

Friends of the 416th Bomb Group (L)

"Keeping memories alive by perpetuating the accomplishments and Heritage of the 416th Bomb Group for present and future generations"



MAIL CALL

QTR 4, 2022

Dear Friends,

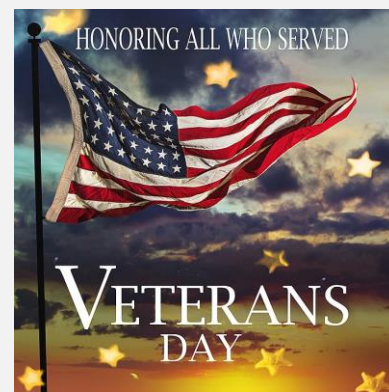
Veteran's Day is November 11. As we approach that day, may we stop in the busyness of our daily lives to reflect upon the sacrifices made by the men and women while serving in the US military. Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime. The Friends of the 416th Bomb Group are acutely aware that most of America's service members do not seek the spotlight. We witnessed the reluctance from our fathers, uncles, and grandfathers to talk about their service during World War II.

Some veterans, especially those who served in Vietnam and endured horrible treatment once they returned home, can feel uncomfortable with the extra attention they will receive on Veterans Day. I read an article about a woman who struggled with the appropriateness to approach veterans to thank them for their service. Her father had served in Vietnam and had conflicting terms with his military service. He did not attend parades, kept his medals hidden and very rarely spoke of his service. She now honors him by going to veteran gatherings as his self-appointed representative, and she "stands in his place and creates a place for the children of veterans who also have a stake in Veterans Day."

She coined the phrase, *I see you. I respect you. I value your service.* Instead of greeting veterans with the more neutral "Thank you for your service", she now greets veterans with "I want to honor you this Veterans Day—but maybe this day is not your favorite." Perhaps this personalized approach acknowledges the anonymity many veterans seek. The parades, pictures in the newspaper and special recognition would be incongruous with their initial motivations to join the military—to serve, not for recognition, but to serve this country. The Friends of the 416th Bomb Group offers us the unique opportunity to honor the memories of those who served. Our two remaining veterans, Roland Dullnig and Alberie Nadeau, continue to remind us of their service during a time when the world needed them and their buddies, the most. May we acknowledge their commitment and service on November 11.

Memories of the 416th BG have been shared, documented, and posted on the 416th.com website for many years. Some of us have had the privilege and honor of meeting our 416th Veterans at the annual reunions. In previous years, the reunions were highlighted in the Annual Newsletters, some of which are available on the 416th.com website. We recap our reunion this year in this issue of the "Mail Call". I hope it will spur us all to come to the 2023 Reunion next year!

Kathe Rensner, *Liaison of the Friends of the 416th Bomb Group*



Keeping in Touch!

As our lives move forward taking us in our various directions, we are still bound together by our 416th history and family connections. Do you have news or a story to share with your 416th family? Please let Kathe know at: friendsof416thbombgroup@swcp.com.

2022 Friends of the 416th Bomb Group Reunion Summary

The 2022 Reunion was held from October 26 to October 30 in Tucson, Arizona at the Hilton Doubletree Inn. Tucson sits in the Sonoran Desert and the many cacti that dot the landscape reminded us of this as the warm and dry desert climate greeted us. Many thanks to Steve Bisel, 2022 Reunion Coordinator, and the Reunion Committee, Chris Adams and Steve Roy. Their efforts planning and running the Reunion are much appreciated.



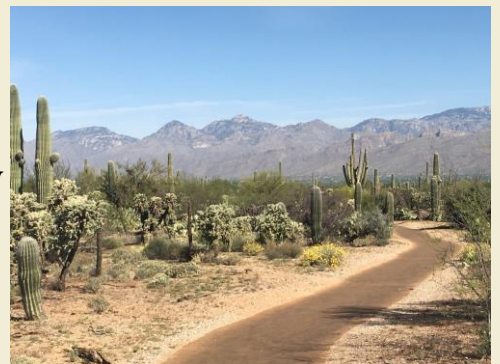
Thanks also to photographer, Jean Sittarich ever ready with her camera, and Dr. Vernon Williams, with the East Anglia War Project, for his insightful presentation and upcoming events.

Day 1. The Reunion kicked off on Wednesday, October 25, in the Hospitality Room as folks began arriving at the hotel. It was wonderful to meet new members of our group and welcome those whom we had not seen since the 2019 Reunion in New Orleans. Friends from both the East (Washington, DC) and West Coasts (Washington and California), along with Indiana, Colorado, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, Missouri, and North Dakota attended this year's reunion.

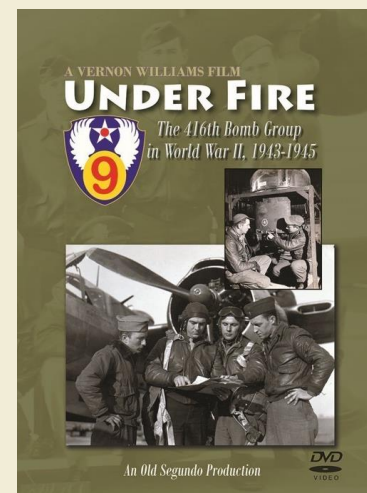
Day 2. Thursday, October 26, featured an extensive tour of the Pima Air and Space Museum. The Museum is the third largest in the country of its kind following the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian in Washington, DC and the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton, Ohio. Our group spent several hours roaming the museum and especially the two hangars where an A-20 Havoc and an A-26 Invader are housed.



Day 3. Friday, October 27, was open for touring Tucson and its many interesting things to do including visiting the Saguaro National Park named for the largest cacti native to its desert environment, and the San Xavier del Bac Mission established in 1691 by Jesuit priest, Father Kino. The current mission, built by the Tohono O'Odham Nation in the mid 1700's is two miles away from the original spot and is still in use today.



Late in the afternoon, we began congregating back in the Hospitality Room to visit and share our experiences of the day. Some of our members began looking through the various scrapbooks and memorabilia of our veterans' 416th experiences and sharing family stories with one another. Toward the end of the afternoon, we viewed the video, titled *Under Fire: The 416th Bomb Group in World War II, 1943-1945*, produced by Dr. Vernon Williams and his Old Segundo production company. This video reviews the story of the 416th Bomb Group (L) from activation and training in the United States, to Combat Operations in the European theater of operations during World War II. This video is available for purchase through the 416th BG Archive store with all sales benefitting the Archive.



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2022 Friends of the 416th Bomb Group Reunion Summary, Cont.

In the early evening, several of our group traveled to the Mt. Lemmon SkyCenter on Mt. Lemmon located an hour from Tucson in the Catalina Mountains. Right at sunset, learned about our local star, the Sun, and were able to view it through a couple of their outdoor telescopes and see the corona and a few sunspots – beautiful! Then, braving the night cold, our stargazing included seeing the moon (very close up!), bright individual stars in our night sky, various planets and their moons among the vast array of stars, constellations, nebulae and globular star clusters from the 24" Phillips telescope. It was just beautiful!



Day 4. We spent our time in the Hospitality Room where we held the Annual Friends of the 416th Bomb Group Business Meeting. News and views from the Friends of the 416th BG was presented by Kathe Rensner. Wayne Sayles (416th BG Archivist) updated the group with news about the 416th Group Archive and Rick Prucha (Webmaster for 416th.com) discussed recent website updates. Chris Adams followed leading the discussion on the 2023 Reunion. Graciously, Roy and Arlene Hohn volunteered to be our hosts next year in Denver, Colorado. We are very thankful for the Hohn's offer to host in 2023. Arlene's father, Captain Meredith Huff, was a pilot in the 669th BS.

After lunch, Steve Roy presented a review of RAF Wethersfield and the Wethersfield Air Field Museum in Essex County, England, and the efforts to keep the historical and cultural heritage protected from commercial development. He focused on his visit to Wethersfield (and the village of Braintree nearby), showing us photos of buildings on the base still standing. He mentioned two sites in the process of "Listing" (the British equivalent of the National Registry of Historic Places) : the bomb dump and the Wethersfield Airfield Chapel, the first American chapel in the UK.

Dr. Vernon Williams presented information about his new film project, *Wethersfield at War: From World II and the Cold War-An Essex Story of Service, Determination, and the Anglo-American Spirit*. He will begin interviewing after the holidays and will focus first on the cold war era military personnel and family members who lived and served at Wethersfield after WWII. He will be working with Wayne Sayles to digitize the 416th interviews that he has done over the years.

Later, Jean Sittarich composed and photographed our traditional Reunion Attendees picture. Later we gathered for our group dinner at the El Charro Café. Doris Sayles presented the Missing Man Table Ceremony, poignant reminder of men from the 416th BG who never made it home after the war. We dined and feasted on Mexican food typical of the Sonoran Desert. Our Guest Speaker was Rob Raine with the 309 AMARG (Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group) located at Davis-Monthan AFB in Tucson, aka "The Boneyard." He gave us a virtual tour of The Boneyard and spoke about AMARG's mission to provide critical aerospace maintenance and regeneration capabilities for Joint and Allied Coalition forces.

Day 5. Day Five brought the 2022 Friends of the 416th BG to a close. As we said our goodbyes and assurances of "see you next year in Denver," the Friends of the 416th BG continued to carry the torch for the men of the 416th Bomb Group who first met post-war at the squadron reunions in 1946. This rich tradition of meeting as a family tied together with memories of those who served and bound with the determination to keep these memories alive by perpetuating the accomplishments and heritage of the 416th men today and for future generations.



Remember, whenever you shop using smile.amazon.com, Amazon makes a donation to the 416th BG Archive. So, please consider shopping through Amazon Smile?