

# PASS IN REVIEW

"Shedding Light on Idaho's Military History"



The official newsletter of the  
Idaho Military Historical  
Society and Museum

Fall 2013

## Idaho veterans from WWII and Korea visit Gowen Field and the museum to recall wartime service

By Gayle Alvarez

Sunday, September 8, 2013 was "Family Day" at Gowen Field. Joining in the activities were seven veteran Idaho Air Guard pilots, some of whom flew the state's first combat aircraft, the P-51D Mustang, with Idaho's original flying unit, the 190th Fighter Single Engine Squadron.

The former pilots included Jack Bowman, Bob Burns, Al Cline, Bill Coburn, Jim Frazier, Chauncey Reese, Walt Stonebraker and Bill Wheeler.

The highlight of the event was a fly-by of two local P-51 Mustangs flown by local pilots Mark Peterson and J. C. Paul. The Mustangs landed and parked at the 124th Fighter Wing hangar (Bldg. 148).

The veteran pilots visited with other Family Day guests, shared personal stories, and autographed copies of the book "First Class or Not at All," a history of Idaho's Air National Guard written by retired Col. Bill Miller. The book details the Guard's early P-51 days. Most of the veterans are named and pictured in Miller's book.

Chauncey Reese then presented a review of early P-51 operations and shared tales from the Idaho Air Guard's first seven years, 1946 to 1953.

Several of the pilots visited the museum for a group picture taken next to our newly-restored F-86A Sabre Jet. Some of them took time to recap their military service and flying careers:

**Chauncey Reese:** "I came to Gowen Field as a B-24 Liberator pilot and was selected to teach systems. I returned to Idaho in 1947 and joined the Air Guard in 1948, serving in the Utility Flight. I went to Korea on a "hot" P-51 project as a forward air observer in the back seat of a two-seat Mustang. I've also flown for the airlines and have a total of 30,000 flying hours."

— See *Veteran Idaho Pilots*, page 2



Idaho Veterans: Left to right: Jim Frazier, Bill Coburn, Dale Hendry, Bill Wheeler, Jack Bowman, Chauncey Reese and Walter Stonebraker.

**P-51 Mustang Flyby:** Below, restored P-51D (top) and P-51A Mustangs arrive at Gowen Field to welcome veteran WWII and Korean War pilots to the Idaho Air Guard's "Family Day" program.



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## Remodel update, Army sniper school items donated by the school's founder

The museum just underwent a "remodel" which expanded the archives and upgraded the restrooms.

A new contract is about to be let to complete the exterior, build new interior walls, add a new floor and new lighting. This new construction may have an impact on the October membership meeting. We will keep you updated as we learn more.

William Knox, founder of the Army's sniper school at Fort Benning, Georgia has donated a large number of items to the museum. His donation includes school materials, uniforms, field gear, and his sniper rifle.



**Museum "remodel" update:** Ken Swanson gives Gayle Alvarez a look at plans for remodeling Idaho's Military History Museum.

Welcome to five new members of Idaho's Military Historical Society: Charles M. Blake, Marie M. Crandall, and retired Lt. Col. John Walker are lifetime members. Kris Vonderahe and Charles Read join our general membership.

## PASS IN REVIEW

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Your comments or article suggestions are welcomed. Call the museum at 208-272-4841 during our scheduled hours or visit us on line at [museum.mil.idaho.gov](http://museum.mil.idaho.gov).

## Veteran Idaho Pilots from page 1

**Jack Bowman:** "I joined the military at age 18. I served in southeast China where I was a member of the "Flying Tigers" and flew a P-40 Warhawk. I met (Gen. Claire) Chennault there.

One thing that stands out in my memory was the general was one heck of a softball pitcher! Most of our missions were in southeast China but we also flew in what is now Vietnam. I went all the way through Cadet training with Waxy. I've also flown the F-86, F-84 and the F-106."

**Bill Coburn:** "I enlisted a few days after Pearl Harbor. I wanted to fly the P-38 Lightning but was switched at the last minute to the B-17 Flying Fortress bomber. We first had to fly 25 combat missions but the number was increased to 30 in March 1944. We didn't think we'd survive because in December of '43 we'd had a 90 percent turnover in flight crews. I had a total of 365 hours of combat and was 24 years old. I joined the Guard in 1946. Some of us shipped out for Korea but wound up in Alaska. I set a speed record when I flew a Mustang from San Francisco to Boise in one hour and 15 minutes. I later went to work with Boise Cascade and flew with them for 15 years. I have 15,000 hours flight time."

Coburn also flew the F-86A Sabre Jet. The aircraft on display at the museum carries his name as pilot.

**Walt Stonebraker:** "I took pilot training in the Marine Corps and flew the F-4U Corsair in combat over Okinawa, Iwo Jima and Japan. I shot down 15 Japanese "Zeros," quite a few of which were "Kamikazes." I flew 33 years for the airlines and 25 years in the military. I have 38,000 flying hours."

**Bill Wheeler:** "I worked for Johnson Wax so I was nicknamed "Waxy." I joined the Idaho National Guard in 1936 and worked with cavalry horses. When the war started I took the Navy test and passed with great scores, but I joined the Army Air Corps instead. I flew P-38 Lightnings in Italy. I crashed in Austria and it took me six months to get back to my outfit. I also served in Korea and Vietnam. My general decided I'd had enough combat so he sent me home. I had nine kills in WWII and flew 32 missions in Korea."

**Jim Frazier:** "I'm second generation; didn't serve in WWII or Korea. I joined the Air Guard but Korea ended before I was trained. I flew the F-86 and F-102 Delta Dagger. I got out of the Guard after about 15 years to work for the airlines."



# A GOWEN FIELD WAC'S STORY

By Gayle Alvarez

Adrienne Leonard—Lynn to her friends—was born in New Jersey in 1923 and grew up in River Edge Manor. An older sister, Marion, was born in 1922, and younger brother Garry joined the family in 1925.

Lynn learned the meaning of service at an early age.

“When I was a little girl, my mother belonged to the hospital auxiliary in New Jersey,” she said. “She used to bring home great big stacks of gauze which we folded into bandages. It made me feel like I was helping somebody.”

She also learned to be self sufficient at an early age. With her mother's help, she made her first dress when only in the third grade. She wanted to be a dress designer, but she said that “I didn't have enough originality.” She became a stenographer instead.

Her first job was in New York City, where a subway commute was only a nickel. She worked for an insurance company owned by a British firm. After their work was finished she and her co-workers were given what she called “army colored yarn” to knit into either socks or sweaters for British soldiers. She chose to make socks.

“We would put our names in the socks,” Lynn said. “I actually got a letter from a soldier who received socks I made.”

Once the U.S. entered WWII Lynn wanted to do her part for the war effort, so she enlisted in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in February 1943. At that time the Army was unwilling to see women as soldiers, so they were given auxiliary status.

She soon left for basic training at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, near



**Private First Class Lynn Adrian Southwick** (on the right in group photo) became a WAC when she joined the Women's Army Corps in 1943 on Gowen Field (Photos courtesy of Lynn Southwick).

Chattanooga. Men had just been moved out of the north base section so that was where she and the other women in her class lived and trained. Lynn said that she “attended classes, learned how to march, and drank a lot of ‘Coke’” for about five weeks.

Career fields for women were limited at that time. Lynn had office experience prior to enlisting so she chose the administration field.

From Georgia it was on to Army Administration School at Commerce, Texas (about 60 miles from Dallas). Most of her time there was spent in classroom instruction.

Her next duty station was Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, where she was assigned to the Base Statistical Office in May 1943. The office was in the main administration building.

Twice a month she had to prepare statistical reports which were sent to Washington, D.C. These reports had to account for everybody on base and detail what they were doing. If for some reason somebody was not working in

their specialty field, the reports had to specify where they were and what they were doing. “Sometimes we worked all night putting these reports together,” she said. “All the columns on the report had to jive.”

Lynn was the only WAAC in the office. She worked with a civilian girl and an officer. There were also four other civilian girls in the office whose job it was to sort mail and forward it to soldiers who had been transferred elsewhere.

It was just after the Fourth of July that she met a fellow named Neal Southwick. He was with the 2nd Air Force and had recently arrived at Gowen Field from Colorado Springs. He needed to learn how to do a particular report which Lynn did for her office so his boss asked her boss if she could train him.

Neal pretended to be a slow learner so he could spend more time with Lynn. It worked; they set a date for the next evening.

On September 1, 1943, the WAAC became the Women's Army Corps or WAC, and as such became a component of the US Army; they

— See *A Gowen Field WAC*, page 4



## A Gowen Field WAC from page 3

became a component of the U.S. Army; they were no longer an auxiliary. Lynn promptly enlisted. The *Idaho Statesman* ran a story that included a photograph of Lynn and a friend being sworn into the Army at Gowen Field.

Meanwhile, her friendship with Neal had blossomed into a romance and on October 10, 1943, they married in Neal's parents' home in Southwick, Idaho (near Lewiston). Now Gowen Field had two Corporal Southwicks!

"I was the first girl to get married so I was the guinea pig," Lynn said. "Everybody told me it wouldn't last but it did; we were married for nearly 50 years."

When one of the girls at the base wanted to do something different than the so-called norm, they had to get permission from the 2nd Air Force. Lynn said, "They usually responded with 'Do as you please.'" She and Neal got an apartment in Boise but Lynn still had to make reveille on base each morning. There was no time for a honeymoon. That would have to wait.

Shortly after their marriage, Lynn was selected as the "WAC Woman of the Week" and was featured in an article in the *Idaho Statesman*.

Lynn enjoyed working on Gowen Field. She remembers that "the weather was wonderful and everything was new and well kept."

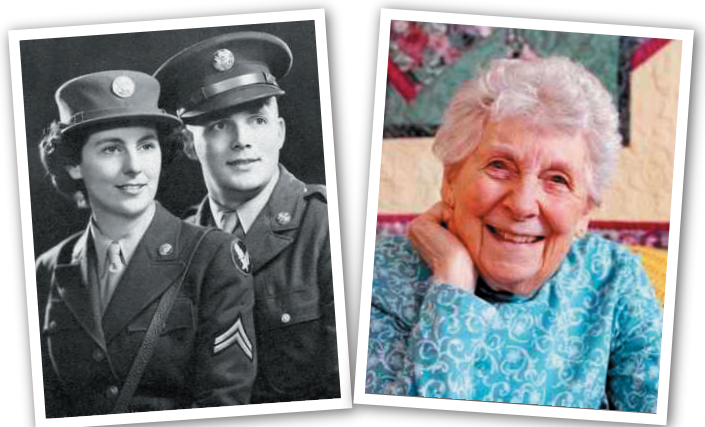
The war was winding down and Lynn was now pregnant. She was discharged on St. Patrick's Day, 1945 and stayed in Boise when Neal was transferred to California. He was discharged in November of 1945.

As Neal was originally from Idaho, instead of sending for Lynn and their baby, he returned to Boise after his discharge and the Southwicks called Boise home. Neal went on to become a field representative for what would become SAFECO.

Their daughter was born in 1945, two days before their second anniversary. They later adopted a second child, a son. Neal passed away in 1992.

Lynn's talent for sewing and embroidery has earned her many blue ribbons at the Western Idaho Fair.

Complications from macular degeneration now limit her abilities but she doesn't let that stop her or slow her down. She now knits squares which she crochets together to make baby blankets for St. Luke's hospital.



Gowen Field WAC Lynn Southwick with husband Neal in 1943 and today. Below: The *Idaho Statesman* ran this article when she was named "WAC Woman of the week." (Courtesy of Lynn Southwick).

**WAC Woman of the Week**  
—At Gowen Field—

Here it is Sunday again, and this week we are bringing to you from Gowen Field as our "WAC of the Week," a 23-year-old girl, all of 5'3" tall, with curly dark hair and green eyes, named Corporal Adrienne Leonard.

... pardon me. ... Corporal Southwick! Yes. Corp. Leonard was married Oct. 10 to Corp. Neil V. Southwick, also of Gowen Field, so now there are two Corporal Southwicks in the family.

But to get back to Corp. Adrienne Southwick. Since May 24, 1943, she has been assigned to the base statistical office at Gowen Field, where all status reports are cleared, and where, in her own words, she's "one of those persistent who are constantly checking other offices to be certain their reports go out on time." To fit her for this kind of job, Corp. Southwick was sent to Army administration school at Commerce, Texas. This of course, was after she had finished her basic training period of four weeks at Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., which she started in February, 1943.

When a WAC finishes basic training, you know, she may be sent to one of the three WAC specialist schools . . . administrative, bakers and cooks, and motor transport; or the Army specialist schools, which include photo lab technicians, code clerk, finance and enlisted technicians . . . wherever she qualifies . . . before she is sent on active duty.

When the Women's Army Auxiliary corps was incorporated into the Army as the Women's Army corps, on September 1, 1943, Corp. Southwick was one of the thousands of girls who reenlisted. We asked her how she felt about reenlisting as a real soldier in the Army of the United States, and she replied, "I was very glad and happy to be able to reenlist as a member of the armed forces. I think it's better to explain after this war why we stayed in there pitching than why we got out!"

Corp. Southwick also has a brother, Garry Leonard, aged 18, who has been in the Army since July, and is taking his training as an aviation cadet at Gettysburg College, Pennsylvania.

Before joining the WAC, Corp. Southwick was employed as a stenographer in the main office of the W. T. Grant company, Broadway, New York City, where she also worked in the fashion merchandising department. Here she helped choose the dresses to be used in making up the large wholesale orders. Perhaps this was a result of her hobby, which is sewing and designing clothes. In fact, she tells us that she made all of her clothes in civilian life since she was in grade school. Of course she doesn't have the opportunity of pursuing this hobby while in the Army, as the Army furnishes all wearing apparel . . . and very nice too! However, Corp. Southwick has now turned her talents to drawing and painting as a hobby, which she also greatly enjoys. As for sports, skiing and skating occupy her time in the winter, though she insists she is no expert, and in summer she likes swimming and horseback riding. As she has been in Idaho now for five months, we asked this girl, who comes from River Edge Manor, New Jersey, just how she likes the western country. Her reply is characteristic as she says, "Though I'm loyal to New Jersey, I think Idaho is swell."

We feel that Corp. Southwick is a representative of the thousands of WACs stationed all over the United States and abroad who are working competently and enthusiastically at the many Army jobs that need filling. She and they are serving where they are needed most! But they are not nearly enough. The call is urgent, as hundreds of thousands of women are now needed in the WAC at once. By joining the Women's Army corps, American women can help in a most important way to bring our soldiers home sooner. Write or call us at 419 post office building.



## Help Wanted ...

### We're looking for transcribers

The inquiries we have been receiving lately on the Farragut Naval Training Station are "I know that Dad/Grandpa/Uncle George was there, I just don't know when."

Without a searchable database of the class photo rosters, we have no way to help them. Our backlog stands at close to 400 rosters.

This project is something you can do from your home computer. We can email you a template and a couple of rosters which you can then transcribe and send the completed template back to us. To see what a roster looks like, there are samples on our Web page at [museum.mil.idaho.gov/farragut.html](http://museum.mil.idaho.gov/farragut.html).

We have recently helped two individuals obtain copies of their fathers' company photos and Muster Rolls because we were able to locate names in the database.



Their reactions were heartwarming and were only possible because those particular rosters had been transcribed.

If you can help, please contact Gayle at [galvarez@imd.idaho.gov](mailto:galvarez@imd.idaho.gov). Your help will make a difference.

### WWII Living History Day highlights D-Day commemoration

World War II Living History Day was held at the museum June 8 to help mark the 69th anniversary of D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Military re-enactors, members of the museum's WWII Living History Group, dressed in U.S. and German army uniforms to display WWII-era weapons, field equipment and vehicles

The group is looking for new recruits. If you or someone you know is interested in WWII history, here are the details:

If you are at least 16 years old, have written parental

permission, and have completed Idaho's Hunter Safety Training Course, you are eligible to become a member of the group.

We are also looking for female Living Historians to portray military nurses and "Home Front Ladies" to enhance our public events. We are interested in forming a medical group to help staff the museum's new military ambulance.

If you and your friends are interested in joining our WWII Living History Group as a re-enactor, visit the museum or call Ken Swanson at 272-4841 Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

## ENDOWMENTS

### In memory of Bob Benbough

- Loren and Ruth Call
- Friends of the Mountain Home Library
- Duane & Donna Gaddy
- Stan Herzinger
- Kevin Knoell
- William C. Miller
- Bob & Nadine Roberts

### In memory of Doug Doehle

- Gayle Alvarez
- Wayne & Mari Lynn Clark
- Stan Herzinger
- Bob & Delores Maynard
- Ruth Moffit
- Pat & Marcia Orthel

### General Endowment

- Ronald Jennings



Cheryl Bloom



Cheryl Bloom

**WWII re-enactors** marked the 69th anniversary of D-Day at the Idaho Military History Museum.

### IDANG F-86A Sabre Jet, Polish MiG-21 now on display



Mike Condrack



Mike Condrack

#### The collection of historic military aircraft

(above, right) on display at the museum includes a restored F-86A Sabre Jet—the Idaho Air Guard’s first jet fighter—and a “work-in-progress” MiG-21 “Fishbed” last flown by the Polish Air Force. The “Fishbed” was the Soviet Union’s primary combat aircraft for more than 25 years (1959–1985).

Also on on display are an Idaho RF-4C Phantom II jet that carried high-resolution cameras rather than bullets or bombs, and a PT-23 “Cornell,” a WWII-era trainer used by the U.S. Army Air Corps.



Mike Condrack

### Flagpoles will be added to Gowen Field’s Memorial Park



IDANG photo/Master Sgt. Tom Gloeckle

**Breaking ground for three new flagpoles** are left to right, Maj. Gen. Gary Sayler, The Adjutant General for Idaho, Lt. Cmdr. Tyler Hamiter, Commanding Officer of the Navy Support Center Boise, and Staff Sgt. Jonathan Brady from Charlie Company, 4th Tank Battalion, 4th Marine Division.

Ground was broken May 23 for three new flagpoles to be placed at the south end of Gowen Field’s Memorial Park, built to honor men and women who are serving in or have served with our nation’s military services.

We can help fund this important project by purchasing a brick engraved with the name of a service member of your choice, a commemorative coin, or donating one of several benches to be added around a fountain in the center of the park located east of Bldg. 600.

For detailed information, or to find order and donation forms visit the memorial Park’s Website at [museum.mil.idaho.gov/gfmemorial](http://museum.mil.idaho.gov/gfmemorial).



## Latest news from the 'Gulf': Idaho's Wild Weasels are back!

By Capt. Brian Davis  
190th Fighter Squadron

We're back! For the second time in less than one year, the 124th Fighter Group is in southwest Asia to support Operation Southern Watch by flying combat air patrols over southern Iraq.

This deployment of our F-4G Wild Weasels and about 100 Guardsmen marks the start of another tour in the Persian Gulf for Idaho's Air National Guard.

This year's odyssey took Group members to the mid-Atlantic islands and Lajes Air Base. After a three-day delay—including New Year's Eve—due to weather, our Wild Weasels and their enroute support team wound up at Souda Air Base on the island of Crete, thanks to a KC-135 airborne tanker malfunction. The next day our people and aircraft landed in southwest Asia. Two days later Idaho's Air National Guard was again flying combat air patrols in the Persian Gulf.

"I'm pleased with our deployment," said [then] Lt. Col. Pat O'Rorke, detachment commander of the first of four groups of Air Guard members scheduled to support Operation Southern Watch during the next six months of this year.

"So far we have met all tasking and integrated well with all of the other units here with the 4404th Composite Wing," he added. "This is a great opportunity for everyone to work and fly in an environment under conditions we don't see anywhere else."

Idaho Senator Dirk Kempthorne, on a fact-finding mission for the Senate Armed Services Committee, paid a visit to Group members to discuss the importance of their service in southwest Asia.

"What you are doing here ... is critically important to peace," he said. "I don't think we—your senators—should be making decisions back in Washington if we aren't willing to come out and see conditions for ourselves and talk to you, the troops on the front line."

Kempthorne was briefed on the mission and capabilities of the F-4G Wild Weasel fighter and its importance to Operation Southern Watch by O'Rorke and [then] Capt. Greg Riddlemoser. He then praised the National Guard and the 124th in particular.

"There is absolutely no question of the ability of the National Guard," he said. "The only question is that of



**Headed for Operation Southern Watch:** An Idaho F-4G Wild Weasel ready to depart Gowen Field for the Persian Gulf and Operation Southern Watch.

availability, a question the 124th Fighter Group has answered loudly and clearly."

For many Group members this new deployment offers a chance to get better acquainted with the flight line, familiar buildings, back shops and other surroundings. For others it offers an exposure to a culture and society drastically different than our own.

Regardless of conditions, culture, or other demands faced by this new team, they will continue to project America's air power in the Persian Gulf.

Their aggressive and professional response to every tasking of members of the 124th Fighter Group—our maintenance and weapons crews, support staff and air crews—can best be described as "First Class."

*Editor's note: This article comes from a 20-year old issue of the "F-4Gazette," published by the 124th Fighter Group while it flew and supported the F-4G Wild Weasel mission. Idaho's airmen would eventually serve in the volatile Persian Gulf—longer than any other Air National Guard unit in the nation—to support Operation(s) Southern Watch and Provide Comfort.*



**Please like us on Facebook!**

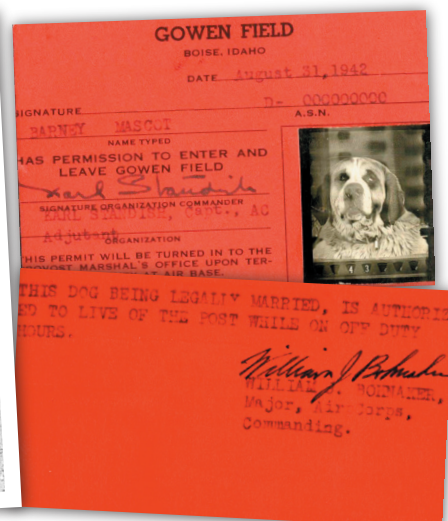
Look for us at [facebook.com/Idaho Military History Museum](https://www.facebook.com/IdahoMilitaryHistoryMuseum).

## Meet Barney, Gowen Field's first—and only—official mascot

Gowen Field's first—and probably only—mascot was Barney, a St. Bernard “puppy” that arrived in Boise with some of the first soldiers in 1942.

He adapted to life on the new base so well that he received an official ID card from his commanding officers and earned a then-rare privilege—permission to live off base when he was not on duty. The card includes this statement over the base commander's signature:

“This dog being legally married, is authorized to live of(f) the post while on off duty hours.”



## Kris Vonderahe has added several books to our library:

- “On Hallowed Ground: The Last Battle for Pork Chop Hill,” Bill McWilliams, Naval Inst Press, 2003
- “Black Sheep One, The Life of Gregory “Pappy” Boyington,” Bruce D. Gamble, Presidio Press, Inc., Novato, CA, 2000.
- “Following The Nez Perce Trail,” Cheryl Wilfong, 2nd Edition, Oregon State University Press, 2006.
- “Northwestern Fights and Fighters,” by Cyrus Townsend Brady.
- “Nez Perce Summer 1877: The U.S. Army and the Nee-Me-Poo Crisis,” Jerome A. Greene, Montana Historical Society Press, Helena, Montana, 2000.



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