



The 307th Bombardment Group (HV) Association, Inc.
The Long Rangers

October, 2015 Newsletter

Our Association grew out of the initial meeting of eight former World War II members who got together in the spirit of fellowship and camaraderie in Reno, Nevada, on September 11-12, 1972. The goal and hope was for continued growth and expanded interest in the Nation's finest heroes.

The members attending the initial meeting were: Carl Whitesell, Dan Cauffiel, George Jaffe, Ed Jurkens, M.P. Nelson, Arthur Downs, and C. Scott.

Since then, our organization has grown, and we have expanded to include the children of the 307th and their families and friends. Our mission is to insure that future generations never forget the sacrifices that these men made for them and for our country. Each year we hold a reunion in a different part of the country to celebrate and reminisce, catching up with old friends and making new ones.

WE ARE THE FAMILY! WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF HEROES



307th Bomb Group Association

**Oh so Hard to get
New Orleans off
our minds!**



Hard to stop smiling! Hard to stop laughing!

For all the right reasons, the attendees at our 2015 family reunion in NOLA have deemed this year's trip one of the best in years! Some even said it was the best ever!

This Re-Cap Newsletter is intended for all eyes! It contains news, updates and a few surprises.

One of the many outstanding memories missed by those who were unable to travel this year, was a historic surprise pulled off by Stacy Roth and long time veteran-member Bob Robinson.

Don't miss it on Page 13.

The photos are still coming in from the Paparazzi, and the Gallery on the 307bg.com website will soon have them all. This newsletter is sprinkled with a few good ones.

The opening Registration started off with a bang!



Ann Williams-Warner let out all the stops when she accepted the position of New Orleans Reunion Host.

Ann's friends and neighbors pitched in to sort and package the welcome gifts, which included several local favorites from coffee to hot sauce and from Mardi Gras Beads to hand made Pralines, Zapps potato chips and so much more.

The majority of the attendees arrived early, and to no one's surprise, many of them jumped right in and helped to arrange the tables for the memorabilia room. The feeling of "family" started early as each new wave of members arrived.

The first day is always exciting, as old friends find each other in the crowd.

Mary Ann Qualia and Diane Calarco-Grochowski hooked up quickly and had to catch up on at least two years!



Sometimes, it happens this way!

Author Ed DeVos received the following email from a College student, just as he was planning his trip to New Orleans for the 307th Family Reunion.

August 19th, 2015

Dear Mr. DeVos,

My name is Louisa Noble and I am a college student in northern New Hampshire. During my senior year of high-school, my social studies teacher recruited me to help him track down a WWII veteran that had received three medals while serving, those in which were found in a yard sale and initiated the project, and who was also a graduate from our high school. His name was James M. Jackson and was a SGT with the 370th Bomber Squadron/307th Bomber Group, Heavy. According to news articles, James was an assistant radio operator and gunner on a B-24 bomber.

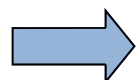
We have been trying to wrap up this project by finding out how he died and just a few days ago we came across your book, *The Chaplain's Cross* which mentions on pg. 199, a B-24 that made it back to Green Island but crashed on its landing. The names you mentioned on the plane match the names of James M. Jackson's crew from the research we have accumulated, but what differs is the middle initial. While we have "M," Jackson you have "H" Jackson.

I am just curious to see where you acquired your information as it could be helpful in our closure to the project. Any information you can provide me with would be greatly appreciated.

Very respectfully,

Louisa Noble

You can only guess what happened next



It happens this way, sometimes!

Ed, having first hand experience with the likes of the 307th BG Historian, Jim McCabe, responded the very next day with a brief email.

August 20th, 2015

Louisa,

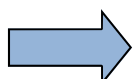
Thank you for your efforts to learn all you can about these heroes from the past. I could not put my hands on the specific records last night but I have included Jim McCabe in my response to you. Jim is the official historian of the 307th and I feel sure he can answer your question. It is certainly possible, when I typed "H," it should have been "M." Since the rest of crew matches up with the information you already have, I suspect that might be the case.

Hope this helps. If I can find the place where I put that information, I will let you know.

Thanks again for your interest in this project.

Ed DeVos

And the story continues





Jim McCabe, not one to let a youthful question go unanswered, did what he does so well. His response was sent just 3 hour after receiving Ed's note!

Hi Louisa,

I am on vacation and will attend to this upon my return this coming weekend. Thank you for honoring Sgt. Jackson and this storied crew of 1st Lt. Paul Rockas. I hope you and those involved in this project are aware of the significance of their ill-fated 29 March 1944 mission to Truk for which they were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation from FDR. It is the equivalent of the Distinguished Flying Cross for everyone who participated in this mission. It is sad to think this medal, among his others, could be found at a yard sale. It looks like this.



Here's a link to a copy of the original military recording of the Presidential Unit Citation awarded to this crew.

http://www.307bg.net/data/documents/27june44_Trunk-President-Award.pdf

The term, "hero," is utilized somewhat freely today as our last WWII veterans are rapidly leaving us. I can assure you that Sgt. Jackson, his crew and the airmen who completed this mission are true heroes of the highest order. I could not begin to fully describe the difficulties encountered for this mission's success. The record setting distance was the equivalent of flying from Concord, NH to Denver, CO.

Beyond this, they had to fly through two major weather fronts, all over open ocean, with no landmarks, no GPS, a Navigational nightmare. The aerial combat began prior to their arrival and persisted for an hour as they departed. The anti-aircraft fire from the ground was intense. Sgt. Jackson was a waist gunner and would have been busy with the scores of Japanese fighter aircraft attacking their bomber and Group.

It was the collective damage they endured from the fighters and anti-aircraft batteries on the ground which led to their demise. Their sacrifice should be known to all your citizens as this was a turning point in the war in the Southwest Pacific Theater.

Respectfully

Jim

Jim McCabe
307th BG Historian



More From NOLA

Yes, there were belly laughs!

In fact, a repeat of our Santa Fe, after hours events just sort of happened. Just past 10:30pm, the elevator on the 8th floor started ringing and it didn't stop until we filled the hospitality room, where refreshments and snacks satisfied our thirst. It was taking on the "family spirit" of the group.



Oh yeah! The Naegle girls found their way to the after hours club. They ran down the hall so fast, they didn't stop to leave their purses in their room. They are so much fun!

And I dare say, you won't see a photo of Betty Kreder without that signature smile of hers.

See what I mean? Oops, Photo bomb!

The Wright sisters, having a good time...at last!
Ha ha!



More From NOLA

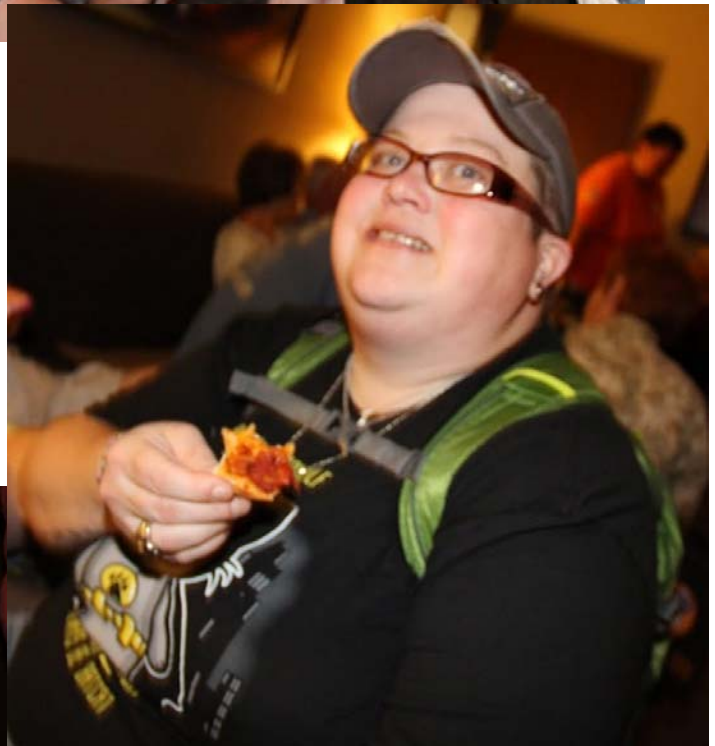
Bob Waibel seems to have everyone at this table convinced that they can solve the mysteries of the world.

Jim McCabe and Cathy Krieger seem enthralled, but Bill Benner is expecting a punch line.



Poor Lisa, She asked for a piece of pizza and all that was left was an appetizer.

And why she has a parachute strapped on her back is no one's business!



Ah ha! There's the Pizza.

Names have been deleted to protect the innocent!

Cathy Krieger asked to add that comment.



“For those of you who haven't read this yet. It's sad, yet proud that we still have people willing to work to recover our veterans. “

Christine Hoover

307th Vice-President

Bodies of WWII US Marines recovered in Pacific



The bodies of 36 US Marines have been found on a remote Pacific island more than 70 years after they died in a bloody World War II battle, a member of the recovery team said.

The remains of the men were discovered after a four-month excavation on Betio Island in Kiribati, director of US charity History Flight Inc., Mark Noah, told Radio New Zealand.

Noah, whose organization worked with the US Defense Department on the project, said the men were killed during the Battle of Tarawa in 1943.

"(They) had an expectation that if they were to die in the line of duty defending their country they would be brought home... that was a promise made 70 years ago that we felt should be kept," he said late Tuesday.

While the remains have not been formally identified, Noah said they almost certainly include those of Lieutenant Alexander Bonnyman, who posthumously received America's highest military accolade, the Medal of Honor, for conspicuous gallantry.

Bonnyman's citation says he led a series of assaults when Marines stormed the island, finally falling when he attacked a bombproof installation that was hampering the advance.

A statement on History Flight's website said Bonnyman's daughters had decided to have his remains interred in a family plot in Knoxville, Tennessee, next to his parents, with a public funeral service planned.

Bodies of WWII US Marines recovered in Pacific



Overall, more than 1,000 Americans died at Tarawa, while the entire Japanese garrison of 4,800 was wiped out.

Noah said the remains would be repatriated this month and identified using a combination of dental records and DNA comparison with surviving relatives.

He said the bodies of several hundred American soldiers still lay in makeshift, unrecorded graves where they were buried after the battle.

Noah said efforts would continue to ensure that the bodies were returned home.

"There's a lot of work to be done on the island," he said.

[Click here to view video and photos](#)



More NOLA Photos



Tom Ayala, gets a few tips on navigating a Skype Video Call from Stacy Roth.

Yes, we have a wine bottle opener. Beth Kendall is the wine bottle opener.



Dottie Kendall shares a few laughs with Vivian and Milt Potee.

Sad, but true.....But wait!

In June of this year, our president, John Poggi and Parliamentarian, Capt. Jack Palmer attended what was said to be the 30th and last Reunion Banquet of the 307th Bomb Wing Assoc. in Lincoln, NE.

These were the boys who served During the Cold War Era (B-47 and KC-97's).



Seated L-R: Jack Palmer, Parliamentarian of the 307th Bomb Group Association, with Donna Bunten and LTC Laurie Bunten, USAF (Ret).

So why is this news showing up on our October Newsletter? Well, thanks for asking! First and foremost, we want all the 307th Bomb Wing members to know that our doors are wide open, and we are here with open arms to welcome you to the "expanded" 307th BG Association.

To make it even more official, the top brass from the re-commissioned 307th Bomb Wing, were present at our New Orleans Reunion, and they made quite an



impression on our members. We are sure we made a few impressions on them, too. Come Join us, we are a family and you are most welcome!

Left: Lt. Commander Kenneth F. Wyzwany, Chief Navigator of the 307th BW training Activity

Right: Maj. Brian M. Plauche, Commander, 307th AMXS

Welcome to the Family!



More From NOLA

Now here's something a few 90+ year-old veterans don't see every day!

When T/Sgt John Wright, of the 424th Bomb Squadron was led into the banquet room before the doors were open to the rest of the group, he came to his table and found a photo of Bob Robinson next to his table setting. Well, at least it looked like a photo of Bob. You see, Bob's name didn't appear on the reunion list this year and John was really looking forward to visiting with his war buddy.



Just then, Stacy Roth, sitting next to him said, "John, say hello to Bob." John was a bit confused, until he saw Bob Robinson laughing and waving back at him. "Hello John, what do you think of this?" Bob and John were debuting a piece of 307th history. The very first ever, 307th BG Video Chat Room is something that has been promised since Indianapolis. John and Bob spent some quality time before the doors opened, then Stacy took Bob around the room and he got a chance to visit with all the veterans, right at their table. The veterans voted unanimously that this is something that has to become part of our communication platform.

"Why wait for a whole year to visit with our brothers? For that matter, why not make this a monthly event?" "Heck, I have great grandchildren that I'd love to visit with. We can use it for family and friends, too." "This is a great idea, let's put a schedule together so we can recruit some of the other fellas who can't travel, so they can join in on member meetings, weekly chats and the reunion." The remarks kept coming in and they were all positive. Soooooooooo → → →

More From NOLA

Sooooooooo, we made it a priority, and we held up this newsletter to be sure we can introduce it to the entire membership, families and friends. And that includes the 13th Air Force Association, the 307th Bomb Wing and anyone within the reach of the 307th Bomb Group website.

Without further delay, we take pride in introducing:

The 307th GB Video Chat Room. Check it out on the website at

<http://www.307bg.net/chat>. Please visit the site, click to view the Enrollment Process. Every veteran should have a connection to this site. Let's do this!



You are here: 307th BG Video Chat Room [Return to HOME Page](#)

Click [HERE](#) to start the Enrollment Process
Click [HERE](#) To view the Chat Session RSVP Form

Welcome to the 307th BG Video Chat HQ

The new 307th BG Video Chat Room is a Member, Family and Friends site created to keep the lines of communication with our veterans and family members open, active and social.

It all started when Bob Robinson's name didn't show up on the New Orleans Reunion list.
Bob has attended nearly every reunion since he had hair.
The word got to Stacy Flora Roth, a long time member, and she jumped into action. Working with Sonia Garza, our IT specialist, Stacy set Bob up with a surprise connection so he could attend the reunion banquet ceremonies from the comfort of his dining room table.



His first Skype chat was scheduled a few minutes before the doors opened for the Saturday evening banquet and John Wright, veteran and an old friend of Bob's was the first face he had seen on the new fangled technology. The Rest is History! Bob spent time on several dinner tables during the evening's events, and he even participating in a game show, which had him belly laughing.

The remaining veteran members of the 307th BG Association decided that waiting a whole year to see old friends is just too long to wait. And considering there are several former members who are unable to travel, we decided to bring the coffee table a little closer to home.

Well, now there is no excuse for missing a reunion, members' meeting, a chat with old friends or out of state family members.

The 307th BG Video Chat Room is opened for business.

Don't wait!
Enroll NOW!

It's easy and it's FREE to all members, families and guests!

A few words from one of the Boys

Uncle Jack Palmer

Pilot — 424th Bombardment Squadron



Hello Folks,

I'm so very proud to be part of this organization. The events, celebrations and quality time spent with the members and families of the 307th BG have surely reached a new high for me. Great comments of praise were heard from all the veterans who attended NOLA.

I just wanted to take this time to remind each veteran, and their families, not to miss the opportunity to enroll in the 307th BG Video Chat Room, which was debuted in New Orleans and mentioned in this newsletter.

Many of us spend a whole year, saving, planning and preparing for our annual reunion. But during the waiting period, we tend to feel so out of touch from everyone else. Let's face it, we're not getting any younger. When Don Calarco and I first tested this video call system over a year ago, I didn't know what to expect. Once we finally got my computer configured, I was shocked at the clarity of the picture and the sound, and even more surprised to hear that it was FREE! Welcome to the future. Let's take advantage of it.

I urge you all not to delay. This is going to bring us, and keep us even closer together than ever before. Technology isn't such a bad thing after all.

I'm looking forward to visiting with you. I've asked Don to post a link to the Reserved Schedule, which will show the names of those who have reserved a "seat" at one or more of the upcoming sessions.

See you soon,

Jack

Jack Palmer



The PX

A Note from Lisa Kreder

Membership

Books

eBooks

Pins

Patches

Duplicate Ribbons and Awards

Challenge Coins

T-Shirts

Jackets / Vests

Windbreakers

Caps / Hats

Outerwear

Build a Shirt

License Plate Frames

DVD - CD

Donations and Memorials

Commemorative Display Collection

Embroider Anything

1Million Specialty items

Hi, it's Lisa.

If you haven't browsed the PX lately, you have to stop by and visit the [Book] section.

We have not only added the Ed DeVoss collection, but we have a few newcomers, like Neal Bertrand and yes, Don Calarco.

Have you written a book? Or maybe you have a collection of poetry that you wish to share. Let us know and we'll get your work set up in the PX Store. God knows if Don Calarco can publish a book, just about anyone can. Ha ha! I had too much fun in Nola! The PX team has been working hard to bring you exciting new items, and I just know you'll like the new look.

Check out the book section. Ed DeVos was a big hit in NOLA, and now all his books are in the PX.

Stop by soon!

[Click Here NOW](#)

Lisa Kreder

PX Manager

OLD?

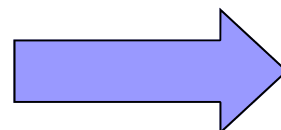
Have you ever wondered what thoughts are brewing in the mind of a man who is soon to be 100 years young?



Bill Grisaitis is a 307th BG member who hasn't been to a reunion in a while. In fact, he was just recently reunited with the group via a few emails. Well, since his first few emails, Bill has shown us that being 99 years old doesn't mean you have to be glued to a rocking chair or destined to browse through old photo albums all day.

Bill is not only the most outgoing 99 year old any of us have ever met, he is knowledgeable (and outspoken) about current events, the news, and the elections. To add that his humor has no boundaries would be an understatement. Between him and Ben Waldo, they seem to collect and share some of the funniest stuff we've seen lately.

In fact, at times Bill is quite profound. Here is a piece that he admits belongs to someone else, who may have been a senior. He suggests reading it slowly, as there is a lot to learn here...for all ages.



AND THEN IT IS WINTER

author unknown

You know. . . time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years.

It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams.

But, here it is... the winter of my life and it catches me by surprise.... How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that winter was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like. But, here it is...my friends are retired and getting grey...they move slower and I see an older person now.

Some are in better and some worse shape than me...but, I see the great change.... Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant...but, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd be.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore... it's mandatory!



A few gems from Bill Grisaitis

~ REMEMBER:

~It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.

~ Today is the oldest you have ever been, yet the youngest you will ever be, so enjoy this day while it lasts!

~Your kids are becoming you....

~Going out is good.... Coming home is better!

~You forget names...but it's OK because other people forgot they even knew you!!!

~You realize you're never going to be really good at anything...especially golf.

~The things you used to care to do, you no longer care to do, but you really do care that you don't care to do them anymore.

~You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep."

~You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch.

~You tend to use more 4 letter words, like "what?"..."when?"... "what?"

~Now that you can afford expensive jewelry, it's not safe to wear it anywhere.

~You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless." What?

~What used to be freckles are now liver spots.

~Seems like everybody whispers.

~You have 3 sizes of clothes in your closet, 2 of which you will never wear again.

~But Old is good in some things: Old Songs, Old movies, and best of all, OLD FRIENDS!! Stay well, "OLD FRIEND!"

It's Not What You Gather, But What You Scatter That Tells What Kind Of Life You Have Lived.

Bill Grisaitis

AND THEN IT IS WINTER

author unknown

Cause if I don't on my own free will...I'll just fall asleep where I sit!

And so...now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!

But, at least I know, that though the winter has come, and I'm not sure how long it will last...this I know, that when it's over on this earth...it's NOT over. A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done...things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

So, if you're not in your winter yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long!

Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not! You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after.

Make it a fantastic one.



NOTICE

Results of our Special Business Meeting in New Orleans September 19, 2015

A special meeting of the members was held on Saturday morning, September 19, 2015. The minutes of the meeting from September 20, 2014, were approved as submitted. Of note from the meeting of September 20, 2014, was the approval by the membership of the revised bylaws, which allows for the expansion of the membership of the 307th to include descendants of those who have served in the 307th Bombardment Group; and provides approval for the 307th to engage in charitable and educational activities consistent with the achievements and legacy of the 307th Bombardment Group (HV) and successor units; and to permit proxy voting and participation in meetings by electronic means.

In simple terms, we have begun the process of changing from a group of 307th veterans, to a group of family, friends and descendants of 307th veterans dedicated to preserving the memories, accomplishments and legacy of our beloved family members. We also can use 21st century technology to keep ourselves and our veterans in touch with the group and each other.

Also at this year's meeting, the membership authorized the board to research and select a location for the next reunion as soon as practicable.

Pursuant to that authorization, the board has begun the process of sending Requests for Proposals to hotels in Dayton, OH; Nashville, TN; Portland, OR; Reston, VA and Tulsa, OK. Stay tuned for the final selection, and the dates of next year's reunion.

Looking back on New Orleans, and forward to 2016



Dear members, family and friends of the 307th BG Association,

If you have scanned this far into our newsletter, you probably have a sense of the unanimous sentiment that the Association's September reunion in New Orleans met or exceeded all expectations!

In addition to our tireless reunion team, several other folks made substantial contributions to our success that I would like to recognize:

MSgt Laura Siebert, public affairs coordinator of the 307th Bomb Wing at Barksdale AFB, who devoted countless hours to photographing our activities at the World War II Museum and during the reunion – and scrounged the audio visual equipment we used at the banquet!

MAJ Brian Plache, commander of the 307th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, for his informative and witty after-dinner address – and for assisting with wheelchairs at the Museum, and enhancing the camaraderie of the hospitality suite!

LTC Ken Wyzywany, the 307th's chief of navigator qualification, for enduring all the navigator jokes aimed his way, and gracing our banquet with his charming wife and daughter;

MSgt Jim Davidson, who recruited volunteers from Keesler AFB to serve on their own time as the color guard for our veterans; and

Our friends from the 13th Air Force Association, especially veteran **Ray Perkins** and outgoing president **Bill Smith**, who arranged for their reunion group to join us at the World War II Museum on Thursday, and for a hugely successful Friday ---happy-hour gathering.

As our seasoned reunion team screens 2016 reunion venues and schedule options – including both September, and July-August dates for greater family participation – we are hoping that both the 13th Air Force Association and the 307th Bomb Wing families may be able to join us for another great gathering.

John

John Poggi, President 307th Bombardment Group (HV) Association

More from NOLA

Jim McCabe draws a good laugh from Ben Waldo, as Bill Springer looks on, during the on-stage interviews held at the National WWII Museum on day two.



You couldn't buy smiles this wide. Vivian Potee and the Poggi girls have a laugh while waiting for the doors to open to the banquet.

The photo on the right was one of the "practice shots" of the group, just before cocktails.



More from NOLA

This happy couple is on a perpetual Honeymoon. Every once in a while Jim's feet hardly seem to touch the ground. Greta has that effect on him!



New members, Bob and Connie Cramer, from San Antonio, fit into the family from day one. Connie even joined the fun as a contestant of the Game Show spoof:

“Is your Memory as Good as a WWII Veteran’s?”

The Keesler Air Force Base Honor Guard, led by Master Sgt. Jim Davidson, gets last minute instructions from John Poggi moments before their entry.



More from NOLA

A very proud granddaughter, Lisa Kreder, poses with Pap-Pap, her maternal grandfather, John Wright, who was kind enough to pass those beautiful blue eyes on to her.



Maj. Brian M. Plauche, Commander of the 307th AMXS, was already sworn in as a family member of the group, a few days before his presentation, so he was very comfortable. All eyes were on him as he unveiled the strength and power of the new 307th Bomb Wing.

More from NOLA



Bob Barker....eat your heart out!

The only casualty of the weekend was Don Calarco's first kidney stone. He recovered with time to spare to host The Game Show on Saturday night.

The vet's team, which included Bob Robinson on remote broadcast from home, won the Game Show hands down.



More 307th Bomb Wing News

by Airman Quay Drawdy
7th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

10/19/2015 - **DYESS AIR FORCE BASE, Texas** -- The 489th Bomb Group was reactivated as an Air Force Reserve unit during a ceremony here Oct. 17.

The 307th Bomb Wing's newly reactivated 489th BG, which encompasses more than 250 Airmen across the 345th Bomb Squadron, 489th Maintenance Squadron and the 489th Aerospace Medical Flight, will be working closely with the 7th Bomb Wing, providing a formal training mission and combat support operations as the first-ever B-1B Lancer-occupied Air Force Reserve unit. The unit will be furthering Total Force Integration, which aims to integrate active duty Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard components by using the B-1B Lancers at Dyess for their mission.



"We are fairly small and have been trying to get integrated and be a part of this team, and we are pleased with the 7th Bomb Wing's reception," said Maj. Stephanie Treadaway, 489th BG executive officer. "Everyone from leadership level to Airmen has been extremely helpful. We want to be here, and we are very excited for this new transition."

The influx of Airmen and their families that will be a part of the 489th BG will add several hundred people to the Abilene community.

"I'd say the community is excited about having more Airmen," said Bob Christopher, honorary commander for the 7th BW vice commander. "People are the driving machines for us. The Airmen spend their money on Abilene, Abilene spends its money on Dyess and vice versa. It all flows together and does us good."

Establishing an Air Force Reserve unit helps retain Airmen already trained in their fields when they choose to leave active duty, allowing reservists to collaborate with active duty members in a local environment. Working so closely creates better working relationships, benefitting both parties when deployed while also providing the Air Force with a larger force when needed.

"Now, more than ever, our nation demands dominance from our Air Force," said Col. Bruce Cox, 307th BW commander. "As the Air Force Reserve Command's only bomber wing, it is my great honor to partner with the 7th Bomb Wing in the B-1 mission area. The citizen-Airmen of the 489th are incredibly excited to join the professional Airmen of the 7th Bomb Wing in their quest to fly, fight and win with the mighty BONE."

The 489th Bombardment Group was first activated on Oct. 1, 1943, at Wendover Army Air Field, Utah. The newly-formed group trained with the B-24 Liberator before entering combat for the first time on May 30, 1944. The 489th BG supported the landings in Normandy and flew missions into Germany, bombing strategic targets and was part of food drops for Allied Forces in France.

"We were all just proud to be there," said Edmund Myles, a retired armored gunner from the former 489th Bombardment Group. "There was a job to do, and I did it to the best of my abilities. We all did."

The group was inactivated on Oct. 17, 1945, nearly two months after the end of World War II, and was reactivated exactly 70 years later.

More Photos from NOLA

Hundreds of Photos are still coming in from members and guests who attended the 2015 reunion.

The entire Photo Collection from New Orleans, 2015 will be available for viewing soon, in the Gallery Page of the 307th BG Website.

<http://www.307bg.net/reunion/gallery/index.asp>

NOTE: Please share your photos! If you are planning on creating an online album to include all your photos from NOLA, please just send the [link] to the album to member.services@307bg.net.



A Final Flight

Colonel George Edward French, Jr.



George E. French, Jr. (Colonel USAF, Retired) age 93, passed away peacefully at his home in Venice, Florida on October 11, 2015.

A funeral Mass was offered on Tuesday, October 20, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at Our Lady of Prompt Succor church in Alexandria, LA. Interment followed in Greenwood Memorial Park.

Mr. French was born on December 30, 1921 to Marguerite Kelsoe French and George Edward French. He was predeceased by his parents, his brother Edwin, his sister, Elsie French Krison and the mother of his seven children, Jayne McCready French. He was very proud of his surviving six sons and one daughter, George III (Jenny), Jean Marie Smith (Bryan), John (Fay), David (Mary Alice), Thomas, Mark (Leslie) and Daniel. He is also survived by 11 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

George spent most of his adult life in the US Air Force, starting out in 1942 at Foster Field in Victoria, Texas.

He flew 45 missions in the B-24 "Liberator" in WWII as part of the "Long Rangers" of the 370th Squadron, 307th Bomb Group, 13th Air Force. In his return to civilian life after the war, George attended LSU, spent a year with Delta Airlines and received his BS in Accounting from the University of Colorado. He received his MBA from the University of Texas, re-entered the ranks of the Air Force and was Liaison Officer with the Auditor General's office for the US Air Force Academy. Command and Staff School followed, as well as Air War College in Montgomery, Alabama. After a stint at the Pentagon, heading up the F104G "Starfighter" program, George retired from his beloved Air Force and moved his family to Dallas, Texas. He was the program director at LTV for the A-7 "Corsair II" Navy fighter jet. After spending several years in the real estate business with Ebby Halliday in Dallas, he retired for good and moved to Florida.

George was a gallant ladies man, a gourmet cook, an expert skier, a sports aficionado and a graceful ballroom dancer. He had a life-long love affair with okra, gumbo, shrimp, crawfish, French bread and martinis. He excelled at so many different things, from cooking to flying to skiing to dancing to gardening to beating his seven children at Spades, Dominoes and Scrabble. His charity extended from orphans in Mexico to the children of Boys Town. He was always a true "Southern gentleman". The most important things in his life to him, beside his children, were Faith and Love. As his body failed him, his mind was forever spinning out stories of days gone by. He could watch and keep up with what was playing on three TV's simultaneously. He had a love for all things sports-related and his "bets" with his sons were generally right-on!

George liked to think that he was still the "Colonel" in dealing with his children and grandchildren. . . hence the name they all called him . . . "Colonel George"! His heart was big and his hatred for broccoli and liver even bigger. He never uttered a curse word and his devotion to Our Lord and the Catholic Church was impeccable. One of his greatest joys was lecturing at Sunday Mass. He is now flying high into the wild, blue yonder. . . and we have to say . . . "He did it his way."



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