



384th Bomb Group Newsletter

1306 Adams Way
Beavercreek, OH 45434



November 2010

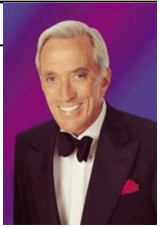
BRANSON... What Fun!



The 2010 Gathering in Branson is over and those in attendance had a great time. The shows were good and there was enough free time for folks to see additional shows on their own, shop, or just sit in the hospitality suite and chat. Our very own Bill Wilkens was selected from the audience at the Dixie Stampede to play toilet seat horseshoes. Unfortunately, the theater did not permit photographs so we have no KODAK moment to immortalize his efforts. He didn't win!!



After the Andy Williams show 4 of the singers came on the bus and sang *DON'T SIT UNDER THE APPLE TREE*. After the SIX show one of the brothers came on the bus and thanked all the veterans for serving....nice touch. After the dinner on Sat we had all the veterans come up to the podium and introduce themselves and say a few words about their time in Grafton. Vida Wilkinson was attending her 1st reunion. She was the only widow in attendance and we had her speak too. That went really well and is something we think should be continued at future Gatherings.



SEATTLE It Is for 2011

Discussion in Branson between Seattle, San Diego and Reno put Seattle in the forefront and when the Board members voted later, Seattle was a clear winner. Details will follow in upcoming newsletters. We conducted some price and amenities comparisons between San Diego and Seattle when some of the hotels in Seattle proved too expensive. In the end Tom and Linda Rowley found what should be the best match for our needs. We also want to thank Bill and Elsie O'Leary for helping with the comparisons in San Diego. We think with the work these folks did we will have the best of the best in Seattle. So here's what we have:

HOTEL

The Doubletree Guest Suites offers 219 newly renovated deluxe suites, each with either one king size bed or two double beds and a separate living room parlor, two telephones, coffee maker, two televisions with in-room movies and a refrigerator. All guest suites are decorated in a comfortable modern style, featuring all the appointments and amenities you can expect from

a first-class hotel.

The hotel is conveniently located within walking distance of the Westfield Shoppingtown, which offers 140 stores and 40 restaurants. In addition, it's just five minutes from SeaTac International Airport and the new Light Rail (to and from which the hotel offers complimentary shuttle service), and fifteen minutes to downtown Seattle. We have ample **FREE** self-parking.

Located at the juncture of I-405 and I-5, the main highways in the Puget Sound area, makes the location ideal for the Group. Downtown Seattle is quickly accessible by Seattle Express, a daily shuttle service that operates from the hotel to Pike Place Market on a convenient schedule, seven days a week.

Without leaving the hotel, we can enjoy the latest in culinary endeavors in the Northwest Landing Restaurant. They offer gracious dining and sophisticated service for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

In the evenings, we can relax at the new Atrium Bar and Lounge.

So, this looks to be a great place for our Gathering, October 6th through the 9th 2011. There are many, many attractions in the Seattle area and one good "target" would be the Museum of Flight.

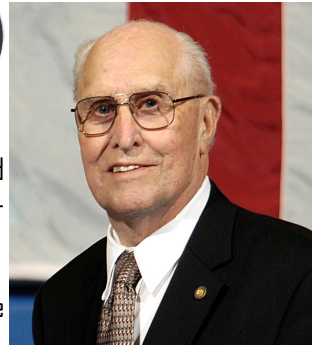
In an effort to keep costs down for attendees the Board has decided we will do Gatherings rather than Reunions. Scheduled activities will be kept to a minimum with the only guaranteed pre-paid item the dinner on Saturday night.



"Keep the Show on the Road...."



Message from Your President... Don Thompson



384th Bomb Group Members:

Another Gathering is behind us. I am sure all had a good time at the Branson Gathering. I am sorry Irene and I could not be there because of Irene's broken leg, but the doctor told her on 22 Sep that she is doing well and so she is encouraged. She spent the time unhappily in a care center doing therapy while you were all having a good time!

Travel is getting difficult for us and I am glad Bill O'Leary will take over as President in 2011. As I told him, there are others who get the work done, such as Carol and Frank and others of the group. Please support their efforts to keep all of us together.

Irene and I have not missed a reunion or a gathering since I discovered the group in 1974, except in 2004 when our granddaughter was getting married.

What the future holds we do not know but there are many who will *Keep the Show on the Road*. Thanks to all of you who are doing so. The 384th lives on!



Gathering of Fortresses and Legends Frank Alfter

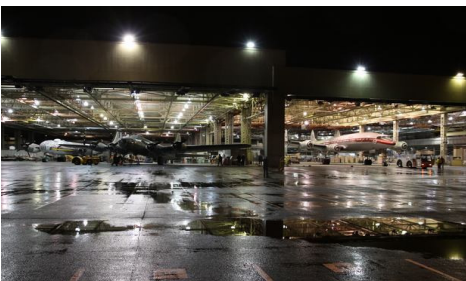


Count 'em.... There are seven B-17s in this photo and all of them flew at the Thunder over Michigan Airshow last August. These are seven of the eight that were there. The eighth one, from the parking spot between Sentimental Journey and Texas Raiders, was flying at the time this photo was taken. I can tell you this was the most Fortresses I've seen in one place. I know, I know, you heroes have seen more than any of us who "weren't there," but I know this show would have brought tears to many of you.

It was just awesome to see and hear that many of these wonderful Forts. During the day they flew one at a time and made very nice passes at the crowd, and then at the end of the day they all cranked up and taxied out. Again, they all made several individual passes, but at the end they all formed up and flew over the crowd in rather tight formation. It was fabulous! And it did bring tears to my eyes.



End of an Era



Early Saturday morning in a rainy Seattle, 0300 hrs local time. The location: Boeing's historic Plant II—about to be torn down after three quarters of a century producing thousands of the most significant and historic air-

planes ever built. In preparation for demolition, three airplanes (B-17, B-29, and a Constellation) that have been undergoing Museum of Flight restoration in the factory's assembly bays were being moved. Just as in days past, with lights and images reflecting off the wet pavement, the last three airplanes were rolled out. The giant hangar doors were raised, the tugs and towbars were hooked up, and with lights flashing, they were moved out of the factory and onto the historic ramp... Where so many have gone before. Then across East Marginal Way and out onto Boeing Field.

This marvelous B-17 was towed across East Marginal Way South to Boeing Field, and will be stored in a hangar at Clay Lacy Aviation.

These are the last airplanes to roll out of these doors... Ever.



Lloyd Witlow's Passing

It is with sadness that we inform you that Lloyd Whitlow passed away in August 2010. Lloyd was President of the Bomb Group for many years and his steadfast leadership made it possible to Keep the Show on the Road. Lloyd participated in getting the second edition of As Briefed published. He also worked with Quentin in getting the stained glass window in the church at Grafton Underwood as well as getting windows made for the chapel at Hill (which will be renamed for Nate Mazer) and the 8th AF Museum in Savannah. He worked on the installation of the 384th Monument at the AF Museum in Dayton and the Avenue of Trees on the airfield at Grafton. He also helped set up the Eagle and Fledgling Award at the AF Academy which presents the award to the top biology student every year from the 384th Bomb Group. His work on many Gatherings and Reunions made it possible for members to get together and enjoy many events. His hard work and dedication will not be forgotten.



Our Branson Heroes



This was the line-up at Branson... They are standing behind the B-17 wing panel that Chris Wilkins worked so hard at getting for our veterans to autograph (not done yet when this photo was taken). From left to right our Branson flight crew is Gene Goodrick, Don Hillard, Peter Bielskis, Jack Goetz, Oran Ferrel, Robert Naum Harry Swift, Henry Sienkiwicz, Bill Wilkens, and Gene Voiland.

Dues Are Coming Due !!

Please mark your calendars now as dues for 2011 will become due in January. The good news is, dues are still just \$25 for the year. If you would like to keep getting this wonderful newsletter, please keep your dues current. There are some events coming up that you won't want to miss out on and this newsletter is a great way to keep abreast of 384th news and members. So, please remember to send in your dues in January!

We need your stories !!!

You will notice there are a couple of stories Frank wrote for this newsletter and not one other story. There are news items and a little about our Branson Gathering and important information about next year's gathering that will be held in Seattle, but no other stories. I know you all have a wealth of experiences that we would like to publish so others can enjoy and learn, so PLEASE send us your stories!!!!

384th BOMB GROUP, INC.
EIGHTH AIR FORCE
1306 Adams Way
Beavercreek, OH 45434



"Keep the Show on the Road...."

We 're on the Web at: www.384thbombgroup.com

TAPS as of October 2010

MILNE, DALE T.	Westminster, CO
MILTON, THEODORE R.	Tucson, AZ
SPODAR, PAUL	New Port Richey, FL
WEENING, FRANK	
WHITLOW, LLOYD	Henderson, NV



384th Toast



Here 's a toast to the host of those who love
The vastness of the sky
To a friend we will send
A message of his brother men who fly
We drink to those who gave their all or old
Then down we roar to score the rainbow 's pot of gold
A toast to the host of men we boast
The Army Air Corps



384TH BOMB GROUP
BRANSON, MISSOURI - SEPTEMBER 10, 2010

© Flash Photo

Photos Still Available

Thanks to Flash Photo for the great job they did with the photos taken of our Heroes and their families. This photo is a really good shot of the whole gang and the one on the inside is just fabulous of our veterans. If you are interested in getting additional copies or prints of the ones you didn't purchase in Branson, you can contact Flash Photo at (417) 334-0073, or via e-mail at flashphoto8411@aol.com, or online at www.flashphoto.photorelect.com