



THE ATLANTA WORLD WAR II ROUND TABLE

PRESERVING HISTORY

INTERNET: <http://www.atlantawwiiroundtable.org>

VOL. 26 No. 1

251st MEETING

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Newsletter

- * Major General Frank Regano
- * Visvaldis (Vis) Kimenis
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Asst. Chaplains – Guyton McCall / Bill Sperry

Date: SEPTEMBER 15th, 2011 (THURSDAY) >> Next Meeting OCT. 20th

Time: Social Half-Hour: 11:00 AM - 11:30 > MEETING START
TIME 11:30 - Speaker Immediately Following Lunch

** **PETITE AU BERGE RESTAURANT**

2935 N. Druid Hills Road, Web Site: www.petiteauberge.com
Atlanta, Georgia 30329 (Restaurant Phone: 404-634-6268)

Price: \$ 15.00 Per Plate ** NO RESERVATION REQUIRED **

Speaker: Major General Frank P. Regano (Ret)

Subject: “Operation Paperclip”

Mission Statement

We, who by our own actions, and by our heritage, know that liberty has not, is not, nor ever will be free, do in association with our friends and comrades, who believe as we do, pledge that we will meet at the call of our Commander no less than ten times a year:

- * **To hear of the war experiences of our members and invited guests**
- * **To encourage and demonstrate pride in our country and its armed forces**
- * **To pass on to posterity our knowledge of World War II, and of the price - human and material - that was paid by our nation for the preservation of liberty in the United States and the world**

Speaker for SEPTEMBER 15th, 2011– M.G. Frank Regano (To Be Introduced By Deputy Commander Weinstein)

Some of our members may have heard or read about the topic that our September Speaker, Major General Frank Regano, will enlighten us with. *Operation Paperclip*, The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) program to recruit German scientists to come to the U.S. and work on our missile program(s). The program was conducted by the Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency (JIOA) and was initiated with the purpose of engaging these scientists and their expertise and keeping them out of the hands of the Soviets and the British. As you can imagine, the rush to ‘recruit’ these Germans was intense, fortunately the Americans won.

At the root of our victory was Dr. Werner von Braun who was the leader at Peenemunde’ Missile Center. After Germany was partitioned-off by the Allies, Peenemunde’ was in the Russian Zone. Dr. Von Braun admittedly preferred the Americans and made it known through contacts he did not want to be a forced citizen of the Soviet Union. Upon being made aware of this grim situation, President Harry Truman issued orders to execute *Operation Paperclip* in August 1945.

After their migration to America, and a short period in White Sands, New Mexico, Dr. Von Braun and about 125 scientists settled in Huntsville, Alabama at Redstone Arsenal. Our esteemed September speaker, Major General Regano will tell us how this group, coupled with talented Americans, became the Army Ballistic Agency which, along with other agencies, launched the Explorer I and Explorer II as a much-needed response to the Russian launches of Sputnik I and II.

Eventually, Von Braun and many of his group assimilated into NASA and activities in The Marshall Space Flight Center. Frank will tell us of a ‘Tale of Two Cities’, where a sleepy little textile town of 6-7,000 people grew into a Mecca of Aerospace Exploration which resulted in missile and rocket systems envied throughout the world.

General Regano, witnessed the operations and activities at Redstone Arsenal as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1954, while attending a extended course at the U.S. Army Rocket & Missile School. This was followed by assignments in Direct/General support to the NIKE / HERCULES Air Defense Units in the Chicago-Gary-Milwaukee area, and from 1958-1963 he served in Europe in several Guided Missile Support Assignments and as the Seventh U.S. Army Nuclear Weapons Support Staff Officer.

Frank holds a BS degree from Duquesne University as well as a MBA degree from Syracuse University. Never one to stop learning, he attended the Army Command & General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth and then spent 4 years on the Army General staff in Logistics. He was then assigned as the Commanding Officer, 27th Maintenance Battalion, First Cavalry Division in Vietnam.

This was followed by 2 years on the faculty of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), followed by attending the U.S. Army War College in 1971. In 1977 he assumed the position of Commanding General, U.S. Army Missile R&D Command. In 1998 he retired to the ‘good life’.

Please welcome Major General Frank Regano as our SEPTEMBER 15th, 2011 speaker (251st Meeting.)

CONTINUED ON BACK

Review of JUNE 16th , 2011 Speaker – Visvaldis (Vis) Kimenis (Introduced by Deputy Commander Goulding)

Our June 2011 speaker, Lt. Colonel (Light-Bird) Vis Kimenis provided the Round Table members with a outstanding presentation at the Round Table's 25th Anniversary event and meeting at the Petite. Vis, a former speaker for us in November 1990 (*On The Receiving End*) and March 1992 (*Know You're Enemy- Germany.*) is also a former Commander of the Round Table (1994 – 1995.)

On June 16th Vis told us about being born in Latvia, U.S.S.R. and as a six year old boy witnessing first-hand the invasion of his country by the Germans, which included tank battles and other combat aspects of the fighting on the Russian front. Before the war was over, he and his family escaped into Germany where he lived through bombings by the British and Americans day and night, to include the devastation of an entire city. He was on the 'Receiving End' – not once but twice.

He introduced us to the *Latvian Legion*, a German conscripted division from occupied Latvia. The Germans formed this division after the fall of Stalingrad in January 1943 where they lost the *German 6th Army* commanded by *Field Marshall von Paulus* with the surrender of 107,800 troops. This massive loss of troops empowered Hitler to direct that 'volunteer' divisions from occupied territories be conscripted.

In contravention with The Hague and Geneva Conventions of 1907, Hitler ordered his head of the Gestapo (State Secret Police) Reichsfuhrer Heinrich Luitpold Himmler, to establish the *Latvian Legion* in February 1943. These young ethnic Latvian 'volunteers' were 'drafted' to serve in the *15th and 19th Waffen Grenadier SS Divisions*; they would participate in battles in Russia, Latvia and Germany.

The 15th became decimated in their defense of *Pomerania* soon after their formation, suffering 55% casualties and were no longer *combat-effective* and were withdrawn from the front. They were later merged with a surviving battalion and fought well during the last defense of Berlin in mid 1945. The 19th would be recognized as the most decorated of the 38 foreign SS Divisions, being awarded 3000+ *Iron Crosses* and 13 *Knight Crosses*.

Colonel Kimenis reiterated that the 15th and the 19th Divisions did not participate in the Holocaust. After the war, those who surrendered to the Russians were sent to forced labor camps in Siberia; those who surrendered to the Americans joined the Para-Military Labor Service Guard, Transportation and Construction units in the *American Zone of Occupation* in Germany.

Thank you Colonel / Professor Kimenis for your enlightening presentation to *Preserve History* and for a job well done.

I am pleased to announce that we have one (4) new members who have joined us since the JUNE 16th, 2011 meeting:

WWII Veteran William T. Hanna – William served in the Army Air Corps with the 91st Bomb Group–Heavy as a B-17 Pilot flying out of Basingborn England. He also took participated in the Berlin Airlift, served with the Marine Air Group in Vietnam and as a B-52 Commander/Line Maintenance Org.

Military Veteran Charles L. Gardner – Charles served with the Military Police at Ft. Leslie J. McNair in Washington, D.C. and was Active Duty Army 1956-1958

Military Veteran Robert (Bob) E. Peavey – Bob served as a Sergeant / U.S.M.C. in Vietnam from 1968-1969 as a Tank Commander.

William (Bill) M. Cosgrove – Bill and his wife Debbie both had fathers who served in WW II. Bill's father, William Sr. served as a Volunteer Ambulance Driver with the American Field Service (AFS) 2nd Motor Ambulance Section (MAS). Debbie's father, James P. Clay of Atlanta was a officer in the 945th Field Artillery Battalion. Bill & Debbie have a Website dedicated to the 945th at www.timeontarget.us

Please welcome William, Charles, Bob & Bill as our newest members of the Round Table at the September 15th, 2011 meeting.

>>> **Upcoming Speakers for - 2010-2011** Program chairman John Davis and program co-chairman Bill Owens have done a splendid job in lining up a wonderful list of speakers for the Atlanta WW II Round Table for our January through June 2010 meetings. The following speakers will be making a presentation to the Round Table in: **September - Major General Frank Regano (US Army)**; October – Seymour (Sy) Rosen; November – Greg McClelland; December – Morton (Mort) Waitzman. More info to come on 2012 and future speakers as they are booked. Please note that the speaker's engagements are subject to change. Thank you John M. Davis for your continuing efforts to seek-out and engage excellent speakers for our meetings and for a job exceedingly well done.

>>> **SPECIAL MEMBER SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(NEW) The Round Table Executive Board discussed reducing some of the expenses relative to the Atlanta WW II Round Table Newsletter at the Board Meeting on August 18th. The Board approved asking as many members as possible that have email addresses, if they would be willing to accept only the email version of the newsletter and not a mailed version. This new effort will be rolled-out over several months so members can express their preference for the digital or hard-copy version of the monthly newsletter. I expect by December 31st, 2011 the roll-out should be complete. If you have a email address and are not on the email roster at present, please make your email address known to Adjutant Kovach at 770-928-4579 or email at jkovach2000@yahoo.com. Those members who do not have email addresses will not be affected by this austerity measure.

>>> **REQUESTS BY INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS AT ROUND TABLE MEETINGS** – In a effort to not interfere with our scheduled speaker's allotted time and also to allow more time during our lunch for table-conversation, the Atlanta WW II Round Table Executive Board has approved the following policy: ***Requests by individuals to make announcements during the Atlanta WW II Round Table meetings must first be cleared through the Commander prior to the date of the meeting.*** The number of announcements will be limited at each meeting and will also be based on priority of interest to the Round Table. Commander Goulding can be contacted at **770-436-4254** or via email at rgoulding@charter.net

Monthly Quotation:

We are opposed around the World, by a monolithic and ruthless conspiracy that relies primarily on covert means, for expanding its sphere of influence. It relies on infiltration instead of invasion, on subversion instead of elections, on intimidation instead of free choice, It's preparations are concealed not published, It's failures are buried not headlined, It's descendants are silenced not praised. That is why I'm am asking for your help, In freeing the World from the clutches of evil men, and allowing man, to be what he was meant to be, free and independent."

- John F. Kennedy.