



## 368<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Association

The 395<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron  
 The 396<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron  
 The 397<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron

**April 30, 2011**

### Reunion 2010 Recap

The Grace Family was more than pleased with the reunion at the Embassy Suites in Phoenix, Sept. 2010. The participation by 368<sup>th</sup> Vets, their families and friends make these events so special with new friendships, shared stories and great photos. A trolley tour of historic Scottsdale, a visit to the Commemorative Air Force Museum (a half-scale P-47 is on display) and our 40s theme banquet were memorable.



Pictured: Gail Grace & Ed

McCrone in left photo. Group Photo: (Back row) Al Benton, Bill Wright, Rupert Maxwell, Ralph Jones Randolph Goulding, Robert Causbie, Ted Taubert, Billy Dunbar. (Front row) Les Leavoy, Loyd Baughman, Jerry Monaghan, John Keil, Bob Winchester, George Davis, Wesley Metcalf.



### Reunion 2011

The Wesley Metcalf family of Vermont will host our 2011 reunion on September 22-25. It will take place in Stowe, Vermont. See the attached flyer provided by Wesley's granddaughter Stephanie Winters, which gives you an idea of the fun that awaits us this fall. The registration packet will be sent out later this month, but there is info on the hotel and the block rate. Also, travel is suggested through the Burlington International Airport in Vermont.

### Folded Wings:

George Sutcliffe, 396<sup>th</sup> Pilot, passed away on January 20, 2011, after suffering from a stroke on January 13. George was part of the original cadre of pilots who sailed to Europe with the 368<sup>th</sup> in 1943. His successful evasion and survival during an encounter with 40 enemy airplanes in July of 1944 earned him a Silver Star. The remarkable airmanship he demonstrated that day has been immortalized in the Dogfights! television program and FLIGHT JOURNAL magazine.

Orville Weale, died peacefully on April 13, 2011, and joins his wife Yvonne who passed in February of this year. He died of pneumonia complicated by congestive heart failure while recovering from the hip replacement surgery in March. Though trained as a radio operator/navigator, he was assigned ground communications with the 396<sup>th</sup>. Most of his time was served in post-war Germany. He has many great stories in the book as well as the picture of him skiing in St. Moritz.

Bob Winchester passed away February 15, 2011. The 396<sup>th</sup> Pilot and DFC recipient attended his first reunion in Phoenix last fall. He made many new friends and got reacquainted with his comrades. According to Shawna, his caretaker, they had plans to attend the next reunion.

Nicholas F. Crisci folded his wings on December 20, 2010. Sgt. Crisci was an original cadre member of the 396<sup>th</sup> FS and excelled with the “Thunder Bums” maintenance section.

William “Willie” DeCristiforo passed away on June 24, 2010. He was an original cadre member of the 395<sup>th</sup> Jabo Angels, having been personally selected for duty while with the 326<sup>th</sup> FG to serve with the 368<sup>th</sup> FG.

Richard B. Nartker, a sergeant with the 395<sup>th</sup>, passed away April 23, 2011. He was also an original cadre member of the Jabo Angels, having proved his exceptional abilities with the 326th FG for being handpicked as part of the original 368th FG.

Priscilla Davis, wife of George Davis, passed away on July 2, 2010 in Florida. Priscilla was a valued participant of the 368<sup>th</sup> FG reunions since its 1978 inception. She and George, 396<sup>th</sup> FS pilot, collected scores of photographs of reunions past. She is missed by all.

### **368th FG History DVD**

This is a reminder that the 368th FG DVD, which includes four incredible hours of 368th history, is available on the web site at: [www.368thfightergroup.com](http://www.368thfightergroup.com).

### **Second to None: History of the 368th FG**

Due to popular demand, work on a limited third edition of the book, Second to None: The History of the 368th Fighter Group is planned for this fall. There may be new pictures, index and text updates, and perhaps a different cover. Stay tuned to the 368th web site for details: [www.368thfightergroup.com](http://www.368thfightergroup.com)

### **Les Leavoy Gives Accolades to P-47 Pilot**

By Laird Leavoy

At the Super Saber Society (SSS) reunion in 2009, Les Leavoy was honored with the Captain American Award. The SSS was formed to honor the F-100 Super Sabre that was a premier jet fighter in the Air Force from 1955-1970. During that presentation it was noted that Les flew combat in the P-47 in WWII and later flew the F-100. A fellow named Perry Lusby came up to me and mentioned he had also flown the P-47. I remember feeling bad that Les was in the limelight partially due to his P-47 days and this fellow had that achievement as well. I made a mental note two years ago to address this situation. I kept a close eye out for him in the hospitality suite at our recent reunion. He was able to talk to Les about his P-47 days and they realized they had a lot in common. As it turned out Les was knocked off two pedestals within the SSS ranks that day, oldest pilot and most combat experience in the Thunderbolt. Perry is 93 years old, 7 years Les' senior and Perry has about twice the combat experience in the P-47. Les flew his first combat mission in September 1944, having missed D-Day but certainly highly engaged in three other campaigns to include the Battle of the Bulge. Perry arrived on scene much earlier and was knee deep in the D-Day invasion among many other engagements. After Les gave the award to Bud Day and Bob Hoover, he surprised Perry and asked him to come up in front of the entire group to acknowledge his contributions to the war. Les felt it fitting and proper to have Perry front and center and officially pass the baton, making sure his significant WWII heroism as the “Senior P-47” pilot in our midst was properly acknowledge. Great stuff.



# **2011 368TH FIGHTER GROUP REUNION**

**September 22- 25, 2011  
Topnotch Resort and Spa  
Stowe, Vermont**

**For room reservations call (800) 451-8686 and ask for the 368th Fighter Group room block (at \$150.00 per night). This room block will be open until August 8, 2011. 3 bedroom townhomes are also available at a rate of \$450.00 per night.**

**On Friday we will enjoy a luncheon cruise around Lake Champlain on the M/V Northern Lights. That evening there will be a cocktail reception that will give us plenty of time to socialize and enjoy each others company.**

**Saturday we will enjoy the sights and offerings of Stowe & Waterbury Vermont, small towns known for Cold Hollow Apple Cider, Ben & Jerrys ice cream and many antique stores. That evening we will be joined by Vermont's Adjutant General Major General Michael Dubie as our keynote speaker for the banquet.**

**Both Friday and Saturday will allow free time to enjoy Vermont's beauty on your own. Right on premises there is a renowned spa (20% discount for all guests of the reunion) and horse and carriage rides. If you want to venture out there are many lovely shops, a beautiful bike path to walk, and a very scenic drive up smugglers notch to highlight Vermonts hills!**

**Registration and full details to follow in May - Watch your Mail!**