



HOT STUFF/GEN. ANDREWS

Newsletter #26

July 2019



JIM'S CORNER

Thanks to the help of Linda Granfield and Elizabeth Heard, Mary Beth Weir Waters a relative of Lloyd C. Weir was located. Relatives of all of *Hot Stuff's* crew and all but one *Hot Stuff* passengers have been located.

Nancy and I were in Iceland on the 76th anniversary of the accident. We met with many Icelanders who were involved in helping making the monument a reality. We continued on to Sweden where our friend Mats Tedenryd took us on a tour of a WWI museum in Meaux, France and WWII museums in Caen, France and Diekirch, Luxembourg. We also spent time with friends in France and visited the American Cemetery in Normandy.

The effort to have Lt. Gen. Andrews promoted posthumously has become the number one priority for this year.

Thanks to Doddi Marteinsson, the website "A Story of Triumph and Tragedy" is being redone and updated.

Fund raising continues for the monument upkeep and maintenance.

Cheers,

Jim Lux



Photographs Found



Captain Joseph T. Johnson
Lt. Gen. Andrews' Aide

Linda Granfield of Toronto, Canada located the above photograph of Capt. Joseph T. Johnson, one of Gen. Andrews' aides. Johnson was from Los Angeles, California. Unfortunately, none of his relatives have been located.

Linda also helped locate Elizabeth Werner a distant cousin of Brig. Gen. Charles H. Barth,



M/Sgt. Lloyd C "George" Weir
Hot Stuff Crew Chief

Elizabeth Heard of Searcy, Arkansas put Jim in contact with Mary Beth Weir Waters a relative of Lloyd "George" Weir. Mary Beth sent Jim many photographs and copies of letters and documents.

Weir was *Hot Stuff's* crew chief. He replaced Sgt. Grant Rondeau, as engineer/gunner on the ill-fated flight. Rondeau volunteered to stay in England to help train replacement crews.

Relative of Navigator James E. Gott located



Capt. James E. Gott

After searching for many years, Jim located Walter Combs a nephew, of *Hot Stuff* navigator Jimmy Gott. Walter, who lives in Florida, was quite pleased to hear from Jim. He was unaware of the complete story of what happened to his uncle. He did, however, as a six years old, remember seeing his mother answer the telephone and begin to cry and then began screaming after being informed her brother Jimmy had been killed.

Capt. Joseph T. Johnson is the only one on board *Hot Stuff* whose relatives have not be located. He was from Los Angeles and is buried in Culver City, California.

Jean Andrews Peterson

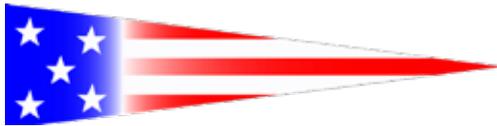
Jean Andrews Peterson, youngest daughter of of Lt. Frank Maxwell Andrews died on Sunday, April 14, 2019 at the age of 95.



Jean Peterson and her son, Richard
(Photo was provided by Richard Peterson)

Jim had a conversation with Jean several years ago. She remembered that her father, Gen. Andrews was on his way home (Washington, D.C.) when the accident occurred.

New pennant for the monument



It is against the law in Iceland to fly the Iceland flag at night. Also, due to severe winds, it was decided to fly the Iceland and American flags on special days only.

Iceland has a pennant with the colors of their flag that can be flown day and night so Jim designed a pennant with U.S. colors that will be flown with the Iceland pennant at the monument day and night. Flags and pennants don't last long in so Jim had six copies made.

A Renewed Effort To Have Gen. Andrews Promoted Posthumously



An effort to have Lt. Gen. Andrews promoted to (4 star) General has been ongoing for more than two years. Letters were sent to President Trump, every United States Senator, U.S. Air Force Officials, the CEO of the U.S. Air Force Association and others requesting their support and help. So far, to no avail!

The goal for this year is to make it happen!

Andrews was from Nashville, Tennessee and many members of his family live in the area. Andy Nelson, Andrews' great, great nephew from Nashville sent a package to U.S. Rep. Scott DesJarlais requesting his help.

Jim also has a friend in Austin who is a close friend of newly elected U.S. Senator from Indiana, Mike Braun, and has asked for his help.

You can also help. Please contact your Senators and Congressmen to request their support.

Memorial Monument Fund Status

There is more than \$3700 in the memorial monument fund and

donations are still being accepted. The funds will be used to maintain the monument and possibly add another plaque and/or an enclosed display case for items that are being left by the monument by visitors.



Hot Stuff Engine Hub



Boots (from Crash Site ?)



A Story of Triumph and Tragedy Website

<http://stridsminjar.is/hotstuff>

Doddi Marteinsson continues to improve *The Story of Triumph and Tragedy* website. If you haven't already done so, please visit the website and advise your friends to visit as well.



The finest and most convenient way to fly to Iceland and on to Europe!

The Stainless Steel Model of *Hot Stuff* Atop the *Hot Stuff*/Gen. Andrews Monument Was Showing Signs of Rust!



The cause of the rust appears to have been from Iceland's harsh weather, salt in the air and chemicals being released into the atmosphere through evaporation from the nearby Blue Lagoon Spa.

Thanks to Solvi Steinarr Jonsson of Graf en Grojt in Iceland, the rust has been removed and a protective coating applied.



Thank you Solvi and Graf en Grojt!

Article Published in the Citizen Searcy Newspaper, Searcy, Arkansas on November 20, 1943 reveals more Information about *Hot Stuff's* last mission

Provided by Mary Beth Weir Waters (great niece of M/Sgt. Lloyd C. Weir)



Newspaper article about Lloyd C. "George" Weir and "Hot Stuff"

McRae Boy Saw Action in European Theater

In a letter receive from England, Robert O. Bitner (?) Captain, U.S.A.C Squadron Engineering Officer about M/Stg Lloyd C. Weir who had been overseas since August 1942 was killed in an Iceland plane crash on May 3, with 13 others.

Dear Mr. Weir. I have known your brother, Lloyd since he joined the squadron over one year ago. During this time, I have watched him develop from the boy you know into a courageous fighting man. He was an excellent soldier, as well as an expert airplane mechanic.

He "went down" on his favorite ship, "Hot Stuff," piloted by Capt. R. H. Shannon who to him was the best pilot in the world. He loved the ship and gave it his undivided attention at all times.

He volunteered for his last flight. An extra good aerial engineer was needed for the "Special Flight" and his offer was immediately accepted. I know if he had known the plane would end up in the disaster that it did, Lloyd would have still volunteered for the flight. Yes, you had a great brother, one of America's best. He received no special recognition for the work he has done

but Lloyd certainly deserves a lot. I have seen him work in rain, mud, cold, heat and sandstorms. Due to his untiring efforts, as a "crew chief," his plane probably had the best mechanical operational record of all the planes overseas. We in the squadron were always proud of him and his work.

All of his fellow "buddies" in this squadron, as well as myself, wish to express our deepest sympathy to you folks for your and his most noble sacrifices. He will always be remembered by us and we shall carry on as he would have wished us to do.

Sincerely yours,

In another letter received from Bill Shannon, Washington, Iowa, brother or Capt. R. H. Shannon "pilot." "It was our privilege to go to the hospital in Memphis, Tenn. for an interview with the "sole survivor" of the fatal Iceland crash, S/Sgt. Eisel."

Eisel told the set-up on the fatal trip was: First to go to Iceland where Bishop Leonard was to conduct an inspection of the chaplain corps. Then they were to fly the general to Washington, D. C. where General Andrews was to go into a huddle with President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. After the general's conference they were to fly back to England, then pick up the rest of Lloyd's crew and fly back

to the United States for a nation-wide stamp and bond tour. The "Memphis Belle" later got to make the trip which was meant to be made by the crew of "Hot Stuff." The boys would have loved touring this country. Guess it was too good to be true.

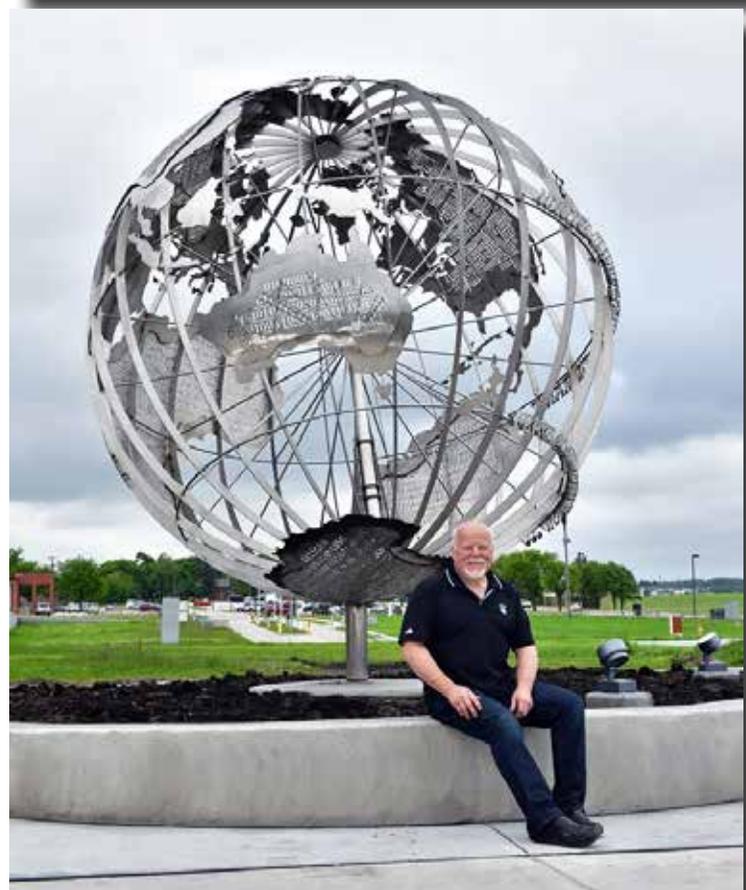
Lloyd and his crew made 29 missions over Germany, France, Holland, Italy, Sicily, North Africa and Tripolitania (?). It's comforting to know they were in serious trouble only once. He and his crew were just short of 200 combat hours. Neither Lloyd or a single member of his crew got so much as a scratch from their combat flying. Eisel said 'old faithful "Hot Stuff" was the best B-24 ever to come off the assembly line. Three of the crew of "Hot Stuff" were to be sent into Officers training school and this was the last "flight" together in "Hot Stuff." How true was (were) those words.

Sgt. Eisel lay twisted in a mass of wreckage for 25 hours following the crash which happened so suddenly. Against that bleak mountainside Eisel's tail-gun turret simply folded inside the wreckage, pinned by both ankles. Two incendiary bombs which were taken along to destroy the plane in the event of a forced landing exploded almost immediately. So did several rounds of machine gun bullets. One bullet struck Eisel's wrist. Frantically he worked one ankle loose. Thinking he was due to burn in a mass of flames

Sculptures by Terry Hinde Installed at the Entrance to the New STRATCOM Building at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, Nebraska

Sculptor, Terry Hinde who made the stainless steel model of Hot Stuff for the monument in Iceland completed the installation of stainless steel models of a globe of the earth along with a B-52 bomber, a Minute Man 3 missile, a nuclear submarine, and a B-2 bomber.

The official dedication of the new STRATCOM building and the sculptures will take place in October, 2019.



tried to get his pocket knife to cut off the leg that held him. Fortunately, he could not. The rain began to fall, followed by sleet and snow, which put out the fire.

He became so desperate for water he tore up his oxygen mask and stretched full length until he could siphon water through the air hose out of a "mud puddle." He says "water out of the deepest well never tasted better than that drink."

The German fighters – about 10 in number- were making it "hot" for Roche B-24 crew on the Libyan desert when "Hot Stuff" crew pulled out of formation to come back and help them. The two B-24 crews battled the fighters for mile after mile until they reached Algiers where Roche made a crash landing on friendly soil, losing three of his men while "Hot Stuff," crippled home with one engine shot out and the plane riddled with "bullet holes." Not a member of the crew was hurt.

S/Sgt. Eisel joined the crew of "Hot Stuff" in early December, 1942. When Roche crashed. Made their first trip together over enemy territory in France. A photographer went along with the crew when they bombed Naples. Said they had lots of fun that day.

Eisel quoted the crew as saying "ack-ack fire and machine gun fire will never stop," but the weather is something else." It was the weather that bought about the fatal crash. Visibility was about 50 feet when the old faithful "Hot Stuff" came to her final resting place against the Iceland mountain-side.

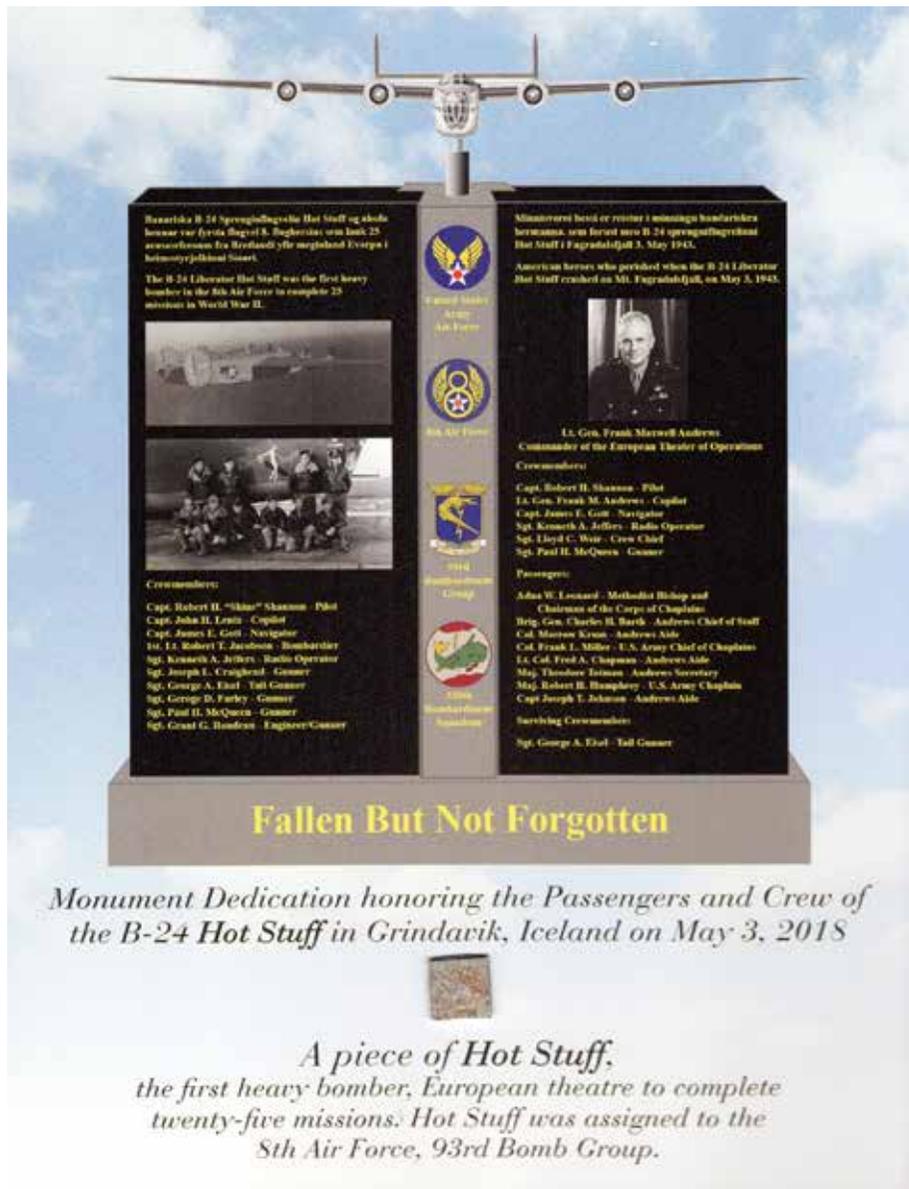
M/Sgt. Weir is the son of the late Dee and Sarah Weir of McRae. He is survived by Mrs. Paul R. Tabb, North Little Rock; J. W. and Virgil Weir, McRae, Army Medical Corps, North Africa.

A Beautiful Plaque of the B-24 Liberator *Hot Stuff* Memorial Monument A Limited Number Still Available!

The plaque has a metal backing and
Contains a Piece of the B-24 Liberator *Hot Stuff*
Recovered from the mountain where it crashed on May 3, 1943

\$200 plus \$5.00 for shipping

Proceeds will go towards monument maintenance and upkeep



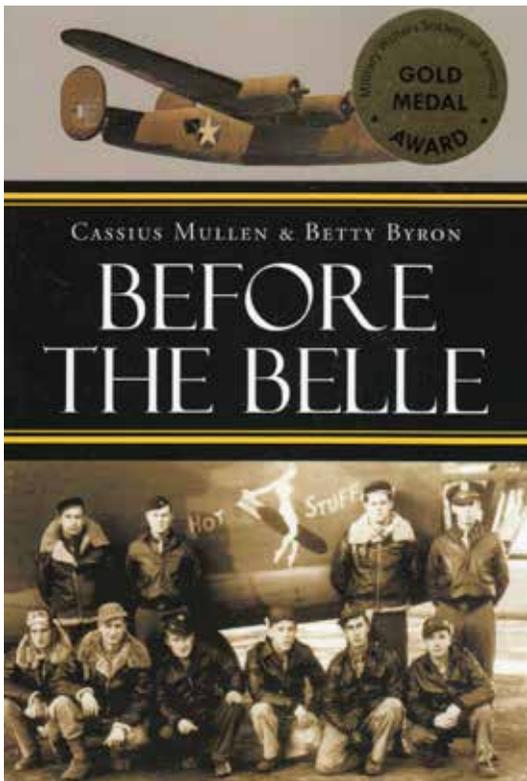
Eight & one half inches wide by eleven inches high
Metal backing
Includes a piece of B-24 Liberator *Hot Stuff*
Built in stand
Suitable for framing
An 8.5"x11" photo of the crew included

Make check out to: 93rd Bomb Group Assoc.
Send to:
93rd Bomb Group Assoc.
c/o James C. Lux
1409 Thaddeus Cove
Austin, Texas 78746

“Before The Belle”

Don't forget, “**Before The Belle**” is a great book and would make a great gift!

Available on Kindle & Amazon



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