

# Chapter Contacts

*Please forward to your members!*



In this month's "It's Only a Hobby!" newsletter from "May-retta" (to use the Old South pronunciation) after the usual announcements and chapter president Dave Lockhart's New Year's message; the major build article is by editor Rob Morales ...



(picture from the internet)

....for his 1/35th scale “Soviet S-51 203 mm Self-Propelled Howitzer” by Trumpeter.

This is followed by four pages of Jim Pernikoff’s regular and extensive book review section. He ALWAYS lists something that sorely tempts me ....but my library already rivals the Union County system, at least in aviation titles! And this after I gave away all those books before the move to North Carolina. Sigh.....

Rob always includes a little quiz with his newsletter: this month one of his questions concerns the SECOND (and fortunately, LAST) B-29 to drop a wartime atomic bomb. As my little hint for you, this picture of that airplane at the National Museum of the Air Force in Dayton. (I chose his picture so you couldn’t see the name, so I’m not giving it ALL away.) BTW, the orange, pumpkin-shaped object is a de-milled

**“pumpkin” (duh!) bomb, one of the non-nuclear training weapons dropped in mission training: the very similar but differently painted implosion-type nuclear weapon dropped on Nagasaki (and which ended WWII) was called “Fatman”.**



## **Change of Subject!**

**Just about everybody should be familiar with the classic WWII combat movie, “Twelve O’Clock High”. When the movie appeared soon after WWII, it were acclaimed as the new standard in realism in “war movies”. A personal evaluation came from my oft-mentioned hero, flight instructor, and former 8th Air Force B-17 combat pilot friend, who told me when the movie appeared that the movie was spot on.**

**[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelve\\_O%27Clock\\_High](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelve_O%27Clock_High)**

In the past sixty years, the movie has become a standard example ....even the definitive tool in civilian management training!  
<http://www.movieleadership.com/2013/05/29/is-twelve-oclock-high-the-definitive-movie-about-leadership/>

There are a lot of interesting facets to the book and screen play: one that is the co-author Bernie Lay, wrote from first hand combat experience! He had been a between-the-wars Army pilot and got out to become a writer. Quickly volunteering when war came, he became one of the cadre forming the 8th Air Force, and soon went with it to England. He wasn't just a "staffie", in his combat missions was eventually shot down, evaded with the French resistance, and eventually escaped to Allied control. So he wrote what he knew: quite an interesting guy!

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beirne\\_Lay,\\_Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beirne_Lay,_Jr.)

You may recall that the central (Gregory Peck) character was B/G Frank Savage. Lay and coauthor Sy Bartlett modeled Savage after a real commander who had taken command of the "hard luck" 306th Bomb Group: most of the events in the book/movie actually happened. (The unit number was multiplied times three to be the fictional "918th Bomb Group" in the book/movie)

A main difference was that the real commander, Gen Frank ARMSTRONG, Jr. did NOT have a mental breakdown as Savage/Peck did in the movie. The general went on to great things.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank\\_A.\\_Armstrong](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_A._Armstrong)



**But what you probably DIDN'T know is that the general and his wife had a son, Frank Armstrong III; born in Shreveport in March 7th, 1930 when his father was a young lieutenant stationed at Barksdale Field. That son, shown here newly commissioned, went on to follow his father's footsteps as an Air Force combat pilot. Mom is seen beamingly proud, as might be expected: but both father and son show the same reserve, with hardly a hint of a smile.**



**That fighter pilot is seen here as a major.**



By 1967 after many other fighter assignments, now-Major Frank A Armstrong III ....nickname, "Dutch"....was an A-1E "Spad" pilot based at Pleiku, SVN , with the 1st Air Commando Squadron. He flew many combat missions, in July being shot down once but rescued. However, on October 6th while leading a flight of A-1's on a mission to Laos he was shot down and seen to crash inverted with his airplane deep in bad guy country, near the border of Vietnam. His body has never been recovered. For details of the action see

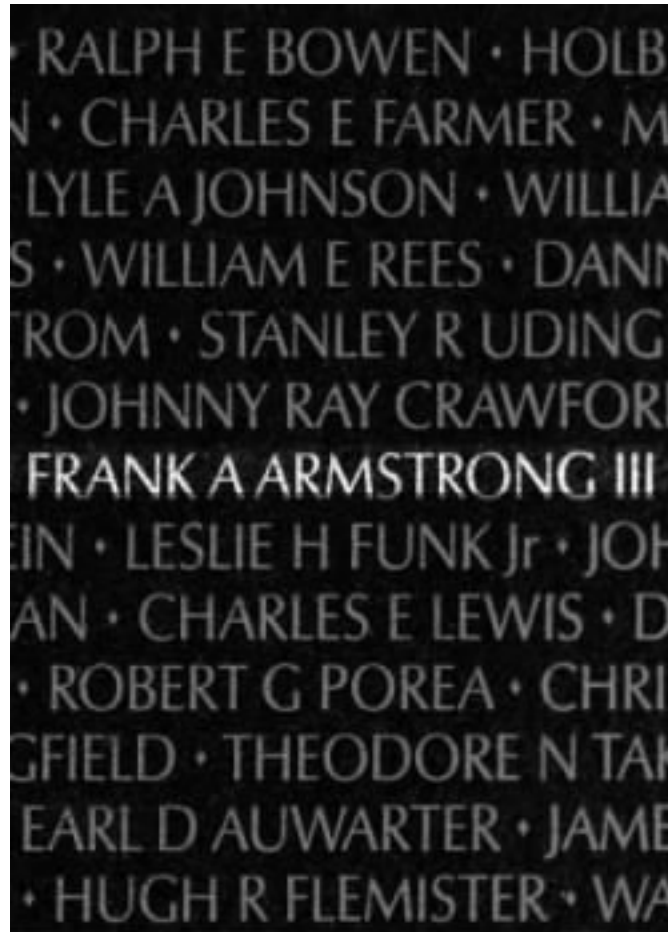
<http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/a/a373.htm>

<http://www.veterantributes.org/TributeDetail.php?recordID=622>.

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=14636165>

Lieutenant General Frank A Armstrong, Jr. outlived the son, dying on August 20th, 1969. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

The son's marker is much simpler, but not far away from Arlington, on the mall in our nation's capital.



Just a few things for you to reflect!

**Fred Horky**