On that mission – Christmas Day – his fuel tanks were hit, his high-altitude oxygen system was hit, and his armor gunner ended up getting wounded in the foot.

AS THE TWO GOT TO KNOW EACH OTHER, they discovered other things in common. The men had been born within a mile of each other and only seven months apart. Both had come up through Cincinnati public schools, and both had managed to scrape together two years of college during the Depression. Both had enlisted in the Air Corps within weeks of Pearl Harbor. Both had to wait months to be called for flying school,

so both took jobs at the same airplane engine factory: Wright Aeronautical in Lockland, Ohio. Herb tested engines, firing up GR-2600-655 Cyclones on test stands. John worked in the plant foundry. The work was filthy, hot, and done exclusively by blacks, he recalls.

HERB GOT ASSIGNED TO ITALY as part of the 32nd Squadron of the 301st Bomb Group. He arrived well schooled in the elaborate squadron takeoff ritual that quickly launched and stacked dozens of bombers into box formations. Rising from fields all around Foggia, the bomber echelons assembled themselves until hundreds of aircraft were swarming up the Adriatic. The first time Herb saw one of the enormous boxes, it took his breath away.

A FEW THOUSAND FEET above the B-17s and off to the side, John Leahr flew escort in a P-51. "I'd always wanted to fly," he recalls. "It fascinated me, but I'd never been up in an airplane in my life." Word that the corps had been forced to train blacks as pilots electrified the black community, John recalls, and he rushed to join the War Department's prewar Civilian Pilot Training program. The CPT assigned black pilots to get their primary training at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Traveling to the deep south in that era "scared me to death," John recalls. "There were so many stories. At that time, there was no federal anti-lynch law, and black people were beaten up and killed and nothing was done about it."

THE AIR CORPS WANTED ONLY ENOUGH BLACK PILOTS to fill a handful of token squadrons, so the washout rate at Tuskegee was ferocious. John's flying career almost crashed on takeoff. "It was when I was ready to solo," he recalls. "I was lined up to take off and I thought I'd cleared myself good. So I started down the field and then I heard a strange noise and I looked up. Here's an airplane coming right down straight on top of me... My prop hit the tail wheel of this other airplane and made a nice clanking noise.

"MY INSTRUCTOR WAS WAY DOWN ON THE OTHER END OF THE FIELD . I didn't think he knew what'd happened. I thought that if I didn't get this airplane off the ground now, I would probably never fly. If you hit another airplane, what that's a washout. So I took the plane off without checking the prop. And that plane tried to slow roll on me all the way around the field. I got it up in the air, holding full rudder and stick to keep that plane straight."

AFTER A BRIEF FLIGHT, JOHN MANAGED TO LAND . "The instructor came running up shouting, 'Did you hit that other airplane?' "I played dumb and said, 'I don't think so'... He told me the commanding officer wanted to see me. I knew what that meant. I was going to be washed out.

"I REPORTED IN THE FINEST MILITARY MANNER, and he was sitting there ignoring me for a while and then suddenly he's roaring at me, 'You darn near killed an instructor and another student!' and so and so forth. He gave me a good chewing out. Then he said, 'Go on and get out of here and be more careful.' Man, was I happy." In July 1943, John earned his wings.

THE FOLLOWING FEBRUARY, his squadron landed in Italy. The black airmen lived apart from the white Air Corps. "The whole crew, everyone – mechanics, cooks, squadron commander, everybody – we were completely segregated," says John. The pilots flew hand-me-down aircraft. When John's squadron first went into combat with the 12th Tactical Air Force in February 1944, they were the only Americans in Europe flying the cranky and obsolete P-39 Airacobra. That July, the squadron was given weary P-51Bs and -Cs left them by white squadrons trading up to the more advanced P-51Ds.

ON A MISSION, the bombers would be about two hours out when the fighter escorts caught up with them. On the intercom of his B-17, Herb could hear his gunners sight them, high above the box, cutting S turns to eat up the difference in ground speed between bombers and fighters. The escorts were supposed to handle enemy interceptors, but nothing seemed to lessen the flak. The Germans moved mobile flak units around to surprise the Allies while they were crossing the Po Valley or near the mountain passes that they followed into Austria and Germany. And once the bombers reached their target, all the anti-aircraft guns on earth seemed to be waiting for them, altitude fuses set. It was the engineer's job to dress the pilot for the bomb run – helmet and a heavy flak jacket shaped like an umpire's chest protector. Herb would tuck the tail between his legs, then continue on with his squadron toward the target.

“YOU'D SEE THOSE POOR BOMBER BOYS line up and go straight into that flak,” John says. “It would be a beautiful clear day and you’d look up into a blue sky, it would be beautiful. But when those bombers would line up, it would look like one hell of a thunderstorm where that flak would come up bursting. And those bombers would fly right through it.

“WE WATCHED THOSE GUYS GO THROUGH HELL . We’re sitting out on the side waiting for them to come out and we could see them getting hit. If they got hit in the bomb bay, the plane just exploded into a great big ball of fire. The whole plane blew up and then it was nothing.

“WHEN THEY CAME OFF TARGET, that’s when the enemy fighters used to really get them. These guys would come off the target all shot up. Maybe they’d have a couple of engines knocked out. Maybe on fire. That’s when we would try to pick them up. They’d call us ‘Little Friend’ – ‘Little Friend, I’m going down.’ Or ‘Little Friend, I’m losing altitude. Can you see us? The pilot’s dead. Or the copilot’s injured. Stay with us. Little Friend, stay with us.’ That’s when those enemy fighters would come to shoot those poor guys down like sitting ducks.

“SOMETIMES THEY COULD GET THE PLANE together and get away from the target. Some might crash-land it if they could find a good place or some would bail out all together safely. In some instances, we were able to escort them far enough from the target so that they could make it on back. We would be running out of gas. We knew to the minute how long we had before we wouldn’t make it back ourselves. The stragglers would be very slow, traveling on two engines, but we stayed with them long enough to get them out of range of enemy fighters.” The Tuskegee squadrons, John says, never lost a bomber they were escorting home.

JOHN WAS EVENTUALLY RETURNED TO THE STATES so he could get advanced training to become a flight instructor at Tuskegee. He found that the racial climate back home had not changed. He recalls an incident in Memphis, where he had been sent by the military for a goiter operation. While convalescing, he and three other black officers had gone into town, and at a bus stop were accosted by a drunk. “He was a big redneck, a thug if there ever was one,” John says. “He stopped the four of us while we were waiting to transfer, right down there in the heart of town. We were in uniform. I was in full dress, with my decorations on, when this guy comes up and says: ‘I’ll be damned. Look at these niggers. And nigger officers.’ And then he says: ‘Two of them got wigs on. Damn, I’ve killed a lot of niggers, but I never killed any nigger officers. I’m gonna kill you niggers’” Luckily, the intervention of a passing white sailor and the arrival of a bus allowed the officers to escape.

ONCE HE WAS OUT OF THE MILITARY, John discovered that he was a pretty good salesman. He sold securities and managed a brokerage office before retiring as an office administrator from Cincinnati Gas & Electric. Herb became a salesman too, selling radio ads and then commercial real estate (He’s still doing a deal or two.) Today, John is a widower with children and grandchildren, as well as his step-children and step-grandchildren, plus the kids who attend his wife Carol’s in-home daycare center. When their paths crossed at the Tuskegee Airmen’s reception, the men were living 10 minutes apart.

ONE NIGHT, HERB RECALLS, “Johnny and I were having dinner, and he said, ‘You know, I grew up in Avondale.’ And that’s when I said, ‘So did I.’ And I remember what he said: ‘There were only five black families in Avondale, and I went to a school on Clinton Springs Avenue. It was an old mansion.’ And I said, ‘I went to that school. I lived on Warwick right where it came into Clinton Springs, and I would just walk up Warwick and right into school.’ Well then he said, ‘I don’t remember you.’ And I said, ‘I don’t remember you.’”

THAT WASN'T SURPRISING. When it came to racial matters, Cincinnati had Southern ways. During World War II, Cincinnati’s railroad station had the distinction of being the southbound point where passenger segregation began. Most of Cincinnati’s hotels, restaurants, and even hamburger stands were for whites only.

STILL AFTER HERB LEARNED that he and John had gone to the same school, he

wondered if they had ever intersected. When he got home he went through his photo albums, of course he still had his second grade picture.

THE PHOTOGRAPH shows 40 kids in the class; 38 are white and two – a boy and a girl – are black. John recalls what happened next: “Herb sent [the picture] to me with a little note that said, ‘John, this thing is getting crazier and crazier by the minute. If that little black guy in this picture is you, well, that kid behind him who is almost touching him is me.’” It was true.

TODAY, JOHN AND HERB take out the picture to show a visitor. “So that’s me right there, and that’s Herb right there,” John says, tapping the white boy with the home-barbered bangs standing right behind him. Their teacher is in the back row. The two agree that Miss Pitchel was a tough cookie.

“AND SEE THAT BLACK GIRL THERE?” SAYS HERB. “I remember her name was Mary Louise Hillman, because my mother’s name was Mary Louise Heilbrun.”

“HERB, DO YOU KNOW SHE’S STILL LIVING RIGHT DOWN THE STREET from the school on Clinton Springs?” says John. “She’s not in the same house she was living in but she’s in the same neighborhood.”

“NOW ISN’T THAT SOMETHING?” says Herb, admiring the photo again. “This was 1928. That’s a few weeks ago.”

FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS, John has been campaigning to tell people about the role of the Tuskegee airmen in World War II and in the country’s racial history. Time is the enemy now for the Tuskegees. These are their last years to speak for themselves, putting on record not just their valor at war but the ugliness they confronted at home.

AFTER THE TWO REUNITED, John enlisted Herb in his campaign. Together, they speak at schools, clubs, and to any other group that will listen. The Kroger Company in Cincinnati had them address a corporate banquet.

TODAY, THEY ARE SCHEDULED TO SPEAK at the suburban Cincinnati campus of Raymond Walters College. Herb is waiting in the driveway when John drives up. John climbs out to contemplate Herb’s nearly vertical backyard that drops into a ravine. “I mowed that once a week for 30 years,” says Herb. “Then I hired this kid to do it for me. I got smart.”

“YOU GOT OLD,” says John.

THE TWO LOAD THE CAR with their Tuskegee Airmen displays and take off. John drives like a pilot, checking the instruments, scanning the horizon, and carefully watching his tail.

THEIR COLLEGE AUDIENCE TODAY turns out to be senior citizens enrolled in an “Institute for Learning in Retirement” course on World War II. At first it seems John and Herb will be preaching to the choir, until they observe that many taking their seats in the lecture hall see to be only in their early 70s – too young to have gone to their war. Which is fine with John and Herb. Fresh ears are always in short supply.

JOINING JOHN AND HERB TODAY IS LESLIE EDWARDS, a Tuskegee ground crew chief who witnessed the nearly forgotten 1945 “Freeman Field Mutiny.” On a small training field near Seymour, Indiana, 162 black officers were court-martialed after refusing the base commander’s order to sign a pledge that they would stay away from the whites-only officers’ club. (The NAACP sent Thurgood Marshall to their defense, and though a handful of officers were convicted, General George Marshall eventually overturned the convictions.)

JOHN BEGINS BY SHOWING A VIDEO – a segment from a TV documentary on the Tuskegees. He talks about his training, about shipping out, and about getting jumped over Linz, Austria, by 40 German Bf 109s. Two of his wingmates were shot down at once, his flight leader was driven off, and, surrounded by enemy aircraft, he discovered that his machine guns had frozen at the high altitude and were unable to fire. He tells the audience that he owed his escape to a mixture of aerial acrobatics and applied religion.

WHEN IT'S HERB'S TURN, he tells the audience about the bomber war. He tells them about the wooden boards in the briefing room where each crew member's last name was posted on a metal strip; one morning Herb watched the operations officer take down a stack of strips and toss them in the trash. They were shot down, the officer explained. They're not coming back. Herb reaches into his pocket and with a grin holds up a battered metal strip with "Heilbrun" written in white. The audience claps.

HE TALKS ABOUT HIS HOMECOMING IN 1945, about meeting John all those years later, and about piecing together their past. Herb puts up a projection slide of the photograph of Miss Pitchel's class. The picture never misses.

GETTING TO KNOW JOHN and hearing about the Tuskegees' war opened his eyes, he says. "He gave me a real education. I'm an honorary member of the Tuskegee Airmen, and I consider it a great honor.

"IN ALL THOSE MISSIONS, I was never under fighter attack," he says. "If it weren't for men like John Lehr, I wouldn't be here. So that's one reason I like John Lehr. Actually that's the main reason I like John Lehr." They hug. The audience laughs.

ONE ARM AROUND JOHN, Herb says that the two have one request. "Don't forget us," he says.

Story Copyright 2001 by John Fleischman.

[Visit the Full Story to See More Photos!](#)

John, Herb we won't forget you and in their case we amend our mission to be:
"Saving Military History Two Soldiers at a Time"

[Visit the 32ndBombSquadron.org Page](#)

And read more stories

**Preserve This History, Honor the Service,
Provide Education For Future Generations**



Make a \$ Donation to the Army
Air Corps Library and Museum

Thank You For Your Support !

Make a \$ Donation To the Sons
of Liberty Museum

Thank You For Your Support !

---- What is Liberty ? ----

"definition. the state of being free within society from oppressive restrictions imposed by authority on one's way of life, behavior, or political views."

Merriam-Webster defines it as " the power to do as one pleases, the freedom from physical restraint and freedom from arbitrary or despotic control.

---- So what is a Son of Liberty? ----

In our context and beginning these were the men and women in America who wanted the freedom from the King of England. They desired a right of self-determination for their lives. They fought for this liberty and codified it in the Constitution of a new country. To keep this liberty they created a military to ward off the any would-be belligerent. For 244 years the men and women who have worn the cloth of our nation's military are the Sons of Liberty. They have fought enemies in other nations, they have fought each other and they have stood as sentinels of the watch.

We celebrate the service of these individuals, we tell the historical story of these selfless patriots.

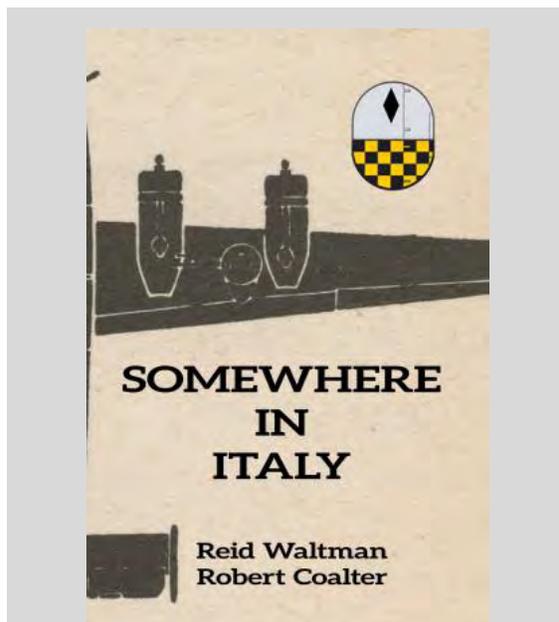
---- The Sons of Liberty Museum ----

Over a decade ago we chose a name for this organization and our sister the Army Air Corps Library and Museum. We believe these names accurately describe these men and women who serve. We will not change any name to satisfy a radical viewpoint or computer algorithm, we don't allow for any revisionist history, we tell the factual stories.

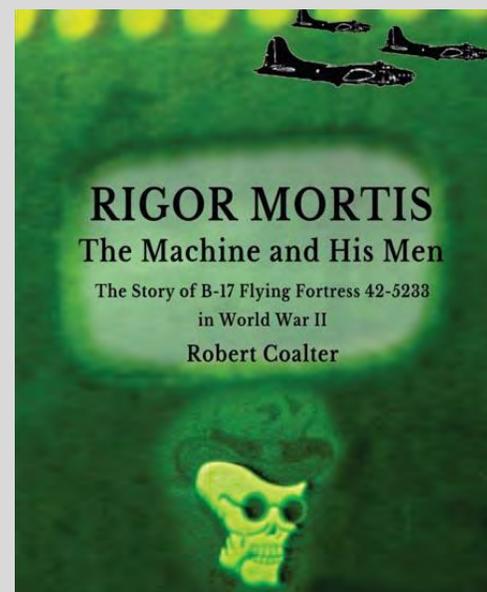
We are Saving Military History One Soldier at a Time.

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I was a navigator in the 459 Bomb Group 758 Bomb Squadron flying B-24's from Torre Giulia Field, tower



Most aircraft of World War II had pictures of sexy girls, tributes to sweethearts, songs and home. The

named 'Coffee Tower', a gravel airfield near Cerignola, on the Foggia Plains of Southeastern Italy during the period August 4, 1944 to May 16, 1945. I flew 50 combat missions over targets in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia and Northern Italy.

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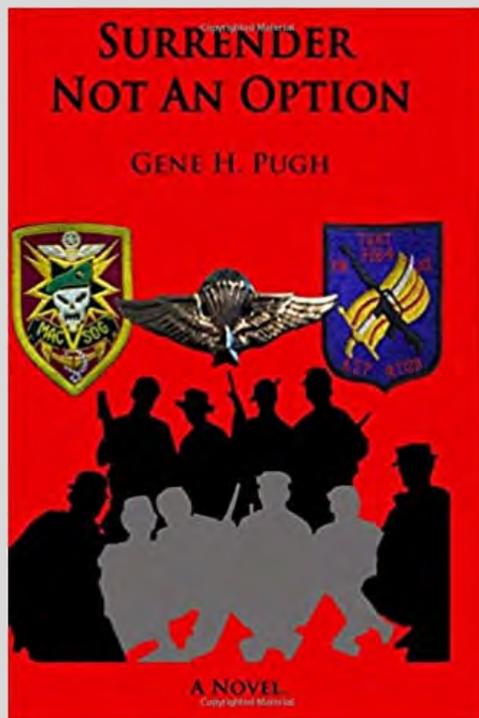
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planes were fondly referred to in a feminine manor. That was not the case with this B-17 tail number 42-25233. He was Rigor Mortis.

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A Novel of MACVSOG in Vietnam. By Gene Pugh a Special Forces Recon Team Member.

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Surrender Not an Option

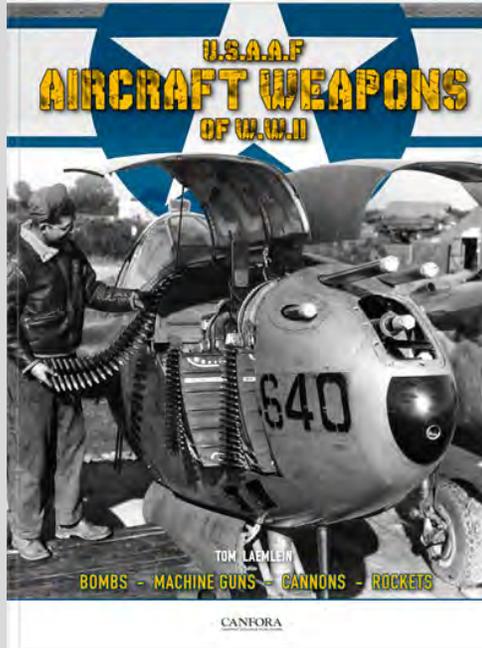
Survivors guilt is not the only thing that is bothering Allen Purvis. He has to relive in his mind the battles in a denied area when he was assigned to MACVSOG the ultimate secret organization during the Viet Nam war. He is put to the test when he commands his friends to sacrifice themselves to save the others of the unit. Wendy Salas, nurse at the 95th Evacuation Hospital sees the horrors of the war everyday. Her pain is personal. A chance meeting on R&R in Hong Kong brings these two people together as soul mates in a hope that one of them can save the other. Purvis like the others wondered why they were saved and the answer was there all the time.

- Paperback : 312 pages
- ISBN-10 : 1539108333
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- Dimensions : 6 x 0.71 x 9 inches

Gene is a member of our advisory board.

U.S.A.A.F. Aircraft Weapons of WWII

This book focuses on the war-winning weaponry of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II. With 144 pages containing more than 250 photos it offers stunning visual details of the machine guns, cannons, bombs, and rockets carried into battle by USAAF bombers, fighters, and attack aircraft. Many of the photos



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Many of the photos and illustrations in this book, some of them in color, are strong enough to be displayed in full page format. The images deliver the gritty details of USAAF armaments' use down to their nuts and rivets, and the high-velocity rounds they fired. This is a unique photo-study, with many of the photos never-before published.

and illustrations in this book, some of them in color, are strong enough to be displayed in full page format. The images deliver the gritty details of USAAF armaments' use down to their nuts and rivets, and the high-velocity rounds they fired. This is the first photo-history of its kind, with many of the photos never-before published.

Combat conditions dictated that many aircraft were adapted into roles for which they were not designed. As necessity is the mother of invention, aircraft were modified in both their roles and their armament. B-25s became ground attackers, A-20s became night fighters, and every wartime USAAF fighter was adapted to carry bombs.

Museum Projects



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Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force

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Many groups received unit citations during their particular conflict. The



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Many WWII veterans organizations have shut. Many these organizations had developed some type of website, some with enormous amounts of data and history. Sadly, many had/have not made provisions for their website to be continued and thus when the bill stops being paid, the website disappears and all the work and information is lost. We want to help and we need you to help us. If you know of a disbanding group, please have them get in contact with us; we would like to bring their website and information under our wing. If they want to continue to maintain it we can give them access to continue that as well. One of our top goals for this and every year is to preserve this history not lose it!

paperwork, in triplicate, would include a roster of all assigned and attached personnel. We are seeking and requesting copies of those roster documents. Please search your papers, talk to your association and help us out with this information and get them to us pronto!

Not a WW2 unit? That's ok. We are also interested in your history and want to help preserve it. Korea, Vietnam and all other conflicts.

If your organization has physical materials such as uniforms, patches, photos and other memorabilia do you have plans for them when you cease operations? We would be honored to be the custodian of your group's history.

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