

PARHAM AIRFIELD MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2019



Registered Charity Number 284146

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It's hard to believe that we are already halfway through our 2019 season. Now the schools have broken up for summer, we are starting to see more families visiting the museum. It's great to have so many children taking an interest in our displays and asking our volunteers searching questions. Between April and the end of July, we had over 400 children visit us.

We are pleased to announce that our work to our new POW room and exhibitions is now complete. Our Chairman has written an interesting article on this that will be included next month.

Looking ahead, our ever-popular tea dance at the museum will be on Sunday 6th October. Please see the advert at the end of this newsletter for more information. It promises to be a good afternoon!

Peter Kindred

SOME OF OUR RECENT VISITORS

Robert Laird and his wife enjoyed their visit to see where Robert's father, Marion, was based in WW2. Marion was one of the original members of the 390th Bomb Group when it was founded at Geiger Field Washington in January of 1943.

He became the Chief Engineer on '*The Bad Penny*'. He was shot down on 10th October 1943 and became a POW at Stalag 17- B until the end of the war.

Robert kindly presented us with bound copies of his father's POW journal and his diary from his forced journey away from the Russians at the end of the war.





Jim McIntosh was pleased to find his father's cousin's name on our memorial board during his visit. Charles McIntosh flew 36 missions with the 390th but sadly never made it home.

We have had several school trips visit us this season. We have to be cautious about showing photos of the children, but to the right, you will see our volunteer crew ready and waiting for an 'invasion' of young people! Several of the staff and students liked it so much they have come back to see us again and brought their families.



Mike Rocchio spent a day with us, having made Station 153 one of his "must-see" stops on his visit to the UK. His great uncle, George Rocchio, was a waist gunner on "My Achin' Back". Mike found George's name on our POW Wall, as well as the name of the top turret gunner who was in his Uncle's crew, Horace Huron. Horace is still alive and living in Texas. He was delighted to hear that Mike had visited the 390th and found his name.

Mike was very impressed by the museum, commenting on how much bigger and grander it was than he had imagined before his visit.



WE'LL MEET AGAIN

We have just listed a limited edition framed print of "We'll Meet Again" by Michael Turner for sale in our Ebay shop. Showing the famous 'Sally B' flying over Duxford Airfield, the print was published to mark the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the US 8th Air Force in Britain in 1942.

The print has been signed by the artist and Dame Vera Lynn. The owner of the print has kindly agreed to give Parham Airfield Museum 50% of the proceeds of the sale. Check out our Ebay page if you are interested in buying this special item.

www.ebay.co.uk/usr/parham-airfield-museum



75th COMMEMORATIONS IN HOORN, THE NETHERLANDS

On 7th July our friends in Hoorn commemorated the 75th anniversary of two 390th B-17 bombers colliding above the town. They remembered the 13 men from Lt Gregor's crew (571st Squadron) and Lt. Cribbs' crew (570th Squadron) who died on that fateful mission.

A Dutch civilian, Mrs Kramer-Deen, was also killed when a bomb exploded on her house, destroying her house and others surrounding it. On the other side of the street, an unexploded bomb fell through the roof of a house and is incredibly still there under the living room floor.

Seven crew members managed to survive by parachuting out, but six of these were then captured and became Prisoners of War. With fortune on his side, the 7th survivor, Sgt. Arthur Brown, escaped and was found after a few days sleeping in a haystack by some children from the Commandeur family, who were actually members of the Dutch Resistance. He eventually made it back to the Station 153 in January 1945.

Memorial crosses and flowers were laid at the monument at Westerdijk. The memorial service was attended by people of all ages who came to pay their respects, including four eyewitnesses who were actually present on that fateful day.

Thank you for remembering them.





Photos courtesy of Frank Leek

Frank Leek, who helps maintain the memorial, is in contact with family members of some of those airmen involved in the crash but would love to hear from descendants of all of the airmen. If you have a connection with any of the crew, please do make contact with him frankleek@zonnet.nl or check out the Facebook page “To Honor and Remember the 390th BG crash over Hoorn-Holland”.

FROM OUR READERS

We have now been doing our monthly newsletter for 10 months and often receive great verbal and written feedback from our readers. Thank you for this—we love hearing from you.

Some of your comments are below:-

“Perfectly delightful! I absolutely love the new newsletter format” JS

“Another wonderful newsletter. I devoured every page as soon as I saw it in my inbox. I really enjoy reading it - every word! Such a great way to stay connected with all that's happening there.” DM

“Always a good read and encouraging to learn about the continuing improvement work to the museums” PN

“A very good read as ever and definitely something to look forward to” PN

“I thoroughly enjoy reading your careful research and thoughtful stories...Keep up the excellent work”. BH

“I do enjoy reading your newsletters each month and hope to get the chance to visit you fellows again in Parham” TK

FROM OUR ARCHIVIST

AIRMAN OF THE MONTH



PAUL HERBERT BELLAMY

20th April 1922– 26th August 1944

“Herb” was born in South Dakota and enlisted at Fort Meade as an aviation cadet on 31 August 1942, assigned to active duty on 7 March 1943 and into the USAAF on 10 March 1944. He was trained as a Pilot and flew just 3 missions from Station 153.

On 26th August while heading out on Mission 179, his plane, ‘*Ding Dong Daddy*’ 42-97182 was involved in a mid-air collision over Hitchin Hertfordshire.

In a letter to his parents one of his crew explained,

“On the morning of the mission our crew were to lead the low group. We finally started forming the formation and at 17,000 feet Herb was doing a magnificent job flying, when the No.6 ship in the high group came down and sat on top of our crew. The 1st Engineer gave out the warning that the ship above us was getting too close but there was no response. The Engineer got out of the top turret in order to grab the controls and dive the ship, but just as he did the planes collided, there was an explosion which knocked him out.



We all had the most highly feeling that Herb our Commander and Pilot was the best in the E.T.O. When in the air he was our boss, and when on the ground he was our best buddie.”

Only 4 of Herb’s crew survived the crash, the entire crew of 42-97182 was lost and 2 civilians on the ground were killed.

“Herb” is buried at Mountain View Cemetery, Pennington County, South Dakota. He was 22.

ORIGINAL

CHECK TYPE REQUIRED (See instructions attached)

UPRIGHT MONUMENT

FLAT GRAVestone

MONUMENT

W.W.W. APPLICATION FOR HEADSTONE OR MARKER

TELEPHONE NO. 0-761853

DECEASED DATE 31, August, 1942

SECURITY DATE 26, August, 1944

DECEASED NAME Paul E. Bellamy

STATE South Dakota

CITY OF DEATH Rapid City, S. D.

DATE OF DEATH April 20, 1942

PLACE OF BURIAL Mountain View

NAME OF FUNERAL HOME Paul E. Bellamy

NAME OF OFFICE OF CONSUlation Paul E. Bellamy

DATE OF APPLICATION AUG 1 1949

1585

901 St. Cloud St., Rapid City, S. D. F. O. Box #110



The Aftermath

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Whilst reading the Station History, every now and then there are some reports that are quite interesting. I thought I would share some of these with you.

GENERAL SUMMARY

AUGUST 1943

In August the Group flew its first eight missions, beginning on the 12th of the month.

Five were directed against targets in France, two against targets in Germany and one against a target in the Netherlands. One of the German targets was the Messerschmitt factory at Regensburg, after hitting accurately the Group proceeded to Africa.

Four of the assigned targets were airfields (three in France, one in Holland). Two were aircraft factories, one an instrument factory and one a secret “aeronautical facilities station” at Watten France.

Bombs carried included 100# incendiaries, 500# GPs and 2,000# GPS, the last being used in the Watten attack.

Five of our aircraft and crews were lost in August. Four were lost on the Regensburg attack and one by collision on the return from Vitry-en-Artois, France.

Clouds so obscured the continent that on two of the assigned missions no bombs were dropped, these were the scheduled attacks on targets at Woensdrecht and Meulan-Les-Mureaux.

Jennie Smith

Parham Airfield Museum Rocker Club Charity

Annual Tea Dance Sunday 6th

October 2pm-6pm

**DJ's The Bagman, Sgt. Bilko,
Shotgun Donny & AndyAV8**

Pay on the door only £5

B.Y.O or use the in house

Naffi Raffle

Camping available from Friday the 4th

**Contact Kevin & Maureen for details &
camping 01728 668271 or 07503 647843**

Proceeds to Parham Airfield Museum others tba.



*Photos from previous Tea Dances.
Good times!*

