

the Cadet Flyer

SPRING • 2016



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

Roland Cleveland Parnell Class of 44-B

Robert Parnell Smith of Bozeman, MT sent in a great picture of Squadron G, Class of 1944-A

with identifications that his dad had saved. His dad, **Roland Cleveland Parnell**, a bookkeeper from South Carolina before the War, started at Douglas with the class of 44-A, but was delayed and left Douglas in the class of 44-B. Parnell graduated from Turner Field. He then was assigned to Smyrna Army Air Field TN for transition training into the B-24.



Parnell flew B-24's with the 450th Bomb Gp., 721st Bomb Sqdn. On Feb. 7, 1945 he flew from Manduria Airfield in Italy to bomb the Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery near Vienna. During the bomb run, his plane was hit by flak, destroying the #3 engine. Despite this damage to his aircraft, Parnell completed the bomb run, but then was hit again by flak during the rally off the target, this time destroying the #4 engine. Although losing altitude, Parnell kept the aircraft aloft and headed southeast towards the Russian lines in Hungary. At one point, they were attacked by three ME 109's. Although they had thrown items out of the plane to reduce weight, they had not yet thrown out their guns. The right waist gunner held his gun on one of the ME 109's and smoke was seen behind it. The fighters then immediately disappeared.

Once over Hungary and near Lake Balaton, Parnell located a relatively flat snowy field and made a successful wheels-up crash landing, during which no crew members were injured. The Russian Army eventually returned all crew members safely to Manduria Airfield on March 15, 1945. The full

MIA Interrogation Report is posted on our website on Parnell's entry in the class of 1944-B. After the war Parnell stayed in the A.A.F. to fly Test Group Atomic. He was killed in a B-45 crash during a night training mission at Langley Field, VA in March, 1952.

We appreciate Roland C. Parnell's service and sacrifice, as well as his son's donation of pictures and information to the Museum.



▲ **Class 1944-A Squadron G Cadets:** 1. Wilbur Carl Pensinger, 2. Raymond Ellis Price, 3. Roy H. Olson, 4. Edward Lamar Schmitt, 5. Marvin Phillip Peterson, 6. Warren Menning Schultz 7. Rhode ? 8. George V. Reiman, 9. William R. "Bob" Purcell, 10. Floyd Appling Peede, Jr., 11. Charles A. Ostrander, 12. Salvatore John Porello, 13. Roger Winston Porter, 14. Donald Richard Sherman, 15. Harry Clay Shaw, 16. Hollis Dewitt Sisk, 17. Lt. Nave? or R. E. Jordan? 18. Larry E. Paul, II or Raymond Fedyk, 19. Cletus John "Jack" Ringsred, 20. Isaac C. Phipps, 21. Frank J. Pabian, 22. John Eugene Prey, 23. Hugh Kilgore Pendleton, 24. Arthur Robert Richard, 25. John Joseph, Shay, Jr., 26. James Rollins, 27. Meredith J. Nulty, 28. Frederick J. Robinson, 29. Harry Wooding Pritchett, Jr., 30. Albert Winfield Scott, 31. James Thomas Short, 32. Carl A. Schafer, 33. Simon Perchik, 34. John M. Phillips, 35. Walter B. Sawyer, 36. Harold Frank Schreck, 37. Arthur E. Pierson, 38. Gerald Gilford Ricks, 39. Lloyd Franklin Smith, 40. James Warren, Shumard, Jr., 41. Ferdinand W. Przybyla, 42. John Gilkerson Phillips, Jr., 43. Gordon Merlin Shortness. **Instructors first row:** Unknown, Theodore E. Roman (marked I), Joe Thalman (marked II), Possibly Charles H. Hoefler, Al L. Crisler, Al Clay, Possibly Ashley DuPraw, Unknown, Possibly George Goetzen, Sam Topous.

Volunteer of the Quarter: Don Brooks

Our highlighted volunteer of this quarter is **Don Brooks!**

Most of us know Don as the low-key man behind the scenes at the 63rd Preservation Society.

And many of us believe that without Don, there would be no 63rd Preservation Society or World War II Flight Training Museum. Don has been on the Board since its founding and has donated or loaned many of the items in the Museum. He continues to generate ideas for museum exhibits and enhancements to the base, and has managed demanding events such as air shows.

For those who are new to the 63rd Preservation Society, Don developed a deep interest in military aviation history due to his father's military service with the Army Air Corps during World War II. Elton Brooks served as a tail gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress and flew 37 combat missions with the 390th Bomb Group operating out of England during the war. It is Don's belief that recovery and restoration of the historic aircraft of the war pays honor and tribute to the veterans of that war as well as all veterans. To that end, he salvaged a B-17 from the bottom of a lake in Labrador Canada, a feat of no small proportions, and continues to restore it. He began the Liberty Foundation in 2004 after purchasing the Liberty Belle B-17: the Liberty Foundation toured the Liberty Belle until a catastrophic fire occurred in 2011.



▲ Liberty Belle in a turn over Orford Church on the east coast of England July 10th, 2008.



We have benefitted from Don's restoration efforts: Don acquired and financed the restoration of a PT-17 Stearman, the trainer in which the cadets of the 63rd learned to fly and the one our cadets continue to fly in at our reunions. He also restored the D-Day combat transport, the C-47 Dakota, which can usually be seen at the hangar at the base. Seeing these aircraft reminds us of the

sacrifices our military veterans have made for us. Don believes that "the aircraft honor our veterans, remind people about the high price of freedom and help preserve our aviation heritage." **Thank you, Don, for your many efforts at making all of us more aware and appreciative of our veterans and our past.**

Addition to the Museum



A beautiful table with a Roll of Honor inside has been given to our Paul Schlundt library by the Eighth Air Force Historical Society in Savannah, Ga. On the Roll is a listing of the over 26,000 Eighth Air Force airmen who lost their lives in World War II. Jim Rimes on behalf of the Museum applied for and was awarded the table and Roll.

It's Time for Spring Cleaning

Spring is here and with it comes pollen, pine cones, and growing grass. **Hank Haklin**, along with **Bob and Judy Hackett**, continue their efforts to keep the Museum's surroundings ship-shape! They did a "yard spring cleaning" of picking up sticks and pinecones, mowing the Museum's yard, and trimming the sidewalks. Bob has also arranged for his yard man to spray the Museum yard

for weeds. Judy continues to steam clean the porch, which she is finding easier to do now because **Paula McGouryk**, our new docent, sweeps the porch each day that she works. Paula has also been cleaning all of the glass doors and display glass because of the pollen. Thank you, Hank, Bob, Judy and Paula!

Introducing Paula McGouryk



Paula McGouryk, our new Docent, comes to Douglas from Florida and is a welcome addition to the Museum. Paula started at the Museum in December, 2015 and has been working hard to personalize her job since she started. Paula has administrative retail experience which she is creatively using to showcase the museum store and sell the merchandise. Using the Docent manual as a base, Paula

has researched questions from visitors and added that information to her tour. As we talked, Paula pointed out some of the things unique to the Museum: The flight line chalkboard on the wall and a small notebook handwritten by one of the cadets displayed on a glass case in the Link Trainer room, as well as the silk map in the survival display in the War Room. Paula's attention to these small details will help make the tours memorable for visitors.

Paula's plans for the museum include continuing the educational programs initiated by Kelly Hoomes. She has already used the Jr. Cadet educational brochures and the paper airplanes with several groups of children. Paula will present the Museum to the school system as a possibility for field trips with the emphasis on Middle School and High School history students. Paula will distribute the Museum brochures to the various hotels across the street so

the hotel proprietors can offer them to their guests. Paula, like Kelly Hoomes, emphasizes the role of women in the World War II years. The Broxton spotter display is one of her favorites in the War Room.

Paula has made some changes to the outside of the building. If you ride by the Museum when it is open, you will notice that the yellow outdoor lights are all on, as well as many more lights inside the Museum highlighting the displays. A small American flag marks the office door of the Museum and, along with the lighting, makes the face of the Museum much more welcoming. Paula, whose Cherokee Indian name means "Sunshine", has certainly added a bright splash of sunshine, personality, and interest to the Museum. Stop by and visit with her soon!

Report from the Docent

We have had a really good start this year. In February, we had a school group of 15 from the Fourth District from Blackshear, Georgia. On April 01, 2016, we had another school tour group of 14 – the Berrien Homeschool Group. They had a wonderful time touring and going to the hangars. Afterwards they bought lots of souvenirs. Then they had a picnic lunch in the park here at the museum. I am looking forward to more tours like this.

Who Does What at the Douglas 63rd AAF FTD Base

Are you confused about who owns what and who does what at the Douglas 63rd Army Air Forces Flying Training Detachment base? Well, a lot of us are, and this article tries to sort it out!

In 1944, as the War wound down and as the demand for pilots dropped, most of the leases at civilian training centers were abruptly terminated. Although originally leased to the military for ten years, the Douglas installation received its closure notice on November 15, 1944. The base officially closed on December 28, 1944 and reverted to the City of Douglas, which continues to own the airport and the base.

The base was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in May 2013 as the "63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)." The National Register is our country's official list of historic places worthy of preservation. The City of Douglas then created the Air Base Preservation and Development Committee to protect and preserve the base. This committee consists of Douglas citizens selected by the Douglas City Council. Its purpose is to

develop, initiate or coordinate the marketing and development strategies for the base and ensure its preservation. The local Historic Preservation Commission would also be involved in the planning stages for any exterior renovations.

Meanwhile, the City of Douglas continues to be responsible for mowing the grass, landscaping, and renting and maintaining the buildings, including the World War II Flight Training Museum's building. The Douglas 63rd Preservation Society is the nonprofit organization that funds and operates the Museum: i.e., it rents the building from the City, maintains the inside and outside, keeps records of those who were part of the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School, and staffs the Museum. The Douglas 63rd Preservation Society and the City of Douglas host the annual cadet reunion each October. As part of the reunion, the Douglas 63rd Preservation Society flies the cadets in World War II planes and provides the annual hangar lunch. Hope this helps – let us know if you have any questions.

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.

The WWII Flight Training Museum
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www.wwiiflighttraining.org
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

YOU CAN HELP!



In December of 2003, a small group of local citizens interested in history, aviation and heritage preservation gathered together to both protect the site of the Raymond-Richardson Aviation School in Douglas, Georgia, and to create and operate a historical museum that would tell the story of not only our community's role in WWII, but also share the lives of the men and women who lived, worked and trained at the facility. Thus, the 63rd Preservation Society was formed.



Mail to:
The 63rd Preservation Society, Inc.
WWII Flight Training Museum
P. O. Box 2770 • Douglas, GA 31534

The WWII Flight Training Museum is operated by this non-profit organization and is entirely funded by donations, gifts and grants. We believe that the museum can make a great contribution to the preservation of our heritage and to the education of both children and the public in general.

Is it a future worth securing? We think so. We hope you do, too. Become a friend of the museum through membership and help us preserve WWII aviation's beginnings.

cut along dotted lines

2016 63rd PRESERVATION SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone number: _____

\$50 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- WWII Flight Training Museum card
- Quarterly museum newsletter
- Free visits to the museum for your family and guests
- Opportunity to help restore and maintain vintage aircraft
- Honoring our veterans with your commitment
- 10% discount on museum merchandise
- Participation in special museum events

The 63rd Preservation Society is a 501c3 non-profit educational foundation.
(Proceeds go toward museum maintenance)