

11-18-09

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Following is a submission for use in the next 8th Air Force News.

Our Virginia Chapter held a meeting on August 23, 2008 that was rather unique-it was held at two locations. First, we had lunch at Bottoms-Up Pizza in Richmond. Following lunch, we visited the nearby Richmond Holocaust Museum. This was a learning experience and a sobering lesson. Due to the influence of one Chapter member, the Museum provided the most distinguished Board member, Docent Alexander Lebenstein to conduct our tour. He is the only surviving member of the Jewish Community of Haltern-am-See. Starting at the age of eleven, he survived two ghettos, two concentration camps and four slave labor camps before being liberated in 1945. We saw a striking replica of the Nuremberg Courtroom complete with wax figures representing those on trial as well as the judges, GI guards and other attendees. Most memorable for this Chapter member was the remark by Alex that every nation on earth could be conquered from within by internal forces of evil. Makes me remember two quotes: "The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance" and, "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

This Chapter still produces a newsletter. An issue was mailed out in early January. It contained submissions by most of the members who visited the Museum. They described the effect and education they received from the tour. Counting Vets and guests, there were fourteen present.

On November 8, 2008, several members from both the National Capitol Area Chapter and the Virginia Chapter attended a book signing at the Udvar-Hazy Museum at Dulles Airport. The book was a series of beautiful finely detailed drawings of mostly WW-II planes. The artist, Nicolas Trudgian, presented each veteran with a copy of the book. Rounding out 2008, a joint NCA Chapter and Virginia Chapter Christmas luncheon took place at the Fairfax Elks Club.

We have come (kicking and screaming) into the hi-tech phenomena. The second-generation lady serving as our Web Master has set up a very attractive and impressive web page. She hastens to point out that it is under construction and is greatly in need of material. I think it is a very fine beginning. Among other items of interest, it contains reprints of articles from some early issues of Plane Talk. It can be accessed at "8THAF-VIRGINIA.ORG".

At our April 25 2009 general meeting and luncheon, Abe Firestone presented a "high-tech" slide show of his recent visit to England with his old Bomb Group for a reunion. None of those in attendance really believed Abe was once that young.

We again teamed up with the National Chapter Area Chapter to provide WW-II Vets to answer questions by the attendees at a Collings Foundation B-17, B-24 and P-51 Fly-In at the Northern Virginia Warrenton/Fauquier Airport. The Fly-In covered four October days and we had members present all four days. The Virginia Chapter held a general membership meeting Saturday, October 24th. SAIC furnished a BBQ lunch for our meeting. All Vets and guests received free food for all four days. Among other contributions from the SAIC Company were 20 rides on Sunday for Vets, ten on the B-17 and ten on the B-24. When you consider that the Collings Foundation was charging \$450.00 per ride, this was a very generous contribution. Yours truly took a B-17 ride, his first since May of 1945.

On December 3rd, Our Chapter plans a Christmas luncheon and meeting at the Stonehenge Country Club in Richmond. Past President Bob Noziglia will show the film "All The Fine Young Men" and David Fields will fill us all in on the details of the Fly-In. David was instrumental in arranging and overseeing the Fly-In.

Chapter President Lew Burke wishes all a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, and "Let's Keep 'em Flyin'!"

cc Joseph Keeley, Chapter/Unit Liaison

Chapter Officers are:

Founding Past President Christopher Bowers

Past President Emeritus James Trask *

Past President Edward Ewing *

Immediate Past President Robert Noziglia

President Lewis E. Burke

Vice President John Pearson

Secretary Robert Gates

Treasurer Paul Adams

Director James Harvell

Director A.J.Z. Firestone

Director Anne Royster

Editor, Plane Talk Robert Gates

Web Master Anne Royster (Daughter of Morris Royster*)

* Deceased

Submitted by Lewis E. Burke

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