

March 2017

# 384th BOMB GROUP NEWSLETTER

1306 Adams Way  
Beavercreek, OH 45434



## Message from Your Chairman-Peter Bielskis...

The 384th Bomb Group Board of Directors invites you to our 2017 reunion, in conjunction with the 2017 reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Society in New Orleans Wednesday, 27 Sept to Sunday, 1 Oct. We had a really great time with the 8th AFHS reunion in St Louis last year and I know this reunion will be at least as good, if not way better. The 8th AFHS took very good care of our folks in the 384th and we had more attendees than all but one other group. New Orleans is a very interesting city with lots of things to do and see, and the food is awesome. There will be tour options that include the WW II Museum, a City Tour, and a Plantation Tour that will satisfy most curiosities. Please plan to arrive before Thursday in order to take advantage of these tours. Our 384th BG Rendezvous Dinner will be at 7 pm on Friday and you won't to miss that. The grand Gala Dinner, where all bomber and fighter groups come together, is at 7 pm Saturday. So, please join us for the 30th reunion of the 384th BG. I truly look forward to seeing you. **Peter**



## Laissez Les Bons Temps Rouler !!! (French for let the good times roll)

When was the last time you were in New Orleans? It's been since 1970 for me, my bachelor trip, and I am really looking forward to seeing the place again, but this time with my bride, Carol. There is so much to do there and it should be great for foodies. We hope you will help us set a new record for attendance at the 8th Air Force Historical Society's reunion from 27 September through 1 October. This will be our 30th reunion.

The most critical task for you this very moment is to reserve your room(s) at the Hilton New Orleans Airport. Do that first (now) and then take time to mull over the reunion registration form. There is a good chance they will run out of rooms and use a satellite hotel for overflow. We have included three pages of instructions to help you get exactly what you want. Last year's reunion in St Louis was fabulous, but there were some glitches with the meal packages, so we are trying to make it simpler. If you need more information about the reunion, please go to [www.384thbombgroup.com](http://www.384thbombgroup.com).

The agenda for this reunion has a lot to offer with three tours set up. Top of the tour list is the WW II Museum, then there's the City Tour and a Plantation Tour. The WW II Museum is fairly new (2000) and is the nation's official repository for things dealing with the American experience during that era, and is considered a "must see." The Plantation Tour takes us to Oak Alley Plantation, built in 1839, providing a chance to experience a bygone era in one of the South's most beautiful settings.

We will hold our private 384th Rendezvous Dinner on Friday evening, which will allow us all to mingle and dine with old and new friends who help us **Keep the Show on the Road**. Please do come. - Frank Alfter

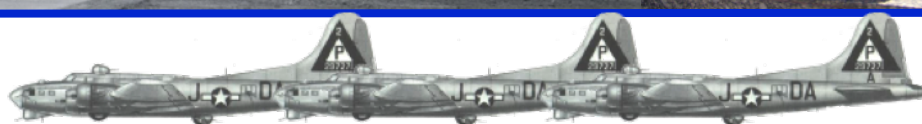
## 8AF + 384th BG Tour - Anybody Interested? by Fred Preller

Mighty 8th Tours UK offers tours of 8th AF locations, and will customize the itinerary to group members in the tour. Tour groups are accommodated in Bury St Edmunds, and are transported daily to and from visit locations. Tour groups range from 8 to 20 people at a time. If you would consider taking a three or five day tour (see link below) this year or next with this company, please call me at 469-338-1397, or email me at [F3RED@PRELLER.US](mailto:F3RED@PRELLER.US) - and please note that I am asking for an expression of interest at this time, not a commitment. For more details, visit:

<https://www.mighty8thtoursuk.com/>



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



**HILTON NEW ORLEANS AIRPORT - NEW ORLEANS, LA**  
**(504) 469-5000 or (800) 445-8667**

[www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/louisiana/hilton-new-orleans-airport-MSYAHHH/index.html](http://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/louisiana/hilton-new-orleans-airport-MSYAHHH/index.html)

**Location**

901 Airline Drive, Kenner, LA 70062

**Reservation Information**

Please call (504) 469-5000 and reference the 8th Air Force Historical Society, or you can go to [www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/louisiana/hilton-new-orleans-airport-MSYAHHH/index.html](http://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/louisiana/hilton-new-orleans-airport-MSYAHHH/index.html) and use Group Code **AFH**. **PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS SOONEST.**

**Group Name:** 8th Air Force Historical Society

**Reunion Dates:** September 27 - October 1, 2017

**Rate:** \$129 + tax (currently 14.75%). Group rate will be available three days before and after the reunion dates, based on space and rate availability.

**Room Rate Discount:** In an effort to make the reunion more affordable, the Society will offset the room rate by \$10 (plus tax) each night (up to 4 nights). Rates will be confirmed at \$129, and then the \$10 discount will be adjusted at the front desk. Please confirm the final rate of \$119 at check-in.

**Cut Off Date:** 25 Aug 2017. Late reservations will be processed based on space availability at a higher rate.

**Cancellation Policy:** Cancellations must be made 24 hours prior to arrival date. After this time a charge of one night's room plus tax will be charged to your credit card. An early check-out fee of \$50 will be charged if you depart the hotel prior to your original check-out date. Please advise the hotel of any changes to your dates before arriving at the hotel to ensure no extra charges occur.

**Overflow Hotel:** There is a strong likelihood that the Hilton Airport will sell out of rooms at the group rate. Please make your hotel reservation first, and then proceed with the activity registration form. Only those confirmed at the Hilton Airport should register for a meal package, as transportation to/from the overflow hotel cannot be guaranteed for the group breakfasts. If you find the hotel has sold out, please check the following webpages for updates on overflow hotel plans: [www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2017](http://www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2017) or [www.8thafhs.org/reunion/](http://www.8thafhs.org/reunion/). You may also call (757) 625-6401 for more information. We strongly discourage you from making reservations at other hotels without first finding out where 8th AFHS has contracted additional rooms.

**Parking & Shuttle Information**

The Hilton New Orleans Airport will offer reunion attendees a 50% discount off the daily parking fee, which is currently \$10. The hotel offers complimentary airport shuttle service to and from the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, operating 24 hours a day on demand. The van pickups are at the Transportation Center, located on the first floor, lower level across from the baggage claim area. The shuttle drops off curbside on the second floor departure level per airport regulations.

**Wheelchair Rental**

ScootAround rents both manual and powered wheelchairs by the day and week. Please call (888) 441-7575 or visit [www.scootaround.com](http://www.scootaround.com) for more information or to make reservations.

**Meal Choices**

**Meal Packages** are intended only for those staying at the headquarters hotel, The Hilton New Orleans Airport. Please confirm your hotel reservation first, before proceeding with your meal registration.

**MEAL PACKAGE 1 \$232**

Package includes 4 breakfasts at the hotel on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and dinners on Friday and Saturday.

**MEAL PACKAGE 2 \$162**

Package includes 3 breakfasts at the hotel on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, along with dinners on Friday and Saturday.

Continental breakfasts include juice, assorted breakfast breads, oatmeal and coffee. The breakfast buffets include juice, fruit, hard-boiled eggs, sausage biscuits, cereal/milk, and coffee/tea.

**CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS**

Thursday's Buffet at \$51 is included in **Package 1**, but can be purchased separately. Friday's Rendezvous Dinner at \$40 and Saturday's Banquet at \$50 can be purchased separately as well, but are included in **both** packages above.



**8<sup>th</sup> AFHS ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM – SEPTEMBER 27 – OCTOBER 1, 2017**

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will participate in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order. Your cancelled check will serve as confirmation. You may also **register online and pay by credit card at [www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2017](http://www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2017)** (3.5% will be added to total). All registration forms and payments must be received on or before August 25, 2017. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form. Returned checks will be charged a \$20 fee. Your contact information will be shared only with reunion attendees.

**Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.**

**322 Madison Mews**

**Norfolk, VA 23510**

**ATTN: 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS**

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received \_\_\_\_\_  
 Inputted \_\_\_\_\_ Nametag Completed \_\_\_\_\_

**CUT-OFF DATE IS 8/25/17**

	Price Per	# of People	Total
<b>REGISTRATION FEE</b>			
Includes meeting expenses and other reunion expenses.	\$40		\$
Reg. Fee for children ages 8-16 attending more than 1 function & staying at hotel	\$25		\$
<b>MEAL PACKAGES</b>			
<i>Package #1 includes 7 meals beginning with breakfast on Thursday</i>	\$232		\$
<i>Package #2 includes 5 meals beginning with breakfast on Friday</i>	\$162		\$
<b>SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)</b>			
Thursday, 9/28: Dinner Buffet (Braised Beef & Fried Catfish)	\$51		\$
Friday, 9/29: Rendezvous Dinner (Chicken Piccata)	\$40		\$
Saturday, 9/30: Banquet Buffet at the WWII Museum – transportation included. (Beef Tips & Mildly Blackened Redfish)	\$50		\$
<b>TOURS</b>			
Thursday & Friday, 9/28-29: World War II Museum (box lunch included both days)			
WWII Veterans Price	\$66		\$
All Other Attendees Price	\$94		\$
Please choose one of the following two tours:			
Saturday, 9/30: City Tour	\$39		\$
Saturday, 9/30: Plantation Tour	\$77		\$
<b>Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.</b>			\$

Please Print

If a WWII Veteran is registering on this form, please list his name first.

MEMBER NAME (for nametag) \_\_\_\_\_  VETERAN  NEXT GEN  OTHER

IF A VETERAN, PLEASE CIRCLE: WWII Cold War Era Korea Vietnam Gulf War Desert Storm Iraq Other \_\_\_\_\_

WWII GROUP AFFILIATION FOR UNIT TOTALS & SEATING ARRANGEMENTS (please list BG, not BS) **384th Bomb Group**

SPOUSE NAME (if attending) \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST NAMES \_\_\_\_\_  NEXT GEN

PHONE # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

MUST YOU BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS?  YES  NO (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

EMERGENCY CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_ PH. NUMBER (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

By submitting this form you will be enrolled in our monthly newsletter subscription. To opt out of this service, please check the box.

**MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS FIRST!!!!**

## Info for 2017 384th Bomb Group Reunion

The 384th Bomb Group Board of Directors invite you to our 2017 Reunion, in conjunction with the 2017 Reunion of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society (8AFHS) in New Orleans, Louisiana, Wednesday, 27 September to Sunday, 1 October. Information on this page is provided to assist 384th Members in planning for and preparing to attend our reunion; additional pages contain the official reunion documents and forms.

### IMPORTANT 384th NOTES:

- Reserve your hotel room **NOW!** Yes, even before you register for the Reunion.
- Plan to arrive (at least) by Friday night by 7:00PM for the **384th Rendezvous Dinner**.
- Select a Meal Package OR 'Separately Priced Meals' that include the **Rendezvous Dinner**.
- Be sure the **384th Bomb Group** is entered as your group affiliation on the registration form.

### MEAL PLAN OPTIONS:

- If you are like me and plan to arrive on **Wednesday** (or before), you can sign up for Meal Plan #1 (breakfast and dinner Thursday-Saturday, breakfast Sunday).
- Or, if you plan to arrive on **Thursday**, you can sign up for Meal Plan #2 (breakfast and dinner Friday-Saturday, breakfast Sunday). If arrival at the hotel is before 6:00PM, you can also select the Thursday Dinner Buffet under 'Separately Priced Meals.'
- Or, if you plan to arrive on **Friday** – early enough for the Rendezvous Dinner at 7:00PM – sign up for the Rendezvous Dinner (under 'Separately Priced Meals'), and such other Separately Priced Meals as needed.
- Or, you can sign up for just the evening meals of your choice under 'Separately Priced Meals.' Note: if you miss the breakfasts (or any of the evening meals) you are missing great opportunities to meet and rub shoulders with some of the most interesting people I know of!

Our **Hospitality Room** will open at Noon on Wednesday, through Saturday night at 11:30 PM. The room will be secure, so bring what you want to share, with confidence that it will be protected.

The 384<sup>th</sup> will have our **Group dinner on Friday evening** – the "Rendezvous Dinner" evening – to be held in our Hospitality Room. This will be a private, table-service meal, and we can conduct any program or business we want to, without disturbing others.

The rest of the program – common 8AFHS Reunion events – will be shared by all. The Thursday evening buffet with a TBD speaker, the Saturday evening Gala Dinner and Program – to be held in the **WWII Museum!!!** - breakfasts, tours, various discussions and panels, will interest all, so I advise you all to rest up – and show up! One tremendous benefit we will see is the presence of Veterans from a broad range of groups, as well as researchers, historians, webmasters, NexGens, and assorted other like-minded folks.

The 384<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group needs to have sufficient attendees registered to qualify for a dedicated Hospitality/private dining room for our Rendezvous Dinner. When you register, be sure to write in that you are with the **384<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group**.

Bottom line: arrive in time for the Rendezvous Dinner on Friday evening.

FINALLY – Direct any questions to Fred Preller, at [f3red@preller.us](mailto:f3red@preller.us)

## MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS FIRST!!!!

## CHISEL CHIN AND ME

Right now I am downshifting seventy years. Think that is easy? Well try it then when you are ninety-four. Seventy years or so ago I was a Technical Sergeant Radio Operator with the 547th Bomb Squadron of the 384th Bomb Group at Grafton Underwood, England. I had already completed twenty-one bomb runs over hostile Nazi targets and the worst mission of all was the last one over a neutral target in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, the Skoda Armament Works. Since the mission was over a neutral territory, the Briefing Officer warned our Bombardiers not to release their bombs unless the factory could be clearly seen. Either due to low hanging clouds or smoke from previous bombings, the factory was obscured, which required three bomb runs through intense anti-aircraft fire before "Bombs Away!" Upon landing, I counted over fifty shrapnel holes through the thin aluminum skin of our Boeing B-17, including an 88mm hole through the right wing spar, which, if it had detonated, would have required someone else to write this story.



Okay, just what has this to do with Chisel Chin? Actually, nothing directly. With or without the Skoda mission, I probably would have spent the evening in the Zebra Club, the enlisted men's watering hole on our Army Air Corps base. I was nursing my second or third flat English beer when the CQ entered the room and yelled out, "Lustig!" Being summoned at that time of the day was not a good omen, so I meekly replied, "Here." "Report to operations!" came the reply. The flight was about a half hour hop to an RAF base near an American General Hospital in Manchester, England. A staff car was waiting to deliver our ground-pounding officers to a dance at the hospital while it dropped us enlisted crew members off at a pub in Manchester.

I never felt at ease in an English pub because of the unfriendly glances of the English men who saw American airmen as the culprits who were sleeping with their wives and daughters, while they were slogging it out from D-Day forward across Holland and France and into hostile Germany. Of course, many American GIs were enduring the same miserable conditions. In an effort to ease our loneliness, our Base Commander trucked in a load of English women, mostly married, affection starved, housewives they collected off the streets of Manchester and Kettering. It was then and there that I met Chisel Chin. She made it clear from the start that she was a married woman. Whether she was an affection starved housewife or not, I never found out - obviously no source of disappointment for either of us at the time.

Chisel Chin was a far better dancer than I was and not an unpleasant conversationalist to boot. When the bell rang ten o'clock, and we all headed for the bus stop, I remember wondering whether or not I should kiss her goodbye. It was a moot question. While we crowded around the bus door, the driver decided to get off the bus. As we backed up to give him room, I felt myself sliding, face down, feet first into a ditch about eight feet deep. As I crawled up out of the ditch, the bus pulled away and I started the half mile trudge back to my tent. It was then that I pictured Chisel Chin smiling all the way back to Kettering - by a stroke of good luck, she had avoided having to give me the traditional goodnight kiss.

As recalled over seventy years later by David C. Lustig



## Logistics, I Don't Know What it is, But I Want Some of it!

The night of 19 February 1944 found England shrouded under a heavy cloud cover, but the weather over Germany was breaking. While the murk might complicate getting away and possibly landing, General Spaatz had made his decision—"Let 'em go." What was to be called the Big Week (20-25 February 1944) had begun. The next day, 20 February, saw the largest force of aircraft up to that time take off and head for targets in Germany. England literally shook under the roar of engines—some 1,004 bomber aircraft plus their fighter escorts.

The primary objective of Big Week was to direct a strategic bombing campaign against the Luftwaffe that would destroy its means to continue the war and, as a result, gain air superiority before Operation Overlord. Bomber operations were conducted principally by the Eighth Air Force, with support from both the Fifteenth Air Force and the Royal Air Force (RAF). In-theater logistics support, the key element that allowed the Eighth Air Force to kick off Big Week, came from the VIII Air Force Service Command (AFSC). A measure of the magnitude of this logistics effort is seen in the number of bomber aircraft generated—VIII AFSC made 1,292 bombers available, an unprecedented number. However, many other facets of logistics support, often on a scale never seen before, were also necessary for Big Week. These include preparation—industrial mobilization, unit buildup and beddown, stateside logistics support, facility expansion and modernization, training and equipping of personnel, and organization of air logistics activities. As is often the case, much of the planning, preparation, and execution of the Eighth's bombing operations was subject to uncertainties that made logistics support difficult and required improvisation on the part of both logistics organizations and logistics leadership.

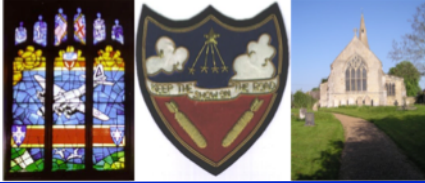
During 1943-1944, the average life of an Eighth Air Force heavy bomber was 215 days, during which it flew missions on 47 days and was undergoing maintenance, repair, or modification on 49 days. The quality of maintenance was often the margin of difference between the life or death of an aircrew or the success or failure of a mission. The greatly increased rate of operations, the high incidence of battle damage, and the growing complexity of military planes during World War II made maintenance one of the most vital functions in waging an air war.

*Excerpted from "How Logistics Made Big Week BIG" AF Journal of Logistics*

## Taps as of March 2017

Gerald Foretich  
William Klien  
Douglas Lillico  
Clarendon Richert  
Philip Seydel  
Eugene Voiland

Meridian, MS  
Dunmore, PA  
Brantford, Ontario  
Urbana, IL  
Palm Beach, FL  
Batavia, IL



544 Bomb Squadron 545 Bomb Squadron 546 Bomb Squadron 547 Bomb Squadron



### Still Looking for Newsletter Writer/Editor

After about eight years, with little in the way of writing skills, or computer tech savvy, this old editor wants to give someone else the opportunity to assemble the quarterly 384th Bomb Group newsletter. I do feel that these newsletters improved over the years, but I have seen some other fabulous bomb group newsletters and I know we could do better. - Frank

### Dues are DUE!

Actually Dues were due in January, but more than three quarters are still outstanding. Dues are important to the operation of the Group and help offset costs, such as printing and distributing this newsletter, supporting Group-selected charities, and all the materials that go into our annual reunions. So, please get your dues in the mail to Carol Alfter, 384th Bomb Group, 1306 Adams Way, Beavercreek, OH 45434.

### Did You Know?

The fleur-de-lis is a decorative symbol used to represent the city of New Orleans. In French, fleur means flower, and lis means lily.



### Visiting England?

You may wish to visit <https://www.mighty8thtoursuk.com> for perhaps one of the best ways to see where our Mighty Eighth operated out of.

### AAFES ★

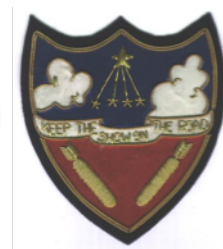
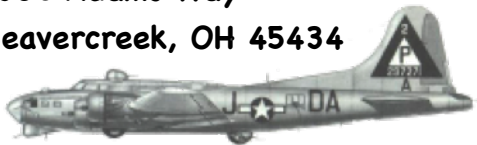
Department of Defense extends online military Exchange shopping privileges to veterans. This applies to all honorably discharged veterans of the military. This online benefit will be effective this coming Veterans Day, 11 Nov 2017. While shopping privileges exclude the purchase of uniforms, alcohol and tobacco products, it does include the Exchange Service's dynamic, online retail environment known so well to service members and their families. Just Google AAFES.

**384th BOMB GROUP, INC.**

**EIGHTH AIR FORCE**

**1306 Adams Way**

**Beavercreek, OH 45434**



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We're on the Web at: [www.384thbombgroup.com](http://www.384thbombgroup.com)