

PARHAM AIRFIELD MUSEUM NEWSLETTER October- November 2020



Registered Charity Number 284146



From our Chairman

It is my pleasure to introduce to you our latest newsletter. We really appreciate the interest you take in our museum. Our volunteer team send their best wishes to you all. We hope that you and your families are keeping well despite the persistence of the COVID 19 virus.

In common with most similar museums, we have decided to remain closed to the public for the remainder of this summer season. This is because of the practical implications and expense involved in opening for just a few months. Our aim is to open as normally as possible next April. We continue to respond to requests for information and have given various researchers guided tours, arranged in advance.

Meanwhile, this situation continues to give us opportunities to carry out major improvements. For example, the entrance has been refurbished and much of the Moller corridor repainted. The wall displays by the library are being rearranged to make them more visible and provide space for some new themes. In the café area, we are re-designing the wall displays between the shop counter and the exhibits at the far end. To assist with this, the

mannequins modelling wartime civilian clothing have been moved to the corridor leading to the new building. In their place will be an exhibition about evacuees and the importance of Parham Station to the war effort. All this is presided over by *Millie the Mermaid*, very kindly painted and donated by Frank Drain, son of 390th Veteran Dick. She is a replica of the mural that was behind the bar in the 390th Officers' Club.



Right, The original Millie

Photo: Stewart Evans



The New Exhibition Hall

The Committee has decided that this should be named “The Kindred Building”. Members of the family did not vote but otherwise the decision was unanimous. When we have our official opening ceremony, a plaque will be unveiled to explain why. It will acknowledge Percy Kindred, “father” of the 390th, auxiliary corporal and a founder of the museum; Herman Kindred, auxiliary sergeant; Charles Kindred, auxiliary radio operator; and Peter Kindred, our President, who has led the building project.

At the committee meeting it was also agreed to name the new cinema “The John Warwicker Cinema”, in recognition of the enormous contribution John has made in researching the history of Britain’s secret defence plans. He persuaded the authorities to allow veterans to speak about it after 50 years, and was instrumental in creating the Museum of the British Resistance Organisation.

Work continues to finish the build project. There are some fitting out tasks to complete such as electrical work in the replica base, but security systems are fully functional. We have wireless broadband thanks to the most generous support of Fram Broadband. Currently our volunteers are focusing on creating the various exhibitions. The main timeline is complete. Other wall displays are being created. An introductory film is in production along with various other digital presentations. A selection of clothing and equipment is being

assembled so that visitors can be photographed in the correct attire! We are confident you will be impressed when you are able to visit.

Membership

A few years ago, the Committee decided to make membership free. We have no plans to change this, but the Charity Commission expects museums to keep a list of members who are entitled to vote at the AGM and stand for election as committee members. So, we have adopted a modern definition of membership. This is open to those who wish to be voting members, carry out voluntary work with us or have recently done so. Others can be added to the list of voting members on an honorary basis if they have been active volunteers in the past. We are in the process of contacting those who we believe may wish to be a voting member. However, this is difficult with the passage of time and General Data Protection Regulations. If having read this, you wish the Committee to place you on the voting list and have not yet heard from us, please email me on parhamairfield@yahoo.co.uk All those interested in the museum will continue to be welcome at our AGM, whether or not they are voting members.

In Memory of Michael John Reader

Michael passed away recently. He had been a keen supporter of the museum and an active re-enactor. His family tell us that he was always happy to be at Parham and have fond memories of time spent with us when they were growing up. They have generously donated a picnic table in his memory so that other families can better enjoy their visits whilst they have refreshment on the grass area outside our café. It is embossed with his name and motifs relating to the 390th Bomb Group. Various other items have also been given in his memory, including a range of World War Two uniforms and some interesting books. We are grateful for this generosity and have the Reader family in our thoughts as they grieve for their loved one. On 26th September Michael's ashes were scattered in our rose garden during a brief service led by Canon Graham Hedger.

Peter Senior



New Building Photo Journal



Above, we are now working hard on new displays and relocating exhibitions in the new building.



Left, Tony Nials, volunteer, does some high level work.

Below, the flags are in place.



Our timeline has been a time-consuming project but we are very pleased with the final result. Many thanks to all involved in researching and collating this information.

Fire at Parham Airfield

On 13th August there was a large fire at a factory on the airfield, just a short distance from the museum. Fifteen fire engines attended the blaze but fortunately no one was injured. Luckily, the wind was blowing the opposite direction to the museum and it was not affected by the fire.



Photo Richard Lapage

Sponsored Walk

On Saturday 27th September Station 153, Framlingham was visited briefly by a group of reenactors based at 95th Bomb Group museums, Horham. Despite the wet and windy weather, they donned their authentic US Army WWII full kit and set off to walk back to Horham, which is about 15 miles. The next day, the plan was to walk to 100th Bomb Group base at Thorpe Abbots. This great effort was to raise sponsorship for the three museums of the 13th Bombardment Wing, which have all been facing difficult times during the COVID 19 crisis. Well done all!



Local enthusiasts came with their military vehicles to see progress with our new building in August.



Some Light- Hearted Humour (Part II)

These are (apparently) actual maintenance complaints from US Air Force pilots and the maintenance crews replies. *P Problem S Solution*

- P IFF inoperative
S IFF always inoperative in OFF mode
- P Number 2 propeller seeping prop. fluid
S Number 2 propeller seepage normal- numbers 1, 3 and 4 propellers lack normal seepage
- P Target Radar hums
S Reprogrammed Target Radar with the words
- P Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick
S That's what they're there for
- P Dead bugs on windshield
S Live bugs on order
- P Autopilot in altitude hold mode produces a 200 fpm descent
S Cannot reproduce problem on the ground

From Framlingham Times September 2008

CALLING 390th VETERANS

Are you a 390th Veteran? We would love to share your stories of the war and hear about your life after the 390th. Please send us articles and photos for submission in our newsletter. Also, please let us know when you will be celebrating a birthday so that we can share your special day.

This month we are featuring Charles Richardson and Allen Corrow.

Charles J. Richardson was born 7th June 1923. He is an avid reader and writer on various subjects. His favourite genres are history, particularly that of World War II, astronomy, and science. He has penned 6 additional books of fiction and non-fiction, one of poetry, two fictional novels, two non-fictional writings, and is currently working on his seventh. Our Chairman has written a book review on his latest book on the next page. Charles still attends book signings and is looking forward to get back out giving speeches regarding his World War II experiences.



Charles was employed in the Automotive Parts Industry prior to his engagement in the European Theater of Operation (571st Squadron) at Parham, and returned to this career after his return to the United States after the war. He remained in this industry until his retirement in 1991.

He was fortunate to be able to return to many of the destinations which he bombed during World War II and be able to witness the numerous changes that had developed over the 50 years since his presence there.

Mr. Richardson's free time is spent reading, writing, enjoying time with close friends, listening to music, singing tenor in the church choir, and maintaining his residence in Charlotte, North Carolina. Charles is active as a speaker and is very active in the 390th Bomb Group Historical Society Chapter in Charlotte, NC.

He has served as elder and deacon in the church, beginning in 1946, as well as having served as youth leader and Sunday school teacher. He is physically active with water aerobics several times weekly at the YMCA.

Prior to her death in 2012, he was married to his wife, Eleta, for almost 70 years. Two children were born of this marriage, a son, Ronald Richardson, who passed away in January, 2018 and a daughter, Carol Dudley. He enjoys time with his two grandchildren, two great grandchildren, and his miniature Schnauzer, Lee.



35 Missions to Hell and Back, A Mighty 8th Air Force 390th Bomb Group (H) History, by Charles J. "Chuck" Richardson.

This book was recently published in the USA. It is a must read for those who, like me, are always searching for accounts of what it was like to fly with the 390th Bomb Group. T/Sgt. Richardson was a Radio Operator/Air Gunner with 571st. Squadron, one of Lt. Raymond Strate's crew of B17G "Good-O-Yank." We are grateful to Emily Wilson who has generously provided a signed copy for our Percy Kindred Library. Well done to our very own Mick Tipple, who is credited for his help with research.

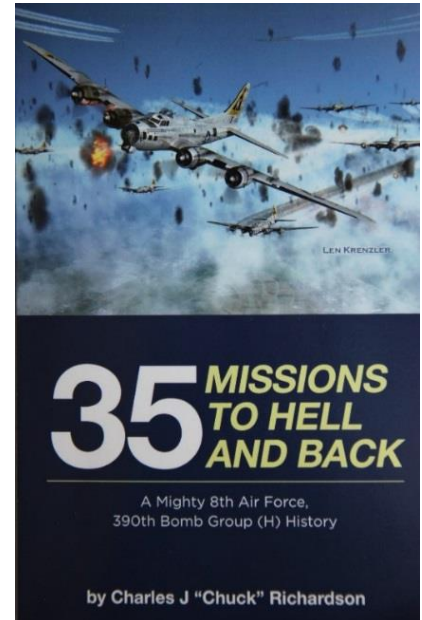
The book begins with Chuck's early life and initial training; unlike many airmen he was a married man when he flew the Atlantic for foreign service. Fortunately for historians he remembered many details of his experiences, helped perhaps by his love of writing letters home. The crew's first mission was to bomb coastal guns in Normandy on 25 May 1944. Their 35th was on 13th September 1944 to oil refineries near Stuttgart. Chuck's experiences during this period are described vividly, a mixture of bravery, laughter, love, joy, frustration, horror and sheer terror.

How did it feel when daylight appeared through shrapnel holes, the flak was so thick it seemed you could walk on it, fighters screamed in from all angles and B17s at your wing tip, flown by your friends, fell to earth? How was a short stay in Soviet Russia for young flyers on a shuttle mission within range of Luftwaffe ground attack? Parham Church was a haven of peace on a rare quiet Sunday, but why did the locals laugh if you asked for a chilled beer? What were the amazing practical jokes these young men played on one another in an age before "Health and Safety"? What made Bournemouth so relaxing, but London so dangerous that Chuck decided he was safer back at base? Just imagine the emotion when Chuck arrived home and his wife was not even expecting him. To find the answer to the questions and much, much more, read the book!

Peter Senior

Book Editor's Note

Twenty-plus years in the writing, this is a compelling story of young boys bound by faith, courage, blood, sweat, and tears, and how that bonding created the brave young men they became. Hopefully, all who read this account will feel the deep emotions of terror, disappointment, frustration, laughter, love, peace, and joy experienced by the author during his service as a radioman/gunner on a B17-G during World War II. Some of the stories contained in this manuscript have never been published or made public.



We have also heard from Allen Corrow and his son Gregg.

“Dad was ground crew for the 571st Squadron, primarily repairing the damaged B-17 bombers. They spelled his name wrong in Boot Camp- as Staff Sargent Allen Carrow- and it stuck in his record! Dad still lives at home in Dayton, Minnesota and is cared for by his 7 surviving children. He maintains his sense of humour!

Dad says they often worked on planes at night. *“We’d go out at night, after dark, so the Germans couldn’t see us. We would work on these planes outside and get spare parts from the “Boneyard” to fix them. We knew the Germans and the sound of their engines and we could tell when they were coming at us. We’d just hide under cover until they’d disappear and then when we got the parts we needed we went back to the big hangar, where we could roll a B-17 in from one end and another from the other end, and you’d be able to work on them at night. One night we were out there with two guys from New York. If you were a guy from New York you knew everything and they knew everything, smug b****rds! One of them ran into the building, punched the button and opened the door. Not too long before we knew it and the building was gone. The Germans had seen it from above and their plane came right at us and took the hangar and the two planes. We were just out of it far enough that we didn’t get hurt.”*



After D-Day, Dad and his corps were responsible for helping to get Dachau concentration camp prisoners to hospitals in France. They would clear out room in their bombers, load up French POWs and bring them to safety, but it was a traumatic experience that Dad wouldn’t wish on anybody.

“We could get 32-35 prisoners standing in the plane and we’d fly them from Germany to France which was only an hour and a half flight. These people were POWs who had been working under German rule. We pulled in and started loading up and you could see the line. When these people had to go to the bathroom, they’d go right where they were standing, right in line to get to that plane. It was an eye-opener, you don’t want to see it. Those poor devils, they were scarred from working, barefooted, no decent shoes or clothes on. And morals- they had lost all their morals. It was just chaos. What they did to those people over there was just unbelievable.”

Following WW II Dad re-enlisted in the US Army Air Corp in 1947 due to the very high unemployment situation in the US following the war. He served for two years and participated in the Berlin Airlift serving on an airbase close to Munich. Dad witnessed first-hand while travelling through Germany the effectiveness of the 8th Air Force bombing campaign during the war. Travelling by train from Hamburg to Munich he commented the landscape of the cities looked as if he were on the moon.

In 1949, Dad left the armed forces and enjoyed spending time with his growing family. He went on to run his own business, Corrow Sanitation, until he retired aged 80. Dad also used knowledge gained from working on a farm to raise Arabian horses, including 6 times U.S National Champion Stallion, *Pistal*.



Left, Allen in his uniform when he attended the dedication of the Minnesota WW II Monument at the State Capital in 2007. Right, Pistal.

My wife Sandi & I visited the Parham Air base 5 years ago along with my sister & nephew and truly enjoyed touring the base. We admire your efforts to preserve the base and we hope to return to visit at some point.

Dad is very, very proud of having served with the 390th Bomb Group during WWII.”

Gregg Corrow



Gregg with his nephew Joe, his wife Sandra and his sister Cynthia (Cindy) at Parham in 2015.



Allen has 8 children, 35 grandchildren, 61 great grandchildren and 12 great-great grandchildren!

Allan celebrated his 98th birthday in August. Many Belated Happy Returns to you Allen.

FROM OUR ARCHIVIST

GENERAL SUMMARY October 1944

Despite the unfavorable weather which prevailed during October, the 390th Group added fifteen missions to its growing total, among them the all-important 200th mission. Reflecting the adverse weather conditions encountered, visual bombing was employed on only three missions. With PFF technique used on the majority of missions, accurate assessment of results could not be obtained, as in few cases were any bomb bursts observed.

Two missions were classed as successful, four as unsuccessful, and for nine, results are unknown.

Casualties for the month were remarkably low. Only two aircraft were reported missing and personnel casualties numbered 31 with only one man officially listed as killed in action. These losses are the lowest for any month since the Group began operations in August 1943.

Indicating the absence of fighter opposition in the skies over Germany, only one counter claim was recorded in October. S/Sgt E. R Stefanic was credited with probably destroying an ME163, one of the new enemy jet-type planes on the Bahlen-Bielsfeld mission of 7 October.

The practise of flying 12 aircraft formations was maintained during the month, but the designation of such units was changed. This type of formation is now referred to as a squadron, and the thirty-eight aircraft formation as a group.

Early in October, the newly completed "Mickey" War Room was used for briefing two Pathfinder crews for the first PFF mission to be conducted from this base. A new system of pre-briefings, independent of the regular briefings, was set up for lead crews and Pathfinder crews.

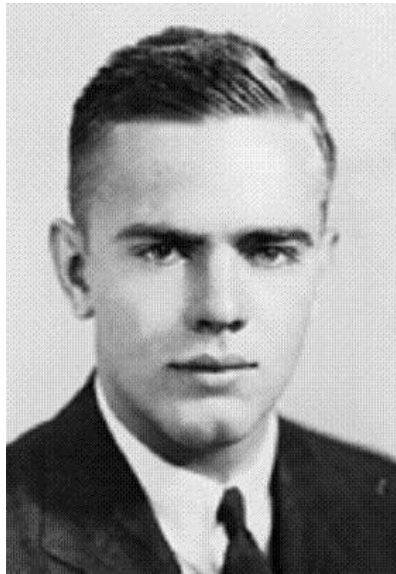
The Training Section established a lead crew Operations in October located in the old briefing building. Fifteen new crews were processed and given ground and air training before going operational.

No aircraft accidents were reported for the month.



AIRMAN OF THE MONTH

OCTOBER



Marshall McLaney Shepherd

9th June 1919- 8th October 1943

Marshall, was born in Pennsylvania and enlisted into the USAAF on 9 April 1941. He trained as a pilot and flew 13 missions from Station 153.

On Mission 20 to Bremen, Germany A/C292 "Pulsatin Polly" received several direct hits from fighter aircraft and flak. No.4 engine was set on fire and Lt. Shepherd thought by taking evasive action and diving he could extinguish the blaze. No.3 engine then started to flame and the B-17 started to spin. The injured 1st Lt Shepherd gave the order to bail out. The plane began to disintegrate and exploded.

Marshall's body was never found. He is remembered on the Wall of the Missing at the American War Cemetery Margraten. He was 24.



SERIAL NUMBER 795	1. NAME (Print) MARSHALL McLANEY SHEPHERD	ORDER NUMBER 1028
2. ADDRESS (Print) 1610 EAST MOREHEAD ST. CHARLOTTE, MECKLENBURG CO. N.C.		
3. TELEPHONE 6374	4. AGE IN YEARS 21	5. PLACE OF BIRTH CHARLOTTE
6. DATE OF BIRTH JUNE 9 1919		6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP U.S.
7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS MR. JOHN CALVIN SHEPHERD		8. RELATIONSHIP OF THAT PERSON FATHER
9. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON 1610 EAST MOREHEAD ST. CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG CO. CAROLINA		
10. EMPLOYER'S NAME MR JOHN CALVIN SHEPHERD.		
11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS 1013 JOHNSTON BLOC CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG CO. CAROLINA		
REGISTRATION CARD D. S. S. Form 1 (over) 16-17105 <i>Marshall McLaney Shepherd</i> (Registrant's signature)		

GENERAL SUMMARY

NOVEMBER 1944

Further deterioration in the weather held the 390th Group to ten missions for the month of November, the lowest number flown in many months. PFF technique, with occasional visual checks, was employed on all but one mission, that of the 16th, when the Group, leading the Eighth Airforce in attack on troop concentrations and military installations in the Duran Area, used the new Micro-H technique to good effect.

Only two missions were considered successful, five were unsuccessful and for three, results are unknown.

For the first 29 days of the month, the Group was on the way to a record low in airplane and personnel losses, but on the 30th, concentrated and accurate flak over Merseburg brought down seven of our aircraft, including that in which Lt. Col. Dolan, Group Air Executive Officer, was leading the 13th Combat Wing. A total of nine aircraft were lost during November, eight missing in action with 73 crew members and one destroyed when it crashed after the crew had bailed out over friendly territory. In addition to the above, casualties include one man killed in action and six men wounded in action.

Four aircraft made emergency landings in friendly territory, the crews later returning to their base, and are listed as "Abandoned on Continent," pending final disposition.

No enemy aircraft were encountered during the month.

One accident, of a minor nature, was recorded when one of our airplanes, after an emergency landing at Leiston, collided with a parked P-51 while taxiing on the perimeter track, slightly damaging one wing tip.

Poor flying weather gave impetus to the training program, the Training Department reporting 17,166 hours of ground training time. 17 new crews were processed and became operational during the month.



AIRMAN OF THE MONTH NOVEMBER



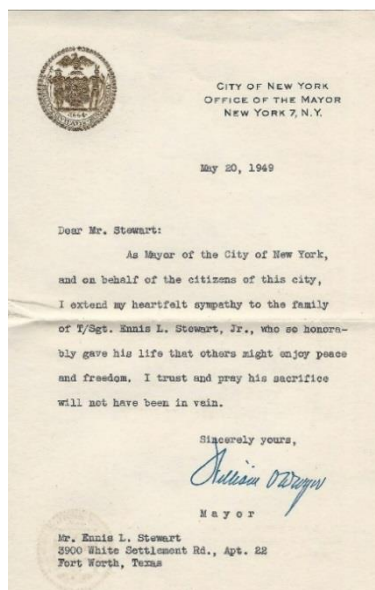
Ennis Lavern Stewart Jr.

9th January 1924 – 30th November 1944

Ennis (Bill to his friends), was born in Oklahoma and registered for the USAAF Draft on 29 June 1942. He trained as an engineer and top turret gunner and flew 22 missions from Station 153.

On Mission 222 to Merseburg Germany A/C080 was hit by flak over the target one minute after bombs away at 1318 hrs. It collided with A/C407 and caught fire immediately. The plane exploded when it hit the ground. None of Bill's crew survived the crash.

Bill is buried at the Fort Gibson National Cemetery, Oklahoma. He was 20.



Jennie Smith

FROM OUR SHOP

With the museum remaining closed for 2020, we are now able to post some items that are normally only available to purchase from our gift shop.

Please click on this link to view items for sale in our Ebay shop.

https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/parham-airfield-museum?_trksid=p2047675.l2559

Parham Airfield Museum sweets and treats are now available online, as well as a selection of other items from our gift shop.

Why not get ahead with Christmas shopping or treat yourself?



Daily Postings

Jennie Smith has now completed her daily Facebook posts from the archive, with the 390th arriving back in America in August 1945.

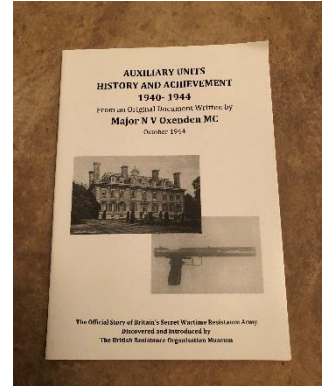
Many thanks to Jennie for all the hours she has given to this project. We are sure our Facebook fans have enjoyed the glimpses into life on the base that these postings gave.

Left, The Queen Elizabeth taking troops home.



BRITISH RESISTANCE ORGANISATION MUSEUM

Have you seen our leather B.R.O bookmarks? These can be purchased from our Ebay shop and are very handy for keeping your place in our ever-popular Auxiliary Units booklet.

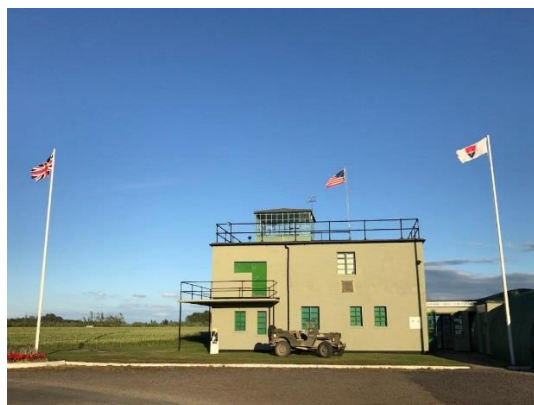


CALLING ALL AUXILLIERS

We would love to share your experiences in 'Churchill's Secret Army' with other readers. Please contact the Museum.

More military advice sent in from Mick Tipple

- "Tracers work both ways" US Army Ordnance Corps memo
- "Bravery is being the only one who knows you're afraid" Col. D Hackworth
- "If your attack is going too well, you're probably walking into an ambush" Infantry Journal
- "No combat-ready unit has ever passed inspection" Joe Gay
- "Any ship can be a minesweeper- once" Anonymous
- "Never tell a Sergeant you have nothing to do" Unknown army recruit
- "Don't draw fire, it irritates the people around you" Your buddies
- "If you see a bomb disposal technician running, try to keep up with him" US Army ordnance manual
- "It is generally inadvisable to eject directly over the area you just bombed" US Air Force flight training manual



We are looking forward to flying our flags again and welcoming visitors back next year.