

# MISSION STATEMENT

The WWII Flight Training Museum is a non-profit organization that is entirely funded by donation, grants and contributions. It is dedicated to sharing the story of the courage and spirit of the American men and women who became pilots during the Second World War. Our primary mission is to preserve, protect, develop and advance the understanding of our nation's aviation training heritage through collections, research, exhibits and interpretation of the 63rd Flight Training Detachment. Our secondary mission is to try to maintain the heritage and as much of the historical integrity of the Raymond-Richardson Aviation School as possible.

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## THE 63RD PRESERVATION SOCIETY WORLD WAR II MUSEUM

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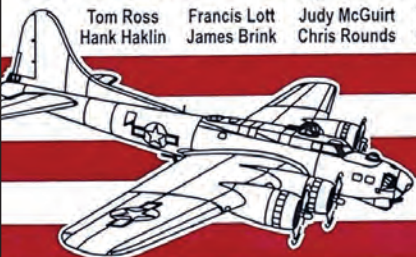
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Please visit our website and click on "About Us" for more information about becoming a member of the Douglas 63rd Preservation Society!

www.wwiiflighttraining.org

# the Cadet Flyer

FALL • 2024



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE 63RD PRESERVATION SOCIETY AND THE WWII FLIGHT TRAINING MUSEUM • DOUGLAS, GEORGIA

## Stephen Ambrose "Band of Brothers" Tour

By Tim Oliver, Docent



In mid-June 2024 I was fortunate to travel to London with my brother, Greg. There we met up with my daughter and her family, who invited us to accompany them on the Stephen Ambrose "Band of Brothers" historical bus tour. It followed the path taken by "Easy" Company, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) from their training location in England into Normandy for D-Day and to all their documented locations in Holland, Belgium and Germany, eventually ending at their final bivouac in Austria in 1945.

Our tour guide was well-versed in "Easy" Company's history and corrected myths and disparities portrayed in the HBO series with facts derived from interviews with "Easy" veterans and books written by the same. An added bonus on the tour were stops at various locations associated with allied military activity near where "Easy" operated but rarely visited by Americans on tour. My brother and I also had personal mission: to locate



Arthur E. Barks



places our father visited during the US Army's Occupation of Austria and Germany in 1946. Prior to the trip, I searched our 63rd FTD website for the names of Douglas aviation cadets known to be interred at the three US cemeteries that were scheduled tour stops. Two of our Douglas airmen are memorialized at the Margraten US Cemetery in Holland. Those are 2LT **Raymond A. Pruitt**, Class 43-G and 2LT **Arthur E. Barks**, Class 43-C (listed on the Wall of the Missing). The database did not have citations for Douglas aviation cadets buried



Raymond A. Pruitt

at either of the other two US cemeteries we visited.

My brother and I flew to London two days early so we could take the train to the

Cambridge American Cemetery where three Douglas airmen are interred. We were able to locate their gravesites and take photos with a Douglas Museum challenge coin in tribute to those who died in the defense of freedom. Each of the three succumbed to wounds received while flying B-17 missions. They are 2LT **Robert E. Rohrlich**, Class 42-F, 1LT **David Rosenthal**, Class 43-H, and Corporal **Donald N. Tuttle, Jr.**, Class 44-D.



The tour began at Aldbourne, England, where "Easy" Company was billeted while they trained for their first combat jump in the wee hours of D-Day. A long truck drive away is RAF Upottery, the

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David Rosenthal



Donald N. Tuttle, Jr.



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airfield where C-47 transports loaded the 506th PIR for their drop beyond Utah Beach.

Interestingly, one of the C-47 pilots who chauffeured members of the 506th on that famous ride was 1LT **Adam Parsons**, Class 43-E, who had originally trained at Camp Toccoa, Georgia, with the 506th PIR as initial officer cadre and had volunteered for pilot training. He was pulled from training at Toccoa in October 1942, did Primary Flight Training at Douglas,

got his wings as a C-47 pilot and was then posted to England with the 439th Troop Carrier Group, flying out of RAF Upottery. Another Douglas graduate,



Adam Parsons



John Homa

**John Homa**, Class 42-J was also a C-47 pilot in the 439th TCG who dropped 506th PIR troops on D-Day.

Next stop was Southwick House near Portsmouth where General Dwight Eisenhower made the timely decision to delay Operation Overlord one day to wait for better weather. From there, the group boarded a ferry to cross the English Channel and put in at Ouistreham, France, the extreme east end of Sword Beach landing zone. A short ride later found us at Pegasus Bridge, where British glider troops famously took and held the bridge against overwhelming opposition. The bridge spans the Caen Canal and was critical to the British planned push to capture the city of Caen. From the Summer 2023 *Cadet Flyer*, you



The Rex Brothers: John (left), Edward (right)

may have read that the **Rex brothers, John and Edward** of Class 42-D, led the first group of D-Day bombers (B-24s) to hit the railway center in Caen at H-Hour minus 30 minutes. From the Fall 2016 *Cadet Flyer*, you may have read that **Don Brooks' C-47** (serial # 43-15137) was flown on the night of 5 June 1944 towing a

British *Horsa* glider that delivered British glider troops beyond the Normandy beaches. (To be continued in Part 2.)



## Cadet Park and Charles Loring Memorial

On 9 September 2024 the City of Douglas Development Committee, Douglas 63rd Preservation Society, the WWII Flight Training Base



Committee, and elected officials came together under cloudy skies to officially break ground on the newly named Cadet Park and Charles Loring Memorial. Cadet Park aims to honor the aviation cadets who underwent primary flight training and Major Charles J. Loring, Jr., Class 1943-B and Medal of Honor recipient.

In the Invocation, we were reminded that "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Many of the aviation cadets who trained here made that ultimate sacrifice."



Volunteers and US Air Force Maintainers from Moody AFB volunteered their time and skills to continue restoration of our P-80 Shooting Star. Once restored, our P-80 will

represent the aircraft flown by Maj. Charles Loring in Korea. It will be the centerpiece of the Memorial.

A dedication ceremony is planned for 22 November, the anniversary of Major Charles Loring's heroic actions.



## Happy 100th Birthday, Bill Manchester!



Here's to an incredible century of memories and experiences!



The Georgia WWII Heritage Trail is on both Instagram and Facebook.

Be sure to like and follow the Trail!!



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