



SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

BRIEFING LETTER BL 11-03



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"Dedicated by some who witnessed the tragedy of war, now united in friendship and the hope for lasting peace among all people".

.....Schweinfurt Memorial, dedicated June 16, 1998

Welcome to Spring By SSMA Secretary Julee MacDonald

May I, hopefully, be one of the first to welcome you to spring 2011. For many of us it has been a long time coming. Mother Nature has been especially hard on us this winter and I am sure we are all looking forward to a calm spring and summer with sunshine, flowers and beauty all around. May I also wish you a belated Happy New Year and I trust it is a good one so far.

SSMA contribution helps Schweinfurt school buy new instruments—Bring more music to the band!

Contributed by SSMA President Rob Klint

3500 US-Dollar für Humboldt-Musikabteilung

SCHWEINFURT (-ner) Schöne Bescherung für das Alexander-von-Humboldt-Gymnasium (AvH): Die Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association übergab durch Georg Ohl einen Scheck über 3500 US-Dollar (rund 2600 Euro) für die musikalische Arbeit am Humboldt-Gymnasium. Die Spende wird für den Kauf von gebrauchten Instrumenten und Ausrüstungsgegenständen verwendet. Im Bild: Schüler der AvH-Bläsergruppe sowie (vorne von links) der stellvertretende Schulleiter Harald Hirsch, George Ohl, Schulleiterin Monika Zeyer-Müller und der Leiter der Musikabteilung am AvH, Rudolf Ott. FOTO: WALTRAUD FUCHS-MAUDER

SSMA Contribution (Cont)

On Dec, 24 th this article appeared in the local Schweinfurt newspaper about the SSMA donation. The caption underneath the photo says:

Nice gift giving for the AvH high school: On behalf of the SSMA George Ohl handed over a check of \$3500 dollars for the musical education at the Humboldt High School. The donation will be used for buying new instruments and equipment. On the photo: students of the AvH brass band as well as (from the left side in the front row) the vice principal Harald Hirsch, George Ohl, the principal Monika Zeyer-Mueller and the head of the music department of the high school Rudolf Ott.

The SSMA's generous donation is helping them buy their much needed, much desired new bass drum. They hope to get a 32" Ludwig Grand Symphony like this one:



They have to raise some additional money from their concerts and/or from the school budget to make the purchase which is 4500 Euro. But Mr. Bieber from the Music department says:

“...it would definitely be impossible to afford such an high-end product without your generous donation. So again I want to say thank you to you and your association. As soon as we send out our order I will give you a note and when the instrument arrives in our music-room I will send you a picture.”

We look forward to seeing that soon!

On the next page is a copy of the information we sent to the school along with the donation. At the School's Christmas concert, they announced the contribution to an appreciative audience.



SSMA Contribution (Cont)



SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



December 17, 2010

The Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association is pleased to deliver \$3500 (US) Dollars, (approximately 2600 Euros) to the music program at the Alexander-von-Humboldt Gymnasium. These funds are going to be used to buy needed instruments and accessories to enhance the music program at the school.

The Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association was formed by members of the 8th Air Force that took part in the October 14th mission to Schweinfurt. A US association that now has an educational focus is working to deliver the message of reconciliation and human understanding as so dynamically demonstrated by the members of this association, former Flakhelfers and the citizens of Schweinfurt. In 1998 these former foes dedicated a joint memorial that stands by the "Spitalsee" air raid shelter. The inscription on the German American Memorial speaks to the bond that was created between these two groups:

Dedicated by some who witnessed the tragedy of war, now united in friendship and the hope for lasting peace among all people

In this spirit of this friendship, the desire to further the cause of human understanding and to further our motto – Friends by Choice – the SSMA has chosen to make this contribution as a symbol of our friendship, demonstrate our support of the people of Schweinfurt, show our appreciation of the support that Mr. Ott and the music department of the Alexander-von-Humboldt Gymnasium has delivered on several occasions to our assemblies in Schweinfurt and our desire to encourage all men, women and children to work to understand, to communicate, so that we may all better our families, our communities, our states, our countries, our world...for we as citizens are each in charge of our future. It is each of our responsibilities to remain "united in friendship and (to further) the hope for lasting peace among all people".

Thank you Alexander-von-Humboldt Gymnasium school and the citizens of Schweinfurt for the opportunity to participate in building a stronger music program and friendship, for all to enjoy.

Now let the music play for all to hear!

Respectfully submitted by the membership of The Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association.

SSMA Contribution (Cont)



The SSMA gift giving ceremony at the school.

Mr. George Ohl (in the black shirt and gray coat) is stationed at the US base in Schweinfurt. George has been a great supporter of the SSMA and has helped support all the SSMA trips to Schweinfurt.

Letter to WWII Museum

A letter from past President George Roberts to the WWII Museum in New Orleans Contributed by George Roberts

George G. Roberts
49 30th Street
Gulfport, MS 39507-1804
Robby49@cablone.net

March 2, 2011

World War II Museum
945 Magazine Street
New Orleans, LA 70130

My name is George G Roberts, I am a veteran of WWII and have been a charter member of the museum since it was identified as the D-Day Museum. I was privileged to represent the state of Mississippi at the roll call of states at the dedication ceremony.

Continued on Page 5



Letter to WWII Museum (Cont)

I am contacting you on behalf of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association (SSMA), a WWII organization founded by survivors of the 8th USAAF mission to Schweinfurt, Germany on October 14, 1943. The mission is commonly referred to as “Black Thursday”, the worlds’ great air battle. I am sure you have heard or read of this historic battle, its devastating losses and heroic efforts of the mission participants and will not dwell further on this aspect of SSMA.

Our organization was formed in the early 1970’s and originally only those who flew the mission were members. It has since opened the rolls to wives, descendants, and friends interested in Air Force history. In the late 1990’s we also enrolled about 25 Germans who lived in the Schweinfurt area during the war as 15-16 year old students. During air raids , they were required to leave their studies and assist the flak gunners defending the city and became known as “Flakhelfers”.

Members started holding reunions in October of odd numbered years to honor those who were killed, renew old friendships and further the aims of the association. We held our 50th anniversary of the battle on October 14, 1993 in New Orleans. Last year, we held our 67th anniversary reunion in Dallas, Texas. This year our reunion will be held in New Orleans and the museum will be one of the highlights of the program. In this connection our members were vitally interested in learning about the expansion of the WWII museum and if there might be a mention or reference to the mission of October 14th 1943 in the expansion area and how we could approach this idea with the directors of the museum. We are in possession of various artifacts, mission directives, and write-ups by noted authors and newsmen that we feel would be of significant interest to museum attendees. While we are not a large organization, we do have limited funds to assist with the cost of including some small display. As a first start, the officers would like to establish a point of contact for the museum to start the ball rolling. Present officers are:

President:

Mr. Rob Klint
3051 Creekview
Grapevine, TX 76051-5578
Email: Robklint@marketsolutionsinc.com

Secretary:

Julee MacDonald
336 Rolling Hills Drive
Conroe, TX 77304
Email: juleemac@suddenlink.net

Treasurer:

Richard Fox
13 Wicklow Court
Holidaysburg, PA
Email: toobad46@msn.com

I would greatly appreciate your contacting the President (info to other officers and myself) via email or USPS at your earliest convenience. Please provide a point of contact and any suggestions or remarks you deem appropriate for this endeavor.

Sincerely,

George G. Roberts, past president

Letter to the WWII Museum (Cont)

The current officers wish to thank George for taking the leadership role in this effort and we hope to hear from the museum soon. Just prior to my releasing this BL, George sent a follow-up memo to the Museum to again ask them to contact us. Great follow-up George.

Our Networking Site

Our Educational Director, Sue Moyer, continues to upgrade our site and has added many new features. Thanks to her for all the hard work! We have added many new members because of the site and her good work. Please visit and see for yourselves!

<http://secondschweinfurt.ning.com/>

Also once again..... If you have an email address and are willing to receive the Briefing Letter via your email rather than by snail mail, please let me know. Any reduction in paper output and postage saves the SSMA money to be used for better purposes!

Real or Reproduction

We have some very talented members of SSMA and thought I would share some of their creativity and workmanship. Chip Dobson from Mobile, Alabama took pictures of George Roberts' Bomber Jacket while we were at the Mighty Eighth Museum in 2008. George's original jacket was donated by him to the Museum. Can you tell which is the original and which is Chip's reproduction?



Only the background gives it away. Good job Chip. I am including another jacket which Chip painted. This one is named Buffalo Gal.





Charter Re-write

Many members have discovered that some of the web sites and other documentation around SSMA include incorrect information. The outdated web site for SSMA states that 600 airmen perished, which is not a true statement. The incorrect information was discussed at our October meeting and Vice-President, Jim Wilson took on the "to do" to re-write the SSMA Charter to contain accurate information. Unfortunately, the old web site does not have a webmaster and has not been corrected yet. We are, however, hopeful that our new site will be the main reference for information on SSMA and will be updated with the re-written Charter. I have included the re-written Charter below for your information so you may use it whenever you need documentation for a presentation or have friends who want to know the true story of SSMA. Many thanks to Jim for a fine job.

Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association, Inc. (SSMA)

Air Personnel of the 8th United States Army Air Force who flew on Mission 115 - October 14, 1943 over Schweinfurt, Germany. This day is also known as "Black Thursday".

Charter

At 1012 hours, on October 14, 1943, in weather so foul that takeoff and ascent was by instruments only, the 8th Army Air Force, also known as the Mighty 8th, dispatched the first of 383 heavy bombers bound for the town of Schweinfurt Germany, 460 miles distant. Since fifty seven percent of all bearings used by Germany were made in this city, it was at the top of the list of strategic targets for the allied forces and had already received a first ruinous attack on August 17, 1943.

After failures to rendezvous and many bombers forced to abort the mission, 291 B-17s crossed the English Channel, making landfall at Walcheren Island, Netherlands and entering German-controlled airspace over the continent. Some of the bombers were initially protected by friendly fighter escort which, low on fuel, were forced to turn back about half way to the target, near Aachen. The bomber stream was immediately set upon by Luftwaffe fighter aircraft which engaged in attacks all the way to the target. An estimated 1,100 fighter and other Luftwaffe aircraft participated in the attacks, most making multiple passes and many landing, refueling and rearming to rejoin the battle. After passing the IP (Initial Point) at Wurzburg only 228 B-17s remained to drop bombs on Schweinfurt. Over the target six hundred (mostly 88mm) FLAK guns on the ground around Schweinfurt manned by Luftwaffe Flakhelpers (LWH) or Flak Helpers put up a blistering flak barrage. Unlike previous missions, the Luftwaffe fighters did not disengage over the target, but flew through the tremendous flak barrage, making almost suicidal attacks on the bombers. After bombs away the vicious attacks by Luftwaffe fighters and other aircraft resumed and continued, disengaging deep into France or, in some instances, not until the bombers reached the English Channel on the return flight to England.



Charter Re-write (Cont)

The battle brought great losses to both sides. Sixty B-17s were lost to flak and fighters, and with ten man crews, 600 air crewmen went missing. Some (an estimated 120) lost their lives in the burning, badly damaged, crashed planes. Most became prisoners of war. Five additional B-17s were lost in England on return. Seventeen additional aircraft were so damaged they could never fly again. On the ground in Schweinfurt, 276 people died and countless more were injured. Hundreds had to be freed from shelters, having been trapped by fallen debris. Businesses and homes were razed. Valuable and treasured possessions were destroyed. Consequently, October 14, 1943 - Mission 115, became known as "Black Thursday" in American military history and one of the greatest air battles of World War II.

Thirty years later some of the survivors from the Mighty 8th, including Colonel Budd Peaslee, S/Sgt. Phillip Taylor and 1st Lt. William Allen decided to form an organization to commemorate their fallen comrades-in-arms. They called it the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association, Inc. (SSMA), giving it direct connection to the second air raid on Schweinfurt.

Initially, the full members of this association were all veterans who flew on Mission 115. Every year the members, their families and friends, meet in a different city in the United States around the 14th of October to remember the huge sacrifices incurred that day, to honor their fallen comrades, to remember those who suffered and those who lost so much, to commiserate and to celebrate freedom.

But there is more to this story: At the 50th Anniversary, two Germans, Dr. Helmut Katzenberger and Vomar Wilckens came to the reunion in New Orleans to meet the members and exchange information they had on "Black Thursday". Then in 1996, Georg Schaefer contacted the SSMA President, introduced himself and asked to join the group. Georg Schaefer, whose grandfather founded one of the "targeted" ball bearing factories, then attended the SSMA reunion in Las Vegas, Nevada with his wife Ruth Schaefer. Mr. Schaefer, who had retired from the Board of Directors of FAG Kugelfischer, had served, along with his classmates, in one of the 88mm Flak batteries around Schweinfurt. He brought many artifacts, pictures and personal accounts from that fateful day. Many of these artifacts and pictures are permanently included in the Second Schweinfurt display at the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia.

It was at this reunion that Georg Schaefer and the SSMA membership discussed a joint memorial in Schweinfurt remembering this mission. Mr. Schaefer presented this idea to his fellow Luftwaffenhelfers and the Lord Mayor of Schweinfurt. They embraced the idea and on June 16, 1998 a German American Memorial was dedicated on a site alongside the former "Spitalsee" air raid shelter in Schweinfurt. The memorial was created by G. Hubert Neidhard (3/3/28 - 5/14/99), who was an art teacher at Alexander von Humboldt High School in Schweinfurt and a flak helper in his hometown during the war.

This started the amicable meetings and a growing friendship between members of the SSMA and the former flak helpers. In 1999, a group of former flak helpers, accompanied by Gudrun Grieser, then Lord Mayor of the City of Schweinfurt, attended the SSMA reunion in Savannah, Georgia. Reno, Nevada was the site of the 2000 Reunion. In 2001, SSMA decided to hold their reunion in Schweinfurt; this was the first time the organization had held their meeting outside of the U.S. Sixty two participants from the U.S. attended despite the disastrous events in New York and Washington on September 11. Fort Worth was the site of the 2002 Reunion. Seattle in 2003. In 2004 and 2007, the SSMA members returned to meet in Schweinfurt.



Charter Re-write (Cont)

The bonding between former enemies is an impressive sign of active reconciliation, but also an admonition to future generations to do all they can so that horrors like those in the 20th century are never repeated. The inscription on the German American Memorial speaks to the bond between these two groups:

"Dedicated by some who witnessed the tragedy of war, now united in friendship and the hope for lasting peace among all people".

A history of the Flak helpers, notes and bibliography associated with the Charter can be seen on the secondschweinfurt.ning.com network site.

Miscellaneous Items of Interest

Here is a little article someone shared with me. I am sorry to say I do not know to whom I should give credit for the information but I found it very interesting.

Why Is It Referred To As The Mighty Eighth?

During World War II under the leadership of Generals Ira Eaker and Jimmie Doolittle, the VIII Air Force formed the greatest air armada in history. The Eighth Bomber Command's first effort was on August 17, 1942 when 12 B-17's attacked targets in Rouen, France. By mid-1944, the Eighth Air Force had a total strength of more than 200,000 people, and it could send more than 2,000 four-engine bombers and 1000 fighters on a single mission against enemy targets in Europe. For this reason, the Eighth Air Force is commonly known as "The Mighty Eighth".

From its early beginning until mid 1945, the Eighth planned and precisely executed America's daylight strategic bombing campaign against Nazi-occupied Europe and in doing so the organization compiled an impressive war record. The Eighth flew 440,000 Bomber sorties to drop 697,000 tons of bombs on Hitler's Third Reich. In achieving that record the Eighth suffered over 47,000 casualties including 26,000 dead. This is nearly half of all the casualties in the entire U.S. Army Air Forces and more than the total casualties suffered by the United States Marine Corps in WWII. Donald Miller, in his book "Masters of The Air" states that from its first mission on August 17th 1942 through October of 1943, two thirds of all the 8th combat crew personnel were killed or captured.

Another item of interest is the Collings Foundation Schedule for the next few months. The UH-1 Huey was one of the most successful heavy lift and troop transports ever used. It initially saw combat in Vietnam where its use as an infantry transport craft into the dense jungles made its type famous on television in some of the first news broadcasts from the battlefields.

April			
4/1-4/4	Victoria TX (B17, B-24, P-51 & Huey) Airport: Victoria Regional Airport Location: General Aviation Ramp	4/4-4/6	Kerrville, TX (B-17, B-24, P-51& Huey) Airport: Kerrville Municipal Airport Location: Kerrville Aviation



Miscellaneous Items of Interest (Cont)

Table with 4 columns: Date, Location, Airport, and Location. Rows include Fredericksburg, TX; Fort Stockton, TX; Marana, AZ; Deer Valley, AZ; Lake Havasu City, AZ; and TBD.

May

Table with 4 columns: Date, Location, Airport, and Location. Rows include Carlsbad, CA; Santa Ana, CA; and Ramona, CA.

In January of 2010, a group of mainly sons and daughters of veterans who were POWs in Stalug Luft 3, joined together to retrace their fathers footsteps on the infamous march from Stalug Luft 3 to Stalug Luft 7A. They marched the 52 miles from Sagan to Spremberg where their fathers had been put in boxcars and taken to Moosburg. It was a 52 mile march in January at about the same time their fathers had marched. One of our SSMA members, George Bruckert, went on the walk with them and brought back a brick from the compound where Jay Coberly had resided. He presented Jay with the brick and Jay displays it with great pride. The re-enactment march was not as hard as it had actually been on the original march. However it was cold and very tiring for those who made it. Here is a picture of George resting while on the march. What an experience that must have been. Maybe George will share his story with me for inclusion in a future Briefing Letter.





Miscellaneous Items of Interest (Cont)

George Roberts shared the 306BG formation in place on October 14th 1943 and data compiled after that fateful day.

306th Bomb Group Formation Oct. 14, 1943
(High Group in Leading 40th CBW)

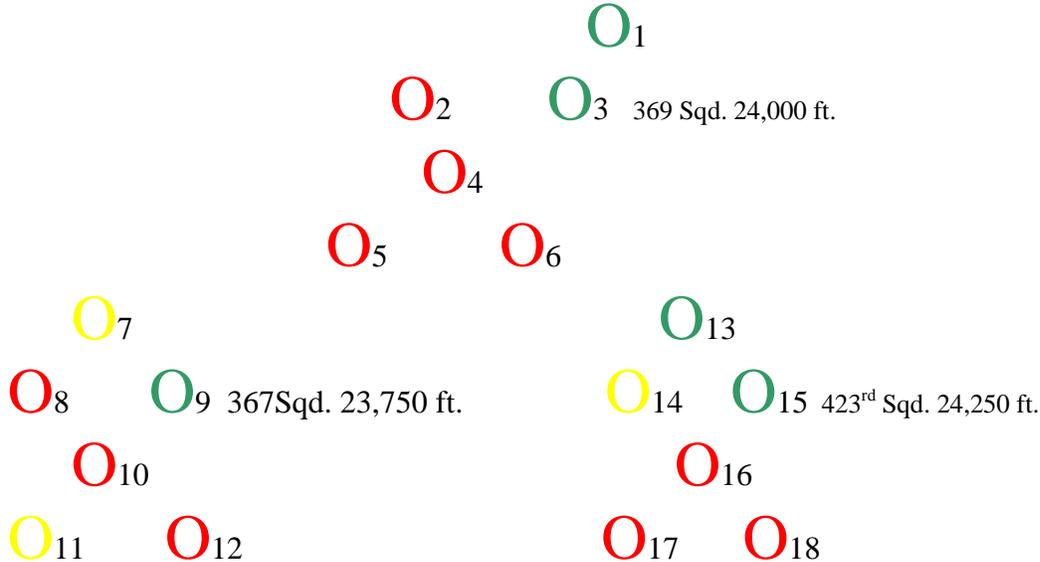


Table with 5 columns: Circle, Plane Nr., Squadron, Pilot, Remarks. Contains 18 rows of data corresponding to the formation diagram.

All returning planes suffered heavy damage and had dead and/or wounded aboard. B17/F-42-3301 (my plane): No.3 ring cowl hit by flak; Right inner wing leading edge and internal damage by flak, left side oxygen system out; Right side dorsal fin hit by 20mm; Servo unit wiring hit by 20mm; Elevator and trim tab cables hit by 20mm; #10 bulk head severely damaged by 20mm; Right front taper head hit by 20mm; Internal damage to vertical fin and dorsal fin by 20mm; Left wing and aileron hit by flak. No. 2 engine nacelle hit by flak. Rudder hit by 20mm. Severe damage and many holes to flak and 20mm shells. Pilot and right waist gunner wounded.

TAPs

Albert C. Widman

Passed on November 20, 2010

Notified by his Daughter Connie



Our thoughts and prayers are with his family..... Another Fallen Eagle has left us.

Also for those of you who might remember one of the best friends SSMA had at the Mighty Eighth Museum, I have lifted this from the Mighty Eighth Newsletter:



It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Dr. Walter Brown.

Walt fought a long and valiant fight against cancer but lost that battle on February 23rd. He died peace-fully at his home in Spring Hill, Tennessee, surrounded by his family. He was laid to rest at Bonaventure Cemetery in Savannah on February 27th.

Originally from Savannah, Walt attended Savannah High School and went on to graduate from the University of Georgia. In 1964 he received his Doctor of Medicine diploma from the Medical College of Georgia. After completing a Residency program in North Carolina he served in the United States Air Force - European Command - as a specialty physician stationed at USAF Hospital in Wiesbaden, Germany. He attained the rank of Major before separating from active duty in 1971.

Upon his return to the States, Dr. Brown established Middle Tennessee Emergency Physicians in Nashville, Tennessee. He was active in statewide affairs as a member of the Tennessee Medical Association and Nashville Academy of Medicine. He was past-president of the Tennessee Chapter of the American College of Emergency Medicine.

Walt served as a member of the school of Medical Alumni Association of the Medical College of Georgia for over twenty-five years and was past-president of that organization. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Medical College of Georgia Foundation and spearheaded the effort on the Historical Renovation project of the old Medical College of Georgia Building in Augusta. In 2007, the Medical College of Georgia School of Medicine recognized Walt by presenting him with the Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Walt served as Chief of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Baptist Hospital in Nashville and on the Medical Staff Advisory Council. All totaled, Walt devoted thirty-five years of his life in the practice of emergency medicine at Baptist Hospital. Walt was also a team member of Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) to whom the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1999.



TAPS (Cont)

Dr. Brown's interest in United States Air Force affairs led him to assist in the founding of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum where he served on the Board of Trustees. He was a lifetime member and officer of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. He served as editor of the 8th Air Force Historical Society news magazine, The 8th AF News, as well as the Mighty Eighth Air Force News for twelve years. Walt was Vice President of the Museum Board and eventually served as the President and CEO of the 8th Air Force Museum.

Walt is survived by his wife, Alice Buchanan Brown; sons, Kerry Bertelle Brown and Kirk Buchanan Brown; sister, Sharon Brown and four nieces and one nephew.

Dr. Brown was an amazing man and will be missed by all who knew him.

As a side note..... While still fighting the battle with cancer, Dr. Brown agreed to be our keynote speaker at the SSMA Banquet at our reunion in Savannah in 2008. Our condolences go out to his family.

2011 Reunion

Remember it is not too early to note your calendars for the SSMA Reunion October 11th through the 14th in New Orleans, Louisiana. The next BL will give many more details about the reunion and will ask for a tally of all who plan to attend.

Please plan to be there! We always have a great time and get lots of business conducted regarding the future of the organization.

In Closing

Have a great Spring and I'll talk with you soon. Please remember..... any and all contributions from members would be welcome for sharing in the Briefing Letters. Please send items to me either through email at: juleemac@suddenlink.net or snail mail at 336 West Rolling Hills Drive, Conroe, Texas 77304.

You may also contact your other officers at the following addresses:

- Rob Klint, President
3051 Creekview
Grapevine, TX 76051
robklint@marketsolutionsinc.com
Jim Wilson, 1st Vice-President
155 Fossil Rock Drive
Azle, TX 76020
jwilson@ftw.ncrs.usda.gov
Bob MacDonald, 2nd Vice President
336 West Rolling Hills Drive
Conroe, TX 77304
bob336@suddenlink.net
Dick Fox, Treasurer
13 Wicklow Court
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
toobad46@msn.com



HAPPY EASTER TO ONE AND ALL!



Membership Form

SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM AND CAP ORDERING FORM

Use this form to become a member of the association, submit a donation or order an SSMA ball cap.

Please send the form to our Treasurer, Dick Fox, via email if for membership at toobad46@msn.com. If you are submitting a donation or ordering a cap, please mail the form to Dick at 13 Wicklow Court, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648. Checks should be made out to SSMA.

Table with 8 columns: First Name, Last Name, Address, City, ST, Zip, Telephone Number. Includes 5 empty rows for data entry.

Table with 2 columns: Email Address, Comments. Includes 4 empty rows for data entry.

Donation _____

“Black Thursday” Cap (\$10.00 each – includes shipping) Quantity ___ X \$10.00 = _____