



# HONOR FLIGHT®

## ROCHESTER NEWSLETTER

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#### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### Spring Flying Season is Here

As we enter Spring, and warmer weather is upon us, a lot is happening at Honor Flight Rochester! Last month, on March 16th, we had our Volunteer Kickoff event, which was a great way to start up the new season. Calls are being made to veterans as we make our way through applications and book them on our three Spring Missions.

Mission 46: April 30-May 1

Mission 47: May 21-22

Mission 48: June 18-19

And while we are busy calling and confirming veterans for these missions, we are still very actively seeking more veterans to apply for future missions. We have several events this Spring and Summer to help get our message out to the community.

Check the events section of this newsletter for the upcoming schedule of community engagements, and keep an eye on the Honor Flight Rochester website and your email inbox for updates and opportunities to get involved.

Remember we want ALL of our veterans to have the opportunity to fly on their Honor Flight Mission and visit their memorials.



# Latest News

## Volunteer Kickoff

Thank you to the many volunteers and guests who attended the March 16th Volunteer Kickoff at American Legion Post 942 in Webster. It was a great event, and a wonderful way to get this season started.



thank  
you!



Rick and Laurie Palmer, recipients of the Colonel Woody Mench Volunteer of the Year Award! Thanking them is HFR Board chairman Peter Glennon



# Latest News



For Immediate Release

**Honor Flight Rochester, Inc.**

**P.O. Box 23581**

**Rochester, NY 14692**

## **Honor Flight Rochester Seeks Korean War, Cold-War Veterans for Honor Flights**

**ROCHESTER, NY** – Following World War II, Americans clearly drew a line in the sand against tyranny by serving in the U.S. armed forces during the Korean War and in the lengthy period known as the “Cold War\*.”

Their sacrifices preserved democracy throughout the world as other forces tried to impose their philosophy upon other weaker countries. **Honor Flight Rochester** (HFR) recognizes these veterans and invites these men and women to apply for a **free Honor Flight** trip to Washington, D.C. This covers veterans who served between 1947 – 1964.

“The men and women who answered our country’s call during those tense times are no less deserving of our admiration,” said HFR Co-founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors Peter J. Glennon, Esq. (Major, Ret. USAF). “They stood their posts in the United States and in foreign lands to preserve freedom. We want to take them on an Honor Flight to thank them for their service.”

“Many former service members feel that because they were not in combat that they aren’t entitled to an Honor Flight. We disagree. We honor them and their service and we want them to fly to Washington, D.C.,” said HFR President Richard Stewart.

**This is an appeal for applications.** As our World War II veterans pass in final review, HFR is focusing on those who served from 1947 up until 1964. HFR’s fall flights will be filled predominantly by veterans from the eras of the Korean War (1950-53) and that portion of the Cold War. We are planning future Honor Flights for Vietnam War veterans.

Veterans can apply for an Honor Flight trip online at [Honor Flight Rochester](http://www.honorflightrochester.org). Paper Honor Flight applications may also be available at area town halls. Honor Flights are supported by community gifts.

**\*The Cold War (1947 – 1991)** was a state of political and military tension between the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies and the United States, its NATO allies and others. It was termed a “cold war” because there was no large-scale fighting directly between the two sides, although there were major regional conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, and other spots globally.

# # #

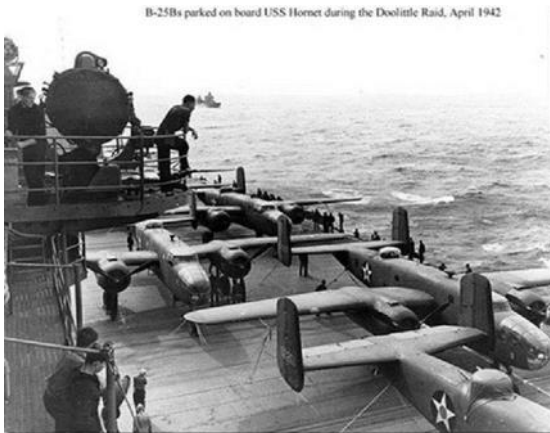
**Honor Flight Rochester** ([www.honorflightrochester.org](http://www.honorflightrochester.org)) – one of 135 established hubs in 42 states the national Honor Flight Network – is a not-for-profit, fully-volunteer organization with a goal of taking every World War II, Korean War, Cold-War era or Vietnam War veteran from the Greater Rochester area who otherwise would or could not go, to visit and reflect together at Washington D.C. Memorials built in their honor. The two-day trip is **free** to all World War II, Korean, Cold-War era, or Vietnam veterans and to veterans of any era who suffer a terminal illness. Rochester’s flying season is April to October. To date, 2,121 veterans have now flown on 45 missions from the Greater Rochester area since the local organization began full scale flights in early 2009.

**Honor Flight Rochester. Please Join Us – Generously. All THEY did... was save the world!**

# The Final Toast

They once were among the most universally admired and revered men in the United States. There were 80 of the Raiders in April 1942, when they carried out one of the most courageous and heart-stirring military operations in this nation's history. The mere mention of their unit's name, in those years, would bring tears to the eyes of grateful Americans.

After Japan's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, with the United States reeling and wounded, something dramatic was needed to turn the war effort around. Even though there were no friendly airfields close enough to Japan for the United States to launch a retaliation, a daring plan was devised. Sixteen B-25s were modified so that they could take off from the deck of an aircraft carrier. This had never before been tried -- sending such big, heavy bombers from a carrier.

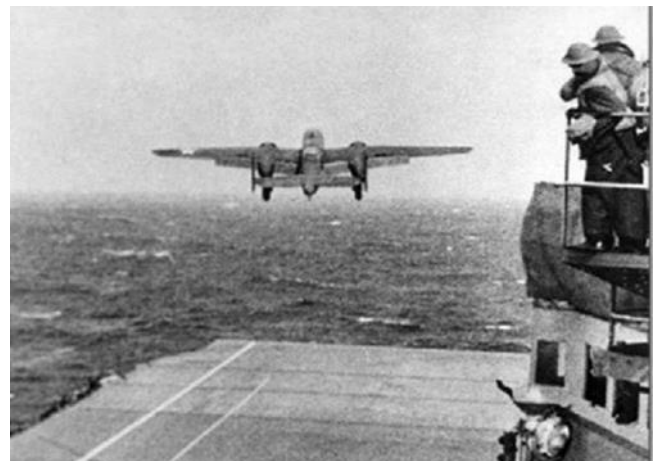


The 16 five-man crews, under the command of Lt. Col. James Doolittle, who himself flew the lead plane off the USS Hornet, knew that they would not be able to return to the carrier. They would have to hit Japan and then hope to make it to China for a safe landing.

But on the day of the raid, the Japanese military caught wind of the plan. The Raiders were told that they would have to take off from much farther out in the Pacific Ocean than they had counted on. They were told that because of this they would not have enough fuel to make it to safety.

And those men went anyway.

(cont'd, next)





They bombed Tokyo and then flew as far as they could. Four planes crash-landed; 11 more crews bailed out, and three of the Raiders died. Eight more were captured; three were executed. Another died of starvation in a Japanese prison camp. One crew made it to Russia.

The Doolittle Raiders sent a message from the United States to its enemies, and to the rest of the world: We will fight. And, no matter what it takes, we will win.



Of the 80 Raiders, 62 survived the war. They were celebrated as national heroes, models of bravery.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer produced a motion picture based on the raid; "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo," starring Spencer Tracy and Van Johnson, was a patriotic and emotional box-office hit, and the phrase became part of the national lexicon. In the movie-theater previews for the film, MGM proclaimed that it was presenting the story "with supreme pride."

Beginning in 1946, the surviving Raiders have held a reunion each April, to commemorate the mission.

The reunion is in a different city each year. In 1959, the city of Tucson, Arizona, as a gesture of respect and gratitude, presented the Doolittle Raiders with a set of 80 silver goblets. Each goblet was engraved with the name of a Raider.

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Every year, a wooden display case bearing all 80 goblets is transported to the reunion city. Each time a Raider passes away, his goblet is turned upside down in the case at the next reunion, as his old friends bear solemn witness. Also in the wooden case is a bottle of 1896 Hennessy Very Special cognac. The year is not hap-  
penstance: 1896 was when Jimmy Doolittle was born.

There has always been a plan: When there are only two surviving Raiders, they would open the bottle, at last drink from it, and toast their comrades who preceded them in death.



As 2013 began, there were five living Raiders; then, in February, Tom Griffin passed away at age 96. What a man he was. After bailing out of his plane over a mountainous Chinese forest after the Tokyo raid, he became ill with malaria, and almost died.

When he recovered, he was sent to Europe to fly more combat missions. He was shot down, captured, and spent 22 months in a German prisoner of war camp.



The selflessness of these men, the sheer guts ... there was a passage in the Cincinnati Enquirer obituary for Mr. Griffin that, on the surface, had nothing to do with the war, but that was emblematic of the depth of his sense of duty and devotion: "When his wife became ill and needed to go into a nursing home, he visited her every day. He walked from his house to the nursing home, fed his wife and at the end of the day brought home her clothes. At night, he washed and ironed her clothes. Then he walked them up to her room the next morning. He did that for three years until her death in 2005."

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So now, out of the original 80, only four Raiders remain: Dick Cole (Doolittle's co-pilot on the Tokyo raid), Robert Hite, Edward Saylor and David Thatcher. All are in their 90s. They have decided that there are too few of them for the public reunions to continue.



The events in Fort Walton Beach marked the end. It has come full circle; Florida's nearby Eglin Field was where the Raiders trained in secrecy for the Tokyo mission. The town planned to do all it can to honor the men: a six-day celebration of their valor, including luncheons, a dinner and a parade.

Do the men ever wonder if those of us for whom they helped save the country have tended to it in a way that is worthy of their sacrifice? They don't talk about that, at least not around other people. But if you find yourself near Fort Walton Beach this week, and if you should encounter any of the Raiders, you might want to offer them word of thanks. I can tell you from first hand observation that they appreciate hearing that they are remembered.



The men have decided that after this final public reunion they will wait until a later date -- sometime this year -- to get together once more, informally and in absolute privacy. That is when they will open the bottle of brandy. The years are flowing by too swiftly now; they are not going to wait until there are only two of them.

They will fill the four remaining upturned goblets. And raise them in a toast to those who are gone.





## Veteran Memories—John (Jack) Foy

John (Jack) Foy served in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1946 as a machine gunner in Gen. Patton's 3<sup>rd</sup> Army. They successfully fought across Europe, including the Battle of the Bulge where they fought to relieve the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne at Bastogne. Jack says, "Our company went in with about 200 men and came out with about 40." Later, they crossed the Rhine and Moselle rivers and then crossed into Czechoslovakia where they met the Russian army. Jack laughingly says, "No one could understand each other but there were no problems." They were still there when the Germans surrendered on May 8th, 1945.



Not surprisingly, Jack traveled with HFR on Mission 14 (aka "The Battle of the Bulge Mission"). He found out about HFR from his good friends Tom and Vince Hope. Gates-Chili teacher Wes Geer was his guardian. While Jack had previously been to the WWII Memorial, his HFR trip "meant so much more with all of the guys reliving their experiences".



Jack was born in Charlotte and has lived nearby his entire life. He says, "I need to be able to hear the roaring of the lake or I can't go to sleep." After the war, Jack thought about going back to Cornell (the Army had sent him) but decided he wanted to work with his hands so he joined his father's plumbing business. Jack and his late wife Rita were married for 46 years and have four children, 6 grandchildren, and 1 great-granddaughter. He feels fortunate that all of his children live within a few miles of each other.

Dick Brookins ("The American St. Nick") and Jack founded the Genesee Chapter of Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge with 99 men. Jack jokes that he "is the baby of the group at 90." The group still has annual ceremonies on Memorial Day and Veterans Day, which draw 250 to 300 people. Sadly, Jack says that there are only 10 or 11 members of the group left.

Jack still gives a couple of dozen talks per year to school and civic groups where he often passes the hat for HFR. He likes "informing people of what we did in World War II and what the men of 'The Greatest Generation' did to save our world. There are only a few of us left." Jack also participates in many HFR events and benefits such as the Gates-Chili "Hike for Heroes" (*right*), and has given talks at several HFR Welcome Homes. Jack also keeps active by serving as a Eucharistic minister and a lector at Holy Cross Church.



Jack is looking forward to his fifth trip back to Europe later this year. He and fellow HFR veterans Peter DuPré and Adam DeSantis will travel with The Greatest Generation Foundation and will spend four weeks at a chateau near Omaha Beach and one week touring France. During his prior trips, Jack had tea with the Queen of England, shook hands with the President of France, chatted and dined with the King and Queen of Belgium, and saw *Whiskey 7*, the plane based in Geneseo that dropped paratroopers near St. Mère Eglise in 2014. Most importantly, he visited many towns which they had liberated and "hugged and cried with the people, especially the few old people who had been there at the time."



## Upcoming Events

### Upcoming Talks & Ground Events

- April 13 NYSHSA Equipment show
- April 16 *Rochester Blue Star Mothers*
- April 20 *Lalla Rookh Grotto @ Masonic Temple*
- April 30 Legacy @ Parklands, Churchville
- May 1 *Lioness Club of Avon*
- May 10 *Red Jacket Rotary Club*
- May 11 *Retired Men's and Women's Club of Greater Rochester*
- May 14 Avon Rotary Blue Jean Ball
- May 19 Community Showcase Embrace Living @St. John's
- May 29 VFW Post 134 Irondequoit Memorial Day Parade
- May 30 VFW Post 8495 Fairport Memorial Day Parade
- July 18-23 Allegany County Fair
- July 19-23 Hemlock Fair
- July 31 The Ultimate Brasstacular
- Aug 4 Deer Run Winery benefit
- Aug 8 4th. Annual Frances McCabe Golf Tournament @ Locust Hill
- Sept 16 BOMA Golf Tournament

\*(Talks in italics)

## 2016 Flying Schedule



**Mission 46** April 30 - May 1

**Mission 47** May 21-22

**Mission 48** June 18-19

Please visit our website for information about the Spring Welcome Homes!



# A Message from Rich



Thank you to all who helped make our March 16<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Kickoff event so successful at the Webster American Legion Post 942. This was an opportunity for volunteers to talk directly with members of the Leadership Team, the Volunteer Resource Committee and our Board Chairman Peter Glennon about the many different positions that must be covered. Some of these tasks coincide with the flying season while others are nearly year round involvements. As we enter the upcoming flying season we are fortunate to have such a capable and enthusiastic cadre to make this happen. Thank you volunteers.

Initially in 2008 Honor Flight Rochester flew only World War II veterans. Over the years the make-up of our flights has transitioned to predominantly Korean War veterans. Our intention is for all our able veterans to take their Honor Flight, focusing on the oldest eras first. We have some work to do. In fact, some former service members feel that because they were not in combat that they are not entitled to an Honor Flight. We disagree and want to honor these veterans by flying them on a mission to Washington, D.C.

As a refresher here are a few sentences of history. Following World War II, Americans clearly drew a line in the sand against tyranny with the Korean War from 1950 to 1953 and in a lengthy period known as the "Cold War" lasting from 1947 until 1991. The "Cold War" ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The term "cold war" implied a war without widespread fighting or bloodshed. The two most notable exceptions were the major regional wars in Korea and Vietnam.

As this year progresses we will be actively making appeals for more veteran applications. World War II applications are fewer and fewer each month. Our current focus is to fill the fall flights with veterans who served in the 1950's and early 1960's up until 1964, prior to Vietnam.

Please remember that sacrifices by our veterans have preserved American democracy. This is to be passed on for younger generations to cherish. Thank you veterans. And thank you volunteers.

Best regards,

Rich Stewart

**Have a question, comment, or something to share?  
DROP US A LINE!**

**[VolunteerHonorFlightROC@gmail.com](mailto:VolunteerHonorFlightROC@gmail.com)**

**Thank a  
Veteran!**

**This newsletter is brought to you by the Volunteer Resource Committee.**