

**U.S. Army Air Forces 93<sup>rd</sup> College Training Detachment (Air Crew)**

**Black Hills Teachers College**

**Spearfish, South Dakota**

**March 1943 – May 1944**

**Overview**

In early 1943, the U.S. military realized it did not have the personnel or facilities required to educate and train the vast numbers of qualified Pilots, Navigators and Bombardiers it needed, in the short timeframe it had, to win the air war in World War II. As a result, it contracted with 150 colleges and universities to conduct five-month education and training courses for the Army Air Force (AAF) called the 'College Training Detachment' program (CTD).

College faculty would teach Math, Physics, History, Geography and English; Army Air Force personnel would conduct military indoctrination and training; and local civilian pilots would provide basic flying instruction for the aviation cadets. At the end of their five-month course, the cadets would continue on to other AAF facilities for additional and advanced flying instruction before receiving their wings and a commission as a Second Lieutenant.

One of the colleges selected for this program...and the only one in South Dakota, was Black Hills Teachers College (now Black Hills State University). From March 1943 to May 1944, more than 1,000 aviation cadets were stationed, educated and trained in Spearfish with the AAF 93<sup>rd</sup> College Training Detachment.

The story of the 93<sup>rd</sup> CTD is interesting and important. It is one that Spearfish and BHSU can and should be justifiably proud.

### Guest Speakers

- **Terry Neil King** was born and raised in Denver. He was a History major at Mesa College in Grand Junction, Colorado and the University of Colorado. He worked at United Airlines in Chicago for 33 years and retired in 2005. He enjoys travel, golf, aviation and photography. He and his wife Kathy live in Barrington, Illinois with their two hospital Therapy Dogs, Caesar and Guinness.

- **Paul Higbee** is a graduate of Black Hills State University and the University of Notre Dame. He is best known to South Dakotans as a longtime feature writer and columnist for *South Dakota Magazine*, and is also the author of six books about the state's history. He is a past recipient of the Governor's History Award, and was the state's Author of the Year in 2001. Paul and his wife Janet live in Spearfish.



**HEADQUARTERS STAFF**

March 1943

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U.S. Army Air Forces 93<sup>rd</sup> College Training Detachment (Air Crew)  
Black Hills Teachers College  
Spearfish, South Dakota

**93<sup>RD</sup> COLLEGE TRAINING DETACHMENT (AIR CREW)**

HEADQUARTERS STAFF  
MARCH, 1943

BLACK HILLS TEACHERS COLLEGE  
SPEARFISH, SOUTH DAKOTA

| <u>FRONT ROW (L-R)</u>                     | <u>HOMETOWN</u>      | <u>DUTIES</u>          |
|--|----------------------|------------------------|
| Neil L. King<br>2Lt, Air Corps             | Denver, Colorado     | Adjutant               |
| Charles J. Gerlach<br>1Lt, Air Corps       | Livingston, Texas    | Commandant of Students |
| Homer I. Lewis<br>1Lt, Air Corps           | Dallas, Texas        | Commanding Officer     |
| William E. Anderson<br>Capt, Medical Corps | Dyersburg, Tennessee | Medical Officer        |
| Donald S. Ballard<br>2Lt, Air Corps        | Miami, Oklahoma      | Personnel Officer      |
| Robert E. Lee<br>2Lt, Air Corps            | Miami, Florida       | Intelligence Officer   |

| <u>MIDDLE ROW (L-R)</u> | <u>HOMETOWN</u>      | <u>DUTIES</u>   |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Sgt. M. S. Rettinger    | Rochester, Minnesota | Drill Sergeant  |
| Sgt. C. N. Kaufman      | New York, New York   | Drill Sergeant  |
| S/Sgt. Paul Loebig      | Louisville, Kentucky | Drill Sergeant  |
| T/Sgt. A. E. Rowe       | Houston, Texas       | First Sergeant  |
| S/Sgt. Clyde Karkalits  | Lubbock, Texas       | Supply Sergeant |

| <u>BACK ROW (L-R)</u>  | <u>HOMETOWN</u>   | <u>DUTIES</u>        |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| S/Sgt. W. T. Mullinax  | Pampa, Texas      | Medical Sergeant     |
| S/Sgt. P. N. Glover    | Paris, Texas      | Chief Clerk          |
| S/Sgt. Jos. L. O'Brien | Chicago, Illinois | Sergeant Major       |
| Sgt. Wesley A. Leach   | Chicago, Illinois | Postal Clerk         |
| Cpl. E. E. Lee         | Ozark, Arkansas   | Payroll Clerk        |
| Cpl. Hugh R. Rowell    | Heflin, Alabama   | Service Record Clerk |

## NEIL L. KING

Neil Lyon King was born in Greeley, Colorado on September 1, 1910 but was raised in and became a life-long resident of Denver. Prior to his military service during World War II, he was employed at the First National Bank of Denver.

He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force on February 11, 1942 at Lowry Field in Denver. Although he had a private pilots license, at the "advanced" age of 32, military pilot status was not an option. After graduating from Officer Candidate School in Miami, Florida, his first assignment was at Strother Army Air Field in Winfield, Kansas from November 1942 until February 1943. In February 1943, he was assigned to the AAF 93<sup>rd</sup> College Training Detachment (Air Crew) at Black Hills Teachers College in Spearfish, South Dakota as Adjutant and Personnel Officer. He assumed command of the 93<sup>rd</sup> in March 1944.

In June 1944, he was assigned to the 3031<sup>st</sup> AAF at Mather Field in Sacramento, California as Public Relations Officer.

In March 1945, he was assigned to the 1559<sup>th</sup> AAF Air Transport Command at Tacloban, Philippines as Personnel Services Officer. In August 1945, he was assigned to the 1550<sup>th</sup> AAF Air Transport Command at Manila, Philippines. Between April and August 1945, he received temporary duty assignments at Biak; Morotai; Halmahera; Brisbane, Australia and Auckland, New Zealand. In November 1945, he was assigned additional temporary duty assignments at Canton, China; Okinawa; Saipan; Guam and Tokyo, Japan. In December 1945 he was assigned to Air Transport Command Headquarters at Hickam Field, Hawaii.

He returned to the United States aboard U.S.S. Gosper (APA-170) in January 1946 and was discharged from active duty on April 22, 1946 at the rank of Captain. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service from March to August 1945 in Leyte, Philippines. He served as a Reserve Officer and was officially discharged on May 20, 1955.

After returning home, he resumed his occupation as a banking executive at the First National Bank of Denver serving as Vice President in the Advertising, Public Relations and Civic Affairs departments. He was a 1952 graduate of the Stonier School of Banking at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. After more than 50 years in the banking industry, he retired in September 1975. He was active in many business, civic and social organizations; he was an avid golfer and a Colorado history buff.

During his assignment at the 93<sup>rd</sup> College Training Detachment, he met and married Joan Sunderland who was a resident of Spearfish. They were happily married for 39 years, with two children and one grandchild, until his death in Denver on November 22, 1983.



**NEIL L. KING**

Adjutant: February 1943 – March 1944

Commanding Officer: March 1944 – June 1944

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U.S. Army Air Forces 93<sup>rd</sup> College Training Detachment (Air Crew)

Black Hills Teachers College

Spearfish, South Dakota

## HOMER I. "PETE" LEWIS

Homer Irwin Lewis was born in Asheville, North Carolina on February 1, 1919. After living in the New York City area and attending school there, he moved with his family to Texas in 1932. He attended Culver Military Academy in Indiana and graduated in 1938. After a year at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, he resigned and entered the University of Texas. In December 1940 he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Reserve Infantry.

In July 1941 he entered active military duty with the Gulf Coast Flying Training Command at Randolph Field, Texas. He was selected for glider training in June 1942 and was assigned as Commandant of Students, 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Air Forces Glider Training Detachment in Spencer, Iowa. In February 1943, he was assigned to the AAF 93<sup>rd</sup> College Training Detachment (Air Crew) at Black Hills Teachers College in Spearfish, South Dakota as Commanding Officer.

In March 1944 he was transferred to Douglas Army Air Field, Arizona as Commandant of Cadets for the twin-engine advanced flying school. In September 1944 Lewis volunteered for aerial gunnery training. He completed basic gunnery school at Kingman, Arizona and completed officer combat gunnery training at Laredo, Texas in December 1944 with a rating of Aerial Observer.

After three months as an aerial gunnery instructor at Harlingen Army Air Field, Texas, he went overseas in February 1945 and joined the 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, in Sudbury, England as group gunnery officer. In this assignment he flew several combat missions over central Europe in B-17 aircraft.

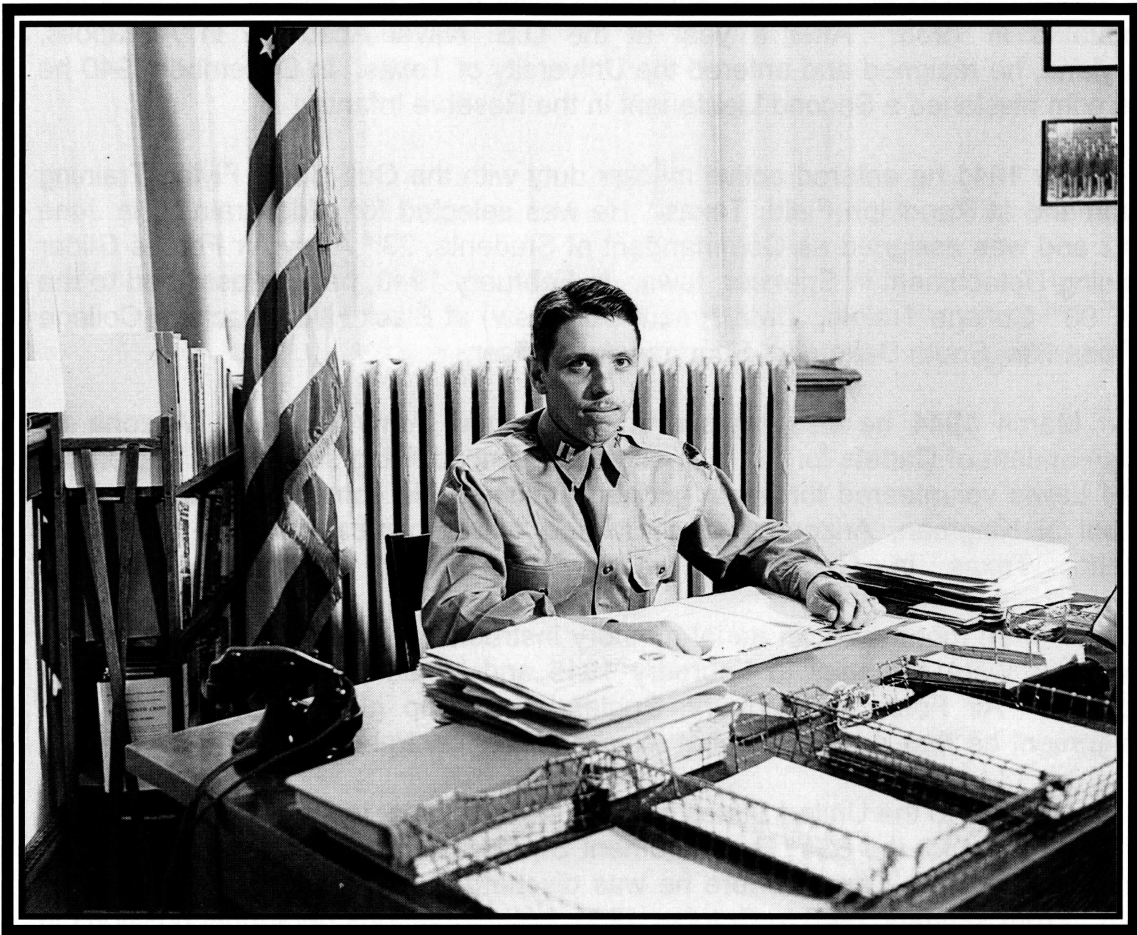
He returned to the United States in July 1945 and went to Drew Field, Florida as gunnery officer for the 834<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron. He was later transferred to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where he was discharged from active duty in January 1946. From January 1946 to October 1951, he held various personnel positions in Reserve programs at Brooks Air Force Base, Texas. He became commander of the 433<sup>rd</sup> Air Base Group in April 1961 at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas. In April 1968 he became Reserve Deputy to the commander, Headquarters Command, at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C.

In March 1971, he was nominated by the President of the United States to serve as Chief of Air Force Reserve.

His military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Air Medal and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award Ribbon. He held a private pilots license and logged more than 5,000 flying hours.

He was promoted to the rank of Major General effective May 12, 1970. He retired April 7, 1975.

He enjoyed travel and reading and divided his time between his homes in Eagle Pass, Texas and Cuernavaca, Mexico until his death on October 21, 2015.



**HOMER I. LEWIS**

Commanding Officer: February 1943 – March 1944

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**PRESENTATION OF 93<sup>RD</sup> CTD FLAG**

January 24, 1944

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