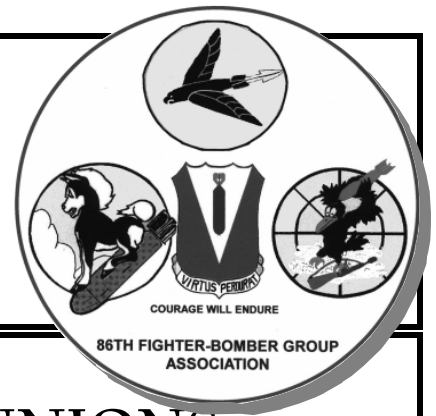


86TH FIGHTER-BOMBER GROUP ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2009 NEWSLETTER



NO SIGN OF STOPPING REUNIONS.

GATHERING TOGETHER IN HOUSTON

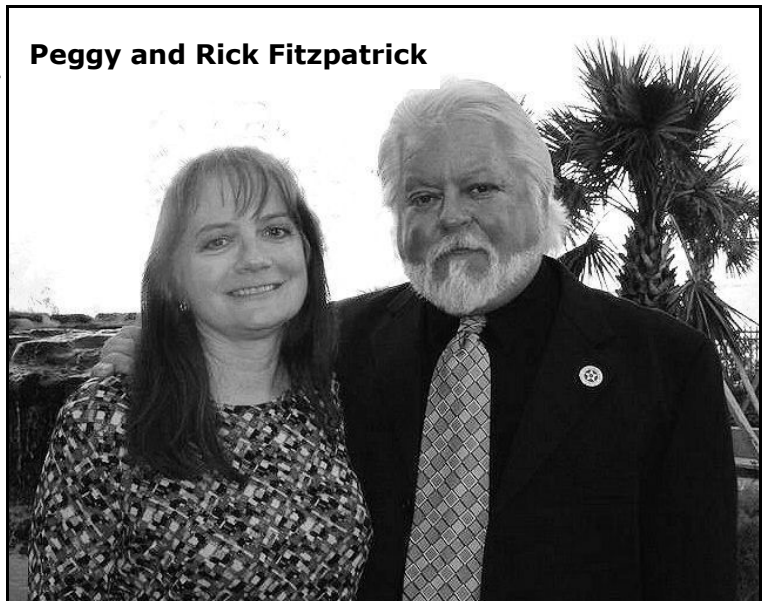
The 86th Fighter-Bomber Group Association's 30th consecutive annual reunion got under way for your correspondent when he and six other attendees were met at Hobby Airport by reunion host Rick FITZPATRICK and transported to the scene of the action, the beautiful new Staybridge Suites. Opened as recently as last April, it turned out to be every bit as plush as advertised.

With its choice of studio, two- and three-bedroom suites, all equipped with complete kitchens, and the larger suites with a bar, all hands thought it the finest lodgings we have ever occupied. Full breakfasts and dinners were "on the house." They could use a couple of more elevators to cut down on the distance to the rooms some of us oldsters had to navigate, but let's not nitpick.

Gale-like winds and rain were the order of the day on Thursday. Fortunately no tours were scheduled, so most people "hung out" (as the kids say) in the Hospitality Room, recounting how they personally "whipped the Kaiser", and discussing their numerous bodily ailments in more detail than one cared to hear. Ah, the Golden Years! The Hospitality Room didn't seem the same in the absence of Refreshment Therapists Hubie and Pauline BOUCHARD, though the finger food furnished by the delicatessen friends of Ellen MASSEY helped to compensate. First time I ever heard of Subway-size sandwiches as finger food.

Friday brought with it a tramway and walking tour of the vast NASA complex located nearby. The skies were overcast but we escaped the rain. I had visited this complex 25 or 30 years ago and the contrast was amazing. It would be difficult to visualize the size of the rockets used to launch the capsules into space without actually seeing them. By contrast, the tiny size of the original capsules ridden into space by Alan Shepard, John Glenn and company was almost ridiculous.

Peggy and Rick Fitzpatrick



86th FIGHTER-BOMBER GROUP ASSOCIATION

Vol. XXX, No. 3

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

Editor – Sidney B. Howard
Publisher – Martha M. Plowden

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Board Members:	One-year term – Audrey Brown, Sid Howard, Glen Margerum Two-year term—Louis DeLuca, Rick Fitzpatrick, Debbie Rose Three-year term – Jack Botten, Martha Plowden, Diane Senneff
Volunteer Pool:	Bunny and John Sheffield

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Association Website: www.86fighterbombergroup.com

We as veterans of WWII are organized to perpetuate the history of our fight to retain our American freedoms, to meet once a year for a reunion with the purpose of maintaining close ties with the Association and our comrades, and to encourage the heirs of our veterans to join with us in a united effort to hold on to our legacy.



MEETINGS OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

The results of the balloting for positions on the Board for 2009-2010 were announced by Audrey BROWN, Vice President Emeritus (in absentia unfortunately). As shown on Page 2 of this Newsletter, Debbie ROSE was named Chairman of the Board and President succeeding Glen MARGERUM who was stepping down for medical reasons, but remaining on the Board. Martha PLOWDEN, Treasurer and Newsletter Publisher, was voted a new three-year term. Jack BOTTEN and Diane SENNEFF were elected from the Volunteer Pool to three-year terms, succeeding Hubie BOUCHARD and "Brad" BRADFORD whose terms were expiring. Audrey BROWN, Louis DELUCA, Rick FITZPATRICK, Sid HOWARD, and Glen MARGERUM round out the nine-man/woman board.

Note: Officer's and board member's salaries remain the same (a pat on the back).

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I guess Debbie figures the duties of her new job won't keep her busy enough, or something, because she has volunteered herself and Randy (her husband) to host next year's reunion in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (That is in "Central America", right.) As of this writing she is already checking the hotel scene for possibilities.

At the conclusion of the General Membership Meeting, as a token of our appreciation for their service to the Association, beautiful plaques were presented to Bill and Mary BOWMAN, hosts of our Indianapolis reunion; to Rick and Peggy FITZPATRICK, Houston reunion hosts; and to Ellen MASSEY of the local Chamber of Commerce "for outstanding service well beyond the call of duty," without which the reunion would not have been the success that it was.

OUTSIDE BY THE POOL

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That evening Ellen and husband Curtis put on a scrumptious Texas barbeque by the outdoor swimming pool with your choice of chicken, beef, sausage, or all three, with potato salad and all the "fixins." I would have liked to smuggle some aboard my flight home for analysis and, hopefully, reproduction.

Saturday dawned sunny and beautiful, not too hot with low humidity, just right for our scheduled visit to Wings Over Houston at Ellington Field. They put on quite a show, with a great collection of planes ranging from trainers to modern jets, and even included a dare devil gal riding atop the wing of a "Flying Jenny" or whatever it was. As special guests, we sat in a covered pavilion with picnic lunches and drinks. Oversize golf carts were available to view all the exhibits.

Returning to the hotel on our bus, we saw hundreds of people taking in the show by the roadside or on roof tops from several miles away.

The traditional group picture took place after our return to the hotel and most folks changed into their "Sunday go to meeting" clothes. Choreographed and directed by our ace photographer, Jack BOTTEN, pix were taken of the veterans, families, and guests and, in a renewed practice, the Board of Directors.

The traditional banquet began with Host Rick FITZPATRICK leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Glen MARGERUM conducted the Invocation, during which he asked for a minute of silence for all those who have answered their last roll call since we last convened in San Antonio.

The after-dinner speaker, Col. Jack Daniel, Vice Commander, 147th Recon. Wing, Texas ANG, Ellington Field gave an informative and, judging by the number of questions he was asked, well-received talk on the unmanned aerial combat vehicles and the part they are playing in the war in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

RICK, DICK, AND JACK



Sunday was getaway day with lots of "stay healthys" and "see ya next year in Milwaukee." We even have a tentative bid for the 2011 so you see our bunch can never be said to be a bunch of pessimists.

Finally, as a personal note, I was very pleased to have with us my lady Lois' daughter, the beautiful Lynn Andress. I've known her since she was two and you'd never guess her age, but I wish I were 25 or 30 years younger. Lois and I stayed over for a couple of days. During that time we had an enjoyable luncheon with a group of some 25 fellow workers at Baker Hughes, Inc. (Baker Oil Tools in my day), many of whom I had not seen since I retired 24 years ago.

LOIS AND SID



REUNION ATTENDEES

(XY) = Number of reunions attended

- (20) BARANEK, Carl & Jackie
- (20) BOTTEN, Jack & Charlotte Reid
- (09) BOWMAN, Bill & Mary
- (19) BOWMAN, Jim & guest Janice Spahr
- (24) BRADFORD, H.E. & son Mark
- (06) BROWN, Roy & Frances

(continued on next page)

- (26) DELUCA, Louis & Angie
 (27) FITZPATRICK, Jesse, daughter Terry Vohs, & son Denny
 (06) FITZPATRICK, Rick & Peggy
 (01) FREECE, Barry & Kathy, guests of Rick Fitzpatrick
 (03) FREY, George
 (01) FRISBY, John & John Jr.
 (20) HARRIS, Lyndal
 (29) HOWARD, Sid, Lois Schroeder & her daughter Lynn Andress
 (03) JOHNSON, Don, Emma, & son Paul
 (07) LITTLE, Ann, Gerry, & daughter Kathryn
 (29) MARGERUM, Glen
 (01) MASSEY, Ellen & Curtis, guests
 (02) OMO, Cecil & Harriet Cooch (27th FBG)
 (22) PLOWDEN, Dick & Martha
 (04) ROSE, Debbie & Randy
 (21) SENNEFF, John & Dianne
 (19) WIESSNER, Dick & Ruth Welsh

Veterans - 17

Wives - 8, Family & Guests - 22 = **Total - 47**

Late cancellations:

BOUCHARDS—Hubie, Pauline, Ann & Amy
 DOLNY, John & Gisela
 FITZPATRICK, Donna, daughter-in-law & friend Pam Leonard

POTPOURRI

✧ The following is an up-to-date report on our old friend Robert P. "Bob" or "Teep" TEEPLE, one of the original stalwarts in the early days of the Association, who was unable to be with us in Houston.

An October e-mail from Bunny Sheffield, Bob TEEPLE's daughter, advises he was admitted to the hospital the end of August with severe dehydration, pneumonia, anemia, and other complications.

"After going through a critical period, the tide turned and he began to pull back." There followed a period of intensive physical and occupational therapy. He continued to regain strength and was able to come home on October 27.

On October 28 I received the following e-mail, dictated by Bob and typed by Bunny. "Greetings to friends of the 86th Fighter-Bomber Group, as you gather in Houston for the 2009 reunion. Welcome back to Ellington Field where I was sworn in as a private in then U.S. Army Air Corps in March 1942.

"Surely wish I could be with you this year. We've built some great memories, way back when, and through these past 28 years. (This was the first reunion Bob has missed since 1982 in St. Louis.) The 86th Group has really gotten around in the U.S. and even a few jaunts back across the pond. I am gratified that our children are keeping us flying along. It gives me optimism for our future. That was a good idea, Sid!

"I'll be thinking about that 'last man standing' bottle. One of us reading (or writing) this now will be who gets it!"

✧ Your editor has been corresponding with some Italian researchers who seek out crash sites and attempt to recover airplane parts of pilots who were KIA or MIA. Their latest discovery was where 1st Lt. Richard P. MARCY, 526th Squadron, was shot down on 9/11/44 in the Po Valley of northern Italy while strafing a German convoy. He hit a tree and his left wing was sheared off.



(POTPOURRI continued from page 5)

Agostino Alberti and his collaborators Stefano Merli, Luca Merli, Matteo Annoni, Diego Vezzoli, and Michele Becchi, established contact with Lt. Marcy's family. In April 2009 Lt. Marcy's son Aaron, his wife Diane, and nephew Rick journeyed to Italy and spent three days with the researchers touring the towns of Spinadesco and Cremona near the crash site. Richie describes their visit as a very moving experience. They were greeted and made welcome by the entire town. I have a lot of pictures of the occasion for those interested.

✿ Kudos are due Kathryn LITTLE for all her helpfulness at the Reunion. Whenever a job needed doing, someone needed to be contacted, or whatever, she was "Johnny on the spot." Her enthusiasm and energy were a nice perk for us.

✈ SPECIAL OFFER ✈

Ken SNIDER (527), son of our pilot J. Martin SNIDER, has put together a couple of CDs copied from 35 mm negatives belonging to Association members, including "candids" as well as many shots of airfields from which we operated and views of well-known historic cities and buildings. They should all add up to about 300 frames.

Ken is offering to burn a CD copy for any 86th member *FOR FREE*, including shipping and handling. Ken can be contacted at 8700 Blueberry Street, Ocean Springs, MS 39564-9777; ken1@cableone.net.

✿ Your scribe has two CD's on "The Col. George T. Lee Story", and a cassette presentation of a talk by former 526th C.O. Harry "Doc" Dorris at our San Antonio I reunion. These are available for those interested, on a first come, first served basis.

ROSTER MAINTENANCE

▲
This section is intentionally omitted.
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IN MEMORIAM



BRADFORD, Jimmie (527) – Our apologies to the Bradford family for not including this in our last Newsletter. Brad's wife died peacefully at home on 5/5/09 after a relatively short battle with cancer. "Brad" has attended 23 reunions to date, and Jimmie accompanied him to most of them. They hosted a great reunion in Dallas in 1993 and Jimmie lined up probably the most entertaining group of after-dinner acts we have ever had. I remarked in the post-reunion Newsletter that, if the music didn't set anyone to toe tapping, they had to be tone deaf.



BURKS, Rev. Gilbert (527 Armament Officer) – Passed away 04/26/09 after three years of declining health. Although he was on our roster from the early years, he never attended a reunion.

COOVER, James R. (525 Commun. Ofcr) – Passed away 8/24/2009. He was a life member (LM-5053) and attended four reunions.

COWAN, Duane E. (525 Armament) – Deceased 1982 according to Social Security Death Index (SSDI). He was carried on our *Not Located* roster.

DEWITT, Edwin (525 Operations) – Mail returned by Post Office marked *Deceased*. He was a Lifetime Member and attended four reunions, the last one in Dallas in 1993.

ELMLINGER, Charles G. (525 Armament) – Deceased 2009 per SSDI. He was carried on our *Not Located* roster.

FREY, Norma (525) – Passed away in June 2009 as advised by husband George. No other details.

FREY, William A. (527 Commun.) – Died on 02/26/09 as reported by his son Tom (no details). Bill and his wife Jeanne were early and strong supporters of the Association, Lifetime members who attended 11 reunions, none recently due to health problems. Bill was proud of his role in making all the arrangements for the ceremony at Wright Patterson AFB and Museum in 1988 where a bronze plaque and, at the time, a newly planted tree were placed to honor the contributions of the 86th Group in WW II.



McCARROLL, Dorothy (526) – Passed away in 2006 according to her son; no details.

McGRATH, William A. (527 Armament) – Died 09/25/09 of a brain hemorrhage as reported by his wife Jane. Bill was a Lifetime Member and attended two reunions.

RAGSDALE, Clayton A., Jr. (GHQ Sergeant Major) – Passed away 6/26/09 after a long battle with many ailments, according to his son, Clayton III. "Rags" was a true southern gentleman who reflected all that is good about our Association. An early Lifetime Member, as you would expect, he attended 15 reunions before physical problems prevented his joining us after the 2000 Meridian get together.



RIDDLE, W. J. (525 Transp.) – Deceased 2007 according to SSDI. He was carried on our *Unlocated* list.

WHITE, Robert M. (27th FBG Pilot) – Mail returned by the Post Office marked "Deceased."

FINANCIAL REPORT—FIRST THREE QUARTERS 2009

BALANCE AT CLOSE OF YEAR 2008 (123108) **\$4,620.10**

Receipts for Three Quarters

Annual Dues (5 @ \$10.00)	\$50.00
Lifetime Membership (2 @ \$100.00)	\$200.00
Voluntary Contributions.....	\$25.00
Activities Reservation Forms (ARFs).....	\$3,125.00
Bank Reversal and Adjustment.....	\$39.32
	\$3,439.32

\$8,059.42

Disbursements for Three Quarters

Printing & Postage	\$823.98
Office Supplies	\$25.38
Computer Supplies	\$99.85
Funeral Flowers.....	\$163.95
Memorial Donation.....	\$79.00
Phone (for 2008).....	\$13.50
Bank Charges	\$23.00
	\$1,228.66

BALANCE AT CLOSE OF THIRD QUARTER (093009) **\$6,830.76**

FOOTNOTES TO FINANCIAL REPORT

1. \$10 Annual Dues, \$100 Lifetime (Cumulative), VC = Voluntary Contribution
2. Make checks payable to **86th FBG Assoc.**
3. Dues/VC payers since last Newsletter:
Dues: Amy **BOUCHARD** (525), Ann **BOUCHARD** (525), John R. **FRISBY** (526)
VC: John **DOLNY**; Lifetime Membership: Christina **SHARP** (GHQ, G-137)
4. Are you a Lifetime Member? If you are, there is an "LM" followed by 4 numbers in the bracketed information following your name on the roster. If it is not there, please contact the Secretary.
5. Don't forget, all contributions are tax deductible if you itemize deductions on your tax return.



MERRY

HAPPY

2009



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Christmas is an occasion to share our blessings, and to remember and honor those who are no longer with us and to cherish those who are.

Tip for the New Year: it does not matter how slowly you go so long as you do not stop. (Confucius)

CHEERS!

Dore Howard Martha Plowden

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2010