

## 1998 HONOREES

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

**Col Rex T. Barber, USAF (Ret.)**

**Brig Gen Robert E. Galer, USMC (Ret.)**

**Maj Jack Ilfrey, USAAF**

**Col Walker "Bud" Mahurin, USAF (Ret.)**

**Col Robert K. Morgan, USAFR (Ret.)**

**Torpedo Squadron Eight Crew of TBF Avenger BuNo 00380**

**Cmdr Harry H. Ferrier, USN (Ret.)**

**Capt Albert K. Earnest, USN (Ret.)**

**Seaman First Jay D. Manning USN (KIA 1942)**

**Unit Recognition to:**

**American Volunteer Group**

**Accepting: John Richard Rossi, AVG Flight Leader**



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"At the core, the American citizen soldier knew the difference between right and wrong, and they didn't want to live in a world in which wrong prevailed. So they fought, and won, and we all of us, living and yet to be born, must be forever profoundly grateful."

Stephen E. Ambrose  
*Citizen Soldiers*

## God Bless America

God Bless America, land that I love  
Stand beside her, and guide her  
Through the night, with a light from above.  
From the mountains, to the prairies,  
To the oceans, white with foam,  
God Bless American, my home sweet home,  
God Bless American, my home sweet home.



### **Maj Gen John R. Alison, USAF (Ret.)**

Gen Alison's career took him to every theatre of World War II. While flying as a squadron commander in General Claire Chennault's 14th Army Air Force, Alison scored the first night victory. Alison was called by General "Hap" Arnold to form the 1st Air Commando Force in the CBI Theatre, where he and "Phil" Cochran masterminded an imaginative exploit of landing everything needed to set up a jungle airport behind enemy lines in Burma. Gliders carrying men, bulldozers, food, ammunition and even mules landed in darkness to build a jungle airport that became one of the busiest airports in the world, thwarted the Japanese invasion of India and helped reclaim Burma. After the war, he served as Vice President of the Northrop Corporation.

### **Col Rex T. Barber, USAF (Ret.)**

Col Barber made the longest intercept mission flown during World War II. In an intense but brief engagement near Bougainville Island, two Japanese Betty bombers were shot down. One bomber carried the architect of the raid on Pearl Harbor, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto. Japan had lost its most powerful strategist. Rex Barber flew the P-38 Lightning that is credited with shooting down Yamamoto, Japan's most omnipotent naval military leader.

### **Brig Gen Robert E. Galer, USMC (Ret.)**

Gen Galer is one of the Marine Corps' top scoring aces, achieving 13 aerial combat victories. He also was presented America's highest military recognition, the Medal of Honor. As commander of Marine Fighting Squadron 224, that was equipped with Grumman F4F Wildcats, Gen Galer flew against the Japanese bombers and fighters attacking the Marines and Seabees who struggled to keep Henderson Field in working order on Guadalcanal. Galer survived being shot down three times, twice off Guadalcanal and once during the Korean conflict. Though 100 miles behind enemy lines, he was rescued by the U. S. Navy.

### **Maj Jack Ilfrey, USAAF**

One of the first aces of the 12th Air Force, Jack Ilfrey flew in both the Mediterranean and European Theatres. Ilfrey shot down two German 109s in a dogfight near Berlin, one of which collided with the P-38 Lightning he was flying, shearing off nearly five feet of one wing. Nevertheless, Ilfrey made it back to England. Ilfrey performed another daring act of bravery when he landed behind enemy lines in Holland to rescue his wing man. While on a strafing mission in France, Ilfrey was shot down behind enemy lines. He evaded capture and was back in England within four days.



## **Banquet & Induction Ceremonies October 1, 1998**

### **Reception**

Big Band Music

Sound Investment

### **Induction Dinner and Ceremonies**

*Master of Ceremonies*

*CAF Col Don Luttrell*

Pledge of Allegiance

Brig Gen Paul Tibbets, USAF (Ret.)

Invocation

CAF Col George Lodge

Introductory Remarks

CAF Col Ken Fields

General Staff

Ron Haddock

CEO

FINA Oil & Chemical Company

Gen Lloyd W. Newton, USAF

Commander, Air Education

& Training Command

Presentation of Honorees

CAF Col Joe Cowan

Chief of Staff, General Staff

CAF Col Ollie Crawford

General Staff

Moment of Silence

for Those Gone West

Cliff Sherrod

Piper

"God Bless America"

Honorees and Attendees

### **Col Walker "Bud" Mahurin, USAF (Ret.)**

Col Mahurin was the first U. S. Army Air Force double ace in Europe. Flying the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt, he was credited with 20.5 aerial combat victories. In March 1944, he was shot down, forced to bail out, then with the help of the French underground, evaded capture for six weeks before being returned to England. Mahurin was sent to the Pacific where he commanded the 3rd Air Commando Squadron and scored another aerial combat victory in a North American P-51 Mustang. During the Korean conflict, he shot down an additional 3.5 enemy aircraft. In May 1952, Mahurin was shot down, taken prisoner, and spent 16 months as a prisoner of war.

### **Col Robert K. Morgan, USAFR (Ret.)**

Col Morgan is best known for piloting the famous Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress "Memphis Belle." Scarred by anti-aircraft fire, "Memphis Belle" was the first heavy bomber to complete 25 missions over Europe and be sent home with its crew intact, logging more than 148 combat hours and 20,000 miles. After completing a U.S. tour with the crew and the "Memphis Belle" to promote and sell war bonds, Morgan chose to go to the Pacific and fly the Boeing B-29 Superfortress. He led the 73rd Bomb Wing from its base on Saipan on the first B-29 raid over Tokyo.

### **Crew of Grumman TBF Avenger Bureau No. 00380, Torpedo Squadron Eight, USN**

On the morning of June 4, 1942, twenty-one aircraft from Torpedo Squadron Eight departed for the Battle of Midway, but only one returned. Pilot Albert Earnest, Radioman Harry Ferrier and Gunner Jay Manning flew into World War II history unaware that their Avenger alone would return. One crewman, Manning, was dead; the other two were wounded by the swarm of Zero fighters that met their attack on the Japanese fleet. After the Battle of Midway, the Grumman TBF torpedo bomber was renamed the "Avenger" in honor of Naval aviators who died in combat at the Battle of Midway.

### **American Volunteer Group (AVG): Flying Tigers**

Before the United States formally entered World War II, a group of American volunteers was formed by Gen Claire Chennault into what was later to become the "Flying Tigers." President Roosevelt approved Chennault's plan to assist Chiang Kai Shek's attempt to repulse the Japanese invasion of China and Burma, by allowing pilots and ground personnel to resign from their individual services and proceed to China as civilians. After downing 19 of 30 Japanese bombers heading for Rangoon, they became known as the "Flying Tigers."