

NEWSLETTER

The Friends of the Air Force Academy Library

P.O. Box 188

U.S. Air Force Academy, CO 80840-0188

friends@usafalibrary.com

www.friends.usafalibrary.com

VOL. III NO. 6

FALL 2004

EVADE! EVASION EXPERIENCES OF AMERICAN AIRCREWS IN WORLD WAR II



Evade! is a newly-released 54-minute film on both DVD and VHS featuring the evasion experiences of World War II airmen.

This film is the culmination of a two-year project undertaken by The Friends with the generous support and cooperation of Mr. Ralph K. Patton, founder and first president of the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society. Much of the content is based on materials donated by Mr. Patton to the Clark Special Collections Branch of the McDermott Library.

From 1942 through 1945, the Army Air Forces suffered over 90,000 casualties in Europe. Over 34,000 airmen were killed and 35,000 became prisoners of war. But over 3,000 airmen successfully evaded the enemy to return home.

Evade! tells the stories of six of those evaders and shows that although escape networks have changed, important human elements in the experience of a downed flyer have remained much the same over time.

Told in their own words, the stories of these American heroes come to life through footage of actual shoot-downs

and through the artifacts of the Ralph Patton Collection.

In addition to the film, the program includes several special features:

Members of the Belgian and French underground organizations relive their most frightening moments and tell why they risked everything to help Allied airmen.

Ralph Patton, a B-17 pilot who impersonated a mute traveling salesman during his evasion through France, narrates his own shoot-down, escape, and evasion experience.

Both evaders and their underground helpers tell how they found each other after the war and formed a bond that has lasted ever since.

The DVD version of the program also offers a self-paced, annotated slide show of over 100 images from the Patton Collection.

The goal of this Friends' project has been to electronically archive key items of the Academy's escape-and-evasion collection, extend their availability beyond the immediate confines of the Cadet Library to scholars and the general public, and to present them in a manner that deepens the user's appreciation of the essential human challenges of escape and evasion.

By permitting cadets and others to test themselves vicariously against these challenges, the program will promote serious, informed discussion of the traits of character needed to deal with such challenges. Thus, the program will benefit classroom teaching, field training, and scholarship at the Academy and beyond.

The Friends plan to make copies available to the Academy to strengthen instruction in military history, leadership, and professional ethics, as well as field

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The time since our last newsletter was distributed has been filled with many significant projects. All of the members of the executive committee have been fully involved and we are fortunate to have such a fine group of skilled and dedicated people on the committee who are willing to give so much of their time in support of the Academy Library.

We are very pleased to have Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, the new Academy Archivist, working closely with us. She is very well qualified for the kind of work that we are doing and we are fortunate to have her on the team.

Jim Gaston's Word One, Inc. has recently completed work on the DVD

(continued on page 2)

training in Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape.

The project began in summer 2003 with a review of Air Force and Army training materials and reports, and firsthand narratives written by evaders and underground helpers. The purposes of this review were to identify characteristic experiences of evaders, prepare questions for interviews, and draft a preliminary outline of a script.

The next phase of the project, collection of materials, was completed in March 2004. Principal activities of this phase included scanning still images, reviewing videos, and interviewing World War II evaders. Five hundred fifty-five evasion-related still images were scanned, 374 of them from the Patton Collection and 181 from related holdings in the Clark Special Collections Branch. Twenty-three videos from the Patton Collection were reviewed, with appropriate sections being dubbed for cover footage.

DISTRIBUTION OF “THE GENESIS OF FLIGHT” CD



Since 2000, the CD accompanying *The Genesis of Flight: The Aeronautical History Collection of*

Colonel Richard Gimbel, has been provided by The Friends to the Academy's Department of History. The CD is given to cadets enrolled in the Department of History's core course, Introduction to Military History, which is taken by all cadets at the Academy. The CD enables each cadet to study the rich materials of the Gimbel Collection. With holdings dating from the 15th century, the collection, housed in the Clark Special Collections Branch of the McDermott Library, is recognized as the most comprehensive collection on the prehistory of powered flight in existence. Col. Mark Wells, Permanent

Professor and Head of the Department of History, has expressed his appreciation for the CD, stating "On behalf of the Department of History, I want to thank The Friends of the Library for your continuing support of our efforts to teach cadets their heritage as future officers of the U.S. Air Force. Each new crop of students is intrigued at the story of how humanity has attempted to conquer the air, and by the extraordinarily rich holdings in the Gimbel Collection." Only through the financial support of its membership will The Friends be able to continue providing the CD to the cadets.

THE FRIENDS COMMEMORATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ACADEMY

As noted in our summer newsletter, on April 1, 2004 The Friends, in cooperation with the Association of Graduates, officially began the celebration of the Air Force Academy's 50th anniversary with a reception at Doolittle Hall and the initial screening of the DVD, *Expect Great Things*. This reception was in lieu of our traditional spring meeting. Funded by the Association of Graduates, the DVD was produced for The Friends by Word One, Inc. It contains film footage obtained from the National Archives that portrays key events in the first fifty years of the Academy's history. It also includes interviews with many of those who were instrumental in building the institution and with graduates who

shared their experiences at the Academy. Following the initial presentation of *Expect Great Things*, we began actively promoting the distribution of the DVD. The Friends are hopeful that the effort will result in a nationally televised presentation of this extraordinary chronicle of the Academy's history.

In 2003, in conjunction with the development of *Expect Great Things*, the Board of Directors of The Friends recognized the need to produce a single volume containing the transcripts of the thirty-seven oral history interviews that were conducted by Word One, Inc. in support of the DVD. Containing both extensive interviews which cover a wide expanse of Academy history and shorter

thematic interviews which are limited to specific topics, the compendium will be an invaluable document for institutional research at the Academy.

The members of The Friends' Executive Committee have been involved in every phase of the project and the work is well underway. A book designer and editor have been contracted to prepare the manuscript for printing. The volume will be a privately printed, limited edition of the highest quality that will be deposited in the Clark Special Collections Branch of the McDermott Library and in the library of the Association of Graduates in Doolittle Hall. This important project is scheduled for completion in December 2004.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(continued from page 1)

Evade! It is a thrilling and well-documented story of some of the hundreds of American airmen who were shot down over Europe in WWII, escaped capture, and evaded to return to friendly hands. This fine piece of work, financed by Ralph Patton, himself an evader, might soon become an Air Force training film. (See more about *Evade!* elsewhere in the newsletter.)

Expect Great Things, another DVD recently produced by Word One, Inc., tells the story of the first fifty years of the Air Force Academy. So far, it is the only historical piece

that has appeared to mark the significance of the Academy's anniversary year. It is beautifully done and deserves wide national distribution.

The Friends are also producing a compendium volume of oral history interviews as another tribute to the fifty years of excellent service provided by the Academy to the nation. The interviews were conducted in support of the DVD *Expect Great Things*. Only six high-quality copies will be produced. They will be deposited in the Clark Special Collections Branch and in the library of the Association

of Graduates at Doolittle Hall. The volume is an invaluable source of information on the Air Force Academy's first half-century and will be available to researchers.

As you can see, we have accomplished many projects and have a full plate of future projects. To finish completing these worthy projects we will need a degree of financial support well beyond any that we have required in the past. Never have The Friends been in greater need of your help to enhance the stature and prestige of the Air Force Academy and its fine Library.

MCDERMOTT LIBRARY NAMES NEW ARCHIVIST



Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ruwell

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ruwell is the new Chief of the Clark Special Collections Branch and also the Air Force Academy Archivist. She assumed her new post in July 2004. Dr. Ruwell has an extensive background in archival work gained at the National Archives and Records Administration, the Smithsonian Institution, the Northeast Document Conservation Center at Andover, Massachusetts, and the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum. Most recently she was Director of the Air and Space Museum at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs.

A Certified Archivist, Dr. Ruwell served as President of the Academy of Certified Archivists from 1996 through 1997. She received her Ph.D. in American Civilization from the University of Pennsylvania.

One of her areas of expertise is preservation of historical materials. While at the Northeast Document Conservation Center, she taught workshops on microfilming and other ways of preserving information from fragile and disintegrating books and papers. She is also an enthusiastic advocate of using electronic technology to make archival materials easier to find and use. Dr. Ruwell cautions, however, that transferring archival materials to electronic format is not archival preservation but a method for increasing access.

Dr. Ruwell has already become involved with the plans for the 50th anniversary compendium and many other Friends' projects. She notes, "The Friends have supported many projects that the Library could

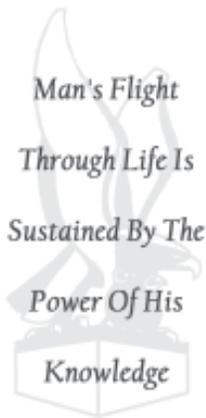
otherwise never accomplish. I am impressed with the enthusiasm and hard work of the Executive Board and very much enjoy working with them."

Commenting on Dr. Ruwell's appointment to the staff, Dr. Ed Scott, Director of the McDermott Library notes, "We are delighted to have an Academy Archivist and special collections curator who is so well versed in the special knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to administer this premiere collection. As a member of the McDermott Library, Clark Special Collections Branch, and Friends of the Air Force Academy Library team, Dr. Ruwell has already proven herself as an outstanding contributor to cadet education and faculty research." Welcome, Mary Elizabeth; we are pleased you are here.

Falconry at the United States Air Force Academy

By A. P. Clark, Lt. Gen., USAF (Ret)

This book tells how the Academy's unique falconry program came to exist and describes the imaginative and innovative work that has produced this exciting application of an ancient sport. The Academy's falconry program is a one-of-a-kind leadership laboratory in that upper-class cadets introduce new cadets to the program and inspire them to devote most of their spare time at the Academy to the care, training, display and performance of these magnificent birds. This Friends of the Air Force Academy Library-sponsored book is available in both hardback and paperback editions. **Order this inspiring book about the cadets' unique performing mascot by calling the publisher, Fulcrum Press, (800) 992-2908 or the Academy Association of Graduates, (719) 472-0300.**



COMPACT DISK FEATURING THE LEE HUMISTON COLLECTION OF POW ARTIFACTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Albert P. Clark*
Lt. Gen., USAF (Ret)

1st Vice President

Henry A. Kortemeyer
Colonel, USAF (Ret)

2nd Vice President

Willis I. Kettererson

Secretary

Philip D. Caine
Brig. Gen., USAF (Ret)

Treasurer

Jock C. H. Schwank
Colonel, USAF (Ret)

MEMBERS

Mrs. John M. Bennett

Elliott V. Converse, III
Colonel, USAF (Ret)

John R. Dallager*
Maj. Gen., USAF (Ret)

George V. Fagan
Brig. Gen., USAF (Ret)

James C. Gaston
Colonel, USAF (Ret)

Dona R. H. Hildebrand
Lt. Col., USAF (Ret)

Bradley C. Hosmer*
Lt. Gen., USAF (Ret)

Richard W. Lemp, Ph.D.

Harold U. Littrell
Air Academy National Bank

William J. Mahon
Colonel, USAF (Ret)

Mr. Duane Reed

Erlind G. Royer
Brig. Gen., USAF (Ret)

Winfield W. Scott, Jr.*
Lt. Gen., USAF (Ret)

James R. W. Titus
Lt. Col., USAF (Ret)

Donald H. White, Ph.D.

ADVISORS

Edward A. Scott, Ph.D.
Director of Academy
Libraries

James H. Head
Colonel, USAF
Vice Dean

Richard S. Rauschkolb
Colonel, USAF (Ret)
Association of Graduates

HONORARY DIRECTORS

Gordon P. Culver
Lt. Col., USAF (Ret)

Charles R. Hamm*
Lt. Gen., USAF (Ret)

John W. Huston
Maj. Gen., USAF (Ret)

Marcos E. Kinevan
Brig. Gen., USAF (Ret)

Naomi McCracken
Lt. Col., USAF (Ret)

T. Ross Milton
General, USAF (Ret)

Tad J. Oelstrom*
Lt. Gen., USAF (Ret)

Reiner H. Schaeffer
Lt. Col., USAF (Ret)

*Former Superintendent
of the Academy

In October The Friends presented to the McDermott Library a CD with more than 350 images from the Lee Humiston Collection of artifacts dealing with experiences of American prisoners of war during the Vietnam War. Mr. Humiston, a nationally recognized authority on the POW experience in Southeast Asia, donated the artifacts to the Academy in 1999.

Assembled over the course of many years, the Academy's Southeast Asia Prisoner of War Collection is the largest and most definitive collection of its kind in the United States. It includes documents, photographs, film, and artifacts from American prisoner-of-war experiences in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War.

Included in the Humiston Collection are:

- prison camp uniforms
- drinking cups that might have been a POW's only "possession" for five years or more and served as a vital communication device
- religious beads and crosses made covertly from scrap material and concealed by POWs for many years
- tiny notebooks of foreign-language vocabulary written in miniscule script with secretly made ink

The CD is a self-loading program with an interactive menu leading to images of items from the Humiston Collection. Among the topics on the menu are prison camp "amenities" and clothing, methods of communication, handmade items, and documents written by prisoners. Viewers can choose to see the images in low or high resolution. Textual information, when available, appears alongside the images.

The Friends believe this compact disk will be valuable in its own right as a way to improve access to a valuable collection for cadets, scholars, and the general public. Further, The Friends view completion of the CD as an interim step toward creation of a more ambitious multimedia program that will use videos, photos, audio recordings, interactive maps, and virtual reality displays to convey the Vietnam prisoner-of-war experience. An outline and multimedia preview of the larger project are now available; the project itself awaits the availability of funding.

THE FRIENDS' WEB SITE IS UP AND RUNNING

Visit us online and see the latest on The Friends and the Academy Library.

www.friends.usafalibrary.com