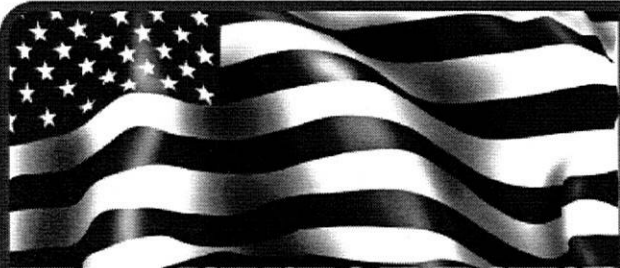


DONE



THE GREATEST GENERATION

315TH NEWSLETTER

Published by
WORLD WAR II 315th TROOP CARRIER GROUP ASS'N.

November 2009

It's hard to believe that it is time to plan for Thanksgiving and the holiday season. For many Americans, it's been a rough year due to a weakened economy, job losses, a slow real estate market and unrest overseas. As busy as the holidays can be, the season does give us the time we may not otherwise find to spend time with family and friends, and after all, isn't that what is most important?

In August of this year, a group of veterans and others affiliated with the 315th Troop Carrier Group had an opportunity to travel to Charleston to attend the 40th Anniversary of the 943rd/315th Airlift Wing. The event, entitled "40 and Fabulous: Reflecting on our Past, Looking to the Future," was held August 7 & 8. Dick Ford and Ted Stewart attend the event in Charleston. Please look for some great photos provided by Dick and stories in this newsletter and a big "Thank You" goes out to Dick for forwarding these items to share.

And speaking of Charleston, next year is a reunion year for the 315th World War II Troop Carrier Group and the big event is planned to be held in the Charleston area. See inside for details on the reunion and mark your calendars now!

A group of World War II veterans from Western Colorado were treated to an all-expensive paid trip to the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC as part of the Western Slope Honor Flight in August. Local groups successfully put the entire trip together with donations from the community to honor these heroes, many who had never been to the memorial. A story on this wonderful event is also included.

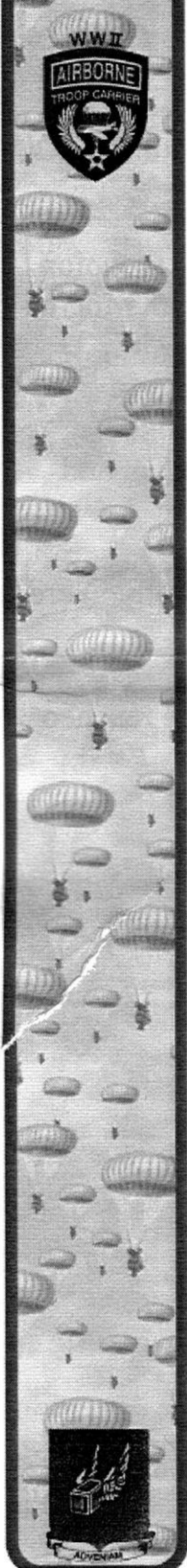
I recently finished the book, "Lone Survivor. The Eyewitness Account of Operation Redwing and the Lost Heroes of SEAL Team 10," by Marcus Luttrell. It is his account of the tragic loss of 11 SEALs and eight other American soldiers in Afghanistan in 2005.

The book was astonishingly vivid and painfully sad. For me, it served as a reminder to continue to support our brave troops in Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries, and to honor all veterans who are serving and have served our country.

My best to all of you for a wonderful holiday season.

Sincerely,

Valerie J. Smith
Newsletter Editor



315th TROOP CARRIER GROUP ASSOCIATION
Olmsted, Florence, Aldermaston, Blida, Spanhoe, Amiens

OFFICIAL NOTICE BOARD

Message from the President:

The members of the board have been working on and are looking forward to the next reunion this coming spring in Charleston, South Carolina. You will see more details on this gathering in this newsletter. This will be a homecoming of sorts as Charleston is now home to the Air Force's current 315th and that organization is very much looking forward to our reunion in Charleston. We'll be visiting the current 315th's facilities on the Saturday of our reunion. We are still finalizing some of the details of the reunion in regard to the menu for the banquet and the exact details on the tours but we should have that information completed shortly.

We will be looking forward to seeing each of you at the reunion and are hopeful all of you are well and will be able to attend this gathering.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. I can be reached via email at gertel@wi.rr.com, or phone at (262) 784-5950 or via the U.S. mail at Gary Ertel, 765 Talon Trail, Brookfield, WI 53045.

Valerie has done a great job of putting together another Newsletter for the 315th. I hope you all enjoy it.

Sincerely,

Gary Ertel
President

World War II 315th Troop Carrier Group 2010 Reunion

Dates: Thursday, May 20 – Saturday, May 22
Departures and Goodbyes Sunday, May 23

Location: Holiday Inn Charleston Mt. Pleasant
250 Johnnie Dodds Blvd.
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
<http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hotel/CHSMP>

Room Rates: \$119.00 per night plus tax of \$13.69 for a total of \$132.69

Reservations: 1-800-290-4004 or 843-884-6000
Identify yourself as a part of the 315th Group Reunion

**Reservation
Deadline:** April 20, 2010 to receive the quoted rate above
Rooms may be available on an “As available basis” after April 20 but
you will not receive the group rate

**Cancellation
Deadline:** May 15, 2010

**Hospitality
Room:** Open Thursday, May 20 – Saturday, May 22 in the Holiday Inn

Banquet: Saturday, May 22. Cocktails at 5 p.m. in the Hospitality Room.
Banquet at 6 p.m.

Selections: Sirloin \$34.00
Chicken \$32.00
Pasta Primavera (vegetarian): \$27.00

**Banquet
Reservations:** Call Cheryl Tobias at 843-416-3106 by May 17.

Hotel Amenities include Three Oaks Grill Restaurant serving breakfast and dinner on-site, cocktail lounge, health & fitness center, outdoor pool, room service and laundry service.

World War II 315th Troop Carrier Group 2010 Reunion

Group Tours – Details to follow in the next newsletter

Thursday, May 20: Boone Hall Plantation and Gardens

Friday, May 21: Fort Sumter National Monument, departing from the Battery

Saturday, May 22: 315th Airlift Wing Base, Charleston Air Force Base

65th Anniversary of Market Mission

“The Bridge Too Far” Commemoration Ceremonies Honoring Polish Paratroops of the 1st Polish Airborne Brigade at Driel, Netherlands, September 18-20, 2009

Dick Ford, special guest



Polish paratrooper Capt. Allen Mack and Dick Ford partnered as guests of the same host family at Driel. Dick was co-pilot of a flight lead for the Polish airborne paratroop drop on Sept. 21, 1944.

Dick was personally welcome by the Prime Ministers of both Poland and The Netherlands during the Polish commemoration ceremonies at Driel.



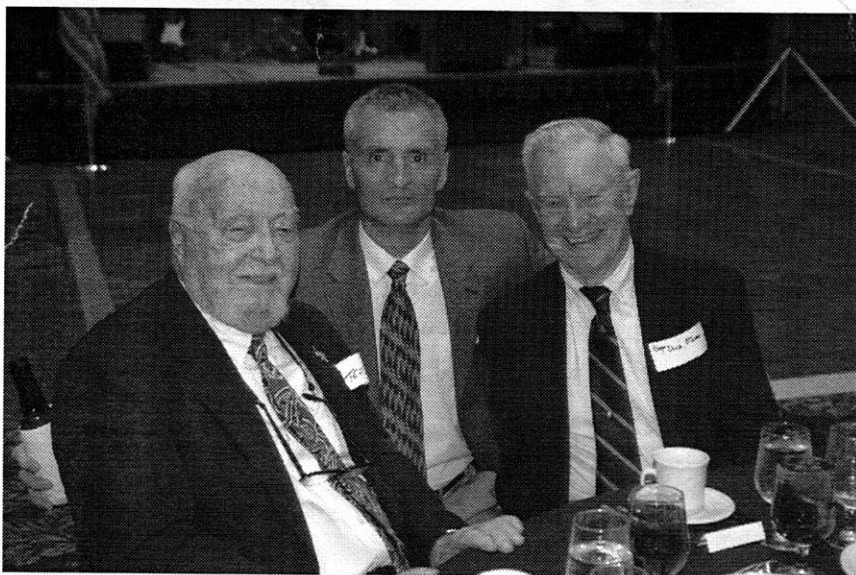
40 and Fabulous: Reflecting on our Past, Looking to the Future
40th Anniversary of the 943rd/315th Airlift Wing
August 7 & 8, 2009
Charleston, South Carolina

As true heroes prepare to retire or separate from the military service, it's a time of reflection and dreams for those who must pick up the sword and advance to maintain our military strength. Over the past 40 years the men and women of the 943rd/315th Airlift Wing have excelled in that task. The 943rd/315th Airlift Wing airmen and civilians have left their marks of courage, direction, and pride of a job well done.

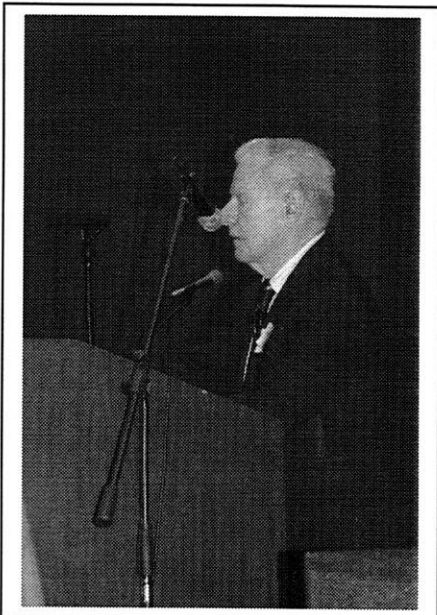
By Dick Ford:

310th Squadron pilots Ted Stewart and Dick Ford were guests at the 40th Anniversary celebration. This airlift wing is our 315th namesake and flies similar missions performed by the troop carrier groups of WWII. Numerous displays, a C-17 flight and special commemorative ceremonies concluded at a Wing banquet and dance. Guest speakers were retired Major General James Banks, Commander, 22nd Air Force, air Force Reserve Command and retired Lt. Col. Dick Ford.

Dick described the dedication and performance of the 315th Troop Carrier Group and the price associated with the numbers "315" during its brief 15 month wartime activation readying for D-Day to VE-Day.



Ted Stewart, 315th Commander Col. Steven Chapman and Dick Ford at the banquet.



Dick Ford was a banquet speaker who commended the "new" 315th for its achievements and performance standards.

Local WWII Vets reflect on their Honor Flight

By Sharon Sullivan, Grand Junction Free Press
August 27, 2009

Local World War II veteran Eugene Kaehler still has the letter from President Franklin Roosevelt telling him he was being drafted into the Army.

"Everytime I look at it I laugh because I kept that darn thing," Kaehler said. "At that time it was bad news. We all knew we were cannon fodder. A lot of that war was upfront and personal. "I lost a lot of friends there."

Earlier this week Kaehler, 83, went to Washington, D.C. for the first time in his life to visit the nation's war memorials. He was a member of the Western Slope Honor Flight.

Western Slope Honor Flight was organized under the national organization for the purpose of flying veterans from the Western Slope of Colorado to and from the Capitol for free to see the National World War II Memorial.

Retired Air Force captain Earl Morse organized the nation's first Honor Flight in Ohio in 2005. As a physician's assistant Morse had cared for veterans for 27 years. By the time the World War II memorial was completed in 2004, Morse found that most of those veterans were physically or financially unable to travel to see the memorial built in their honor. According to 2008 data, 1,000 World War II veterans die each day.

Morse began a campaign to escort veterans to Washington free-of-charge so they could see the World War II memorial. One-hundred and eleven World War II veterans from the Western Slope made the journey which included visits to Arlington National Cemetery, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and the World War II Memorial.

"It was super fantastic," Kaehler said. "It was a wonderful experience. I hope we can do it again for others who didn't get to go." Robert English, an Army airplane mechanic who served from 1942 to 1945, had been to Washington several times and had seen the other memorials but he'd never seen the World War II memorial until this week.

Another highlight of the trip, said English, who turned 88 on Aug. 8, was being "graciously" greeted at their arrival by Sens. Bob and Elizabeth Dole. Several veterans mentioned their amazement at how they were welcomed both upon their arrival to the Capitol, and then their return home to Grand Junction.

"Arriving home, the reception was indescribable," Kaehler said. "Not one of us ever received a reception like that. The tears were coming pretty good."

Another Honor Flight participant was 84-year-old Robert Wigent, who served in the U.S. Navy for three-and-a-half years. He attended the Honor Flight with his brother-in-law, a fellow veteran. "It was absolutely wonderful, I just can't get it out of my mind," Wigent said.

"It's a trip everybody should make in their lifetime to be a good American. If you don't have wet eyes when you look at those memorials there's something wrong with your eyes."

Ernie Satterfield was drafted into the Army three months after turning 18, and was injured during the Battle of the Bulge. At 84, he's grateful he was able to go to Washington, D.C. He hadn't expected to after having his fourth heart attack in July.

Each veteran was accompanied by a "guardian" to assist with catching buses and keeping hydrated. Some of the veterans needed assistance with wheelchairs. Alicia Trujillo, 20, and Brian Ramsey, 35, are both Mesa State College students, who manage the college radio station. Trujillo and Ramsey were among approximately 80 volunteers who went as guardians on the trip. Neither student had ever been to the nation's Capitol.

"It was all breathtaking," Ramsey said. "The best part of the trip was seeing the vets react to it all. It was amazing. They were sharing stories about what had happened. The interaction itself was the greatest part of it."

Taps

**With deep regret we record the
loss of these comrades.**

Charles Lewis	43rd	10.7.08
Claude B. Rice	34th	12.10.08
Thomas L. Pugh	43rd	2.5.09
George Doll		3.9.09
Henry G. Hamby, Jr.	310th	7.19.09

Treasurer's Report

WWII 315th Treasury Report Summary

Bank Balance Jan. 1, 2009	\$4223.46
Income	433.36
Dues	345.00
Caps	30.00
Other	58.36
Expenses	424.86
Newsletter	374.86
Corp. Registry	50.00
Bank Balance Oct. 1, 2009	\$4231.96

Supplies inventory

3 Caps	@ 15.00	45.00
0 315 th Cap Insignias	@ 3.50	--
13 Lapel Pins	@ 7.50	<u>97.50</u>
Inventory value		\$142.50

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Dues

Just a reminder, if you haven't paid your \$20 dues yet this year you can send them to: Dick Ford,
WWII 315th TCG Treasurer, P.O. Box 4399, Sunriver, OR 97707.
E-mail: dickfordfire@aol.com.

Are you on our E-mail List?

If you would like to receive e-mail updates as well as this newsletter, please send your e-mail address to: vjsmithcolorado@hotmail.com

Wishing everyone Happy and Safe Holidays!

