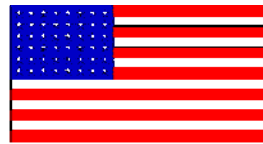


THE DROPZONE

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REMEMBRANCE 2011

On Sunday 13th November members and friends of Harrington Aviation Museum Society gathered at the Carpetbagger Memorial to remember all those brave men and women who have given their lives in the cause of freedom.

The weather was kind and so the service was held in bright sunshine with a stiff breeze snapping the flags at the jack staff. The Reverend Doug Spencley, curate of the Faxton Benefice officiated. This was the last time that Doug will take part in our remembrance service, as next year he will be moving on to take charge of his own parish. We wish him well in this new venture.

Tom Reeves wasn't well enough to attend the service this year, but wreaths on behalf of Northamptonshire Aviation Society were laid by his son Jason, and granddaughter Amber.

Roy Tebbutt laid a wreath on behalf of the Harrington Aviation Museum Society, and a wreath was presented by Harrington Parish Council.



Ron Clarke lays the first wreath, to the memory of the Carpetbaggers

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

On page three of this issue is published the second part of the article detailing the problems that faced Gen. Ira Eaker while he was establishing the U.S. Eighth Bomber Command in Great Britain.

There is an Obituary for Nancy Wake, SOE.

Story and pictures of the annual Christmas Dinner and the guests who attended

Remembrance (cont.)



Roy lays the HAMS wreath



Chairs are provided for the comfort of the elderly



After the service, everyone returned to the museum where light refreshments were served by Mrs Vera Tebbutt and her band of canteen helpers.

Guests who had not previously attended a remembrance Service, or visited the museum, had the opportunity to view the exhibits and talk to the museum guides. A number also watched the Operation Carpetbagger film.

Schweinfurt - The Battle Within the Battle for the U.S. 8th Air Force (Part 2)

Capt David Reichert, USAF

Recapitulation.

With adequate reinforcements and clear weather over Germany, Eaker launched the 8th's largest offensive of the war to date. In a series of missions that became known as 'Black Week,' the 8th launched over a thousand bombers against vital industrial targets in Germany. The first three missions (October 8th - 10th) against the cities of Bremen, Gdynia and Munster, resulted in the loss of eighty-eight bombers and nearly nine hundred aviators.

Four days later, October 14, 1943, the day known as 'Black Thursday,' the bombers of the 8th Air Force flew once again towards Schweinfurt.

The morning of October 14th started out in the same manner with which the men of the Eighth Air Force had become accustomed: cold, dreary, and foggy.

Once it was determined that the weather over the target was clear and that the visibility required for take-off was above minimums, the order was given to proceed with the mission. As the bombers began to climb away from their fields, they realized that the weather briefers had been incorrect with their predictions. Instead of breaking out of the low clouds at two thousand feet, as briefed, most bombers didn't break out until six thousand feet with some remaining in the clouds until ten thousand feet. Since the bombers needed clear conditions in order to form up into the "combat boxes" that would afford them the maximum defensive firepower, the excessive cloud cover over England delayed and in some cases prohibited the bombers from joining with their pre-briefed formations.

The most significant casualty of the weather was the loss of the entire Second Air Division from the total combat force. At the pre-briefed rendezvous time, only twenty-nine of the sixty B-24s were in formation. After repeated attempts to contact the missing bombers, the air commander of the Second decided against flying into Germany with such an undersized force and instead flew a diversionary mission against the port city of Emden. Without a single bullet being fired, the weather erased sixty bombers from the mission.

Engine problems along with other technical difficulties would send thirty-three B-17s home early, bringing the total number of bombers that would cross into German territory down to 285 bombers, almost twenty-five percent less than planned.

In addition to losing over five hundred thousand pounds of bombs, more importantly to the survival of the crews was the loss of over twelve hundred machine guns that would have been used for protection against the German fighters.

Another casualty of the weather was the loss of nearly half of the fighter escort force. Of the four P-47 fighter groups that were dispatched with the mission, one failed to find any bombers after breaking through the clouds and another joined on the Second Air Division and accompanied them on their diversion. The other two groups each joined on a division of B-17s and accompanied them to the limit of their endurance.

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The loss of fighter escort was less pronounced than the loss of the missing bombers' guns, however, because even though the P-47s destroyed thirteen enemy aircraft, the majority of German fighters waited in the distance for the Thunderbolts to turn for home.

Once the bomber formations reached the German town of Aachen, on the German-Belgian border, the Thunderbolts had reached the limit of their fuel and had to turn for home. Without any further fighter opposition, the Luftwaffe began to ferociously attack the bombers. Single-engine Focke-Wulf FW 190s and Messerschmitt ME 109s came directly at the formations, firing their 20-millimeter cannons and machine guns and twin-engine Messerschmitt ME 110s and 210s would stay beyond the range of the bomber's guns and shoot crude rockets into the formations.

Also in the fight were Junkers JU 88s, primarily used as night fighters by the Germans, and Junkers JU 87s, (commonly known as the Stuka) which were fixed-landing gear dive bombers that would climb above the Allied formations and drop time-fused bombs down among the B-17s.

"We were briefed to be met by about five hundred enemy fighters of various sorts. It turned out to be about seven hundred with fighters having come in from the Russian front. We saw every thing imaginable thrown at us. Fighters, usually twin-engine, lined up at beyond our gun range and began launching rockets that appeared to be like a telephone pole as they passed by us and exploded. Some enemy aircraft flew above us towing bombs on long cables hoping to entangle the cable on a Flying Fortress. We had never seen so many enemy fighters before or afterwards," recalled John Piazza, a gunner in the 92nd Bomb Group stationed at Alconbury, which was attached to the First Air Division.

The 306th Bomb Group, also flying as part of the First Air Division, had lost three of its eighteen planes to mechanical problems shortly after crossing the English Channel. Two more went down to enemy fire before the P-47s left the formation at Aachen leaving the 306th missing five aircraft from the formation before any serious combat had begun. The German fighters were relentless in their pursuit of struggling units and the 306th was no exception. Six of the remaining thirteen were shot down prior to the target area with two more being shot down on the return trip home. In all, only seven of the aircraft from the 306th managed to bomb Schweinfurt and only five made it back to their base at Thurleigh.

As bad as the losses were for the 306th, the 305th Bomb Group's losses were worse, in fact the worst of the day. Scheduled to be the low group of the lead wing, the 40th Combat Wing, the 305th was eight minutes late to the assembly point. Upon finally reaching this point, the group commander tried to contact the lead group of the 40th but was unable to do so. Not wanting to waste any more time, the group moved to another assembly point where they came in visual contact with the 1st Combat Wing. Like the 40th, the 1st was also missing its low group. After making radio contact with the 1st's commander, the 305th slid into position as the 1st's new low group. The assigned low group of the 1st, the 381st Group, later joined up on the wing's high group, the 351st, over the English Channel.

While the low position was still the least enviable position in the wing due to the greater susceptibility to flak and enemy fighter attacks, members of the 305th were possibly feeling a little relieved because they were no longer a member of the lead wing, which in recent weeks had been a frequent target for German frontal attacks. This relief was short lived however, when the air commander for the battle, Col. Bud Peaslee, ordered the 1st to take the lead because his wing, the 40th, was missing its low group. Operating procedures prohibited the lead wing from entering Germany with any less than three groups due to the German's new tactic of using frontal attacks. The 40th moved above and to the left of the 1st in a non-standard formation.

Having the extra aircraft above them in the formation didn't help the 351st's position as the low group. Thirteen of the original sixteen aircraft dispatched were lost prior to reaching the target area. The remaining three did manage to bomb the target and return to their home base at Chelveston. Conversely, the extra firepower did help the other groups in the 1st. Each of the other three groups only lost one aircraft. The 40th, offset as it was in its non-standard formation, lost nineteen of its thirty-seven aircraft.

"The intercom was a constant chatter as the crew called out Luftwaffe fighter locations," remembered Gene Carson, a tail gunner with the 388th Bomb Group stationed at Knettishall. "I knelt in silence. I had nothing to say . . . No one had to tell me there were bandits at six o'clock and there was no need for me to report their presence. The Luftwaffe was all around us. . . . We were being mauled."

While the German fighters concentrated on the First Air Division, the Third Air Division proceeded to the target relatively unscathed. Aided in part by the thirty-minute time lag behind the 1st, the 3rd also benefited from a planned course diversion near the German border that took it well south of the 1st's penetration course into Germany and away from the heaviest concentration of German airfields. As a result, the entire 3rd Air Division of over 140 planes lost only two more aircraft than did the 351st Bomb Group during the course of the mission.

Despite the unrelenting fighter attacks and constant flak barrage, the bomber pilots handed control of their aircraft over to their bombardiers for the most crucial part of the mission. The next five minutes would determine if the mission would be a success, and, more importantly, whether or not all of the lives lost in the process would be in vain. The first to arrive over the target, the 91st Bomb Group, had an unobstructed view of the five major ball bearing production factories. As had been practised and performed many times before, the lead bombardier released his bombs when the target was in his cross-hairs and the remaining bombers in the formation released on lead's mark. With Schweinfurt billowing smoke below, the unrelenting bombers from the 1st turned back to the west. Unfortunately for them, their day was not yet over.



Messerschmitt ME 109

The 3rd reached Schweinfurt approximately ten minutes after the first and found the entire target area covered with large clouds of smoke. Having no other option, the lead bombardier set his crosshairs on a bridge to the southeast of the factories. On his mark, the entire division dropped their bombs, primarily on the southern half of the factory complex as well as the marshalling yards that led to Schweinfurt from the city of Wurzburg. Their mission complete, the 3rd turned to follow the 1st back to the fighter escorts that would give the beleaguered bombers some relief from the Luftwaffe and accompany them to their bases in England.



Junkers JU 88

During the return trip home, the bombers were again tormented by an innumerable amount of German fighters. The Luftwaffe pilots who had attacked the bomber formations on their way into Germany were now refueled and ready to renew the onslaught. The B-17s that they met on the way out of Germany made easier targets because there were fewer of them and many of those that remained were already operating on less than four engines or otherwise badly battered. The 3rd bore the brunt of the attacks on the return leg as the 1st benefited from a more southerly route across Germany and France. The only defense that the bombers could offer was to keep their formations tight and their gunners firing until the Thunderbolts arrived, presumably near the border town of Aachen.

When the bombers reached the German border, there were no friendly fighters in sight. The weather had once again dealt a crucial blow to the members of the 8th Air Force. The fog that had almost caused the cancellation of the mission had persisted, and in some cases gotten worse, causing the escorts to remain grounded. Although not as numerous or as ferocious as the attacks over Germany, the Luftwaffe continued to harass the bomber force across the occupied countries and in a couple of instances all the way to the English Channel.

Just because the crews had made it back to the Channel didn't mean that they were in the clear. "At the ending of a mission . . . (the English Channel) was not always a safe haven. The RAF Search and Rescue boats were always standing by to pick up downed flyers. . . . Not until we touched down, taxied to our hardstand and cut engines did we feel a measure of comfort," Piazza reminisced.

Others weren't as lucky. A fitting ending to the deadly day was waiting for the crews over England. The weather, combined with the struggles of the battered bombers, was at least in part responsible for the final five lost bombers of the day. Low on fuel and unable to find any airfield to land on due to the low clouds, the crews of these airplanes decided to abandon their aircraft. All five planes were lost, but all fifty crewmembers survived. This brought the total number of bombers lost over the past ten hours to sixty making the trip to Schweinfurt the costliest single mission in the history of the 8th Air Force.

"First it was a feeling of wonder that we were alive and had made it back to good old mother earth in one piece, plus an inner appreciation of being alive which I have to this day," said Hoffman.

"After being debriefed and a shot of "Old Crow", we hit the sack as we were totally exhausted both mentally and physically as the mission had taken everything out of us. I think for everyone who flew at that time this was true. When you say "We Gave Our All", that is a true expression."

The crews had done their part; it was now up to the intelligence officers and the analysts to assess the damage done to the 8th Air Force. After receiving the results, Eaker sent Arnold a cable that detailed the 8th's losses and once again requested additional bombers, long-range fighters, and drop-tanks for the shorter-range fighters. He concluded by saying "There is no discouragement here. We are convinced that when the totals are struck yesterday's losses will be far outweighed by the value of the enemy material destroyed."

In fact, Eaker was discouraged. He had not received the complete results from the attack yet, but he knew that with the depleted force that had actually dropped bombs on Schweinfurt, there was little hope that the ball bearing factories were bombed out of commission.

As with the first attack on Schweinfurt, he had hoped that Harris would follow the 8th's attack with a night attack on Schweinfurt. Harris, however, was adamant about not attacking what he deemed panacea, or cure-all, targets. In his autobiography, Bomber Offensive, Harris defended his position, saying that every time the Americans went to one of these targets, their resources were so depleted as to not return for a couple of months, giving the Germans ample time to rebuild or replace everything that was destroyed. He also defended not attacking Schweinfurt specifically, saying, "They (the target experts) paid no attention to the fact that Schweinfurt was too small and distant a town for us to be able to find and hit in 1943." Yet he failed to mention that Bomber Command had indeed flown missions further into

Germany than Schweinfurt, including multiple missions to Berlin, as early as 1941. He also failed to say that a fire-lit Schweinfurt would have been easy on that clear night over Germany and that Luftwaffe opposition would probably have been light and unorganized as a result of the multiple missions that the fighters flew against the Americans earlier in the day. Instead, another opportunity was missed to inflict even greater damage on Schweinfurt.

Desperate for a victory in the face of the huge losses incurred, the preliminary results of the battle were overly optimistic and exaggerated by senior Army leaders. At a press conference on October 18th, Arnold boldly exclaimed, "Now we have got Schweinfurt!" The Army Air Forces classified magazine *Impact* stated that the factories were so heavily damaged that "our bombers may never have to go back."

While not to the extent that the Army Air Force was reporting, the Schweinfurt factories were significantly damaged during the raid, so much so that Hitler placed Albert Speer in charge of protecting the industry against further Allied attacks. After the war, interviews with Speer revealed that the October 14th attack destroyed almost forty percent of Schweinfurt's total production capacity. If the bombers had returned shortly thereafter, he concluded, German armament production would have been at a standstill. The bombers did eventually return to Schweinfurt, ten more times as a matter of fact, although by the time they returned Speer had begun dispersing the undamaged machines vital to bearing production deeper inside of Germany.

At this point in the war, Eaker had no way of knowing the extent of the damage to the ball bearing factories. What he did know was that sixty of his bombers had been shot down, another 142 were damaged, and six hundred of his men were either dead or missing. While he might have believed that the American losses would be outweighed by the damage inflicted on Schweinfurt, he must have also wondered how long he would have to keep sending his men deep into Germany without adequate fighter support.

Eaker's discouragement over not totally destroying Schweinfurt was short-lived on account of finally receiving some long-awaited good news from the states. Two weeks after the battle, as a direct result of the massive losses over Schweinfurt, Arnold directed that all P-51 Mustangs and the majority of the longer-range P-38's were to be allocated to the European Theater. Eaker at last had the long-range fighters that he had been requesting for over a year. Once his bomber force was replenished, he could send more bombers against Germany more often without incurring huge loss rates. Everything that he had envisioned for the 8th Air Force was finally falling into place. Unbeknownst to Eaker though, the organization that he had created from scratch

almost two years previous was about to be taken from him.

At a meeting in Cairo in early December, Arnold expressed his displeasure with the mission rates of the 8th Air Force. He had trouble understanding why a larger percentage of available assets were used in other theaters and he questioned Eaker's training programs and target priorities. Arnold thought that there was a problem in the 8th that needed to be fixed. "Only a new commander divorced from day to day routine could achieve this," in Arnold's view.

Arnold's British equivalent, Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, a friend and supporter of Eaker, argued that Eaker was doing the best that he could with the resources that he had. He explained once more about the poor weather hindering operations and that when the missions were launched, Portal explained, "Air operations in Europe and the Pacific could not be compared. In no other part of the world were our bomber forces up against some 1,600 German fighters over their own country."

Also discussed in Cairo was the creation of a unified command in the Mediterranean Theater similar to the arrangement the Allies had in the European Theater. Worried that having two commands would lead to two different opinions and directives on the best way to defeat Germany, the Combined Chiefs of Staff also created the position of Supreme Allied Commander to provide unified guidance to the two theaters on the destruction of Germany.

When the command structure suggested at the Cairo conference was finalized, Arnold had found a way to remove Eaker from command of the 8th Air Force without disgracing his old friend. The creation of the Mediterranean Theater Command meant that there would have to be an Allied Mediterranean Air Force Commander. With Spaatz reassigned to England as the commander of the newly created U.S. Strategic Air Force in Europe, Dwight Eisenhower, Roosevelt's choice for Supreme Allied Commander, agreed with Arnold to move Eaker to the Mediterranean position saying, in a cable to Eaker, "...it would be a waste to have both you and Spaatz in England." He continued, "We do not (repeat not) have enough top men to concentrate them in one place."

After repeated attempts at trying to change the mind of his superiors to let him stay in command of the 8th, this cable from Eisenhower effectively closed the door on Eaker's protests. He was well aware of Arnold's impatience with the lack of missions and knew the main reason for his transfer; Portal had informed Eaker of Arnold's comments at the Cairo meetings. Despite his negative comments towards Eaker, Arnold sent Eaker a letter of congratulations on his new assignment, stating, "Your new assignment...pays tribute to your talents as an organizer and a leader."

Continued on page 9

EDITORIAL

While we hear of venues closing through lack of visitors, Harrington museums have had a very good year. In spite of a later start to the season visitor numbers for both adults and children are higher than they were in 2010.

The museums continue to be particularly popular with a variety of adult organisations who visit on weekdays and evenings, and there have been six groups from Travel Editions, organisers of 'War Weekends' who make their visits on Sundays. We were kept busy right up to the end of the season with October being a very busy month.

We started and ended the month with groups from Travel Editions and in between played host to twelve personnel from R.A.F. Benson, 30 Scouts and ninety children from Rothwell Junior School. Needless to say, we breathed a great sigh of relief at closing time on Sunday the 30th!

As usual, Mrs. Vera Tebbutt did a great job with the organisation of the annual Christmas Dinner, held on December 5th, and she has also kept a keen eye on the canteen staff throughout the year.

It was also good to see Tom Reeves out and about again at the Christmas Dinner. Tom hurt his back towards the end of the season and has been having some tough physiotherapy for the past few weeks, I'm pleased to see that it seems to have worked.

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As I write this editorial, there is great excitement in the country concerning the slap in the face delivered by the Prime Minister, Mr. Cameron, to the German and French Premiers last week. He is being hailed as the 'hero of the hour' who saved our Nation from falling into the clutches of the Germans.

It should be remembered that he *would* have handed us over to the Germans if they had made just one concession, but they didn't and so he claimed victory. The *real* credit for his stand must go to those Members of Parliament who have kept him under pressure to stop giving way to EU demands.

Prominent amongst those is our local Member of Parliament, Philip Hollobone, who works tirelessly for the good of his constituents and the benefit of the country as a whole. I am very pleased that Philip is a member of HAMS.

From all at Harrington, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a fabulous New Year, and ask you to spare a few moments thought for absent friends.

Fred.

Rothwell School Visit

October was an exceptionally warm month, but during the last ten days there was finally an autumnal nip in the morning air although the sun continued to shine. On such a morning, we welcomed the first group of children from Rothwell Junior School. (There were so many of them that we had to accommodate them over two consecutive days.)

The children are divided into teams, each team having six members. A team leader is appointed and then they set off around the museum collecting information. Children in this age group complete a quiz devised by Ron Clarke called the Parachute Quiz, that takes its name from the exhibits marked with a tiny parachute symbol that also bears a number.

The quiz sheets are divided into ten blocks of numbers ranging from 1 to 99, but there are only twenty eight items to be located and identified. It is all good fun and members of the team that gains the highest score are presented with a certificate.

When the quiz is completed the children are introduced to other exhibits that give them some idea what life was like during World War Two.

They hear the air raid siren, look at incendiary bombs, use the stirrup pump and experience what it was like to spend time inside an Anderson Shelter. The stirrup pump and the Anderson Shelter are always the most popular activities!

This year is the first time that we have used the air raid siren. It is the personal property of Roy and he very kindly allowed us to use it in an experiment to see if it would prove to be popular. It is a rather delicate instrument, and has to be handled carefully to prevent damage to the mechanism. We are now trying to obtain a more robust model for future use.

While the incendiary bombs attracted only mild interest, the means of dealing with them, the stirrup pump, was very well received. Each team queued up to take their turn at first pumping, and then squirting. Needless to say, one or two people got a little damp!

The activity was under the supervision of Mr. Ronald W. Clarke while the water carriers, (code names Aquarius and Gunga Din, otherwise known as Keith and Fred), were kept busy replenishing the fire buckets. (Thinks: must get a longer hose pipe for next year.)

Pictures on next page.



A young demonstrator shows how it should be done, but Keith looks a bit anxious!



Yes, we've all got the hang of it now!



Emerging from the Anderson Shelter. And no, Keith is not bashing anyone, just protecting their heads.



"Its dark in there, but I think I saw a mouse."



Uncle Ron announces the winners of the quiz.



The winning team from the first group show off their certificates. (Teams usually consist of six, but there was one extra here.)

The Schweinfurt Raid

(Continued from page 6)

After a few final orders and more than a few good-bye speeches, Eaker was on his way to the Mediterranean to assume his new command. Jimmy Doolittle, famous for his leadership in the raid on Tokyo earlier in the war, replaced Eaker as 8th Air Force Commander.

On his way to Italy, Eaker was informed that Prime Minister Churchill was in North Africa and would like to have a word with him. Eaker met Churchill in Marrakesh where the Prime Minister thanked Eaker for his service and congratulated him on his new, larger assignment. Then the former opponent to strategic daylight bombing made one of the most telling comments on Eaker's time with the 8th Air Force; "This gives me an occasion to tell you that your representations to me at that time have been more than verified. Around-the-clock bombing is now achieving the results you predicted."

Churchill was correct with his statement. With the addition of the Mustang to escort the bombers, the Allies were able to penetrate deeper and more often into Germany than ever before. By mid-1944, the Luftwaffe was offering little to no opposition to the foreign aircraft that penetrated their airspace. On D-Day, Allied warships were untouched in their venture across the English Channel and Allied bombers were unmolested by enemy aircraft as they dropped their payloads on the beachheads. In his autobiography, *Global Mission*, Arnold states, "What had happened to the German Air Force?... Had our daylight bombing been effective? Had our plans for 'round the clock' bombing of Germany borne fruit? We needed no further proof."

Some, due to the excessive loss rates and poor bombing results, consider missions such as Schweinfurt a failure. The critics of these missions, Schweinfurt in particular, fail to take into account what came about as a result of the mission. Besides heavily damaging the five main ball bearing factories in Schweinfurt, the bombing also created a massive reorganization of the German bearing industry that caused a slowing in the production of bearings. There might not have been an immediate drop in the production of bearing-dependant aircraft, but without the attack on Schweinfurt, production of these aircraft and other war-related machines would have continued on longer than it did.

Shortly after Eaker's departure, the 8th was able to send over one thousand bombers on a single mission. It was sustaining a lower loss rate on these missions than during Eaker's tenure as commander and the bombing results were better than during Eaker's tenure.

All of these improved numbers are a direct result of the addition of the P-51 Mustang to the inventory of the 8th Air Force. The same P-51 that Eaker had requested over a year before he was relieved of command.

The second battle of Schweinfurt is a microcosm of all of the reasons that Eaker was replaced as commander of the 8th Air Force. The poor weather that was constantly hampering the 8th's ability to conduct missions was responsible for the loss of sixty bombers before the divisions even crossed into occupied Europe and was a contributing factor in the destruction of five bombers whose crews bailed when they were unable to find a landing strip. It was also responsible for the grounding of the 3rd Air Division's egress escorts.

The majority of the aircraft lost on the mission to Schweinfurt were lost because of the lack of fighter escort any further than the German border. Repeatedly over the past year and a half, Eaker had requested the allocation of P-51 Mustangs to escort his aircrew into Germany. Before the P-51s were available, he had asked for external fuel tanks for the existing fighters. Despite the multiple requests and the large amount of losses on every deep penetration mission, Arnold could never get the 8th the resources they needed to conduct a successful operation against the Germans until Eaker had already been reassigned.

After the week that culminated with the Schweinfurt raid, the 8th had to stand down for a few days until they had replaced the lost aircraft and repaired the damaged ones. Throughout his time in Europe, Eaker had been promised replacements and reinforcements that would bolster his numbers and enable the 8th to mount the large-scale attacks that were necessary both for protection of the bombers and for destruction of the selected target. When it was time for these reinforcements to arrive, something else would come up and the bombers that were supposed to be given to the 8th were instead given to other commands, other services, or other countries.

At the same time Eaker was denied assets while he was still expected to continue with the bombing campaign. When he could not keep up the pace of operations that was expected of him, because of all of the factors stated above, Arnold criticized him for proceeding too slowly.

And finally, because of British resistance to the concept of strategic bombing, the American raid on Schweinfurt was never followed by what would have been a crippling British attack. Ever since Eaker had arrived in England, Harris had been trying to convert Eaker to the concept of area bombing. His dislike of

the strategic bombing concept never caused him to deny Eaker any help that he was able to offer, but he refused to attack the targets that the Americans felt were the most important.

The second mission to Schweinfurt was an important battle in American military history. On the outside, it damaged the major producer of a crucial component of the Nazi war-machine. More importantly, on the inside, it was the catalyst for the sweeping changes that were necessary to ensure the maximum destruction of Germany as fast as possible with the minimum loss of human life. And once again, in an effort of such magnitude that had never been put forth before or duplicated since, it showed that no matter what the opposition, the American soldier will never be turned away without completing his objective.

Anyone who finds it difficult to understand why there was such a lack of understanding and cooperation among Commanders, needs to read more military and political history.

I further suggest that readers with no military experience consider carefully what the Schweinfurt raids represent. Although the losses were heavy, this is just one example of the many air attacks that were launched against Germany, some with even heavier losses of aircraft and personnel. This was all undertaken so that we in the western world could live in a society free from tyrants.

Therefore, to anyone who lived through the Second World War it is inconceivable that any politician claiming to be British, could contemplate handing sovereignty of our country to Germany in the name of 'mutual cooperation.' Adolf would be dancing in Hell!

All those who think that it is right to submerge Britain in a Federal Europe should be taken through Traitors Gate and incarcerated in the Tower Of London! (And I will gladly pull the levers on the rack [Fred].)

HAMS Annual Christmas Dinner

Once again we gathered at Market Harborough Golf Club for the annual get-together on Monday 5th December. This year though, was a little different to past events as we had a number of special guests. Clive Bassett and his wife Mary brought with them Harry and Liz Verlander and we were also pleased to welcome for the first time, Ms. Gina Glover and her husband Geoff.

Most of our members know that Harry is our tame ex-Jedburgh who has his own display in the

museum and for quite a few years has been a guide, in company with Clive, with Travel Editions 'Secret War' weekends.

Harry has now decided to take life a little easier and will not be visiting the museum quite so often with Travel Editions tours. So on his last visit to the museum in October we arranged to have a group photo taken with Harry 'centre stage' and present him with a copy at the Christmas Dinner.

The sun shone brightly on the day and we were further fortunate that Gina was at the museum engaged on a piece of research. She readily agreed to take the photograph, and as a professional photographer, she did an excellent job. See the results on the next page.

Unfortunately, your publisher is not too skilled with a camera, so the pictures taken at the dinner are not first class. They would have been much better if I had used my pocket camera, but I chose to use an expensive model that I had not previously used in subdued lighting. (Should have obeyed the dictum 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'.)

Here are some of the better shots.



Getting to grips with the turkey/lamb/salmon?



Vera and co. waiting for the next course.



Front L to R: Vera, Harry, Harry's wife, Liz, and Tom

Standing: Fred, Hilary, Keith, Roy, Betty, Graham, Adrian, and Clive

Every one in the picture signed their name on the back of Harry's copy



Gina was presented with a bunch of flowers, as was Vera. Unfortunately the one of Vera was poor quality. BUT, on the right is one that I took earlier....(about five years earlier).



Vera Christmas Dinner 2006.
She hasn't altered has she?



Harry and Liz relaxing.

(The lights had not been turned down, lazy flash.)



Harry and Liz with Ron, after the presentation.

(Sorry about the blur.)

OBITUARY

Nancy Wake 1913—2011

Nancy died in August after a short illness. Since 2003 she had been a resident at the Royal Star and Garter Home for Disabled Servicemen and Women, Richmond, London.

Nancy moved to Europe from Australia in her late teens and earned her living as a journalist. In the 1930s she settled in Marseille, where she met and married her husband, a wealthy industrialist named Henri Fiocca. At the outbreak of World War Two Nancy began helping downed allied airmen to get back to Britain, and later became a courier for the French Resistance Movement.

When the GESTAPO were about to close in on her she managed, at the sixth attempt, to get to Spain and from there to England, where she was recruited by the Special Operations Executive. On completion of SOE training she was parachuted back into France from a Carpetbagger aircraft. Nancy eventually had control of around seven thousand resistance fighters and always led from the front.

At the end of the war she discovered that after her escape to England, her husband Henri was arrested by the GESTAPO and eventually died under interrogation.

Nancy was one of the most highly decorated members of the SOE, having earned the following honours:

France's highest award, the Legion d'Honneur; three Croix de Guerre, and the French Resistance Medal

From Britain she was awarded the George Medal

From America, the US Medal of Freedom

In 2004 she was made a Companion of the Order of Australia



Christmas Quiz

This is a tricky connections quiz. Answer each question and then work out the one word that connects each answer. For example, each answer could be connected to a door: back door, side door, stable door, etc., (but door is not connected with this quiz) so test your brain power.

1. Which 2001 action-adventure movie, filmed in Prague and based on one of Chaucer's works, starred Heath Ledger, Rufus Sewell and Paul Bettany?
2. Which former Labour leader was registered with the Football League as an honorary player for Plymouth Argyle to celebrate his 90th birthday?
3. Which British current affairs magazine first appeared in 1961, having evolved from a school publication edited by Richard Ingrams, Willie Rushton, Christopher Booker and Paul Foot at Shrewsbury School in the mid-1950s?
4. What title is used in the US to describe a licensed attorney, assigned to represent people who are charged with a crime and who desire legal representation but who cannot afford to hire a privately retained attorney.
5. Which Swedish tennis player won 7 Grand Slam singles titles between 1982 and 1988?
6. Which 1953 American Biblical epic film, starring Richard Burton, Jean Simmons and Victor Mature, tells the story of Demetrius, a Roman military tribune who commands the unit that crucifies Jesus?
7. Which Antipodean band, formerly known as Split Enz, played to around 250,000 people at their farewell concert outside Sydney Opera House in November 1996?
8. A recent Rugby Union scandal involving a faked injury to a Harlequins player became known in the tabloid press as what?
9. What was the name of the hideously ugly member of the Beano's Bash Street Kids, so ugly that he became handsome when he pulled a face?
10. John Birks Gillespie had a famous nickname, as did Edward Kennedy Ellington. What was Charles Parker Junior's?

Try not to tear out too much of your hair!

Answers can be found on the back page.

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**Wishing you a Merry Christmas and
a Happy and Prosperous New Year**

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And the **connection**?

ANSWERS

1. A KNIGHT'S TALE
2. MICHAEL FOOT (footbath)
3. PRIVATE EYE (eyebath)
4. PUBLIC DEFENDER (public baths)
5. MATS WILANDER (bathmats)
6. THE ROBE (bathrobe)
7. CROWDED HOUSE (bathhouse)
8. BLOOD GATE (bloodbath)
9. PLUG (bathplug)
10. BIRD (birdbath)

Connection: BATH or BATHS

If you didn't manage to get the answers,
try working backwards.