



For Immediate Release
Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
Fort Myers, Florida
Contact: Daniel Eaton
Public Information Officer
pio@fmarc.net
239-425-7914

On the Air: Honoring WWII Heroes at Buckingham Field

Fort Myers, March 12, 2025 -- Curious about ham radio? Step back in time and experience history in action! Join us at Buckingham Field in Lehigh Acres on March 18–20, 2025, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at 15191 Homestead Rd, Lehigh Acres, FL 33971, for a special live radio event. Watch and listen as operators broadcast to honor the men and women who trained here during World War II when it was known as Buckingham Army Airfield. Whether you're a history buff, radio enthusiast, or just curious, come see ham radio in action and be part of this unique tribute!

Buckingham Army Airfield, located in Fort Myers, Florida, was a significant military training base during World War II. It was established in 1942 as a flexible gunnery school for the United States Army Air Forces. The base played a crucial role in training aerial gunners who served on bombers like the B-17 Flying Fortress and the B-24 Liberator.

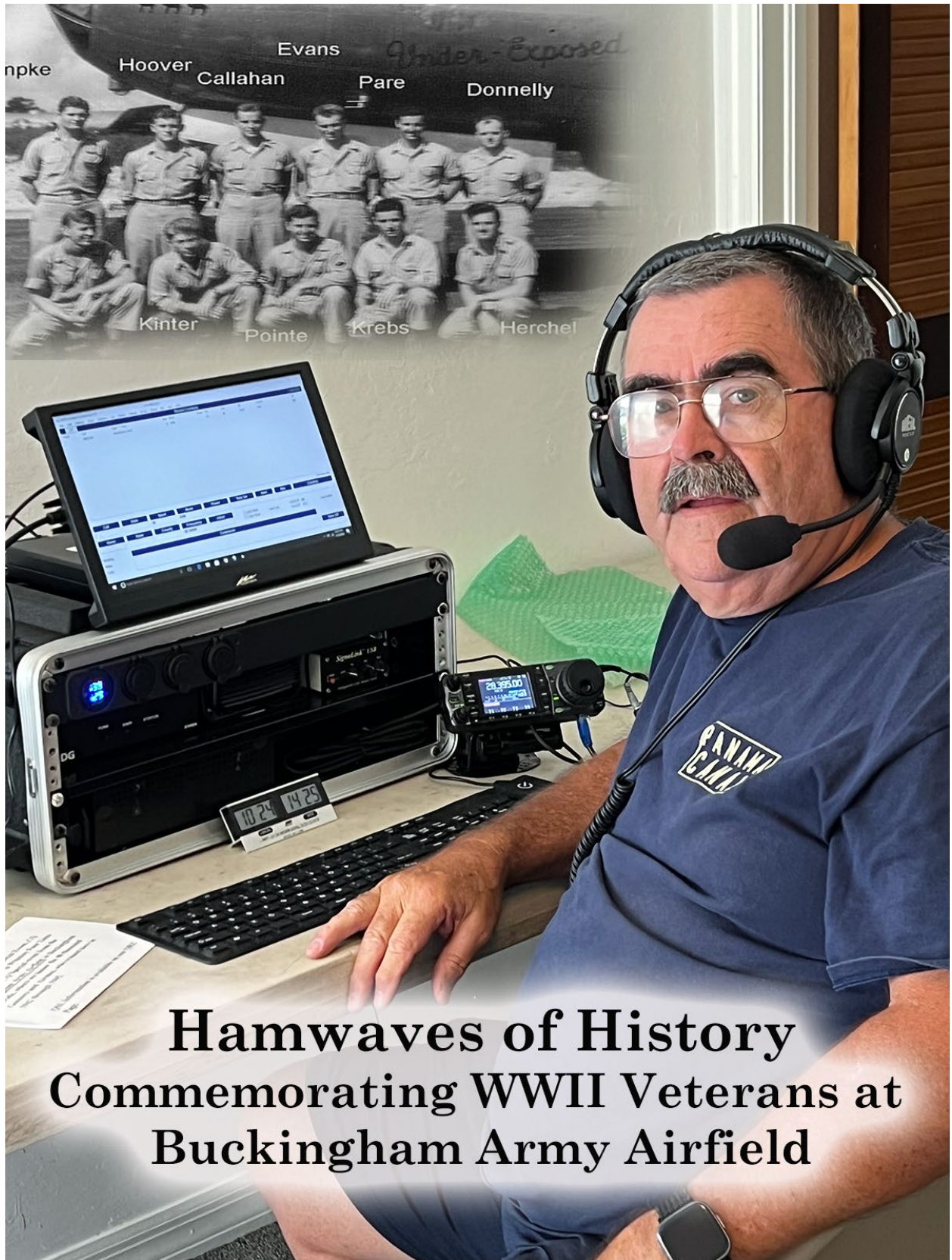
At its peak, the airfield had thousands of personnel, multiple runways, and extensive facilities, including barracks, mess halls, and training ranges. After the war, the airfield was deactivated and eventually repurposed. Today, much of the former base has been redeveloped, but remnants of its past, such as old buildings and infrastructure, can still be found. The site is now home to the Lee County Mosquito Control District and some industrial and residential developments.

Buckingham Army Airfield remains a historical landmark in the Fort Myers area, reflecting Southwest Florida's contribution to the war effort. Established in 1942 under the AAF Eastern Flying Training Command, Buckingham Army Airfield was a pivotal training base and, during its active period, held the distinction of being the largest airfield in Florida. Its primary wartime objective was the training of aerial gunners responsible for defending bombers. During its operational lifetime, it graduated almost 48,000 aerial gunners. At that time, many American fighter planes lacked the necessary range to accompany bombers on extended flights over enemy territory, leaving the bombers and their crews vulnerable.

A crucial aspect of the airfield's mission involved preparing gunners to sit in turrets or stand behind openings in the bomber's fuselage, tasked with shooting down attacking aircraft. This role played a critical part in ensuring the success of the United States in both the European and

Pacific theaters. In addition to training gunnery students, Buckingham AAF served as the primary training center for instructors at the Army's other flexible gunnery schools. The term "flexible gunnery" referred to the use of a mount in the station or turret of the aircraft, as opposed to the fixed aerial guns found on fighter aircraft.

Established in 1957, the Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club, Inc. has been dedicated to fostering camaraderie among individuals with a shared passion for Amateur Radio. With a commitment to facilitating the exchange of information, promoting electronics and amateur radio knowledge, advocating for good radio operating practices, and advancing the art of Amateur Radio, the club strives to create a vibrant community. Additionally, the club actively sponsors and promotes various activities related to amateur radio, provides crucial public service during emergencies, and actively engages in other community initiatives. FMARC is affiliated with and sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), which is the national association for amateur radio, connecting hams around the U.S. with news, information, and resources. The club meets at 7 pm on the last Tuesday of the month. Call 941-275-9145 to attend a meeting or visit www.fmarc.net to learn more.



Hamwaves of History Commemorating WWII Veterans at Buckingham Army Airfield

