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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Fall 1992

Mission Accomplished!

The Flight of the Liberator "Diamond Lil" Across the Atlantic

by D.J. Hastings, Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF

Since our arrival at Norwich on June 10th I have been asked many times just what it was like to fly in a 51-year-old Liberator across the Atlantic, and the answer must be, "interesting, challenging, exciting; and with the Confederate Air Force, great fun"...for with the Confederate Air Force there are two main things that make it enjoyable. Firstly, Diamond Lil is well maintained and has thousands of man hours spent on her each year to keep this grand old lady in flying trim; and secondly, you are flying with a crew of great experience. David Hughes, for example, as Senior Aircraft Commander is a senior captain with Delta Airlines. Ray Krottinger, the other Commander, has many years of flying behind him with hundreds of hours on Diamond Lil. Al Stricklin, the third pilot, is also well experienced as well as being our Senior Navigator. Our three Flight Engineers, Sam Mangrum, Henry Brand and David Kjell, also have many years of experience and indeed David is a senior FAA authorization engineer. Equally the pilots are all qualified engineers and the engineers are qualified pilots, so this British pilot felt very humble in this super crew. We must not forget the Scanners, two Lady Colonels, Kathy Martin and Starr Stone, who are also accomplished aviators.

The journey itself was an unforgettable experience with constant reminders to us all as to why we were undertaking this unique flight, namely to pay tribute in this 50th Anniversary year to not only the 6400 young men of the 2nd Air Division USAAF who gave their lives for our freedom flying Liberators from the East Anglian bases fifty years ago, but also to those who survived. The Liberator just had to return to Norfolk in this special year. The departure from Fort Worth, Texas on a foggy and damp morning was the first reminder, with a hundred or so 2nd Air Division veterans there to see us off. The tears in their eyes as we taxied out brought a lump



The Crew of Diamond Lil at Fort Worth

to our throats. Also the presentation of the greeting to the younger generation by the 2nd Air Division Association Heritage League to Norfolk Scouts was a moving occasion. At 1015 Diamond Lil rotated smoothly at 90 mph and in no time at all we were cruising above the clouds at 9,000 feet with the crew rapidly settling in and everything running smoothly.

Exactly on schedule at 1415 we started our descent into the huge Minneapolis International Airport and the headquarters of one of our main sponsors, Northwest Airlines, and what a truly wonderful sponsor they have been. No aircraft is allowed a "fly-by" at this major airport, but as we turned on finals the Tower requested that we do just that, so gear and flaps were rapidly retracted and Diamond Lil proudly swept along the runway and we were amazed to see the hundreds of people waiting on

the ground to greet us. On landing we taxied past the airliners to be parked outside the Northwest Headquarters flanked by a Boeing 747 and a DC10. First out of the Liberator is always the Flight Engineer to place the tail support in position, and Sam Mangrum to his amazement was handed a huge bouquet of flowers, something we will not let him forget. Then the rest of us stepped out into the warm Minnesota sunshine to be met by a barrage of TV cameras and radio reporters as well as a huge crowd. Also waiting was the wartime B-24 pilot Lt. Al Dexter and his wife Pat, whom we first met in 1944 when he was flying with the 389th Bomb Group at Hethel, and yet another link was established. A welcome speech was made by the Vice President of Northwest, presents were given to the crew,

(continued on page 4)

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President's Message "Association"

by Richard M. Kennedy

Webster defines an Association as "an organization of persons having a common interest." In the case of the 2nd ADA one would not find many who would take exception to this definition — perhaps, none! Webster goes on to say that an Association represents "something linked in memory or imagination with a thing or person." The 2nd ADA really does link "memories" with a "thing"; most vividly when recalled by most, if not all, of us. In light of the foregoing, it would seem that the 2nd ADA certainly qualifies as an authentic "Association" in all essential categories.



COMMON INTEREST, MEMORIES AND SENTIMENT (FRIENDSHIP)!!!!

My friends, this year of 1992 marks the 50th Anniversary of the arrival of our Mighty Eighth in the UK and the beginnings of the formation of those "2nd AD MEMORIES." Fifty years, and in the minds of many of our associates the recollection of those memorable events are as clear and sharp today as they were when enacted. I don't think we, who experienced those unusual and momentous happenings will ever forget, or want to forget, the hazardous times we shared. Therefore, the cornerstones of COMMON INTEREST and MEMORIES were securely set within us, not necessarily by design but, most likely, by our participation in the forefront of that tremendous conflict, WWII.

The 2nd ADA has withstood the test of time. This fact is made abundantly clear as we approach our 45th Annual Reunion and, next year, the 30th Anniversary of our distinguished Memorial. Spanning the time period is in itself a major accomplishment but, as I see it, the Association not only held firmly together, it definitely grew in numbers, stature and prestige. A question that could be expected might be, "How can an Association, so widely spread out (across the USA) with such a diverse membership remain so intensely viable?"

A quick response would, of course, call attention to a dedicated membership, the obvious COMMON INTEREST and ongoing FRIENDSHIPS within that membership and, perhaps, some other binding detail. Maybe that's it! A bond, some adhesive — the GLUE??? The Memorial certainly has, if not an adhesive quality about it, the magnetism to produce the capability of exerting a dynamic force contributing to Association longevity. As compelling as the Memorial is, I'd like to look a little "closer to home." I'd like to suggest that this *Journal* is the GLUE that assembles, on a regular schedule, those basic factors COMMON INTEREST and FRIENDSHIP. I think it is safe to say we all look forward to each issue and read, and re-read, with genuine interest the mission stories, the anecdotes, the reports of Association doings and the letters to our Editor, Bill Robertie. Bill has produced and continues to publish the kind of paper an Association like ours needs. We all owe him a great big thank you for all he's accomplished these many years.

As you know, I've been rather direct and open with respect to my desire to maintain a strong 2nd ADA. I want to express my gratitude to the Division Group Vice Presidents for their dedication to that principle of holding to the team concept. While the *Journal* may be the GLUE, we all know the Groups are our STRENGTH!

One more real factor contributing to our amazing record of longevity is the patience and understanding of our members' wives. Again, we all know, we couldn't do it without them. A great big thank you to our constant partners. As we look ahead, we'll continue to call upon all we've mentioned here and, in addition, the Heritage League, our Associate Members and our overseas Friends.

All in all, I'd say we've done pretty well over the years. Let's keep it all going and "Keep 'em Flyin'!"

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center

An Update by Richard M. Kennedy

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center's new Chairman of the Board, L/Gen. E.G. "Buck" Shuler, Jr., USAF, Ret., has been meeting with key Savannah business and civic leaders during July. General Shuler's briefings on the Center have raised the enthusiasm for the Center to new heights and the key leaders are dedicated, now more than ever, to ensuring the construction of the Heritage Center in Savannah.

Additional support from the upper echelons of Georgia government is also reaching new heights. On July 23 the following met with Governor Zell Miller: L/Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr., Chairman of the Board; M/Gen. Lewis E. Lyle, Heritage Center President; Daniel W. Massey, Executive VP of the Heritage Center; Richard Knowlton, President of the Savannah

Economic Development Authority; Bill Daniel, Chairman of the Board of the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce; GA Senator Tom Coleman; and Mr. Ben Love, 8th AF veteran from Houston, Texas. Their meeting resulted in Governor Miller pledging his full support and enthusiasm for the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center.

As a member of the Board of Directors of the Heritage Center, I would like to take this opportunity to ask for the full support of our 2nd ADA membership in promoting this endeavor.

If you would like further information on the progress of the Heritage Center, you may contact it at 1-800-421-9428, or write to P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402. Your questions and comments are welcome.

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As You Read Your Journal,

Your Group Report

The page to which most of us automatically turn. Our Group VPs do a great job.

The Davis Wing

It was often intimated that the B-24 Davis Wing would not fly in a wind tunnel. Not so! Allan G. Blue introduces David R. Davis, designer of the wing that brought so many of our people home.

The Fighter Types

Roger Freeman attempts to distinguish between bomber and fighter pilots, the hunted and the hunters. He may have a point.

Women's Army Auxiliary Corps ...

From WAAC to WAC, from Des Moines to Hethel, Eleanor J. Storms revisits those first days on this fiftieth anniversary.

Three Brief Glimpses

of the Air War. These you must read. Robert E. Oberschmid offers some fascinating examples of those years, disturbing, shocking, emotional.

We Do Not Forget

So many from Britain have expressed their appreciation for our presence. David Henshall, of the East Anglian Times, says it as well as any.

Enjoy your Journal. It's good reading!

Lucky 14th

by Chester Boshinski (446th)

I was 20 years old and about 130 lbs., and it was our 14th mission, January 16, 1945, to Ruyland oil refinery. Bomb load was ten 500 lb. AP bombs.

We made our bomb run in heavy flak and bombs were released. The next thing I heard on the intercom was "Armament man, one of the bombs hung up." At that instant I could have faded into the cracks of the floor. I plugged into a long oxygen hose, snapped on my chest chute and opened the door from the waist to the bomb bay.

Sure enough, there it was, a middle one on the right rear rack. The top one had bounced down over it. The next thing I focused on was that 9" wide beam. With my heart in my throat, I gingerly stepped out and toward the rack. Reaching it, I checked the rack, pushed the manual release lever, and it was bombs away. I watched as it dropped away seeing the vane spin off in about two seconds.

I turned to inch my way back to the waist. Upon reaching the door I was preparing to step in with my foot when all of a sudden all I saw was a big white flash in front of me. With all the bulky jacket, pants and boots, somehow I had hooked the chute release and it spilled in front of

me. I think I turned white and skipped a few beats as I fell forward in the doorway grabbing an armful of silk. I froze waiting, with the wind blowing around like a hurricane, waiting for that huge tug that would have sucked me right out had the wind or slipstream caught the right loose end. Very gingerly I checked my situation and began reeling in my loose ends still flapping around me.

I still remember looking up into the face of horror of the other waist gunner. He was also frozen, or afraid to help for fear of going out with me; I don't know as I never asked him. When I finally entered the waist and threw the chute on the floor, we turned and eyeballed each other and shook our heads, said nothing and went about our business. The rack was later checked out on the ground, but as always everything was A-OK; they found nothing wrong.

All was not lost because the one I released hit a large oil tank, verified by flight crews in the rear formations. I'm glad it was on our 14th mission and not the 13th. I still believe someone from above had his hand on my shoulder. We only had fourteen holes in the ship that day, otherwise it was more or less a normal run.

Mission Accomplished

(continued from page 1)

a huge welcome cake was cut and we met many 2nd Air Division veterans.

That evening the crew were the guests of Northwest Airlines for a dinner at the Hilton Hotel at the airport and over coffee we managed to get Al Dexter to talk about what it was like to fly and fight in a Liberator 50 years ago, which reminded us all yet again why we were making this flight. Next morning we were up at 0530 and out to the aircraft at 0645 with still hundreds of Northwest employees admiring Diamond Lil. The previous afternoon the Northwest Vice President had inquired as to what we were eating the next day over the Arctic. When we showed him he just said, "I'll send a truck out to you at 0730," and sure enough it arrived on the dot, packed with huge flasks of coffee and soft drinks, and some of the best airline meals you have ever seen, so we fed well that day.

0800 and we taxied out, past the many airliners whose passengers waved and must have thought they were in a time warp as a B-24 went past to line up for our first max weight takeoff of the trip, as we had our full fuel load of 3000 gallons on board. Diamond Lil and David Hughes made it all look easy and we were soon climbing up to our assigned flight level of 9000 feet on a super morning.

By lunchtime we were into the barren part of Northern Canada as we crossed Lake Superior and then skirted along Hudson Bay. Here we met our first piece of bad weather with cloud and some icing, but the carburetor heaters performed well and there were no problems. By late afternoon we were out in the sun over some of the most beautiful scenery in the world with the snow covered mountains and ice flows as we entered the Arctic Circle, and I weathered my first test of flying this grand old lady as the Flight Engineers played the trick of walking aft just as I had got the trim settled down! Still she is certainly a great airplane to fly, heavy as one would expect with no power assisted controls, only your muscles, but an experience I'll never forget.

By 1400 we were in the descent to the tiny Arctic settlement of Iqaluit in Frobisher Bay, Canada, one of the most barren and lonely airfields in the world, and the cold really hit us hard as we stepped out of the aircraft to yet another friendly greeting. We refueled and parked Diamond Lil for the night, and then reported to the tiny and expensive wooden airport hotel with one of the hardest legs behind us. At Iqaluit the temperature drops to minus 15 centigrade, so early the next day Diamond Lil had to be towed into the specially heated hangar to be "warmed up" for 2 hours prior to starting.

By 1015 we were ready to go on the next exciting leg of eight and a half hours flying all the way across Greenland to Iceland. Again we had a good met forecast followed by another max weight takeoff, but at those temperatures and a 20 knot wind down the runway, Diamond Lil used under half the available runway length and climbed up through broken cloud to 9,000 feet. Here the crew settled down to the now normal routine of flying, navigating, eating, resting and taking photographs, and the wild scenery in this part of the world was quite something.

Diamond Lil flew smoothly on, but then No. 1 engine showed a slight drop in oil

pressure and an increase in cylinder head temperature, which initially we thought could be a jammed relief valve in the oil cooler due to the extreme cold. Cowling gills were opened but still the engine would not settle, and suddenly we noticed a small amount of oil being blown out along the rear cowling. Standard procedures were immediately carried out with the engine being shut down and the propeller feathered. The passengers and the media on board were informed, and until we told them, two had not even noticed that No. 1 had been stopped. A gradual climb was initiated on three engines to 11,000 feet and the crew discussed the alternatives, either to turn back and fight the headwinds all the way back to Iqaluit where there were virtually no facilities, or to carry on to the NATO base at Keflavik in Iceland where we would have ample ground support and a choice of several good long runways, as well as the diversion airfields en route. The decision was made to carry on, and the grand old lady performed beautifully on three engines despite picking up some rime ice in cloud. We all began to appreciate how the crews felt fifty years ago when they returned "on three" even though we had no enemy flak or fighters. Navigation was by the GPS satellite system and dead reckoning, and a Canadian Radar Controller summed it up when at one point as we left his area he said, "You guys are on your own now."

The Arctic icecap was unbelievably beautiful, especially as we crossed the Davis Straight in the sunset, and we were soon talking to the friendly voice of the controller at Keflavik. At 2145 local time, David Hughes made a superb smooth approach, and landing on three engines in the rain we taxied in to a huge welcome and the now usual battery of TV cameras. Also there to greet us was the 120 Squadron Nimrod Crew of the Royal Air Force, yet another link with history as Diamond Lil would have served with that squadron in 1941 but for her landing accident on her delivery flight to the RAF. The U.S. Navy were great hosts and we were soon towed in to a warm hangar to start the strip down on No. 1 engine, hoping that it would only be a minor problem such as an oil line ruptured. But with no sign of an oil leak, the oil strainer screen was opened and there were the traces of metal which meant we had a major problem. The U.S. Navy engineers quickly analyzed the oil and with the sad news that we had traces of copper and silver in the screen, we all knew that the worst had happened and that a main bearing had gone, which meant a complete engine change with our chance of arrival at Norwich on June 6th beginning to fade. The details as to how the replacement engine was flown out is another story, but suffice it to say that thanks to Senior Officers in the Royal Air Force and the United States Air Force it arrived safely.

In Iceland we saw the advantages of having a full crew of skilled engineers, for in no time at all the old engine was stripped out and removed, and while we waited for the replacement engine to arrive we cleaned Diamond Lil from nose to tail. We cannot praise the U.S. Navy and the NATO base at Keflavik enough, for they took us to their hearts, housed and fed us with the Orion Squadron looking after us, and some of their young engineers even volunteered to work through the nights with us. By Mon-

day afternoon, June 6th, the replacement engine arrived and by 2 a.m. on Tuesday it was fitted. By lunchtime that day the propeller was back on, and at 10:30 p.m. that evening Diamond Lil was towed out of the hangar and we all waited with bated breath for the engine start on the new No. 1, after 32 hours of hard work. We never doubted our Flight Engineers, and she roared into life at the first attempt and was soon running sweetly to the cheers of the many onlookers, including the 120 Squadron Nimrod Crew who had arrived to escort us across the Atlantic. Tests were completed, the aircraft refueled and by 2:00 a.m. we were all complete, the hangar cleaned and we all slept well that night. 0800 and we were awake to another great U.S. Navy breakfast, out to the aircraft to meet the Nimrod Crew, whom we just cannot thank enough, and then over for a Met briefing as well as filing our flight plan. For the first time during our stay in Iceland the sun began to shine.

At 1030 we were airborne on the longest leg over water, but with a Nimrod on our starboard wing flown by Wing Commander Mitch Lees, the Officer commanding 120 Squadron, the entire crew was happy and the new No. 1 engine purred along. Joining the crew on Diamond Lil was Flight Lieutenant Steve Rennison of 120 Squadron who has worked so hard on the project, and he soon became the only current pilot in the Royal Air Force to fly a Liberator.

Halfway across the Atlantic a second Nimrod carrying the international press on board joined us to port, so at last we had a real formation as this famous Liberator approached Scotland and RAF Kinloss, being delivered just 51 years late to the Squadron. 1430 hours and we touched down at Kinloss to a really warm welcome, complete with a Piper, and we knew that we were nearly home. We cleared customs and then took off on the last leg of this 4000 mile historic journey, flying down the east coast on a perfect evening.

As we crossed in Lincolnshire, the final Royal Air Force greeting almost had the Confederate Air Force crew in tears, as three RAF Coltishall Jaguars from 41 Squadron tucked in tight and even a Tornado joined us briefly near Wainfleet. As we approached Norfolk, the Air Traffic cleared the formation down to 1500 feet and we swept over Kings Lynn, much to the delight of the 392nd Bomb Group who were in the town. We then headed east over North Pickenham, Watton, Shipdham and Attlebridge, with all the crew deeply moved to see so many people waving to us. 1930 and Norwich Airport was in sight. What a picture it was to see so many people waiting for us; you have no idea how near to tears we all were. One fly-past and then to RAF Coltishall to thank 41 Squadron and the Station for their truly great welcome before we lowered the gear and settled in for our final approach for landing at Norwich.

Over 18 months ago the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF in Norwich decided that we must get a Liberator back to Norfolk in 1992, and now the dream had come true thanks to the Confederate Air Force, international, national and local companies, The Royal Air Force, The United States Air Force and The United States Navy, as well as many individuals who have sponsored this unique flight. We thank you all for making history come alive.

Vice President's Message

by John B. Conrad



Most of us have read or heard about the beginning of the 2nd ADA, organized at its first convention in 1948 in Chicago. It was attended by those serving in Division Headquarters. The WAC contingent, who had formed their own organization, merged with the 2nd ADA in 1949. An interesting and concise history of the 2nd ADA is recounted in the Spring 1990 (Vol. 29, No. 1)

issue of the *Journal* on page 9. It is written by Jordan Uttal, one of the organizers of the first convention in 1948. Membership opportunities were extended to all who had served in 2nd AD units: the 14 bomber groups, the 5 fighter groups and civilian associates such as Red Cross and Civil Service employees.

All of us have shared in the common goals of supporting the 2nd AD Memorial Library in Norwich and in creating the American Librarian Fund to maintain an American presence in the library. We are bonded together by the exchange of information in the 2nd ADA *Journal* and annual reunions. Under this overall umbrella of common goals and bonds, the 2nd ADA began the development of sub-units which has been successful in creating identities among the 14 bomb groups.

The 44th BG was the first to organize a mini-reunion at the 1971 convention and to elect a group vice president. By 1975, the headquarters group and most of the 14 bomb groups were similarly organized. This recognition and organization by group under the auspices of the 2nd ADA created a favorable climate for each group to establish goals and projects for itself. To accept tax-deductible contributions for these projects, nine groups have found it necessary to establish parallel but separate organizations. Each organization publishes its own newsletter as do three other groups

without separate organizations. Nearly all groups now have a published history in book form, covering the wartime years.

We have recorded our collective histories by division and group in thirty-odd volumes of the 2nd ADA *Journal*, covering many subjects including the development of the 2nd AD Memorial Library, wartime exploits of every variety, articles and letters from members and group vice presidents' reports. This has been supplemented in recent years by the group newsletters and the published group histories.

It now remains for each and every individual member, if he has not already done so, to write his personal history for the benefit of his family. Some members have been heard to remark that their families are not interested. It is true that in certain stages of development in our children's (or nieces and nephews) and grandchildren's lives that they may not be interested, but as they enter middle age and later, they become more interested in your personal history and activities. You will do your family a great service if you will prepare your own written record, attaching any snapshots or other mementos. Be sure to identify your pictures with names of people and places and the dates taken, particularly the year if you don't have the exact date. Only you can write your personal history as it should be written. Someday, if not now, your family will appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Report on the Memorial Trust

by E. Bud Koorndyk

My first item to share with you regarding the ongoing saga of our Library and Trust has to do with the Library itself.

I travelled to Norwich during the latter part of May for a meeting with the Board of Governors, accompanied by my wife June and two daughters. Phyllis DuBois, Trust Librarian, had prepared me, prior to our coming, for the hordes of people they anticipated were to be visiting the Library. This influx of visitors was the direct result of the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of our arrival, which will be an ongoing activity throughout the summer and fall.

During our stay in Norwich of five days, stopping in at the Library each day, I was surprised at the numbers that visited and who were amazed at what we have, as the 2nd ADA, in such a wonderful Memorial. Phyllis was assisted by Tony North, who asked me to share his thanks for all the years of friendship by our members and the continual letters of encouragement that he receives from his friends in the USA. Leslie Fleetwood, a Library Aide, also was utilized to help in meeting and sharing the Library with the guests.

On Wednesday evening, the 20th of May, a wine and cheese reception was held in the courtyard of the Library, prior to dedicating a wonderful display of archival memorabilia in the lower level of the Library prepared by Dr. Martin Levitt, our Fulbright Archivist. This event was honored with the presence of Lady Mayhew, one of our founding Governors now in her 90s.

I had occasion to spend some time with Dr. Levitt and was impressed with all he has accomplished for our Memorial Library in this short time. The memorabilia has now been all documented and all placed in proper chemically approved boxes or envelopes and deposited in the Norfolk Record Office for safe keeping. Any material that scholars should wish to peruse will be available under proper supervision.

Dr. Martin Levitt has served us well, not only at the Library but also by conducting many seminars and fulfilling speaking engagements at various levels in the academic world. By the time this article is published, Dr. Levitt will have completed his term as our Fulbright Archivist and will be returning to the United States.

On behalf of the 2nd ADA, I offer our sincere thanks to Martin for a great job done with all the archival material that was located in various places in the Norwich Central Library.

The meeting of the Board of Governors was held on Thursday, the 21st of May. Because of some misunderstandings that had arisen among the Board of Governors, the Fulbright Commission and our 2ADA/Fulbright Memorial Library Award Agreement and how we anticipated the agreement would be implemented, it was deemed that in the best interests of the 2nd ADA, our President Dick Kennedy accompany me.

Bud Chamberlain, Chairman of the Oversight Committee of the 2ADA/FMLA was to be in England with his Bomb Group and

he also was invited to attend the Board of Governors meeting.

On the finance side it was reported that a shortfall of some 7,000 pounds was to occur. This deficit was erased with a gift of \$25,000, authorized by the Executive Committee, towards the funding of Dr. Martin Levitt.

Because of a drop in income generated by our Trust capital, it was anticipated that there would be a shortfall of some 1,500 pounds for the years 1992-1993. I did note that their drop in investment return was not as acute as some of us have experienced in our portfolios in the U.S.

We were able to eliminate some rather strong feelings between Governors in regards to our 2ADA/FMLA Fund. This will give our Oversight Committee a chance to fine tune our Agreement so it fits into the scheme of our Memorial Trust. Much of the meeting was taken up with addressing this one issue.

It was agreed that Hillary Hammond, Director of Arts and Libraries for Norfolk County, would serve as Executive CEO of the Board of Governors. He would function not as a Governor but would serve as the Communicator and Executive of the Board of Governors. Hillary has been an outstanding supporter of our Library and a tremendous help in sharing his expertise on Library management with us.

As we together enter upon a new plateau in the life of our Trust and Library, may we all recognize that in any successful operation there may arise a few hurdles to overcome. May we always remember that problems of today become future joys of accomplishment.

The Heritage League

by Jeane Stites, President

As I attend reunions and meetings, I am often asked, "What IS the Heritage League?" Following are some of the points I like to bring out.

The Heritage League, after diligent work by a dedicated group of Second Air Division Association members, was incorporated early in 1987. The first general meeting was held later that year in Norwich, England, the site of the 2ADA reunion. As set forth in the By-Laws, the purposes of the League are:

(1) To advocate and support an adequate, effective and efficient Armed Forces of the United States.

(2) To carry on programs to perpetuate the memory of the Second Air Division, 8th Air Force, USAAF members who gave their lives for the cause of peace and freedom during World War II and to comfort their survivors.

(3) To conduct programs for charitable and educational purposes through the Memorial Trust of the Second Air Division, USAAF, located in England.

(4) To sponsor or participate in activities of a patriotic nature.

(5) To provide social and recreational activities for the League and the 2ADA membership.

Before the troops departed from England at the end of hostilities in 1945, monies were

collected to establish a memorial for those whose lives had been sacrificed in defense of freedom and peace. In 1963 the Memorial Room at Norwich Central Library was dedicated. This past year saw the goal of a \$500,000 trust fund reached and surpassed, thus assuring an American presence at that memorial in perpetuity. Heritage League members — individually and as a group — have made a number of contributions to this fund over recent years and have shared in the elation of having achieved such an ambitious goal.

Our group maintains close ties with groups such as The Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial, based in Norfolk, England. We are presently trying to stimulate interest in a pen pal program between individuals, families and school homerooms in our two nations.

Visionaries see this group as one day becoming a prestigious genealogical society; they mention the DAR, SAR, and the like.

Our present membership is made up largely of wives, children and husbands of those who served in the 2AD. Recognizing our own mortality, we realize we must try to interest and involve our sons, daughters, grandchildren and other interested parties in the perpetuation of our goals and ideals. It has been my hope to enlist many new members among these groups in this year of my

presidency.

Next year, the helm will be assumed by one of the younger members, Billy Sheely Johnson, whose father lost his life in 1944, the summer before her birth. Billy brings energy, creativity, and zeal to whatever projects she undertakes. It bodes well for our future, I think.

It seems a great many of the 2ADA have not spoken with their families about their war experiences. Horrifying as many of them were, it was best to try to forget. Unfortunately, once those parents are gone there is little chance for their children to gain the information they so desperately seek. We have met many young people who are just now sorting through war memorabilia and eagerly trying to locate someone who knew the parent and can give them information about that very significant time. We urge all members of the 2ADA to relate some of your memories; the camaraderie of your crew, the friendships established with the village people in England. Only in this way will they know the importance of preserving the memory of the Second Air Division.

We fervently believe the selfless valor of the Second Air Division should not be forgotten!

Reminder: The next general meeting of the Heritage League will be October 3, 1992 at the Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas. Y'all come.



by Bob Sheehan

We are about to go to Las Vegas for our 1992 Reunion. This year the 467th joins with the 2nd Air Division Association. The activities of the 2ADA were listed in the *Spring Journal*.

The 467th activities are:

(1) Our Hospitality Room will be open most of the time during the four days we will be in Las Vegas. You are urged to bring your own memorabilia so that others may share it with you. Make sure it is properly identified.

(2) The 467th Group Dinner will be on Sunday night, October 4th. No program will be presented other than a few announcements concerning reunion activities. This is the kickoff gathering and should be spent just having fun.

(3) The 1992 Business Meeting will take place immediately following the 2nd Air Division Association Business Meeting on Tuesday morning, October 6th. The time will be about 11:00 a.m. The business at hand will include the election of officers and directors for 1992. If anyone has a subject that needs attention, please give me a written request by mail in advance of this meeting so that same subject will be placed on the agenda for this meeting. We hope to have a report from those who made the trip to England in May.

Again, we remind you to support the Library Program in Norwich. It is such a worthwhile effort.

389th Notes

by Lloyd E. West

It's time for the Fall 1992 issue of the 2ADA *Journal*, and I have assembled a few items that I hope may be of interest. Circumstances prohibited this VP from contributing to the summer issue.

NEW MEMBERS

The response to the packets sent to prospective new members has dropped considerably recently. Following are the recent new members of the 2ADA from the 389th BG: Adrian Antonelle, 1148 W Barefoot Circle, Barefoot Bay, FL 32976; John R. Ball, 641 Chelsea Dr., Sanford, NC 27330; Paul J. Bordewich, 6748 Pagentry, Long Beach, CA 90808; Norman Casey, 551 14th Ave No., Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494; Dean W. Dahlke, 313 Adrian, Council Bluffs, IA 51503; William E. Dent, 2102 Marie Pl., Monroe, LA 71201; William Greer, 108 Winding Meadows Dr., Flat Rock, NC 28731; Donald E. Kunkle, 118 Boxwood Rd., Aiken, SC 29801; John C. Messerschmitt, 190 E 72nd St., New York, NY 10021; Henry Montegari, 880 E 15th St., Brooklyn, NY 11230; Dale L. Montross, 70443 Chappel Rd., Rancho Mirage, CA 92270; Kenneth Morgan, Rt. 2, Box 49, Elizabeth, IN 47117; Frank J. Raab, 304 Lyster Rd., Oreland, PA 19075; James B. Valla, 4704 Lodestone Dr., Tampa, FL 33615; Associate Member Frank Amador, 11746 Maple St., Whittier, CA 90601.

FOLDED WINGS

We regret to report the following: Jack R.

Jaeger, Charles Ducsay, Richard W. Reedy, Franklin Guild, Robert Wittenberg, Frank J. Serratore, Herbert J. Newman, Maj. Marcus A. Pharr.

ROSTER

After no acknowledgement of a personal letter to those members of the 389th named for non-payment of 1992 2ADA dues, 29 have been dropped from the 2ADA roster by the membership VP. We know there are various reasons for dropping, but we regret losing even one member.

PLOESTI

Representatives from the 44th, 93rd, 98th, 376th, and 389th Bomb Groups who participated in the August 1, 1943 mission to Ploesti, Romania were invited to a meeting July 31, 1992 at the Liberal KS Air Museum to discuss plans for a 50th anniversary reunion in 1993 of all veterans of the mission. As VP of the 389th I need some help in locating those crewmen of the 389th still living who were on that mission. Please get in touch with Lloyd E. West, Box 256, Rush Center, KS 67575 or call (913) 372-4484.

LAS VEGAS

Members of the 389th planning to be in Las Vegas October 4-7 for the annual 2ADA reunion, check your 2ADA *Journal* and 389th Newsletter for items of interest to you in the fall issue of each publication. Hoping to see many of you in Las Vegas for a grand time, your VP Lloyd E. West and Assistant VP Allan P. Hallett.

David R. Davis and The Davis Wing

by Allan G. Blue

David Davis was born in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, in 1895. He was not of robust health, and because of this his formal schooling took a back seat to the family doctor's advice that he spend as much time as possible out-of-doors. After the death of his father, his mother apparently let him work at it without restraint. Accompanied by a tutor, his wanderings took him far from Eau Claire — canoeing rivers in Canada, following the trail of Lewis and Clark, or just disappearing for weeks at a time. Between trips he attended school, but gave no indication that he would ever excel in the education department.

In 1910 the family (Davis had a brother and a sister) left the prosperous Davis Paper Company in Eau Claire and moved to Hollywood. Like many boys of his age, Davis became fascinated with the new challenge of aviation, and many a day skipped school to hang around the local airport in hopes that he might be allowed to help push a plane out of a hangar.

In 1915 he became part owner of a bamboo Curtis with a three-cylinder motor. His partner in this venture was Grover Bell, who was considered "senior pilot" because he could make turns — all Davis could manage were straight-line, grass-cutting flights. Grover's younger brother wasn't allowed to try at all, but in later years Larry Bell, founder of Bell Aircraft, got to make quite a few airplanes himself.

In 1917 Davis became an infantry private,

and as soon as the war was over he purchased a Jenny. The story goes that this plane made the first flight across Death Valley when a severe storm blew Davis all the way across the valley — backwards. When the gas ran out, the forced landing wrecked the plane and broke Davis' glasses.

Upon the death of his mother in the early 1920s Davis had funds to invest and, together with Los Angeles Times journalist Bill Henry, induced a man named Donald W. Douglas to leave his job as Chief Engineer for the Glenn L. Martin Company in Baltimore and return to California. The resulting Davis-Douglas Aircraft Corporation, with Davis as sole owner and financial contributor, produced the Douglas Cloudster, the first airplane to carry its own weight in payload. However, no orders were forthcoming. Before severing his relationship with Douglas, Davis also paid for the engineering of the DT torpedo plane. (The latter funds were later repaid by Douglas.)

For a time in the late 1920s Davis worked for Bendix, and has been credited with developing the first variable-pitch propeller without mechanical control. But Davis was essentially a loner, and left Bendix to pursue, on his own, his search for "the perfect wing."

The task he faced was formidable, to say the least. Wing design was rapidly progressing from the early cut-and-try method, carried out in the back of a hangar, to the wind tunnels of the laboratory. Davis' ideas,

more intuition than anything else, didn't fit into either category.

He improvised. His workshop was his kitchen table. He was convinced that the traditional methods of wing design erred by treating the wing as an object that remained stationary while air flowed over it. In his mind, Davis felt the wing, like a propeller, should be considered as having its own motion, and that the relationship between the moving wing and the moving air should be able to be expressed mathematically. He further reasoned that the approximately 10% drag penalty that had come to be accepted by the engineers might be greatly reduced if the correct formula for the air/airfoil relationship could be found.

His mathematical explorations were handicapped by his haphazard schooling; he knew no calculus. It took nearly a year to produce the first of his formulas, laboriously and somewhat clumsily expressed in trigonometric functions — the highest mathematics he knew. Eventually, he felt he had a family of equations that could produce airfoil shapes for whatever performance characteristics were desired — high speed, high lift, or the best compromise between the two. On May 25, 1931, he applied for a patent on his creation.

The patent was not granted until almost three years later, on January 9, 1934. The long delay was due in part to the fact that the issuance of a patent for a purely mathema-

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The Davis Wing

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tical formula was most unusual — some sources say unprecedented — but in Davis' case granted because "...the objects described and predicted... (represent)... a family of related shapes, having a definite utility and function."

Now Davis owned a "paper wing" — which might or might not be worth the paper it was printed on.

He would have to test — and here again he improvised. He built a three-foot segment of a wing, devised his own pressure instrumentation, and mounted the whole assembly on a platform that could in turn be mounted on an automobile. Douglas Shearer, a friend who worked for MGM, had a car (Davis did not) and was willing to loan it to Davis as long as the tests were made in the early morning before Shearer needed the car to drive to work. This was fine with Davis, in as much as his tests required that no wind be present to disrupt his instrumentation, and early dawn was the perfect time. It is doubtful that Shearer knew the full details of this testing process. Davis and a friend, Walter Clavery, would pick up the car in darkness, remove the body, mount the testing platform, and then go hurtling down a particular straight stretch of highway at 90 mph, dodging farm trucks on their way to market. As soon as any breeze came up, or the clock neared their time deadline, they would take off the testing gear, replace the body, and get the car back to Shearer's garage in time for him to leave for MGM.

This testing phase began in 1935 and was not completed until two years later, but by that time David Davis was convinced that his theory was sound and his formulae were correct. Now came the *really* hard part — convincing someone else. And not just somebody, but somebody who commanded the substantial resources necessary to convert a paper wing to cut metal.

Turned down flat by the first company he approached, Davis managed to have another friend, Walter Brookins, arrange a meeting with Maj. Reuben Fleet, head of Consolidated Aircraft. Fleet had a well-earned reputation as a hard headed, no nonsense businessman — hardly a likely buyer for something as esoteric as the product Davis was selling. But Consolidated built long-range aircraft, and Davis felt he had to try.

The first meeting (there were two) did not go well; Davis had to admit there had been no wind tunnel tests, and his attempts to explain his theories in terms of the interaction of rotating bodies in a flowing fluid did little to captivate Fleet. I.M. Laddon, Consolidated's Chief Engineer, attended the second meeting and also was unimpressed. Finally, as a polite dismissal, Fleet suggested that Laddon show Davis around the plant.

It was during this tour, as Davis began talking with small groups of Consolidated engineers, that Laddon began to have second thoughts. Among his peers, Davis talked with confidence and authority. Maybe, just maybe, there was something to his ideas after all. A few days later Laddon told Fleet



Davis continued to use the automobile as his airfoil testing device during the post-Consolidated wartime period. This is the "Davis Airfoils Test Car," a 1942 Buick convertible with a removable platform for mounting instrumentation and the wing section under test. Person in car is Leland Reid; Davis stands alongside. Photo taken in 1943. Note that wing section was mounted vertically. (Courtesy Bob Reid)

that he thought the Davis thing was worth a try. At the time, Consolidated was just completing design of their Model 31, a private venture that the company hoped would be a logical follow-on to their successful PBY flying boat. Why not let Davis design an airfoil for the Model 31 and then compare his design with Consolidated's? The cost would only run about \$800, half for the wind tunnel model and the rest for the test. Reluctantly, Fleet agreed.

Davis went back to his kitchen table. His orders were to produce his magic airfoil within the planform and thickness distribution of the existing Model 31 design. Not exactly the same as designing a wing from scratch, but at this point still a golden opportunity. His design complete and his eight-foot model ready, Davis presented his offering to GALCIT — the Guggenheim Aeronautical Laboratory of the California Institute of Technology, in Pasadena.

At that time, a wind tunnel test normally took a few hours to run, a few days to interpret the results, with a final report ready in a week. Davis was given his wing back, but no report appeared. Another week went by, and GALCIT asked for the wing again. It was returned a second time, but still no final report. Davis, understandably anxious, thought GALCIT was giving him the run-around, but what they were actually doing was taking their tunnel apart to see if they could find some reason for the astounding results produced by the Davis wing tests. Finding nothing wrong, GALCIT finally issued their report on September 13, 1937. It stated, in part:

Certain of the results for the Davis wing are so striking that when they were first obtained, it was felt that some experimental

error must have entered. Accordingly, the model was installed in the tunnel and tested on three separate occasions some weeks apart. The final run was made immediately following that with the Consolidated wing. All three tests gave practically perfect agreement... In view of these repeated checks the Davis wing results are believed to be very trustworthy...

From an academic point of view, the most startling of the Davis wing results is the airfoil efficiency factor showing that the slope of the lift curve has very nearly the value 2π , which is predicted by perfect fluid, thin airfoil theory. Practically all of the wings tested at the GALCIT have had values lying between 0.87 and 0.92, with a maximum value of 0.93 previously obtained just once. The remarkably high value for the Davis wing (0.983) is probably associated with a peculiar variation of boundary layer thickness with angle of attack, but no real explanation for it has as yet appeared.

From the practical designer's point of view, the abnormally high lift curve slope is of no great importance. However, certain of the other characteristics are quite good, especially in competition with the Consolidated wing values...

Fleet and Laddon now faced a serious, and expensive, decision. Go with the in-house, state-of-the-art wing, or take the chance and switch to a design that might turn out to be revolutionary — or a wind tunnel fluke. In the event, they took the chance and the twin-engine Model 31 wing design was changed over to the Davis airfoil.

Consolidated then upped the ante by selling the Army the Model 32, an as-yet

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The Davis Wing

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undesigned airplane based on the Model 31 Davis wing. Fleet claimed the Model 32 would be a better four-engine bomber than the B-17. And this, mind you, before the Model 31 had ever flown.

There remained the question of compensation to Davis for his work. He had established his own company, Davis Airfoils, Inc., which was located on North Sycamore Street in Los Angeles. Negotiations between his lawyer and the Consolidated legal department dragged on and on until Fleet and Davis decided it had been long enough. Sitting down in Fleet's office, they worked out an agreement in a short time that gave Davis \$2,500 for each prototype and a royalty on each subsequent airplane produced using his airfoil, based on a sliding scale beginning at 1/2 of 1% of the selling price of the aircraft and decreasing to 1/8 of 1% when and if orders reached \$10 million. If total royalty payments reached \$50,000, the rate was to be reduced to 1/16 of 1%. (By 1943, Davis was being paid \$92.71 for each B-24 produced, the going rate under the 1/16 of 1% feature of his agreement. Army procurement thought this excessive, and a new agreement took effect on 1 April of that year whereby Davis would receive \$5 per airplane. He got his amount for each of the 17,383 Davis-winged aircraft produced on and after that date. Davis' total royalties from his kitchen-table wing approximated \$400,000 — in 1940 dollars.)

The Model 31 made its first flight on May 5, 1939, and it was an unqualified success. Fleet and Laddon breathed easier, and work on the Model 32 prototype, the XB-24, went forward with new confidence.

Davis went on to other things. With others, he formed the Manta Aircraft Corporation which produced the design of a radical pursuit aircraft based on the Allison liquid cooled engine and featured what today would be termed a modified delta wing. But neither this nor Manta's other wartime projects ever saw the light of production.

Davis' time in the public spotlight was brief. He remained associated with the aircraft industry for another three decades but never again as a leader; wartime research buried forever his kitchen table approach to the mysteries of flight. In 1962 he is known to have been with Hughes Aircraft as an inspector of outside source procurement. He died on April 15, 1972 at the age of 78.

There is an interesting sidelight to the now-famous wind tunnel tests. Again quoting from the GALCIT report:

The Davis model had a very beautiful polished surface of the same type that is found on the best automobile bodies. The Consolidated model... had a very poor surface finish when received from the Consolidated Corporation. It was worked over for several days by the same man who had worked on the Davis wing finish... (until)... the surface textures of the two models were practically identical.

The man who built all of Davis' wing models was Leland Reid, who shaped them by hand from laminated mahogany. What GALCIT didn't know, however, was that the "best automobile body type finish" that they had so admired was just that. After Reid had finished shaping a model, he would take it down to the D'Arcy Coach Works in Alhambra, owned by his friend and fellow aviation enthusiast D'Arcy Quinn, and have them spray it with multiple coats of black automobile lacquer finish.

Note: Much of the information about Davis that appeared in newspapers and magazines of the time is contradictory. One source, for example, credits him with a law degree from Vanderbilt University. The above account is based largely on Harold Keen's "Mystery Airfoil," which appeared in Popular Aviation in June 1940, and T. Benson Hoy's 1941 Saturday Evening Post article "This Wing May Win the War." Both of these were based on extensive personal interviews with Davis. The writer would also like to thank Alan (Bud) Reuter, Bob Reid, and Ed Allen, all of whom knew David Davis, for their help.)

Editor's Note: Al Blue reports that his continuing research into the Davis story has turned up the fact that one of the original wing models prepared for Davis by Leland Reid may still exist. If this can be confirmed, we'll have a photo in a later issue.

Return to England 1942-1992

by C.N. "Bud" Chamberlain, Chairman

It is no secret that 1992 is the 50th anniversary of the American Air Forces' arrival in Britain during WWII. It is no secret, either, that the East Anglia Tourist Board (EATB) has been charging flat out for months — maybe even years — to plan a host of events around which any former 8th or 9th USAAF unit association could build a reunion back in the United Kingdom. Well, scores of them did exactly that.

Although the 2ADA had slated its 1992 reunion in Las Vegas before it knew of EATB intentions, better than half of our bomb groups, nevertheless, planned to be in England for this great celebration. So, we were well represented. The 392nd, 445th, 466th, 467th, 489th and 491st have been there already with delegations totaling over 300. The 44th and 448th plan to go in the fall and, at last count, expect in the neighborhood of 300 between them. Additionally, untold numbers have travelled there individually.

The EATB sparkplug for USAAF - UK '92 is a charming young lady by the name of Jane Sullivan. I have asked her to say a few words expressing her reaction on the success to date. Here is her response:



I think I can say, without doubt, that the USAAF 50th Anniversary in England has been a success. By October, over 80 groups will have come back as well as many people who have travelled independently. If the letters that I have received from these people are anything to go by, it has definitely been a success. Our aim was that all veterans would receive an extra special welcome this year, and the following quotation from a letter hopefully proves that this aim has been achieved: "...I know that I speak for the great majority of people when I say that we were graciously received, royally treated and

shown a deep seated kindness, appreciation and love that the British people seem to hold for we WWII fliers. People recognized the 8th AF patch on my battle jacket and time after time I was confronted by complete strangers. Invariably we reminisced about the wartime years, the good times and the bad times, the happy times and the sad times. Every conversation was joyful and memorable; but there seemed to be an underlying theme, a leitmotif to every single conversation held. Although the words were never spoken, the message was clear. Basically these people said 'Thanks for coming, Yank and thanks for coming when we needed you, 50 years ago.'"

This is fully consistent with my own experience at Halesworth in May where our Friends of the 489th Bomb Group hosted a superb six day reunion which for warmth, diversity and good cheer was unmatched. I expect the other visiting groups will have similar tales to tell. I hope so. Let's toast the EATB for highlighting this historic event and for creating the most favorable environment for its commemoration.

466th Bomb Group

by Bill Nothstein

ATTLEBRIDGE UPDATE

On the 12th of June 1992 the Memorial was dedicated. To avoid being repetitious, I include below the entire account given me from Barkev Hovsepian.

466 BGA Dedicates Memorial

by Barkev A. Hovsepian, President

An enthusiastic group of 466ers gathered at the Hotel Nelson in Norwich on June 9, 1992, to start an exciting and memorable week which culminated with the dedication of the stone memorial just outside our Attlebridge airfield.

Our first full day of activity was a visit to Norwich City Hall Council Chamber where we were welcomed by the Lord Mayor Arthur Clare and Lady Clare. The Lord Mayor presented a book on Norwich and, as president, I accepted the gift on behalf of the 466 BGA. While we were being served refreshments, I pinned a 466 BG badge on the Mayor's lapel, making him an honorary 466er. In turn, we were presented with the City of Norwich badges. Coincidentally, and appropriately, the Confederate Air Force's "Diamond Lil" flew over — as if giving us a personal salute and welcome. After visiting historic Guild Hall, and enjoying fish and chips at a local eatery, we gathered at the 2AD Memorial fountain where we were welcomed by Phyllis DuBois, Trust Librarian. When inside, we were so impressed with the many books and memorabilia. Some old-timers noticed how much it had grown since previous visits. The McNairs presented Phyllis with the book containing a list of all the names, to date, of donors and boosters to be placed in the Memorial Room for future viewing.

The next day was our visit to Duxford Airfield and the American Air Museum section. Inside the hangar, we spoke with Keith Hill, aviation artist, and his wife Alison. Keith had on display a lithograph of his latest painting, "Combat For The Straggler," which is a 466 BG, 787 BS, B-24J. (Only 750 copies have been made.) Several people purchased copies of this handsome reproduction. First-timers were pleasantly surprised to find our Group insignia among the 60 emblems displayed on the hangar wall. (This impressive, full-color, back-lighted display was produced by Duxford artisans and sponsored by the 8AFMMF.) After a pleasant sit-down luncheon, we went to Madingley American Cemetery. Russ McNair offered a prayer for our boys buried there and those who are MIA. The Assistant Director of Madingley, Mr. Raymond Shaw, welcomed us and explained that all 466 graves were marked with flags to make them easier for us to identify. With our 466 banner held at the base of the memorial flagpole, I placed a lovely wreath on behalf of the group, and after a moment of silence we dispersed throughout the cemetery. First-timers were most impressed by the Chapel and the splendidly landscaped grounds.

The third and most important day, 12 June, was the day of the dedication ceremony. As our bus approached the beautifully decorated triangular plot, we came upon the crowd of dignitaries and villagers, waving in the breeze. I personally was stunned by the spectacle and had a lump in my throat. The impressive attendance left me almost speechless. There was the RAF Honor Guard from Swanton Morley, the Color Guard from Lackenheath, and veterans from the Royal British Legion led by Digby Horner. Each military unit approached the monument in turn and the ceremony commenced. Rev. Paul Illingworth, rector of Weston-Longville All Saints Church, opened with a prayer of remembrance to the convocation, followed by the priest from Lyng, representing the Bishop. Tom Reto asked the following to come forward and say a few words for the occasion: Mrs. M.F. Duigan, Chairman, Norfolk County Council; Mr. Leslie Woolf, Chairman, Broadlands District Council; Mr. Tom Eaton, Chairman, Second Air Division Memorial Trust; Mr. Raymond Shaw, Assistant Director of the American Cemetery. (American Battle Monuments Commission — they oversee all American memorials in the U.K.) Also present were: Mr. David Lee, Assistant Director of Duxford Museum; Ms. Jane Sullivan, East Anglia Tourist Board; and Mr. Keith Rackham, of Perfitt, Ltd., who was the stone mason. (This triangular plot of land is deeded to the 466th Bomb Group Association, Inc., and a clause in the Property Deed states, "...We accept the Memorial being there for all time and cannot be moved.") My sincere gratitude was expressed to all who honored us by their attendance and participation. At this point in history, I feel fortunate to have been the spokesman in reminding everyone what the memorial represents: "In Memory of Those Who Served" for the cause of liberty and freedom. Immediately after the ceremony, we met at the Thomson residence for refreshments. Mighty Eighth posters and 466 badges were distributed to those pre-

sent, and Tom Reto and I cut the beautiful cake which was made in the design of the memorial monument.

That evening we attended the Gala Banquet at the Hotel Nelson. Among the dignitaries and guests was the famous author and our friend, Roger Freeman, and his wife Jean. Roger was the guest speaker, giving me a most hilarious recounting of our lives, language differences and customs of nearly fifty years ago. He was in rare form and it was a welcome change from the solemnity earlier that day.

The next day was spent in leisure, shopping, individual side trips, visits and socializing.

On Sunday afternoon, Molly and Lou Loevsky had arranged a boat trip on the Wensum River. (Interestingly, the captain of the boat was the same one who had retrieved my Air Force cap which the wind had blown into the river back in 1986!) This was a most enjoyable conclusion to the intense schedule of the preceding days, and we were indeed most fortunate that the weather during our entire stay was unbelievably beautiful!

We survivors are most fortunate to have been able to pay our respects by taking part in this memorable event, and I encourage all 466ers, who are able, to visit our magnificent memorial, for it is truly a sight to behold.

Thank you for a job well done.

Recently I had occasion to call some of our members. After talking to Ralph McCready (Armorer with the 785th Squadron), he sent me many photos of his group. I have selected one with the largest group of personnel to be printed in this issue. Do you recognize any of them? I believe the person standing on the left was Lt. Tom (?), Armament Officer. Ralph said that he would welcome all visitors and he is at home at HCR 1, Box 610, Longville, MN 56655. It appears he traded one Longville for another.





392nd B.G.

by Oak Mackey

*"A little nonsense now and then is relished
by the best of men."*

— Shakespeare or somebody

From the ice box to the frying pan, it is true; Maxine and I have moved from Minnesota to Arizona. Our new address is 2329 N. Recker Rd. #19, Mesa, AZ 85205, phone (602) 641-3033. Yes, it is warm here. The big difference is, heat does not have to be plowed nor shoveled, and the winters are great.

I am writing this report in July to meet the *Journal* deadline; therefore, the agenda for our business meeting is not finalized yet. However, the meeting will be at 0900, Monday, October 5, 1992 in the meeting room assigned to the 392nd BG. Always on the agenda is the election of the Group Vice President for the following year. Those in attendance at the business meeting may elect any eligible candidate of their choice. If that person is someone other than myself, I will be very willing and happy to hand the office over to him, and will cooperate with him in every way I can. However, I have enjoyed being your VP the past year and am most willing to have another go at it for another term. If you have items and/or ideas for the agenda before the meeting, it is helpful if you could get them to me beforehand. On the other hand, we are informal folk at the 392nd BG, so items from the floor are always welcome.

You all already know, but I will make note of it here anyway. The 392nd BG Memorial Association met in conjunction with the 2nd ADA in 1991 in Dearborn, Michigan. Therefore, they are meeting this year in conjunction with 8th AFHS in Louisville, Kentucky, October 6-11, 1992.

The Norfolk & Suffolk Aviation Museum located near Flixton, England sent me a letter in March of 1992; they had located my name in a copy of the 2nd ADA *Journal*. Yes, we are famous far and wide. They requested information concerning two B-24s from the 392nd BG that collided and crashed near Skeyton, Norfolk on March 25, 1945. I was able to give the Museum a good account regarding that tragic event for I recall it very well. Also, it is recorded on page 89 of "The Liberators from Wendling." The two crews involved were the Kaiser crew and the Markuson crew. There were only four survivors who managed somehow to bail out; all others perished. Survivors from the Kaiser crew were two gunners whose names I do not know. Survivors from the Markuson crew were the engineer, "Sugar" Cain and the co-pilot Harold W. Hutchcroft. Now, I was the co-pilot on the Jack Clarke crew and we were good friends of the Markuson crew, for we had trained together at Tonopah, NV before being sent overseas to the 8th AF. In

September of 1944, both crews, and the Cieply crew, and the Peterson crew from Tonopah were assigned to the 392nd BG. The Cieply crew was shot down by German fighter planes on Dec. 3, 1944; there were no survivors. The Peterson crew all returned safely to the good ole U.S. of A. In the Clarke crew, we had one casualty. Kevin Killea, our tail gunner, had been on sick call sometime along the way and was one mission behind the rest of the crew. We were going to be flying our 35th mission soon, and to catch up with the rest of the crew and finish with us, Kevin was flying on 3-25-45 with the Kaiser crew. He was killed in the collision and crash. Kevin was a spunky, happy-go-lucky Irish kid just 20 years old; his loss was a real tragedy, as was the loss of our friends on the Markuson crew and the Cieply crew.

Co-pilots, like birds of a feather, tend to flock together. So, after the war, Hutchcroft and I have corresponded and have met on occasion. Therefore, I called Hutch on the phone and told him of the Museum's request for information on the collision and asked if it would be okay to give the Museum his address in Middletown, IA. He said, "Sure, go ahead," and in addition he told me he was going to England with the others from the 392nd BG in June 1992. There was correspondence between the Museum and Hutchcroft and arrangements were made for a representative from the Museum to meet with him in England. The representative was a Charles Bird, who was 14 years old in 1945 and lived near the crash site near Skeyton. It is not clear if he actually saw the collision, but he did see the four parachutes open and saw the men in them drift to the ground. He saw the airplanes crash and heard the bombs explode. Since, he has drawn a precise map of the area which shows the locations where each airplane hit, where a propeller hit, etc. He has searched the area for relics and found a .45 caliber pistol and many other items. He gave Hutchcroft two .50 caliber machine gun shells, a piece of aluminum, and a small identification plate which indicates the airplane was built at the Ford Willow Run Plant in Michigan. Also, the Norfolk-Suffolk Museum displays larger parts from the airplanes. What goes around, comes around. It is now 47 years since 1945 and there are still people searching and researching for information about our incidents and accidents in World War II. It is truly astounding.

You have heard of the success of the 2nd ADA regional dinner at the El Toro Marine Base each February. Here is another success story. It hasn't happened yet, but it will. On February 7, 1993, there will be a 2nd ADA regional reunion at the Clarion Hotel located midway between Orlando and Disney World. All Florida members, all Heritage League members, all 2nd ADA snowbirds from anywhere are invited. Florida members will receive full details at a later date in the mail. Those residing somewhere outside of Florida can write or call Col. Lawrence G. Gilbert (Ret.), 1482 Granville Drive, Winter Park, FL 32789 or call (407) 647-2623, for information and registration forms for this

outstanding, gala affair. You won't be sorry.

The 392nd BG is renowned throughout the world. A Cpl. Mark Wyllie of the Royal Australian Air Force wrote a very good letter to Cliff Peterson requesting information concerning the 392nd BG combat record and activities during World War II. Cliff passed it on to me so I could make note of it in this report. Cpl. Wyllie's address is, 1 Lewis Court, Sunshine 3020, Victoria, Australia. If any of you wish to correspond with him, he would appreciate it very much. I have sent him an old copy of the 2nd ADA *Journal* and a couple of newsletters from the 392nd BGMA. Also, he was invited to become a Subscribing Member of the 2nd ADA by sending Evelyn Cohen \$15.00 for the annual dues. He would then receive future copies of the *Journal*. And, I told him how to get copies of "The Liberators from Wendling" by Col. Bob Vickers and "392nd War Stories" by Col. Myron Keilman. He has replied with a long letter and thanked me for the things I sent him. With his letter were copies of some interesting newspaper clippings and reports written about his father's escapades during World War II with the Australian Infantry Third Division in New Guinea and Bougainville Island. Those fellows had to fight a very dirty, bloody war. Combat missions in bombers are no fun, but it sure beats the infantry man's war.

Gentlemen, that's it for now. See you in Las Vegas. To close, here is another "Lest We Forget" article by Col. Myron Keilman.

LEST WE FORGET

by Myron Keilman (579th Squadron)

On 30 October 1944 the 2nd Air Division bombed the oil refinery complex at Hamburg, Germany. Twenty-one (21) 392nd B-24s released 466 250 lb. bombs by radar. The weather enroute and over the target was poor. No fighters were sighted and the flak was meager. No airplanes or crews were lost.

On 1 November the same target was assigned. Ten aircraft took off and ten went over the target in spite of extensive winter weather. No fighters came up and only moderate flak was encountered. All airplanes returned safely.

Here is how General Doolittle rated the 2nd Air Division effort:

"The determination to deliver our bombs on assigned targets was commendably demonstrated by the Second Bomb Division and its scouting force on thirty October, notwithstanding five to seven tenths cirrus clouds and dense contrails along the route and in the Hamburg area. Photo reconnaissance on 1 November revealed considerable damage to the dock and shipyard area inflicted between 29 October and 1 November. I wish to commend the entire Second Air Division on the skill and determination shown in navigating through the extremely adverse weather condition along the route and in successfully completing this mission. It is feats like this which are progressively adding to the capabilities of the Eighth Air Force."

"Surprise" Attack on Hamm, Germany, 22 April 1944

by Major Kenneth L. Driscoll (USAF, Ret.)

Why am I writing this article 48 years after the events happened? Here is why:

A couple of years ago I heard about the 467th and 801st/492nd Bomb Group Associations. During 1944 I had flown five daylight B-24 bombing missions with the 467th Bomb Group and 30 secret night missions with the 801st/492nd Bomb Group dropping spies and supplies to support the French underground forces.

I joined both Associations; have gone to their reunions; have received their Quarterly Newsletters and bought and read the two books written that best describe the history of both groups: (1) "The 467th Bombardment Group, September 1943 — June 1945" and (2) "The Carpetbaggers, America's Secret War in Europe" by Ben Parnell, which describes the secret night missions of the 801st/492nd Group.

Because of my renewed interest in both Groups, I have recently been reminiscing about the various missions that I flew from April through August 1944.

One mission in particular stands out above the other thirty-four: the 467th Bomb Group mission to Hamm, Germany on 22 April 1944. That was my crew's 3rd combat mission.

HQ 8th Air Force decided to pull a "surprise" attack on Germany. Our target was the railroad marshalling yards at Hamm, Germany.

The "surprise" was that the 8th Air Force was to hit the target about an hour before dark and catch the Germans unprepared to retaliate with anti-aircraft guns (flak) and fighters.

After bombing the target, we were to fly in formation back to the coastline. Upon reaching the North Sea coastline, darkness would be setting in.

At our afternoon briefing, our instructions were that when it got dark, we were to break formation, turn on our running lights and each crew was on its own to return to base.

The group aircraft took off as scheduled late in the afternoon/early evening. My squadron, the 788th, was not leading the group. My crew was flying number 2 position (deputy lead) in the squadron formation. I do not recall who our squadron lead pilot was.

The group got into formation at about 24,000 feet altitude at the assigned radio beacon north of our base, Rackheath. At the designated time, the group turned east and joined other groups flying in formation at the division assembly line. When we crossed the North Sea, our altitude was approximately 27,000 feet.

After landfall, we saw some flak bursts in the distance but no enemy fighters. About 10 minutes prior to reaching the I.P. (a point above the ground from which a straight bomb run was made to the target), our plane got hit by flak which disabled the number 2 engine. I dropped back out of

formation, lost some air speed but was able to hold altitude. We dropped back about 200 yards from the formation before we had number 2 prop feathered (the front edge of the propeller blades pointed forward to reduce drag), mixture controls full rich, propellers in maximum RPM and the throttles full forward. We were too far over enemy territory to turn back. A single B-24, with one engine out, flying alone, would be an inviting and easy target for enemy fighter aircraft.

Luckily, I had been able to maintain altitude. With full power on the three good engines, I was able to catch up to and rejoin the formation. Another aircraft had pulled into my vacated position and I pulled into the open spot at the back of the 788th formation. With the extra power on the three engines, I did not have any trouble staying in formation.

Within a couple of minutes, we got to the I.P. and the various flights got in trail position for the bomb run.

After dropping the bombs, the flights turned right off the target and reformed into the normal group formation configuration for the return flight.

The flight to the coast was routine with the exception of having to keep extra power on the three good engines to enable us to keep in formation.

Just prior to reaching the coast in semi-darkness, enemy anti-aircraft guns shot up some tracer shells at us. They resembled the bright white Roman candles used at 4th of July celebrations. There were 10 or 15 of them. I saw them passing nearby to the right of us. They were going straight up. Because my field of vision was cut off at the top of the co-pilot's window, I could not follow them up. I had never seen anything like that before.

Shortly thereafter, we crossed the coastline and headed back across the North Sea. When we were over the water about 15 miles, darkness was becoming a reality.

I decided to break out of the formation a little early due to the fact that I had been pulling excessive power on the three good engines while in formation, and did not want to risk losing another one at night over the North Sea (I wasn't sure how far a B-24 would fly on two engines and I did not want to find out).

Shortly after dropping back out of formation, we turned on our running lights and started a very slow descent. This allowed me to reduce the power and take the strain off the three good engines.

When full darkness came, I started to fly by instruments which was normal procedure on night flights over water. The navigator, Lt. Harold Pantis, kept getting electronic fixes. He kept us all informed, over the intercom, as to when we would make landfall near Great Yarmouth, and the estimated time of arrival (ETA) over our base at Rackheath. We did not see the lights of other aircraft. The formation had pulled ahead and dispersed in front of us.

They were flying faster than we were.

The navigator, who was superior at his work, gave me a few small corrections as we kept our slow letdown to the English coast.

There was radio silence.

Just about when our ETA over the coast was up, the navigator called and said we were then crossing the coastline. The night was very dark and there was a 100% blackout on the ground. We could not see the coastline or anything on land. He gave me the heading to the base and an ETA which was only minutes away. I told the crew to get into their normal positions for landing (ball turret up, tail gunner out, waist guns secured, etc.). The navigator was to stay in place in the front of the aircraft until the base was in sight.

When the ETA at the base was up, the navigator called over the intercom and said that the base was directly below us. I banked the aircraft to the left and looked down. I could see absolutely no base lights or runway lights — everything was blacked out.

The city of Norwich was located about 8 miles southwest of the airbase. At Norwich, barrage balloons were up to protect the city from low flying German bombers. We had to avoid flying over the blacked out city or risk being off course and having a cable from a balloon knock us down; or being fired upon by the anti-aircraft guns protecting the city.

While circling around near the base, some other aircraft were also flying around with running lights on. No aircraft had an assigned altitude. We were on our own.

Horsham St. Faith, another B-24 base in our Wing and Division, was located about 8 miles to the west of our base. We could not see any lights at that base either.

We did not have an alternate airport assigned during the briefing.

There was still radio silence. The control tower did not send out any instructions. I do not remember if I, or any other pilots flying around, broke radio silence. If one of us did, the tower did not respond.

With headings supplied by the navigator, I made about 6 passes across the blacked out base. The entire countryside was very dark with no lights or landmarks visible.

I then told the navigator that we would fly northeast for 5 minutes and then make a 180 degree turn and head back to the base. I thought that by flying straight and level for that period of time, the navigator would be able to better reconfirm our exact position in relation to the base.

After making the 180 degree turn, he gave me the heading and ETA back to Rackheath. When the ETA was up, he again stated that the base was below us. I then began to circle to the left again but the base was still not in sight.

By this time, I was getting quite concerned. We had been flying for about 3 hours with an engine out; Norwich, with its barrage balloons and anti-aircraft guns was

(continued on page 13)

"Surprise" Attack

(continued from page 12)

close by; other aircraft were milling around in the darkness; no alternate airport to go to; no radio contact with the tower and no lights on the ground to indicate our base and runway. The whole countryside was still blacked out.

Luckily, fuel was not a problem. We had taken off with a full load of gas and the flight to Hamm was not a long one.

After circling about 3 more times, all of a sudden the runway lights were turned on. I immediately entered a normal traffic pattern. As usual, landing lights were turned on during the final approach. The tower still maintained radio silence.

We landed and rolled to near the end of the runway, turned right on to a taxiway, turned off our landing lights and started to taxi back to our parking area. Periodically, the landing lights were turned on for a very short time to assist me in taxiing the aircraft in. These lights were not designed for full time ground operation and would burn out quickly with prolonged use.

When we got about halfway down to our parking area, military personnel in a jeep flagged us down and I stopped the aircraft. We were then informed that German fighters and fighter bombers were in the area and had hit the base. The German planes had intermingled in the darkness with the 8th AF planes coming back across the North Sea and were not detected when crossing the English coast.

We shut off all lights, and due to the extreme darkness proceeded slowly to our

parking area. Needless to say, after shutting down the three engines, we evacuated the plane in a hurry.

We were told later at the debriefing that German aircraft had come across the base, strafed it and dropped two bombs. One enlisted man, who had been visiting friends at the base, was killed, and five aircraft had not yet returned. It was not known at the time if they had been shot down by the intruding German aircraft or had landed at some other 8th AF base in East Anglia. Each aircraft had a 10 man crew.

Early the next morning, I went down to the Squadron Operations Building to get clued in as to what had happened the night before and to find out the status of the five missing planes. I was told that three had landed safely at other bases and two were shot down close by with no survivors. One was shot down northwest of the base by a German fighter and the other was shot down by anti-aircraft fire near the base.

Just by chance, both First Pilots on each aircraft (Lts. Jack Skinner and James Roden) had been close friends of mine from our early days of training at Wendover, Utah. In my opinion, Lt. Roden was the best formation flying pilot that I had ever known. I felt a great personal loss upon hearing of both of their deaths.

I never received an explanation of why the tower did not break radio silence and instruct us to turn off our lights, scatter in a northerly direction and return in a half hour or so. It is possible that the first few returning aircraft were advised of the situation. At that time, I estimated that we were about 8-10 minutes away and 20-25 miles

out from the base. With VHF radios, we should have been able to pick up tower transmissions at that distance.

The German fighters probably did not try to shoot down any of our aircraft while intermingled with us coming in over the North Sea. That action would have been detected and their surprise attack ruined. Our incoming aircraft would have been alerted and appropriate dispersal information given to us. The ground bases and anti-aircraft gun sites would also have been alerted earlier.

We had no fighter protection while flying over the North Sea. Our normal excellent fighter escort was provided by P-38, P-47 and P-51 day fighter type aircraft while flying over the Continent. We did not have any night fighters since the 8th AF had always flown during the daytime and there was no apparent requirement for them.

There were about 1000 B-17s and B-24s crossing the coastline enroute to about 30-35 8th AF bases in East Anglia.

If the German fighter type aircraft had enough fuel and ammunition, all their pilots could have returned to Germany as Aces or Double Aces. This was a fighter pilot's dream — to be undetected among hundreds of enemy bombers flying at night with their running lights on and their guns secured (unmanned for landing).

I do not know how many bombers the 8th AF lost that night. I do know that our Group lost two and that there were probably about 30 to 35 Groups flying.

To the best of my knowledge, the 8th AF never made any more of these "surprise" early evening missions over the Continent.

I'm Fine

Author Unknown

There is nothing whatever the matter with me
I'm just as healthy as I can be.

I have arthritis in both my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

I think my liver is out of whack
And a terrible pain is in my back,
My hearing is poor, my sight is dim
And everything seems out of trim.
The way I stagger sure is a crime
I am likely to drop at any time.
I jump like mad at the drop of a pin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

My teeth will eventually have to come out,
And my diet I have to think about.
I'm overweight and can't get thin
My appetite is such that it's sure to win,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet
Or I wouldn't be able to go in the street.
Sleep is denied me night after night,
And every morning I am a sight.
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin
I'm practically living on aspirin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

The moral is as the tale we unfold
That for you and me, we are growing old.
It's better to say, I'm fine with a grin
Than to let them know the shape we are in.

It Was Not To Be

by Marvin Hendrickson (466th)

On December 24, 1944, our bomber crew of the "Margaret Jane," B-24 Liberator from the 466th Bomb Group, 787th Squadron, had completed breakfast, briefing, dressing, installing the 50 caliber guns, pre-flight checks and were waiting in line for our turn to take off on a mission over Germany. Our crew consisted of Robert E. Gordon, pilot; William Reiger, co-pilot; Otis Tichenor, navigator; Seymour Schram, bombardier; Charles Ondes, top turret gunner; George Perry, crew chief; Leroy Zack, radio operator; Lane Arrington, tail gunner; Doyle Campbell, nose gunner; and Marvin Hendrickson, ball turret gunner.

As usual the planes took off at a few second intervals, and as we were getting up a real head of steam, Robert Gordon noticed the plane in front of us had aborted take-off. He cut the power and applied the brakes to attempt to stop our forward progress, but we didn't have sufficient space and ran off the end of the runway. The rest of the crew was in the takeoff positions and I had been selected to be in the waist area on intercom to report any unforeseen problems.

When we left the runway I was thrown from the waist forward to where the batteries were above the bomb bay, but with the heavy flight togs I was uninjured. The nose wheel was ripped off and the forward compartment was filled with dirt, mud and grass. Of course the crew evacuated the plane post haste, as we had a full bomb load as well as

full gas tanks. As luck would have it, no one was injured.

With the nose wheel off, the tail of the plane was sticking up in the air, so the B-24s following us had to get their landing gear up quickly to keep from hitting it.

To point out the diligence and conscientiousness of the ground crew, we took that same plane on a mission the next morning, Christmas Day, over Germany. What a gigantic task they performed.

Later in the spring we lost two engines on a mission, had to dump our bombs and land at a temporary fighter base with the metal mesh runway. Not only did we wreak havoc with the mesh, but we ended up in the mud again, so the old gal didn't fare so well that time. We left her in Amiens, France.

During our 27 combat missions the most serious injury was the loss of part of a finger by the top turret gunner, Charles Ondes. On many of the missions we had several holes in our plane caused by flak, but by the next mission the holes were patched and the plane was ready to go.

A closing note: During the 1991-92 school year my daughter Melinda was a Fulbright Exchange Teacher Participant at St. Ives, Cambridge, England, and her exchange partner was Robert Flack. So in 1944-45 we were dodging flak and in April 1992 we were being squired around England by his parents, Jean & George (WWII RAF) Flack. Is that ironic or what?

492nd Happy Warrior Happenings

by W.H. "Bill" Beasley



VA HEALTH CARE MEDICAL ALERT

H.R. 1300 sponsored by Rep. Marty Russo of Illinois calls for the end of the federal medical health care system *including the veterans hospital system*. Contact your Congressmen and let them know your feelings.

SAN FRANCISCO — APRIL 1992

Norma and I were in San Francisco in April and were able to get together with Bob and Pat Mattson and Bill and Maxine Clarey (both members of Prewitte's crew) for dinner. A fun evening of reminiscing and flak and fighter stories. Bob showed us a very unusual wire model of a B-24, complete with a small motor mounted on a stationary stand, which rotates the aircraft in a circle. It is called "SARHADS MIGHTY — B-24."

PENNSYLVANIA

In May while in Valley Forge we had a very enjoyable Sunday afternoon visit over lunch with Evelyn Cohen. Monday we drove to Gettysburg to view the battlefield and were able to pay Mellicent "Buck" Moorhead a visit. We had a great 2 hour visit. Buck's son started the Buck Moorhead Museum in the corner of his dining room. Buck's wife Margaret has been under the weather and we hope she is completely well and able to make the Las Vegas Reunion.

2ADA MIDWEST REUNION OSHKOSH, WI

Jim and Bernice Brown, Ed and Betty Erickson, Committee Member Russ Valleau, Margaret and Tom Floyd, Ed and Anita Goldsmith, John and Helen Losee and Norma and I attended. The Sunday night fish boil was something we had never seen before and it was great. The weather was ideal for eating outside. Wisconsin does have BIG mosquitoes however!

We visited the Experimental Aviation Museum and Eagle Hangar housing WWII planes. Never having been there before, I found it extremely interesting. I recommend a visit if you have never been there. We were treated to a Fabulous Forties show at the Opera House followed by lunch.

We were joined by Harry and Ann Dean and Don and Eunice Gedatus of the 491st. It was my pleasure to represent the Executive Committee at the banquet on Monday night and speak a few words to those in attendance.

Russ Valleau became the proud owner of one of Earl Zimmerman's (389th BG) hand made clocks. Wilbur Stites and his committee are to be commended for a job well done.

WESLEY WILLIAMS (859th BS)

Wes and Barbara Williams (Prytulak's crew) were in Denver to see their daughters and paid us a visit. Lots to talk about...too short a time. They had been on a 3000+ automobile trip from Florida to Las Vegas to Denver and still had the trip home to Florida. Wes has a jazzy red sports car and he says he and Barbara have taken an oath not to carry any sharp instruments in such short close quarters. Their daughter lives in Las Vegas. I hope they will pay her a return visit in October and attend the 2nd ADA reunion.

INTERNATIONAL B-24 MEMORIAL MUSEUM

The International B-24 Memorial Museum is a unique aircraft museum. It is the only known museum dedicated to a single aircraft, the LIBERATOR. This includes the various B-24 models; its flight and ground crews, and the production and support crews. The Museum was dedicated on July 15, 1989 at its permanent home site, at the Pueblo Memorial Airport which was a training base for the B-24 during WWII. I was stationed in Pueblo for a short time after coming home from overseas and wanted to take a look at the old base (only 2 buildings remain).

The Museum contains many artifacts, photos, etc. of the B-24. The "Honor Gallery Hall of the LIBERATOR Legends" is a complete history of the B-24 from its original design to the end of WWII. The display records the history of all U.S. and allied bomb groups and wings which flew the LIBERATOR during WWII.

The Museum welcomes the donation or loan of WWII artifacts such as aircrew items, photos, uniforms, patches, badges, logbooks, squadron or group histories, etc., especially those related to the B-24 LIBERATOR.

I am proud to tell you the only Group History Book I saw in the case was "FORTUNES OF WAR" by Allan G. Blue, the History of the 492nd Bomb Group. This is the first time that I recall seeing a self-sealing gasoline tank. They have a Sperry and Norden Bombsight but no B-24. Interestingly, it is the only museum dedicated to the B-24 but because there are only 13 in existence, this museum does not have one. Does anyone have a B-24 they would like to donate to the Museum?

I spoke with Bob Boyce, Museum Director and George Williams (466th BG) and Mrs. Williams who volunteer in the museum; three very enthusiastic B-24 people. For further information, contact Robert L. Boyce, B-24 Museum, 31001 Aviation Avenue, Pueblo, CO 81001, phone (719) 948-9219; or 568 South Bayfield, Pueblo West, CO 81007, phone (719) 547-2369. (Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays, Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m.)

AIR HERITAGE MUSEUM AND AIRCRAFT RESTORATION FACILITY BEAVER COUNTY AIRPORT

This museum facility is located 25 miles northwest of Greater Pittsburgh Airport. They are almost finished restoring a P-47. As I write, the electrical work is being completed on this fighter. AIR SHOW is August 8 & 9, open to the public, hours 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission charge is \$3.00.

They offer training classes in all phases of aircraft repair and restoration to all who are interested. These classes will include electricity, sheet metal, riveting, fabric work, radio, instruments, hydraulics and numerous other systems. As they say, "even though some of the classes may be about subjects you do not plan to become involved in, it never hurts to absorb a bit more knowledge." Learning an aircraft as a total system, rather than just a group of connected parts, helps you to understand why the parts are made and connected the way they are. For more information, contact Lee F. Knepp (492nd BG, 857th BS), 121 McMillen Avenue, Beaver Falls, PA 15010.

QUESTION

Do you recall how easy it was to detail strip and reassemble your guns while blind-folded, wearing gloves and carefully laying out all the pieces in order as you took the gun apart...only to have the instructor come along and scramble the parts. "Gentlemen, you have one hour to put this back together!?"

LAS VEGAS, OCTOBER 4-7, 1992

Our 492nd BG Group Dinner is on Sunday night, October 4, 1992. Monday, October 5 has been designated as Group Activities Day. In view of the fact that many will want to participate in the golf tournament or take a tour to Hoover Dam which is available on Monday, as well as a City Tour which is available on Tuesday, I am recommending that we hold our business meeting following the group dinner on Sunday night, October 4.

We will have a suite for the 492nd BG where videos can be viewed along with any memorabilia you may wish to share. There will be a P.X. where you can buy 492nd BG caps, pins, badges, patches, books, etc.

I need volunteers to help during "Open Hours." If you can volunteer for at least a 1/2 hour shift, please let me know.

Harry Orthman is in charge of the Golf Tournament. If you haven't already signed up, get in touch with Harry at 25382 Adriana, Mission Viejo, CA 92691 (714-581-0755).

Following is a list of registrants to date. There are some on this list who said they were planning to go, and if you haven't already done so, contact Evelyn Cohen as soon as possible. If your name is not on this list, consider joining us for a dandy time with your 492nd Bomb Group comrades.

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Bill and Norma Beasley, Bud and Margaret Beasley, Bill and Maxine Clarey, Bob and Patt Mattson, Carl and Verla Johnson, Harry and Sally Orthman, Jake and Helen Mink, Gerald and Hazel Edwards, Ed and Mary Alexander, Tom Chaffee, Bill and Molly Sparks, Bob and Dorothy Cash, John and Helen Losee, Jim and Polly Mahoney, Ernie and Emilie Haar, Jim and Ruth Bowman, Charles and Lorraine Bastien, Norm and Vera Burns, Buck and Margaret Moorhead, Tom and Mary Nelson, Charles Beard, Lee and Billie Woods, Jim McCrory, John Taylor, Harry and Katherine Rawls, Billy Sheely Johnson, Gene and Renie Gossett, George and Frances Greiff.

HELP WANTED

A World War II American pilot, returning to Britain in September for 8th Air Force's 50th Anniversary observance, wishes to locate wartime English friends. Anyone knowing whereabouts of Charles E. and Winifred Fitt or their daughter, Barbara, who lived at 1 Matlock Road, Thorpe Road, in Norwich, or of Kathleen Few, who lived in King's Lynn or Wisbech, please contact George Greiff, 1030 Mason Woods Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30329.

SAUL PLATINSKY

Does anyone know the whereabouts of this former 492nd BG pilot who was interned in Switzerland on July 11, 1944? Recently, two of his crew members have been found: Frances Billiard, 11120 Egerton Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80908 and Dr. Dorsey Wiseman, 1018 No. Cornell Avenue, Fullerton, CA 92631. The Record Center in St. Louis has no info on his whereabouts. The Swiss Internee Assn. is also looking for him. Please contact me if you have any information on Saul.

ORDERS

I'm still looking for a copy of the orders sending the crew members by boat, one member per crew from the original 72 crews leaving Alamagordo. You are doing a great job in sending me copies of orders I did not have, and believe me, it is appreciated!

American Librarian Fund Update

by Jordan R. Uttal

Well dear friends, regrettably, there has been a drastic falling off in contributions... only six checks have been received since the last *Journal*.

We do not intend to appeal to those who have already done their part. They, indeed, have our thanks for putting us in position of more than reaching our target!

For those of you who have not contributed, if you are in position to do so, your gifts will be warmly received and welcomed. Just mail your checks to me (address on page 2), made out to **2nd Air Division Association**. Your name will be added to the lists being prepared for filing in the Group Memorabilia folders in the 2ADA Memorial Room in Norwich.

Division Headquarters

by Ray Strong

I received the following letter from Ms. Pat Connick earlier this year. As of this writing, Ms. Connick and Betsy Schweppe Pursh were making plans to meet. They are both Associate Members of the 2nd ADA and hope to attend one of our annual meetings together sometime. I am sure that similar experiences could be told by others but I feel that this one should be published and become a part of the archives of the Second Air Division Association.

42 Old Palace Road
Norwich, Norfolk
England, NR2 4JQ

Dear Mr. Strong,

I have a story to tell you which I think you will find interesting. Ms. DuBois, Norwich City American Librarian (2AD Memorial Trust), thinks you may want to use it in your 2nd Air Division newsletter. I am in the process of writing to Miss Cohen in Philadelphia to become a member of the 2nd Air Division Association. This is a long story, so I hope you won't get bored.

In 1944 my mother, who was unhappily married (heard it before?) with an 8 year old son made friends with some American G.I.'s. Mum's friend and husband owned a small farm just outside Norwich at Rackheath. The "boys" used to visit the farm for eggs, vegs, etc. One day they brought over a couple of G.I.'s from Ketteringham Hall. One was Sgt. Larry Sheppard and the other 1st Sgt. Harry Schweppe. They all started socializing together and Mum & Schweppe fell for each other. Schweppe was married but his wife had gone off with another man back home.

To cut the story short, I was born on Sept. 6, 1945. If you remember Schweppe, he was about 5'9" (I think), a bit stocky with fairish/reddy hair. I am 5'4", slim with fair straight hair. My "father" in Norwich was 6'4" and had black wavy hair. My "brother" is dark haired and 6'1"!! Mum is 5'2". Her name was Margaret "Margie" Littleboy. Mum was married so she couldn't do anything about their relationship and she kept quiet. I don't think Schweppe knew about me. He went back to the States in Oct. '45 but couldn't say good-bye to Mum or even see her. I think he last saw her in about March '45.

Anyway Mum divorced and remarried in 1964. When I was 28, she told me this story. As a kid she was always talking about "Schweppe & Sheppard" and she gave me a badge which she always used to wear. (She sent me a picture of it and it was the Army Signal Corps insignia.) He had given it to her. I couldn't do anything until my step-father died in 1987, and then I started. I didn't have any information — just a name. I went to one of these agencies who say they can find people for you — it cost 30 pounds (\$60) and they didn't do anything! I gave up until the G.I.'s came back to Norwich in 1990. I rang Miss Cohen and mentioned the names of the two boys — she hesitated and then said that she had served side by side with them!! Luckily Larry Sheppard's widow, Helen Hanson Sheppard, happened

to be in Norwich. Ms. Cohen got Helen to ring me and we met up. We visited my Mum (in a Residential Home, she suffers from Alzheimer's disease) and Helen said she could remember her. Helen said when she returned to the States she would send me some photos. Can you imagine how I felt seeing my father for the first time in 45 years? Helen also suggested I write to National Records. I did and got his serial number. I wrote to Dept. of Veterans Affairs. Dad died 21/1/82. They told me when he joined up, his address on joining and date of demobilization.

From here I rang Directory Enquiries (Int) and the only Schweppe in Pittsburgh was Ex-Directory. Next I wrote to the Pittsburgh paper (Post Gazette). This was in April 1991. I heard nothing so in Sept. '91 I wrote again. They said they couldn't print anything but gave me an address of a W. Schweppe (just outside Pittsburgh). I wrote just saying that Schweppe was a friend of my family and was he any relative?

In Oct. '91 I was at home one afternoon and the phone went. It was long distance and a lady spoke. It was Schweppe's daughter. He had returned to the States, divorced and married again in 1947. Betsy (my half sister) is 5 years younger than me (born 1950). I work for Eastern Counties Newspapers in Norwich and she works for Pittsburgh University. We fax each other weekly and write long involved letters, send photos, recipes, books and leaflets on our home cities. Betsy sent me a video of herself, husband, daughter (8 years old) and home. I will try to visit her in 1993. We are so close after only a few months, I can't wait to meet her. Can you put me in contact with any of Schweppe's friends from 1944-45? The names of Cramer, Flionis, Sgt. Schreiber are on the photos if this helps. (I put her in touch with Robert Cramer and they have corresponded — R.S.)

I gather 2nd Air Division are coming to Norwich in July 1993 (I told her that we were not coming in 1993 but I have since learned that we might meet in Norwich again in 1995). I am trying to get Betsy to come over but I guess that's too much to ask.

Dad won a Bronze Star while serving at Ketteringham Hall. Would you like a copy of the citation? I have a photo of his presentation I can send to you. Details — Sgt. Harry W. Schweppe, serial no. 33363194, 1st Sergeant, 315 Signal Co., awarded the Bronze Star for telecommunication work.

My sister has no objection to my writing to you with these details, I must add. Could it be of interest to your newsletter? Please, will you write to acknowledge receiving this letter.

Yours Faithfully,
"Pat" Connick
(Mrs. P.M. Connick)

So if any of you HQ people, especially 315th Signal Co. people, can help Pat fill in some of the blanks about her father, I am sure that she would like to hear from you.

Women's Army Auxiliary Corps Marks 50th Year

by Eleanor J. Storms

In December 1941 stunning news came over the radio. America listened intently as President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave his sobering speech as to why this nation was now at war with Japan. This announcement changed the lives of many women and men.

Congress passed a Navy bill permitting women to enlist in the Navy receiving the same benefits as the men. Senator Edith Nourse Rogers also sponsored a bill to have women enlist in the Army. Congress passed this bill, Public Law 554, with the restriction that women could serve with the Army in an "Auxiliary" status. This meant that the women were not IN the Army and were not to be given the same rights and entitlements as the men.

From December 1941 through May, the war worsened in Europe as well as in the Pacific area. During this time women were watching the development of this new Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. They gave considerable thought as to whether or not to change their present careers and goals. PL 554 offered women the opportunity to go overseas whereas the Navy could not.

These few months were also a time of testing women's reasoning as to why they would want to take such a risk. For many different reasons, families, friends, relatives, even government and civilian businesses tried to dissuade women from entering service life. But, once women believed that they were taking the right opportunity to serve their country, they were ready to leave their careers behind and plunge into the unknown ahead.

They visited the recruiting office asking questions and getting information. Public Law 554 was so new to the recruiters, few answers could be given. Some wondered why one would want to go into service life. They were to sign up and await further instructions from the Army. Women were taking up the challenge to go even one step further to serve their country overseas. The instructions and orders were implicit when they arrived. Reading them, one knew that life was going to change drastically.

The first Women's Army Auxiliary Corps Training Center opened at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. The Post quickly renovated the Cavalry horse stables into a barracks for the women recruits.

They came to Des Moines by troop trains, bus or car and checked in. Military education began on the troop train. After checking in at the Post they got their first glimpse of their new "home" for the next six weeks of basic training.

The tiered beds were lined up meticulously throughout the barracks. Each was assigned a bed and a small space for clothing. Everything taught from then on had a rule to go along with it. Clothing and all items had to be hung or placed in an identical manner; shoes under the bed in a certain order. The bed had to have mitered



Graduates from first Basic Training Centers, later assigned to 2nd Air Division Headquarters. (l-r): Fritzie Gross Henkin, Betty Shearer, Maggie Boynton, Eleanor McKenzie Heister.

corners and blankets made so tight that a coin could bounce if dropped on it. They marched to — a what? — mess hall where the dishes had to be scraped, rinsed and stacked.

Life was constantly changing. The women were told when to wake, when to march, when to sing, when and what to study and when to be tested for AGCT, skills; when to report for physicals, shots, when to do — what? — KP and when to mop and clean one's personal area for "white glove" inspections; when to report for — what? — CQ duty — charge of quarters, when to parade for special visitors; the list went on.

These women were constantly learning a new military language that only one in the military life could understand. They were quick to add new words and phrases and wrote new WAAC songs to suit their own need.

Morale was high and the camaraderie and laughter brought them through basic training. They were over their culture shock of having to live daily under one roof with women from every corner of America.

Later, Daytona Beach, Fort Oglethorpe and other training centers opened as the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps expanded.

But after basic training, no matter where one received training, the basic routine existed and the military language kept expanding. The WAAC no longer thought as one in civilian life might, but as one belonging to a sharp, military unit, dependent upon one another. They were eager to transfer for further training and to serve in some other military capacity.

Nearly all of the 2nd Air Division WAC Detachment women received their basic training as soon as the very first training centers opened and most received further training before going overseas to the ETO.

The "Auxiliary" was dropped in 1943 to allow women to receive the same benefits as the men, except dependency allotments. So today, we women are known as WACs.

Today, after fifty years have gone by, these same women recall with pride the opportunity they had to serve their country in a meaningful way. They value their military experience as one of the top highlights in their lives, and they are happy to be a part of the Headquarters, 2nd Air Division and the Association.

Let us not forget to remember those women who served with the Headquarters, 2nd Air Division, who have "folded their wings."

Update on Memorial Room Book Contributions

by Jordan R. Uttal

Well now, evidently we have done some of you a favor by reminding you how to donate books in memory of specific individuals!

From the time the Summer *Journal* reached you in late June, containing my article on the subject on page 29, to date (July 15, 1992) Geoff Gregory reports that he has funds to send to Norwich for six new individual honors.

He is particularly pleased that the donors

have supplied the necessary information requested in the above mentioned article.

For those of you who wish to honor a specific individual with a book in his or her memory, please write to Geoff Gregory as per the article on page 29 of the Summer *Journal*. He will be glad to help you in your desire to honor a departed friend or family member. This is a wonderful way to pay your respects, so feel free to use this opportunity whenever the need may arise.

The 448th Speaks

by Cater Lee

The 448th Bomb Group Association had their 9th consecutive annual reunion at Omaha, Nebraska and stayed at the beautiful Red Lion Hotel where they were treated royally.

Our attendance was down somewhat from usual, and we believe it was due to our selected dates of May 28, 29 and 30, as those dates conflicted with numerous high school and college graduations. Our members had grandchildren involved in both. We will not use those dates again but we will try early June or possibly July, perhaps using a July 4th as that would give us cheaper rates. We would like to hear from anyone who would like to attend if the July date is a problem.

Leroy Engdahl has been working with the Seattle, King County Visitors and Convention Bureau and we have several attractive quotations from Seattle, Bellevue, Everett and areas near the airport.

There are so many lovely places to visit in this beautiful area of our country; many will want to stay more than the three days for our group reunion. Nearby is Mt. Rainier, also Mt. Olympia, the Olympia National Forest, nearby Vancouver, Canada, the Boeing Aircraft factory at Everett, and McChord AFB at Tacoma. Start planning now for a lovely visit to the beautiful Northwest next June or July 1993.

We continue to have several of our members placed in the "Folded Wings" column, as do other groups. We ask that in the event of your death, your widow please notify Cater Lee at P.O. Box 850, Foley, Alabama 36536 or Leroy Engdahl at 1705 Wexford Drive, Vidor, Texas 77662, so we can have your name entered in the "Folded Wings" column and make corrections to our existing rosters. Thanks for your help, and we hope it's a long, long time before that's necessary.

To our knowledge, the first of our veterans who pursued the teaching profession after military service and whom we have recognized in our "448th Speaks" column has passed away. Dr. (Ph.D.) William E. Ruck of Medford, Oregon, passed away in June. Bill was on Jim Bell's crew at Seething.

Paul Homan's efforts in getting together a 448th group to "Return to England" September 2nd has exceeded all expectations. More than 100 are scheduled to meet at Heathrow and Gatwick September 2nd and will be met by a bus to take them to Norwich with a full week of very interesting visits and activities being planned for our arrival. Some of the events will be visits to Duxford, Cambridge, a special day at Seething, visits to the Swan Pub, the Mermaid Pub, a couple of banquets and other events. We all owe Paul a debt of gratitude for his many hours putting this all together along with much help from Pat Everson of Seething.

Continuing with the recognition of our 448th veterans who followed the field of

education after their military service, we present the following.

C.W. "Bill" Anderson of Spokane, Washington, retired out of the Air National Guard as a full Colonel. He served as a radio operator on "Frisco Frisky" with the 713th Squadron. He was on a replacement crew and only flew six missions and the war in Europe was over. How lucky!!

After the war he attended Washington State University at Gonzaga, on a basketball scholarship and the G.I. Bill. After graduation he was hired as a high school coach at the high school from which he graduated in Spokane, "Lewis and Clark." The school was built in 1910 and has 2,000 students.

He then returned to college to receive his Masters degree and further education. Since then, he has been in the administration end of education. He was Dean of Students at a community college, then returned as Principal of the large downtown high school in Spokane for 10 years. He was also on the State High School Athletics Board and since retirement is directing a program for a local college part-time, where students may earn their masters in administration and their principle certificate from the state of Washington.

Dr. (Ph.D.) Paul G. Schauwecker of Shreveport, Louisiana, was the navigator on Frank Gibson's crew which was one of the first 448th crews to finish its combat tour although it was a replacement crew. We want to recognize and thank Paul for his helping organize our 448th annual group reunion at Barksdale AFB in Shreveport in 1985. He met with Leroy Engdahl, then Group VP, and with officers at Barksdale in the planning phase of this, our first reunion.

Paul got his B.A. degree from the University of Indiana in 1948. His Masters and Doctorate degrees are from Louisiana Tech University in 1968 and 1974. Paul has taught at Louisiana Tech University, Rollins College, Florida and the Florida Institute of Technology.

He spent years 1968-87 at Louisiana Tech following 1966-67 at Rollins College. He retired from Louisiana Tech in 1987. After that he continued to teach part-time at Louisiana Tech and that included one full year at Florida Institute of Technology as a visiting professor. Most of his teaching career was at Barksdale AFB at Shreveport where he was responsible for the on-base Master of Business Administration degree program for Louisiana Tech. Paul is a retired Colonel.

Lawrence (Larry) Barkham flew on Lt. Gen. (Ret.) William W. Snavely's crew where he served as flight engineer.

After graduating from Williamette University with a B.A. degree in 1950 he taught 29 years, the eighth grade 3 years and the fifth and sixth grades 26 years. He received his M.S. degree in 1960.

Larry and Snavely's entire crew met at

the 448th group reunion at Hampton, Virginia, last September. This was the first time many of the crew had seen each other since 1945. They hope to get together again in 1995, the 50th year since victory in Europe in 1945. We all hope they can fulfill this desire.

Harold D. Stroud of Pittsburg, Kansas graduated from Pittsburg State University with a B.S. degree in 1950 and his M.S. in 1952. He taught Journalism and History at Chanute, Kansas high school and community college for 35 years.

Harold says he retired from the 712 squadron armament shop and went back to college, taught a full tour and retired as a gentleman farmer raising cockleburs, cactus, coyotes, a few cows and a *lotta* cane. It's obvious Harold still has a great sense of humor and it's a pleasure to recognize him although his modest report was too brief.

Ira Wells of Staten Island, New York completed 30 missions as a nose turret armorer/gunner in March 1945. He had completed one year of college when entering the service. He got his B.A. degree from Wagner College on Staten Island in 1948 and his M.A. degree from New York University School of Education in 1949.

Ira took additional courses and was presented with a supervisory and administrative certificate by both the New York Department of Education and the New York City Board of Education.

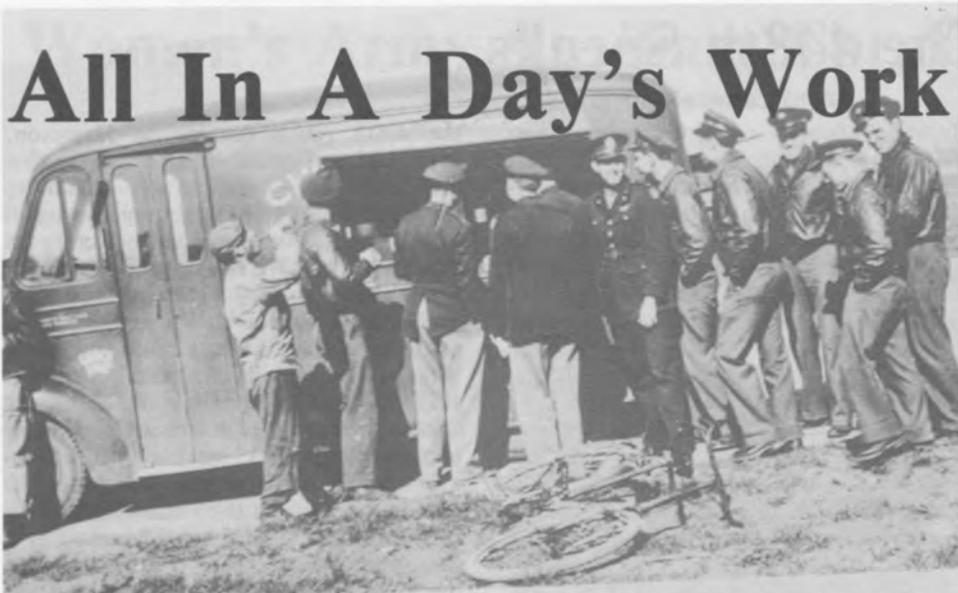
Ira says, although he was assigned various non-teaching jobs during his professional career, his highest level of satisfaction would be the time he spent in the classroom with his students. We think most all teachers feel the same. Ira's wife also was a teacher spending her time in the junior high school.

Congratulations to all those who gave of their lives to help others be better and wiser citizens. If any other 448th veterans followed the field of education and are not yet mentioned, please contact Cater Lee and give details, as we want to recognize them. Thanks!

Leroy Engdahl at 1785 Wexford Drive, Vidor, Texas 77662 has a good supply of the B-24 mementos on hand for any member of the 2nd ADA. If you would like to purchase any of these items either for yourself or as a gift for your entire crew for reunions or other occasions, contact Leroy. He has pewter B-24J tie tacs at \$6.00; a smaller but attractive silver plated B-24 lapel pin at \$7.00; the same silver plated B-24 as a ladies charm at \$7.00; ladies silver plated B-24 earrings at \$12.00/pair. Be sure to specify for pierced ears or screw type. He also has 8th AF lapel pins at \$4.00 and small U.S. flag lapel pins at \$4.00. Please send two stamps to help cover packaging and postage. Thanks.

Be sure to let Cater Lee know of your interest in attending our 1993 group reunion in the Seattle area and if a July 4th date creates any problems.

All In A Day's Work





Ordnance

by Howard D. Landers (44th/492nd)

On September 10, 1942 we landed in England and were stationed at Shipdham, near East Durham which was about 18 miles from Norwich. Norwich was our liberty run. It was sort of rough going for a while, because when we arrived we did not have our equipment, so we had to use the English trucks to haul the bombs from the railroad station in East Durham out to the bomb site. We finally learned where our equipment was sent. We had painted the Flying Eight Ball on all of the equipment before we left the States. One of our planes happened to fly down to Africa and the crew saw the Flying Eight Ball on equipment there and told us when they arrived back at our base. Our equipment had been shipped to Africa because they needed it more than we needed it. Finally, we received new equipment in England, but it was hard getting replacements.

When the 492nd Bomb Group originated, they transferred ten of us from the 44th Bomb Group to start forming the 492nd Bomb Group at North Pickenham. I was to be in Group Ordnance, and my duties were to work with four squadron ordnance sections. Headquarters Ordnance personnel consisted of Capt. Brisendine and myself. We worked closely with operations and the four squadron ordnance sections. We were the only personnel that could give the four ordnance sections the plane numbers of each squadron and the type bombs to load and the fuse settings. We handled the information from operations to the four squadron ordnance sections. We kept them posted on all the changes, taxiing time and take-off time. We made a report on all Allied and enemy planes that crashed within a 20 mile radius of our base. We had a display

in front of our office of different types of bombs, and the way we loaded them in planes. After the 492nd was disbanded, Capt. Brisendine and I were sent back to the 44th for rations and quarters until they had a job for us. Several weeks later Division called and stated they had found a job for us. Our duties would be to go to France and turn in reports on bombed villages and towns. I was told I would have to stay awhile after the war was over. I was not too happy with that. Division asked me how many points I had, and when I told them, they said I had enough points to go home. When asked if I wanted to go home, I replied, "Yes."

While waiting, Capt. Metz, Group Ordnance Officer of the 392nd wanted me to come to work with him until my time came to go home, which was about 1½ to 2 months. During that time, I obtained some pictures of bombs displayed on racks. The picture of the two men in a squatting position shows Capt. Metz on the right. The person on the left was the Group Armament Officer, whose name I cannot recall. I stayed there until I came home. I had some more pictures from the 492nd, but in the embarkation process, I had to give up a lot of my pictures and souvenirs, even though I had them censored at the base.

After arriving home and having a furlough and six weeks' rest at Miami Beach, Florida, I was assigned as head of the ammunition at Fort Meyers, a B-29 Gunnery School. I remained there until I was discharged.

Does anyone have any knowledge of Sgt. Carl Bender, Capt. Sanberg, Capt. Ned Brisendine and Sgt. Major Gibbs?



Capt. Metz and Group Armament Officer with a display of several types of bombs up to 2,000 lbs.



This is a 100 lb. demolition bomb. We would load 52 of these bombs per plane.



Incendiary bombs



Incendiary cluster bomb



These were 300 lb. bombs. We loaded 40 per plane.



We would load 40 of these fragmentation bombs per plane.



491st BOMB GROUP
THE LAST AND THE BEST
the
RINGMASTER
REPORTS

by Hap Chandler

LAS VEGAS REUNION, OCTOBER 4-7

As of the date this article is written in July, we have over 100 491st members who plan to attend this reunion. Bill Rigg and company made a valiant effort to have a record number in attendance.

ENGLISH REUNION —

A GRANDDAUGHTER'S REPORT

Shauna Patrick, granddaughter of John and Sarah Torode, joined the Ringmasters' "Return to England" trip in May 1992. She was excused from school for two weeks and was required to write a paper on her observations. Her report follows.

**"I Have Never Felt Prouder
Of My Country"**

by Shauna Patrick

When I first arrived in England for the 50th reunion of the 491st Bombardment Group, I wasn't sure what to expect. There was an overwhelming welcome by the English and by the veterans and their wives with the tour.

When we arrived at Metfield there was an unbelievable feeling of gratitude in the air. The people welcomed everyone like long lost children. Everyone had been sharing their own personal experiences of the explosion at the bomb dump all week.



Shauna Patrick, age 17, granddaughter of John and Sarah Torode admires the 491st memorial wreath at Madingley Cemetery, Cambridge, May 17, 1992. Shauna's grandfather, a pilot in the 855th Squadron, placed the wreath honoring fallen comrades of the Group during ceremonies at the annual "Day of Remembrance."



The 491st returns to Metfield on May 19, 1992 after 48 years. Ringmasters exchanged B-24s for a hay wagon view of the airfield. Note Bob Hull in WWII uniform (it almost fit).

The dedication of the veterans was evident at the library, with the 2AD Memorial pool and all of the books that were purchased during several fundraisers. I didn't realize the magnitude of help that Americans gave during the war. While over there not only did I see the effects that our country has placed upon them but the gratitude that they showed 50 years after the fact. I have never felt prouder of my country.

Of all the places we went and all the things we saw, I must say North Pickenham was my favorite. This was because of one person, "Tractor Annie." I had heard so many stories about her, in my mind she was a fictional character. When my grandmother said, "That's Tractor Annie," I can remember saying, "She's a real person?" From that moment on, all the stories I had heard suddenly became real. It's something that I hope to tell my children.

I learned more about World War II in those few days than I have in all of my years of school. I am glad that I was fortunate enough to have shared such memories with the Group.



"Tractor Annie" with Gene Scamahorn and Norman Johns on the hood of a restored jeep, May 18, 1992. Joe Flagler and Hap Chandler join them.



Ringmasters relax in the garden of Keith and Iris Thomas at tea time, May 20, 1992.



by H.C. 'Pete' Henry

SHIPDHAM TOWER — Will Lundy reports that more than 200 people have sent donations and he's mailed out about 200 lithographs (described in the last 8-Ball column); \$16,500 collected to date. Irene and Will visited Shipdham, Norwich, etc. in July & August and more information about the Tower restoration will appear in the *Winter Journal*. Will's letter (28 June 92) advised that Ken Dropek passed away but did not give the date. His wife, Marge, enclosed a second check from the Dropeks for the project and asked that word of his death be passed on to the 44th HMG, 2ADA & 68th Sq. Assn. since Ken was a member of all three organizations. We extend our condolences to Mrs. Dropek and the family.

Here we go again! Charles Armstrong (66 Sq.) telephoned in early June to advise that the information reported in the 8-Ball column, 2nd ADA *Journal*, Summer 1992 about the 20 June 44 mission to Politz, Germany is erroneous. Charlie said that he led the mission and Col. John H. Gibson was the Command Pilot. (This was Col. Gibson's last mission.) Norm Vickery was the Bombardier and the 44th BG hit the target right on the button. The lead was not turned over to the Deputy Lead or another Group (492nd) for any reason. The 44th BG led the 8th AF on this mission and had excellent fighter protection. (The 8th AF intercepted a message to German fighters directing them to destroy the first group over the target. The excellent fighter cover was apparently the reason why the 492nd BG following behind suffered so many casualties.) The above is further corroborated in Will Lundy's book, "44th Bomb Group Roll of Honor and Casualties" page 259, which states, "Results were most gratifying as the bombs covered that area with an excellent pattern. 60 enemy fighters were seen but only seven attacked the 44th's formation. One 68th Sq. aircraft was damaged and was last seen heading for Sweden." (See MACR 6149). (Lt. Richard I. Keller's crew did land safely in Sweden with one wounded gunner on board.) The success of this mission is further borne out in Will Lundy's "History of the 67th Squadron," page 228. To further back up Armstrong's remarks, he enclosed a copy of the Command Pilot Report to 66th Squadron Operations, dated 20 June 1944, signed by John H. Gibson, Col., Air Corp. naming Armstrong, pilot; Kessler, D.R. Navig.; Sneff, H2X Navig.; Vickery, Bombardier;

and Pick, Pilotage Bombardier in ship #767. The report gave all of the officers a rating of Excellent and comments about the whole crew were, "Very steady. Good lead crew. Keep for Division Lead."

**The Happy Warrior*, 492nd BG newsletter for June 1992 lists 100 names on the Wall of Missing — 492nd Bomb Group (H) at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery. 52 of these occurred on the above mission.

The following article, in part, from *U.S. Air and Trade Show News* was received from Joe Warth at the end of June.

"DAYTON, OHIO — One of the last flying B-24 Liberator bombers was rededicated on Saturday, June 20th at the United States Air and Trade Show to honor American airmen killed flying the planes during World War II.

"The plane is owned by David Tallichet, a former bomber pilot, who has collected an entire squadron of reconditioned WWII aircraft. The B-24 was renamed 'Joe' in memory of the 9,500* 'G.I. Joes' who were killed in the skies over Europe and the Pacific Ocean.

"Nostalgic 'nose art' was done on the plane before the rededication ceremony. Artist Owen Hughes used his talents during the war painting planes in exchange for flights aboard the aircraft. On the B-24, Hughes painted an American bald eagle gripping a U.S. flag in its talons. The lettering read 'In Memoriam to the 9,500 Airmen Killed in Combat Flying B-24's.'"

"Mr. Charles Joseph 'Joe' Warth, a former tail gunner with the 44th Bomb Group, 506th Bomb Squadron, B-24D Liberators (H), 8th Air Force, ETO during WWII, was selected by Mr. Tallichet to represent the 'Joes' who flew combat missions in the various Theaters of War during WWII."

*The 2AD lost 6,400.

Edna and Alan Phoenix from Deopham, Wymondham, England, wrote again in June advising they have located Moody E. (Dick) Thompson with Will Lundy's help. Dick has promised to write, filling in the past 47 years, and will try to visit them sometime in the future. Edna says the reunion there for DEOPHAM GREEN was a tremendous success and a Memorial was dedicated with a special service. It is located not far from the main entrance off the road from Hingham to Gt. Ellingham. The Phoenixes live on the edge of Deopham Green Airfield and many of the villagers attended the dances in the Women's Institute Hall in the village where Edna met 'Dick' Thompson and others.

You may or may not receive the Fall *Journal* before the 2ADA Convention in Las Vegas October 4-7. We hope to have a good turnout of the 44th and as of this date (10 July 92), thirty of us have made our reservations. We look forward to seeing all of you again.

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
Marvin H. Speldel



Within the constraints of publication dates this is being written before the gathering of the 446th Bomb Group Association at the Valley Forge Hilton in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, but you are reading it after the fun, comradeship and memory recall of the reunion. As I sit here using the Columbus system on my typewriter — search for and land — the 1992 Reunion shapes up mighty well with over 240 registered at this time and trips planned to the Valley Forge National Park and Freedoms Foundation, historic Philadelphia and the Brandywine Valley; an evening out at Lily Langtry's for dinner and a Las Vegas style revue as well as our annual Banquet. Looking forward to meeting all the Bungay Buckaroos along with Dick Kennedy, Evelyn Cohen and Pete Henry who will represent the 2nd ADA at the Banquet.

If, for one of many reasons, you were unable to make the August dates I hope you are considering attending the 2nd ADA Convention in Las Vegas, October 4-7, 1992. Especially for some of you Westerners who couldn't make it East, this would be a good time to gather with the troops. Evelyn Cohen has all the details. Further, whether you made it to one or the other or both this year, start planning now for November 4-7, 1993 at Hilton Head, SC.

If you have not as yet made your contribution to get the B-24 into the hangar, do so now while this is fresh in your mind. Send your check to Marvin J. Anderson, 8411 E. Albion Place, Tucson, AZ 85715, payable to "446th BGA Museum Fund." Thanks!

A note of the kind we don't like to hear: Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, located on land where General Washington camped his ragged, ill-fed, ill-equipped army, reports that a 30 by 60 foot flag which they fly from Freedom Hill was stolen by vandals and found the next day, desecrated, torn and stained beyond repair. In stealing the flag the vandals had also damaged the halyard cover and alarm system. Not exactly the kind of respect and behavior we fought for, but maybe it can somehow be put to rights with a contribution to Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania 19481. Give it some thought.

Haven't heard much in the way of additional experiences that you might like to share with the rest of us. Remember, while we all had some similarities in our wartime existence, we all had one or more unusual experiences that remain strictly our own. Let's hear from you. To trigger some memories, who remembers July 4th, 1944 when, with the briefed mission scrubbed because of the weather, the flares and the flare pistols somehow managed to get from the planes on the hardstands to the Nissen huts in the living areas and we had our own form of fireworks until the MPs broke it up? Or — the belly turret gunner who blasted one of the Flixton rabbits with his 45 and then cleaned it with Vitalis when no gun oil was to be had?

That's it for now. I'll be looking for you in Vegas and waiting to hear from you any time with your stories for the BUNGAY BULL.

Murphy's Law of Combat

Or: Never forget weapons are made by the lowest bidder

Submitted by Dave Patterson (445th)

1. You are not Superman. (Freshly graduated recruits from Marine boot camp and all fighter pilots, especially, take note.)
2. Suppressive fires — won't.
3. If it's stupid but works, it isn't stupid.
4. Don't look conspicuous — it draws fire. (For this reason aircraft carriers have been called "bomb magnets.")
5. When in doubt, empty the magazine.
6. Never forget your weapon was made by the lowest bidder.
7. If your attack is going really well, it's an ambush.
8. No plan survives the first contact intact.
9. All five-second grenade fuses will burn down in three seconds.
10. Try to look unimportant, because the bad guys may be low on ammo. (Trivia devotees will recall the sudden disappearance of rank and distinctive caps on the uniforms worn by Soviet officers in Afghanistan.)
11. If you are forward of your position, the artillery will fall short.
12. The enemy diversion you are ignoring is the main attack.
13. The important things are always simple.
14. The simple things are always hard.
15. The easy way is always mined.
16. If you are short of everything except enemy, you are in combat.
17. When you have secured an area, don't forget to tell the enemy.
18. Incoming fire has the right-of-way.
19. No combat-ready unit has ever passed inspection. (Note: No Marine unit has ever failed a combat readiness inspection, which suggests peacetime inspections are to readiness as mess hall food is to cuisine.)
20. If the enemy is in range, SO ARE YOU.
21. Beer math is 2 beers times 37 men equals 49 cases.
22. Body count math is 3 guerrillas plus 1 portable plus 2 pigs equals 37 enemy killed in action.
23. Friendly fire — isn't.
24. Things that must be together to work usually can't be shipped together.
25. Radios will fail as soon as you need fire support desperately. (Corollary: Radar tends to fail at night and in bad weather, and especially during both.)
26. Anything you do can get you shot — including doing nothing.
27. Make it too tough for the enemy to get in, and you can't get out. (This seems to be the guiding design principle behind the Soviet BMP and our Bradley infantry fighting vehicle, both of which nicely package the troops in armored boxes for group destruction.)
28. Tracers work BOTH ways.
29. The only thing more accurate than incoming enemy fire is incoming friendly fire.
30. If you take more than your fair share of objectives, you will have more than your fair share to take.
31. When both sides are convinced they are about to lose, they're both right.
32. Professional soldiers are predictable, but the world is full of amateurs.
33. Murphy was a grunt.

June 6, 1944

by Bill Francis (93rd). Written July 6 & 7, 1944.

Today is D-Day and everyone is alert to the highest pitch. Although we've been waiting for this day for a long time, now that it is here everyone is talking about the invasion and giving his own individual opinion of what is to come.

For the past month bases have been restricted and then the restriction lifted only to be posted again. So when the restriction came yesterday, June 5, no one thought much about it. But when the reports came in that British Tommies were called out and told to report to base, when we had three different alerts scheduled for today, when the first takeoff was at 3:00 in the morning (unusual in that it was so early), it started us all to thinking that this might at last be it.

At 3:00 this morning the new crew that is sleeping in the same Nissen hut with us, came in from guarding the planes. After being over here for a while, one gets used to having the lights put on at all hours of the night and don't take notice to it or wake up from the lights being snapped on. Therefore it was odd how everyone snapped wide awake at the click of the light switch although they were all in the soundest of sleep. We all must have gone to sleep thinking of the impending invasion and the new crew verified our suspicions by telling us the news just came through that this was D-Day.

Knowing we could learn no more, we all went back to sleep like veterans and a few of us got up for breakfast at 6:30.

After making a fire, heating water and shaving, I hopped on my bike and was over to the line in time to sweat the boys out. All

our ships came back without as much as a flak hole. Evidently we caught Jerry with his pants down, for the expected stored up fighter opposition didn't materialize and I can't understand why there was no flak. In Operations a bunch of us were grouped around the radio (wireless), listening to Jerry broadcast and then the British and heard the news of the events so far.

My crew have been off a regular assigned crew for a month now and some of us have only made one mission during that time. It was because our pilot was made lead pilot and an old crew put with him. We try to kid each other that we don't care as long as we get our 4 hrs. in a month and say that we are glad we don't have to stick our necks out in this invasion. But I know that if I were not to fly a mission in the next week in the big push, I'd regret it for the rest of my life, and the others who spout off feel underneath the same way.

So when I learned this morning that our original crew is practically all together again, making it probable that we will fly in the next few days if not today, my hopes mounted and I felt a hell of a lot better.

I've written this this morning so that I could capture and retain my own thoughts and feelings on this eventful day.

June 7th and the weather typically English with low ceiling and drizzling cold rain. Not very good for the boys on the other coast and worse for us, because we've got to go

over and be the Flying Artillery in support of those fellows on the beach heads. All day yesterday there was the steady drone of engines overhead and today it hasn't let up in spite of lousy weather. Four different missions yesterday from our Squadron and we were on the last one. Wasn't bad except for landing. Took off at 5:20, climbed to 16,000 feet which is fairly low and it was warm upstairs with only -19°. After we got up there was a solid undercast that looked as though a fellow could step out and walk on it. After forming we started crossing the Channel. There was a steady stream of planes coming back and going over. Nearing the French coast, we could see breaks in the clouds and down below were thousands of ships of all kinds making a steady procession to and from the invasion coast. We were straining our eyes trying to see actual landings but were disappointed. While keeping a weather eye for Jerry and wondering where that stored up German Air Force was hiding, we crossed the coast and on into our target, dropping our bombs squarely and then out again without seeing fighters or flak. I couldn't understand why, but I'm certainly not mad that old Jerry didn't show.

The worst part of that mission was when we came back with a 500 ft. ceiling to drop through in the dark and then trying to find our field. After flying over a dozen different fields in an hour and a half of searching, we finally located ours and landed on a wet runway. That was one of the invasion missions and I only hope the ones to follow are as easy.

'Flame Leap'

by Wilbur Clingan (453rd)

Regarding the title for this column, I have had no feedback at all. No cries of indignation or bravo; nothing — good, bad or indifferent. I guess we'll stick with it.

This is written for the Fall issue of the *Journal*, which may not reach you before you leave for Las Vegas, so it will have little reference to the scheduled reunion. However I will remind you that we will have a business meeting around 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 4. This is the first day of registration and the timing will conflict with some. I regret that, but I do think we should have the business meeting before our Group dinner, which is scheduled for later that same day. Please resolve this to the best of your ability and try very hard to be at our business meeting. We do have an agenda to address. Foremost, probably, is the election of officers. Get your nominations in to either Bill Garrett or Willie Wilson. We'll see you there. Start to plan and save now for the 1993 reunion which is rumored to be in Hilton Head, South Carolina. We'll see you there as well.

Now for the REALLY BIG news!! First came the rebirth of "Wham Bam." You know that the 20th Bomb Squadron named one of their B-52 A/C "Wham Bam." The plane's name was unveiled by Andy Low and Ramsey Potts at a ceremony in June 1990. What you may not know is that the 453rd Group has been reactivated, is now in being and continues to be outstanding. The Air Force has disbanded S.A.C. and, in its place, has created an Air Combat Command and an Air Mobility Command. Under command of Col. Paul W. Essex, the 453rd is designated an Operations Group, flying KC-135 R aircraft. It is based at Fairchild AFB, Spokane, Washington. Forty-nine years, almost to the day, after the 453rd was first activated, it has come into being again. S.A.C. held an annual competition to determine the best of its assigned units in each category. Concerning tankers, what is now the 453rd trounced its competition at the last S.A.C. contest. It won three of four events and missed the fourth by one point out of a possible 1400 points. The 453rd is the proud possessor of the huge silver bowl.

Those of you who have ordered Benarcik's book have most likely received it by now. We have and we enjoy it very much. There are some printing errors and some unidentified pictures which cause us to wish we had been given an opportunity to proof it before printing. However, such was not the case and the book is now in being. We are grateful to Mike, to the Benarcik Foundation and to Gen. Andy Low. It is a professional job, workmanship is splendid and content affords much enjoyment.

For your information, Diana and I have ordered some lapel pins. They are supposed to be delivered in ample time for us to take them to Las Vegas. Our experience with this type of thing is limited if not nil. They will be like the logo on our Newsletter minus the words "453rd Bomb Group" — just the white diagonal on a black background with the letter "J." When you are at the reunion



M.J. Guiman Crew. Back row (l-r): S/Sgt. J.J. Weaver, arms gunner; Unknown, tail gunner; T/Sgt. R.M. Dean, radio operator, gunner; S/Sgt. D.D. Thomas, arms gunner; T/Sgt. S.R. Romagnouls, eng. gunner; S/Sgt. R.M. Kirkwood, eng. gunner. Front row (l-r): 2nd Lt. J.J. Simms, navigator; 2nd Lt. H.H. Bates, bombardier; 1st Lt. M.J. Guiman, pilot; 2nd Lt. L.W. Smith, co-pilot.

you will have an opportunity to buy one if you wish. It appears that the cost will be about \$3.25 each. If you want, you are welcome to pay more than that. Once the initial investment has been returned, any overage will be put in the 453rd treasury. I do hope they turn out to be as good as represented. If you are not at the reunion and want a pin, perhaps we can reorder some, though they must be ordered in pretty heavy quantities. Howard Shaw in N. Syracuse, NY will be interested, I know.

Recently, the Bob Jordans, Eino Alves and Bob Marxs, along with Pat Ramm went to the Primary School at Old Buck. There they met with the Headmaster and with the children. They write that it was a rewarding and exhilarating experience. Phyllis DuBois had provided an identifying book marker for each of the books. Bob wrote that they fell in love with each of the children. This was money well spent on the part of the 453rd.

Bill Eagleson writes that they too were at Old Buck and enjoyed it immensely. They presented two copies of Benarcik's book to Old Buck (Pat Ramm and Julian Goodey). And Russ Harriman was at the Norwich Library when copies of the book were presented there.

Swede and Virginia Johnson write that the mini-reunion at Oshkosh, WI was delightful. Diana and I would have liked to have been there. We weren't able to do so, but we understand that all present had a fine time. The 453rd had about 45 persons attending. These are fun!

M/Sgt. Joe Duegaw would like to hear from anyone who has information about his father, Joe Duegaw, who was a bombardier flying with Bob Dooley, 733rd Squadron. On a mission 13 April 44 they were hit, flew to Switzerland and were interned.

The plane might have been "Bombs Away." If you recall the incident and/or have info about his father, write to M/Sgt. Joseph H. Duegaw, Jr., PSC #3, Box 5636, 7AF/XP, APO 96266-5636.

Mark Wyllie is a member of the Royal Australian Air Force and is interested in the 453rd BG. He would like to correspond with any of our members — flying or non-flying personnel. He writes interesting letters. Write to him at: Lewis Court, Sunshine, Victoria, Australia 3020.

New members and/or retreats: We extend a warm welcome to John Burnside, who lives in Hesperia, CA; to Mike Aguirre, a resident of Corona, CA who was at Old Buck from 6/44; and to James Foltz, an associate member. His dad was Fred B. Foltz. Also, Frank Hazalik of the 735th Squadron who flew with Darrell Boucher; Richard Dean, 734th Squadron; Paul Corbisiero, Amos Adkins, and Seth Heywood who were all 735th Squadron. John Talbot, Jr., Mark Talbot, Helen Talbot and Joan Halverson have all joined as Associate members — John Talbot, Sr. would be proud. Austin Burrows, 733rd Squadron, is also a new member. Again a warm welcome; we are happy to have you with us. Deceased: A sad farewell to W. Robert Cunningham and James B. Taylor.

Speaking of members, the 453rd has lost 19 members for whatever reason. That isn't good — we do not want to lose anyone. Please be sure to pay your annual dues of \$15.00 to Evelyn Cohen and please be sure to stick with us. Other groups have lost members as well — some more than the 453rd, some less, but the loss of one is one too many.

That's it! I have probably used up our allotted space. It has been good to visit with you. Cheers, and Diana and I wish you and yours well.

Three Brief Glimpses of the Air War

by Robert E. Oberschmid (93rd)

What did we see? We were all so young but we saw things no one on earth had ever seen before. All those old timers who could tell stories of what they had done and seen had never really seen anything like this.

The eyes of the foot soldier saw the same carnage as Caesar's Alexander or Pershing's soldiers. But picture this if you will, there, to your right and slightly ahead is a four engine bomber flying in formation over enemy held territory and he suddenly bursts into flame from nose turret to bomb bay. We had previously been subjected to the usual bursts of flak over the Fresian Islands but of little consequence, or so we thought. And now we watched a drama that lasted no longer than five seconds — beginning to end. Here was this B-24 flying straight and level, on fire almost end to end and then two of the crew members in the waist section bailed out. It didn't seem possible for anyone to react fast enough to get out of that plane but those two did. The plane flew on for several seconds and then simply disintegrated in a huge fireball.

The two crewmen passed our wing tip leaving a lifetime of memories — they were not wearing parachutes.

I don't know if anyone has tried to describe the "Tannoy" (a simple loud speaker in each hut) but its messages had a profound effect on our lives. Its impersonal, unsympathetic message was simply, "Combat crews alerted, breakfast is being served in the mess hall." That was it, no more, no less, but if you were alerted for that day's mission it meant you would see and do things that day that had no parallel in history.

We had been alerted, so it was off and on for us (off our backs and on our feet). After putting on our cold damp clothes, we headed out to a combat crew fresh egg breakfast.

Our hut was across a small baseball field from the mess hall, and while trudging through the snow in the cold and dark there was little if any of the usual banter between us. Several members of a crew from one of the other huts came alongside of us and I noticed they were all carrying fully packed B-24 bags. Even though it was 4:00 in the morning I assumed they were going on pass to London and made a comment to that effect. Several of them said, "No, no plans to London," so I asked the obvious question, "What are the bags for?" And they said, "We are not coming back."

That was the end of the conversation. After the mission to Southern Germany I inquired as to their status and was told that they had reported a variety of problems with their aircraft and had gone to Switzerland.

We never heard another word about that crew. One would assume the brass knew what happened, but then again who knows.



Front row (l-r): Sgt. Nick Flueras, gunner; Sgt. James Duprey, gunner; Sgt. Eugene Clement, radio operator; Sgt. Fred Johnson, flight engineer; Sgt. Allen Sorenson, gunner; Sgt. Glen Thompson, gunner. Back row (l-r): Lt. Armando Antonio, co-pilot; Lt. Jerry Baughman, navigator; Capt. Robert Oberschmid, pilot; Lt. Elmer Pearson, radar navigator; Lt. Elwood Faulhaber, bombardier.

We had been on a mission to Keil, Germany — the Sub-Pens and ship building facilities there were among the world's largest and deserved a lot of Allied attention. We had a solid undercast in the target area which resulted in meager, inaccurate flak. There were no enemy fighters and a resultant "milk run" mission.

As we headed home over the North Sea, the Bomb Groups eased out of the usual bomber stream and were high, low and side by side. This was an unbriefed, unplanned maneuver that allowed the aircraft to spread out, the crews to relax somewhat, save gas and it greatly reduced the propwash that could be so troublesome at times.

There was a B-24 off to our left more or less by himself, which in itself was not unusual. If enemy fighters were not a threat, aircraft with a problem would usually separate from their formation, although this aircraft appeared normal in all respects. We were passing to the north of the German held Island of Heligoland where we could always expect a few bursts of flak whether we were in range or not. True to form they fired several rounds, which exploded far out of range to our left. At this the crew of the B-24 to our left started to bail even though they were flying straight and level with no apparent battle damage, and had all four fans going. We counted ten good chutes but what really got our attention was that most of those men were not wearing their Mae West life jackets.

To this day at our crew reunions we still discuss this mysterious, even bizarre incident. Frankly, the longer we talk about it, the less sense it makes.

Consider, life expectancy in the frigid waters of the North Sea was 20 to 40 minutes. We were in enemy territory and

far from home, so rescue by an Allied boat was unlikely at best. Even if the Germans on Heligoland noticed the bailout, it would take them an hour or so to get to the area and then the almost impossible task of finding the men that had been wearing their Mae Wests. Those that had not, had no chance at all.

This mission took place August 6, 1944. If there are any survivors of this incident, please contact our 2nd Air Division Association. History needs your story.

2ADA Southwest Regional Dinner

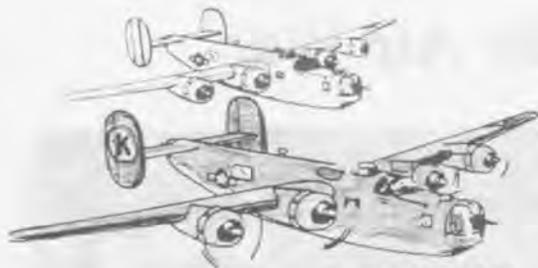
We sincerely regret that our plans for 1992 miscarried and we were unable to put on our 9th Annual Dinner.

However, the committee has already met, and we have arranged to conduct our 9th annual get-together on 27 March 1993 in Dallas, Texas at the Marriott Hotel, LBJ Expressway near Coit Road.

Details will be mailed to the 2ADA members in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas in mid-January. Needless to say, all members would be welcome.

For further details prior to the January mailing, please contact Committee Chairman, John Sanders at the address below. How about marking your calendars now!!! We look forward to seeing you in Dallas.

John Sanders
5249 Zion Road
Garland, Texas 75043
Tel. (214) 226-1623



458th Bomb Group

by Rick Rokicki

MEMBERSHIP

We have added 5 new members: **Carsie Foley KY, Fred DeNeff OR, James Eloff MT, Harold Markle NY, and Phil Cloud CA.** Additionally with the help of **Dan Roberts, Bill Case and Bob Deegan,** I have sent out applications to eleven potential 458th members. Appreciate hearing from anyone who might have a name and a good address for me to follow up on. Heard from the family or friends of the passing of three of our long time members: **Vernon "Red" Goring, Roy Slover and Gregory McDonald.** Have sent Group condolences. One additional note on memberships: as of this date (mid-July), we show 24 who have not renewed their dues in spite of second notices from the Membership VP and my personal telephone call or letter. It is entirely possible that some of this number may have made their "last flight," so the Folded Wings section may have more 458th listed.



INSIGNIA

It is obvious that the new 458th blazer insignia has been well accepted. I have just reordered 50 additional and hopefully will receive them before the remainder of the original order of 100 is gone. Have had gratifying comments on the striking colors and workmanship. Sent **Joe Fisher** one and he thought it was "super." In any case, if you want one, send a check,

cash or money order for \$10.00 and I'll have it on the way to you.

For those of you who have requested the 752nd Bomb Squadron "Eagle-on-Bomb" patch, and were disappointed when I advised we had none left, here's your chance to get in on the last order I've just sent in. Having just 10 more made at the same time they're making the Group Insignia, and both types should be here long before you get this copy of the *Journal*. Presently have only 4 ea. of the 753rd and 4 ea. of the 755th left. Cost for all SQUADRON insignia remains at \$9.50. The 458th GROUP insignia is \$10.00, P.P. Almost forgot to mention that I still have 6 ea. 8th AF shoulder patches we used to wear on the Uniform blouse and A-2 jackets. Cost remains at \$4.00 P.P.

TAILWINDS

It's more likely than not that **Jim Simes** had some unexpected mail, because after the last *Journal*, I had several calls and letters requesting Jim's mailing address. The same day I received the 458th Group insignia from the North Carolina factory, I received a request for the blazer insignia from **Herman Peacher** who included a page of stamps with his letter. **Herm** got the first of the bunch. I appreciate the stamps, thanks again.

Dan Roberts is planning a "Mini-Reunion" in Atlantic City in late October or early November this year primarily for 458th members. The idea originally started when he contacted ten (10) ground crew mechanics, line & crew chiefs with the thought that there might be some interest in it. Dan does not exclude flight crew members or others who might wish to attend. Those interested should write to him for full particulars. His address: 9100 Atlantic Avenue, #1004, Margate, NJ 08402. Told him that I would be interested. Photo at top right shows Dan in front of "TABLE STUFF" although he was the Crew Chief of "OH MONA."



As a result of **Tom Wholley's** story on the 2016th Fire Fighting Platoon, and **Pete Poulos'** article regarding the flare, I received a letter from Tom saying that he (Tom) was the one who responded to that fire! Now, how coincidental can you get?

Austin Stirratt has been quite active since joining the Association with the hopes that he could help in locating the 78 gunners he had record of in the 755th Squadron. We discussed this by telephone and mail and he came up with a very good form to send out. He sent me 7 of the completed

forms and although space will not permit full disclosure of all names, I'll give you the crew number, ship's "name" or other I.D. as I have. The questionnaire was sent to crew members of: Crew 62 (**Burtis, Curtis & Clark**... I think either **Jim Isbell** or **Fred O'Neill** called them The Law Firm!). Crew 76 (**Nelson Stewart, Bert Betts & Ken Enockson**). No Crew #, but "Princess Pat" (**Maurice Bittler, Jim Olney & Bob Deegan**). No Crew #, but "Last Card Louie" (**Harold Wells, Cassie Dill & Joe Lipschitz**). Crew 74 (**Curt Vogel, Al Hilborn, S. Scorza & A. Testa**), ship was Rough Riders. Crew 73 (**Royce Glenn, Jim Rigley, Bob Nixon & Buck Birnie**), Aircraft #42-100433. Crew 67, "Paddlefoot" (**Charles Melton, John Krpan, Charley Wynan & Chas. King**). Crew 65, "Tailwind" (**Bob Whitlow, W. Roland, McGeorge & Lawrence**).

Many of the above crew members are, have been or are since-deceased members of the 2ADA. In addition the following air crew members are still in the 2ADA, were members of the above listing: **Ralph Clizer, Scott Fogg, Tom Brown, Fred Robinson, Ivy Griffin, Phil Cloud, Dale Steiner, Wes Belleson, Larry Forrest, Bernard Doyle, Marvin Hoge, Frank Heinecke, Lloyd Habeck, Joe Tomich, Joe Brown, Austin Stirratt, Ernie Hutchins.** The three members who were on the above crews who have since passed on are **Glenn Mattson, Vernon Goring and Roy Holton.**

If you are interested in helping **Austin Stirratt**, or wish to do the same for your squadron (752nd, 753rd or 754th), why not get in touch with him and ask for a copy of the questionnaire he is presently using? I would appreciate someone doing this for our 458th Group records. Unfortunately, our roster as it is in the computer, shows only the Bomb Group and does not show squadron or crew. As "late as it is in the game," it would be a great step in the right direction if we could have this done. Admittedly, it's not an easy task, but there must be a few of you out there who might want to help in a limited way, if you only supply your crew, position, aircraft name or number, etc. Again, I would like to commend Austin for all the work he's already done and that which he still has to accomplish for the 755th Squadron. If you would like to help compile a listing of flight crews for your squadron, why not get in touch with him? His address is: **Austin F. Stirratt, 55922 Mira Street, Yucca Valley, CA 92284; Tel. (619) 364-3889.**

Austin wrote that he and his wife Betty were driving the ALCAN Hwy to Alaska the last week of June. Again a little *deja vu*, the date of his letter was June 11th, 1992, the same date we came back from Alaska! Ceil and I left on May 19th for Vancouver, BC for a few days, then boarded the cruise ship *Regent Star*, for a week's cruise up the Inner Passage to Whittier and eventually to Anchorage by train and bus. Spent a week in Denali National Park, drove a van for 987 miles to the edge of the Arctic Circle and back. You can't imagine the things we saw. As it turned out, when we came back to Anchorage, I had an emergency call and we left before we could visit with Jim and Ginny Isbell. Must say that I hope to visit the wilds of Alaska again at some future date, only then it will be by airplane... both ways!

My last check on the number of people that were attending the Las Vegas Convention was 95 from the Group. I'm sure that number will increase, since I've heard from several people who are planning to go but had not notified Evelyn yet. When you arrive, give me a call and I'll give you some info as to where you can meet and have an Adult Beverage or two. "On To Las Vegas!"

We Do Not Forget . . .

by David Henshall

From the "East Anglian Times," May 18, 1992

The East Anglia that welcomed the Americans in 1942 was vastly different from the England of today. The world was at war and few days or nights passed without at least the distant rumble of guns or the thud of bombs dropping somewhere.

On land, at sea and in the air, men from the region were fighting with weapons of ever-increasing complexity. But the homes many of them left behind were a good deal less sophisticated.

Less than a third of the houses in the village of Pulham Market on the Norfolk-Suffolk border where I then lived as a boy had electricity, and just a handful enjoyed the luxury of a flush toilet. Oil lamps — the best of them the "Tilly" vapourised paraffin type — lit the country cottages and, during the hours of darkness, men with huge horse-drawn "night carts" carried away the human waste.

That darkness was as deep as man could make it. The country had been "blackened out" since 1939. It was an offence to show a glimmer of light because even the flash of a match might be seen by the German planes that crossed our skies and could bring bombs in its wake.

The tiniest hamlet had its air raid warden who pounced like lightning on the smallest crack in the curtains. "Put that bloody light out," he'd scream, adding "Please, sir," if it were somebody of superior station. Car headlights were masked, sharply angling two small slits of light at the road.

At first, coming from brightly-lit America and its broad highways, the Yankee fliers had a hell of a time on our narrow roads, and especially on the little lanes leading to their out-of-the-way airfields. Jeeps and

trucks were forever being pulled out of ditches. But soon, on bicycles and invariably without lights, they were hurtling round the countryside as though guided by radar. They were great mixers and they carried with them a whiff of the wild west, a touch of tough New York glamour and the heady romance of Hollywood.

Smart and, by our standards, wealthy, many of them looked as though they had stepped out of a movie. For the girls in particular, it was the Saturday night dream factory come true. Living, according to popular legend, on giant steaks and ice cream, the young Americans were genuinely concerned by the rations of the average British family, a few ounces of meat, butter and sugar a week. But, bolstered by what we would now call "real" bread and home-grown vegetables, at the end of the war the nation was fitter than it had ever been before. Lean, but fit. Led by the farmers, the country dug for victory in a big way, every spare inch of land given over to the production of food. The beloved bowling green at my grandfather's pub, The Falcon, disappeared under a sea of potatoes and beans; occasionally fertilised by overflowing "bumbies," produced cabbages too big for a small boy to carry.

The men of the United States Army Air Force moved quickly into the community, helping with local projects, always brilliant with the kids. Their Christmas parties were a wonderland previously unimagined by village youngsters, and the Yanks' natural flair for barter was soon part of the local economy.

Rusty, brakeless bikes changed hands for a couple of cartons of Camels and free beer

for a week; women who took in American washing were sometimes paid with huge tins containing a whole chicken or a ham big enough to feed the family for a week. The Black Market thrived, as it always does in times of war, this one an interesting extension of US Lease Lend.

There were, for us, puzzles caused by racial segregation, leading to the establishment of "black" and "white" pubs in our towns, and clashes with locals or British servicemen, usually involving women. But this was an unreal world in which death was never far away, nerves often at snapping point and passions ran wild with incredible ease.

There were few, however, who didn't welcome the Yanks, who didn't feel a marvellous sense of relief that Britain was no longer alone. We knew that with Clark Gable, James Stewart and all those other lively young men flying missions from our local bases, we would turn the corner and win much sooner.

As the war went on, this feeling of relief turned to admiration and pride in their achievements and a deep sense of sadness over their heavy losses. Nobody who ever heard the throaty roar of the Flying Fortresses and Liberators flying out to battle or watched them limping back, shot full of holes and hardly able to stay aloft, will ever forget the brave men, many of them still in their teens, who became part of the Suffolk, Essex and Norfolk scene 50 years ago.

We salute them and welcome them back to the fields from which they flew. The green, beautiful countryside is not much changed by the passing of half a century. But it is peaceful because of the courageous part they played.

We do not forget.

February Florida Fiesta

Here comes an opportunity to visit Orlando and make, and renew, old Second Air Division acquaintances. You may do this at an ideal time during the winter season while staying at a first class hotel at very attractive rates.

On February 7, 1993 there will be a regional Second Air Division Association mini-reunion at the new 900-room Clarion Hotel, located within easy reach of the major Orlando tourist attractions. Invited to attend are all Florida members, including the Heritage League, snowbirds and other members planning to visit Florida during the next winter season. Those who served in the Second Air Division during World War II and are not presently members of the Association are encouraged to attend, if they will include an application for membership in the Association when submitting a registration form.

While the reunion will officially convene for only one day, the hotel has agreed to extend to us a \$55.00 per night rate for the three nights preceding the reunion and also three nights after the reunion. This amounts to a full week, for those who so desire, to leisurely visit the Orlando area attractions such as Disney World, Sea World, Universal Studios and the Space Coast. Frequent round-trip transportation at reasonable rates will be available from the hotel to these attractions.

Florida members of the Association will receive full details by mail at a later date. Members living outside Florida and non-member WWII Second Air Division veterans can receive additional information by writing to the address below.

Col. Lawrence G. Gilbert USAF (Ret.)
1482 Granville Drive
Winter Park, FL 32789



The Air Force Gunners Association will hold their Fourth Reunion in July of 1993 at Bethesda, Maryland. Please contact Mr. Jay Ingle at the address below for membership information.

Jay E. Ingle
Membership Chairman
35469 Colossians Way
Shingletown, CA 96088



Open Letter To the 93rd

by Floyd H. Mabey

FOLDED WINGS (93rd men not members of the 2nd ADA): Frank S. Bruno, 1/25/92. The following men were members of my crew who I haven't listed before. These two I have just learned about from Alice Hunter at the Department of Veterans Affairs (it took less than a month for her reply): S/Sgt. Mahlon W. Cressey 3/31/74, original W. Gunner on "Shoot Luke" and S/Sgt. George W. Foster 11/6/75, replacement gunner on "Shoot Luke." Some of the following crew members I had found over the years and visited with them; they have since passed away. Capt. John H. Murphy (1974), pilot; Capt. Edmund F. Janic (1940s), bombardier; T/Sgt. William D. Mercer (1940s), radio; S/Sgt. Paul B. Slankard (1981), tail gun; S/Sgt. James D. Cowan (1982), w. gun; Capt. George Black, 2nd co-pilot and 2nd pilot.

NEW MEMBERS: Starting with revision #13-92. If you want the addresses of these fellows, drop me a card. Francis E. Heffner, Kenneth Neidenthal, Jules Mangano, Henry E. Meyers, Paul E. Meyers, William E. Reynolds, William & Frances R. Whitney, John H. Wilson, Frederick Woodbeck, Charles M. Knoedler, Olga J. Mora, John R. Brown, Rev. Harold G. Gietz (492nd-Hdq-93rd), Frank J. Eiden, Joseph G. Giordano, Gabriel S. Zsigo, Associate member Edith G. Wand, Leonard Avano, Moses J. Gozonsky, Kurt Harris. Ending with revision 19-92 dated 6/19/92. Now the bad news. The 93rd had 29 men on my drop list for non-payment of 1992 dues. I called several and sent letters to the rest. 11 have reinstated, 2 deceased, 1 sick with cancer, 8 requested to be dropped, and 7 didn't have the courtesy to answer even though I sent a self addressed, stamped envelope. So our membership as of 6/25/92 is back to 693. 41 listed with another group before the 93rd and 23 Associate members leaves a total of 757. Come on fellows, help your VP out, finding your old crew. The following address is one way to find these fellows. Check your old orders for name, rank, serial number and last wartime address if you have it. Write to Alice I. Hunter, Chief Field Servicing Division, Department of Veterans Affairs, Records Processing Center, P.O. Box 5020, St. Louis, MO 63115. They cannot give any information if the veteran never applied for Veterans Administration benefits.

TIME FOR ME TO RETIRE as Vice President of the 93rd BG, 2nd ADA. This will be my last "Open Letter to the 93rd" and definitely the hardest one for me to write. Since my election as VP for the 93rd in July 1986 at St. Charles, IL, I am very proud to report that I haven't missed writing this quarterly report for the *Journal*, and most importantly, I haven't missed a 2nd ADA reunion during this time. After a lot of con-

sideration, I feel that the 93rd needs new blood, someone with the time, dedication, new ideas and the finances. Anyone interested in applying, contact M/Sgt. Joseph T. Beach (Ret.), 4128 Galbrath Dr., N. Highland, CA 95660; Tel. (916) 331-3331. He has been appointed by me to bring a slate of nominations before the membership at our 93rd meeting to be held October 5, 1992, 1-3 p.m., room to be announced at a later date. Our Mini-Reunion dinner will be held October 4 at Las Vegas, NV. There will be no speakers at this dinner; only socializing. Any business will be at our meeting. The 93rd will have a hospitality room next to my room; bring any item you might display and it may remain in our room for the duration of the reunion. I would like a few volunteers each day to oversee against loss of any display items. I will set up a schedule of hours that the room will be open for our members.

Members of the 93rd, I want you to know that I have done the very best that I know how to do; it has really been a labor of love. I'm just sorry that I couldn't answer all of the letters you have sent me, as yours weren't the only letters. Many are from all over, requesting information about their fathers, grandfathers, uncles; about all the different plane names and numbers, when and where they were downed or what happened, etc. This has really demanded a tremendous amount of time and expense. All of you who have sent me orders and pictures, if I didn't thank you, I do now. If I hadn't had this information I couldn't have answered these letters. It has been gratifying when I could give answers, and without your help with this, I just couldn't have done it. Right now I am putting all this information in a good sized box, and expect to send it to our Memorial Library before our Archivist, Dr. Martin Levitt, leaves the Library at the end of August 1992. God bless you all; you will still be hearing from me.

OUR DONATION TO THE AIRFIELD FUND: The following is quoted from a letter I received from David Woodrow, Airfield Farm, Topcraft, Bungay, dated 28-4-92.

"Just received your letter containing your most generous 2,000 dollar gift. It will be invested in our Airfield Fund and the interest will provide money for our Topcraft church and its charities throughout the ages. It will be a very good way of remembering the old airfield, and all those young 93rd boys who lived amongst us fifty years ago. I thank you all on behalf of Topcraft P.C.C. and we are proud of all of you returning veterans who hold us in such esteem.

"This year many are returning to our Second AD bases, staying in our homes and visiting events; hope the weather keeps fine.

"All the local people are still working very hard to stop the rubbish tip. Thank the veterans for their support; let's hope it will win though. Will keep you informed."

REQUESTED INFORMATION:

Ralph G. Tissot, 24 Garrison, Lakewood, CO 80215, thinks he flew some in the "Duchess." He remembers a tail gunner they called "Babe," a tall blond Swedish looking chap, 330th BS. Anyone with infor-

mation about "Babe" is asked to contact Tissot.

Colonel Luther C. Cox (Ret.), 4932 Oakbrook Pl., Orlando, FL 32812 (328th BS), author of "Always Fighting the Enemy," would like information about John Cocky, Muskogre, OK. He took pilot training 42-A at Randolph Flying School (Spring 1941) which was involved in an early mid-air crash with another B-24; all 20 were killed. Please notify Col. Cox with any information.

Mr. Claude Hekas, Ty-Ar-Groas, 29700 Plomelin, France, would like to hear from any of the three plane crews that survived the April 16, 1943 mission on U-Boat base at Brest. One down at Guilers, one at Plougerneav and the third at Plovarrze. As far as I know the three planes were "Ball of Fire Jr." #41-23874, "Liberty Lass" #41-23732 and "Missouri Sue" #41-24122. He sent a map of locations if any of you would like a copy.

INFORMATION:

For 93rd pilots from Cadet Class 42-B, there is an Association of this class. If interested, contact Trent Wells, Secretary, 9658 Wagner Road, Coutterville, CA 95311; Tel. (209) 878-3448. They ask for names and addresses of 93rd pilots covering Feb. 1942 through May 8, 1945.

The Airplane That Wouldn't Fly

by Dan Raymond (389th)

It was early in 1944, and Duane Hall's crew had all but completed "phase training" in the Second Air Force at Casper, Wyoming. We were a pretty good crew and were surprised one day to learn that we were going to have a check pilot on board.

At that time an experiment was being run at Casper to see if B-24s would operate as well on 91 octane gasoline. The planes serviced with 91 octane had a large yellow X on the fuselage side near the pilot's seat. We hated those "yellow X" airplanes as they lacked power and performance.

It was to one of those planes that we were assigned that day.

Everything seemed normal on engine run up and on the start of the takeoff roll. But, instead of flying off the ground, we were approaching the end of the runway at about 140 MPH but still on the ground.

Finally at the last moment, Duane horsed her back and immediately retracted the landing gear. At maybe 100 feet of altitude he started to reduce power to climb settings. We lost about 50 precious feet so he increased power again to takeoff settings.

We went around and landed about as hot as I have ever seen a '24 come in. Elapsed time for the form 1A was 10 minutes.

The next day another crew tried that same plane. It rolled across the prairie at the end of the runway and went through the chain link fence at the state highway.

The story was that in some manner the angle of incidence of the wing had been affected during a violent maneuver and the poor old thing had no lift. But, after going through the fence, what was wrong no longer mattered.

Memorial Day 1992

by C.N. "Bud" Chamberlain

American Memorial Day was celebrated this year on May 17th at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery near Madingley. As they did last year, The Friends of the 2AD Memorial and our Heritage League jointly presented a wreath there during the impressively stirring ceremonies. My wife, Mike, was invited to represent the Heritage League and did so in company with David Neale from the Friends. Over 90 wreaths from a variety of organizations were placed at the Wall of the Missing. This included one from the 2ADA represented by "Friend" Evan Harris. Perhaps 1000 or more veterans, British friends and active military people witnessed a memorable and well organized program. Particularly noteworthy was the Introductory Address delivered by The Honorable Raymond Seitz, our Ambassador to the Court of St. James. With permission, it is reprinted here as follows:

"1992 is a year of special significance for Americans:

- 500 years ago Christopher Columbus made his first voyage across the Atlantic and changed the world. Over the centuries millions followed.

- And fifty years ago, thousands upon thousands of Americans crossed the Atlantic back to this antique land. And many stayed forever.

"About two million American servicemen

and women came to this island during the war. My father was one of them; my wife's father was one of them. They came in one of history's great endeavors.

"These simple serried graves in this quiet, gentle countryside speak beyond words. Their eloquence is their silence.

"But I would like to read today from a letter written by an American who recently visited St. Paul's Cathedral. The letter, along with a donation, was found in a collection box. It was sent to me by the Dean. The letter was written by Augustine Turpin and addressed to the Dean and the parishioners of St. Paul's.

"It reads in part:

'One of my two best friends, Lt. Col. Carl Fleming, was shot down and lost with his B-24 bomber crew on his 31st mission while flying in low level to drop supplies to British soldiers trapped at Arnhem.

'Another close friend, Capt. Fuller Patterson, was with the RAF and was shot down twice and finally killed in the Battle of Britain.

'I lit two candles and said a prayer for my two friends. While standing in St. Paul's I remembered the great picture of St. Paul's dome silhouetted against the flames of London. I kept thinking of my friends and the terrible suffering of the British people.

'By your fortitude and courage you gave America the time to prepare to fight the tyrants.

'Many American families paid dearly as well, including my own family — one son killed in action; another wounded. Many others of my friends and associates at college and from my youth in Richmond, Virginia were killed or wounded. America shared in your agony.

'My ancestors moved from England to Jamestown, Virginia about 1650. Our peoples may occasionally disagree, but our two countries have the inextricably intertwined goals of leaving to our descendants a peaceful, healthy and sound world.'

(signed) Augustine Turpin

"There is not much one can add to Mr. Turpin's letter.

"So, on this fiftieth anniversary of common cause and common struggle and common sacrifice, I would merely wish to say:

- For the relatives here assembled and elsewhere grieving;

- For the comrades, old and young, of those bonded nations;

- And to those who lie here in eternal chorus,

We hear your silence and we remember."

All who participated, British and American, in presentation of this moving and solemn ceremony merit our plaudits for a superior result. In particular, as Americans, we can be justifiably proud of our Ambassador for setting the proper mood with his incisively appropriate Introductory Address.

Lest We Forget

by Myron Keilman

On 9 October 1943, the 2nd Bomber Division target was the submarine and port facilities at Gdynia, just north of Danzig on the Baltic Sea. It was a long nine-hour mission. The 392nd launched fourteen B-24s, eleven of which reached the target. Some 25-30 German fighters attacked with the B-24 gunners claiming six destroyed. No airplanes were lost but nine were shot up. Here's a message of note from Air Marshall Mallory, Commander of the Royal Air Force Fighter Command:

"May I offer my heartiest congratulations of the British Fighter Command for the brilliant exploits of the 8th U.S. Bomber Command during the last 48 hours. In their epic attacks against Danzig and Gdynia they have far exceeded their own brilliant record."

General "Hap" Arnold wired General Eaker this:

"Long mission into Baltic and attacks on distant German objectives in Poland shows the world your growing ability to hit the enemy wherever you choose. Well done.

"The employment of larger bombing forces on successive days is encouraging proof that you are putting in an increasing proportion of your bombers where they will hurt the enemy. Good work.

"As you turn your effort away from ship building cities and toward crippling the sources of the still growing German fighter forces, the air war is clearly moving toward our supremacy in the air. Carry on."

The Fighter Types

by Roger Freeman

The difference between bomber and fighter aircrew was once defined by a B-17 Fortress pilot as "We are the guys who get shot at: the fighter guys are the ones that do the shooting."

While not quite that simple, the bomber men were over-conscious of being the hunted — targets for enemy interceptors and flak — the dreaded anti-aircraft artillery; whereas the fighter pilot was very much the hunter, exhibiting an aggressive stance. Of course, fighter pilots were shot at too, but the personnel of a fighter group were generally extrovert and confident in contrast to the stoicism found at a bomber station. A fighter pilot believed his combat success and survival were largely in his own hands, for he had more freedom of action than bomber crews, who had to "sit there and take it" as the formation droned slowly to and from the target.

However, the overall average chances of survival for a fighter pilot were no greater than for bomber-crew men — 68 percent. Even so, this figure for the whole period of the U.S. air war is deceptive in that fighter attrition was comparatively light in air-to-air combat but extremely high when attacks

on ground targets were undertaken. The most dangerous task was strafing enemy airfields, which were nearly always heavily defended with light anti-aircraft weapons. Surprise and speed were the strafing fighter's best hope of escaping unscathed. For such work the more robust P-47 Thunderbolt was better suited, its air-cooled engine frequently continuing to function after sustaining hits. The liquid-cooled engine of the P-51 Mustang was exceptionally vulnerable and a single rifle bullet hit in the cooling system could cause a leak that quickly brought seizure. The Thunderbolt, with its eight machine guns, had better firepower for strafing, the Mustang having, at most, six. In the final months of the war, when most of the strafing of airfields deep in Germany occurred, fourteen of the fifteen long-range fighter groups operating from England were flying Mustangs and a day's fighter losses would frequently be higher than those sustained by bombers.

There has been a tendency in post Second World War years to present the fighter pilot as having an easy time. In truth, most fighter pilots' careers were just as fraught with danger as the bomber boys'.

The 445th Reporting

by Chuck Walker

Greetings from shaky California. Soon after this area experienced the 28 June earthquake, and believe me it was quite a jolt, I was reading the morning paper and saw that Fritch, Texas had been blown away by a tornado. About that time the phone rang. It was a call from Eldon Gray, Fritch, TX, inquiring about our well-being. Fortunately, both our households survived with little damage. He doesn't like earthquakes and I'm not fond of tornados, so I guess we both live in the appropriate location.

It is with heavy heart that I report that Lt/Gen. Robert Terrill, USAF (Ret.) folded his wings April 3, 1992. Internment was April 12 at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs. Gen. Terrill was the original 445th Group Commander and served in that capacity from activation April 1, 1943 until July 24, 1944.

Other sad letters were received. June Meehan reported that her husband Daniel Meehan folded his wings on their 47th wedding anniversary. Myrl Kuhlman reported that her husband Charles had folded his wings 18 May 1992. She very generously enclosed a donation to be used at our discretion in Charles' memory. She also forwarded copies of the outstanding crew 8434 history compiled by Basil Red, a gunner on the same crew (Roland Campbell's) with Charles. Buddy Cross informed us that Marvin Tyler, the right waist gunner on his crew, folded his wings on April 24, 1992. Marvin had been a member of the 2nd ADA but had dropped out because of declining health. We express our condolences to the families of all those who have folded their wings.

On a happier note, we are pleased to welcome the following new members to the 2nd ADA: Louis Cohen, Boca Raton, FL; Edward McCormick, New Braunfels, TX; Paul Sturgill, Lexington, KY; Alvis Kitchens, Monroe, LA; Harold Libby, Kankakee, IL; Paul Bordewich, Long Beach, CA; and Ben Grimm, Rapidan, VA. I have also sent several applications to former members whose addresses I have recently received.

Michael J. Bandler, a veteran writer on the arts, entertainment and literature, recently wrote that he is working on a full-length biography of actor James Stewart who served with the 445th's 703rd Squadron during WWII. The book is to be published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich sometime in 1993. Bandler is seeking clear anecdotes, reflections or impressions that will help him fill out his background knowledge of Stewart's military history. If you are able to contribute, call Bandler at (301) 649-2460 or write to 1101 N. Belgrade Road, Silver Springs, Maryland 20902.

Elden Zink has been very busy attempting to locate his former crew members. He says, "It was a shock to me that so many of our crew have died and I am very sorry that I could not find them sooner." Elden found that V.A. indicates Hagop Yazijian, Theodore Downs and Andre Stracelsky have folded their wings. He was told in 1986 that Ben Grimm had folded his wings in 1978

but was overjoyed to learn that Ben is not only well and kicking but that he is a current member of the 2nd ADA. (We knew that Ben was a member of the 2nd ADA but we didn't know until recently which crew he was on. So you see how we can use the information you send in on our questionnaires!) By the way, Elden is still searching for Charles Russell and Rubert Hermes. Can you help him?

Mrs. Richard D. Childs writes, "My late husband was a member of the 445th's 700th Squadron from its formation in Sioux City through 30 missions with the 8th Air Force. . . I have just finished editing my husband's letters and would like to be in touch with any members of his crew during that period to ask for additions, corrections and input. The names I have are Gerald Roudenbaugh, pilot, John Dowd, and David Ofner, comprising the officer group; my husband was the navigator. The remaining crew were Harry Patterson, Walter Lawson, Charles Pastor, Herman Yatko and Stanley Savage." Our records contain a current address for Yatko who is a member of the 2nd ADA, but none for other members of the crew. Can you help? Roudenbaugh's crew flew the "Bunnie" and would you believe, the Chuck Walker crew flew many missions in that tired old bird only to be permanently assigned to it following the Kassel mission. As a matter of fact, we finished our tour by putting the 100th mission on the "Bunnie."

Bill Boyanowski has been searching for his former crew members and has been told by the Department of Veterans Affairs that John Adams, Louis Beamer and Robert Bennicoff are "still with us," but was saddened to learn that Richard Shelton, Nicholas Kusenko and John Derbonne had folded their wings. Bill asks, "Would you please recognize these three who have folded their wings. They were not members of the 2nd ADA, but they were damn good air crew members of the 445th." Glad to oblige, Bill.

Howard Reichley says he really enjoyed seeing "Diamond Lil" on the cover of the *Journal*. He further says that "she is actually a limey LB-30 land bomber 30 and she is a beauty. She is currently housed at Ft. Worth Meacham FLD. I have helped on engine overhaul and general repair and yes, I had a 30 minute test hop — how great that was." Although Howard was not on the five man crew manifest for "Diamond Lil's" flight to England in June, he has generously provided those going with the names of pubs in Norwich and London that can provide the "world's worst beer." It is apparent to this writer that Howard hasn't been back to England in some time. Had he been he would know that English beer and ale is first class and is served cold. Some change from 1944, huh, Howard? He stopped in Elkhart, IN on his return from Dearborn for a nice visit with Al Spahn, our former group bombardier. Howard has also invited Roy and Jean Leavitt to visit him in Texas.

Although you will probably not receive

this *Journal* until after 27 Sept., I believe it is appropriate to remind ourselves of that tragic mission to Kassel. Here is Chuck Huddleston's personal account of that disastrous day as relayed to me by Joe Salisbury, his pilot: "Huddleston made a brief record of all his missions. Since he is not the most talkative guy around, I asked Chuck for permission to send you the following:

"Mission #25, 27 Sept. 44. Kassel, Germany, tank factory, six 1000 lb. general purpose bomb load, take off 0610, landing 1326 (Rheims, France). Altitude 21,600, undercast, light flak, cover by P-38s and P-51s.

"Off to Kassel again. Our Group was leading the effort today. At the I.P. we zigged instead of zagging and as a result were left at the rear instead of the front. The lead ship misread the radar so we went to Gortingen instead of Kassel. Our P-51 escort left us at the appointed time and P-38s were to pick us up. Instead, at about 1000 hrs. 100 FW 190s hit us and had a field day. We were into a hot and heavy battle for about 10 minutes, but it seemed like hours. On the first pass our #1 engine was knocked out and 18" of one prop blade was shot off. A big hole in the flaps and three or four more shells into the engine. Two shells went into the right wing gas tanks, but fortunately didn't explode. Gas was pouring along the side of the plane and into the bomb bay, right rudder controls were severely damaged and caused a lot of vibration. One shell went into the bottom of the ship, through the bulkheads and out by the A.P.U. The sky was filled with burning and exploding planes, many parachutes. I hit a FW 190 on a level attack and he caught fire. My other hit was a low attack angle and he blew up. About this time our escort came back and saved the day. Good ole 38's and 51's!! We were headed back towards France and in view of our situation, the pilot put down the main gear as we couldn't sustain any more attacks. We were gradually losing altitude and we threw out all we could to lighten the plane. When we crossed the front near, I think Koblenz, we went into a cloud bank and got some ground fire. When we exited the clouds they stopped firing and we figured it was our own troops. About then we spotted a fighter field at Rheims and the pilot (Joe Salisbury) said we could bail out if we wanted, but we decided to go with the plane. We began shooting red flares and on touchdown the nose wheel collapsed and we skidded down the landing mat and off to the left side. The radio operator (Robert Kriebel) had thrown out the radio and the strip didn't have a transmitter strong enough to reach Tibenham. The radio operator and I took a set from a wrecked B-26 nearby and cranked it up and got a message to England. We were picked up the next day."

Salisbury adds that "Chuck Huddleston flew 23 missions with me and Willard O. (Bud) Pease and finished his tour with John French's crew."

(continued on page 31)

(continued from page 30)

What a terrible day in the history of the 445th and indeed in the history of WWII.

Bill Dewey tells me that the Kassel Monument Memorial Association is planning a rededication tour to the Kassel area on the 50th anniversary of that event, 27 Sept. 1994. The plan includes a visit to Norwich and Tibenham on the way home from the rededication. Bill says only 100 rooms will be available in Germany, so those interested in this tour are advised to contact Reginald Miner, 1084 West Lake Road, Branchport, NY 14418.

Lawrence Gilbert, 392nd, writes that a regional 2nd ADA reunion is planned for the Orlando area on Feb. 7, 1993. Contact Larry at 1482 Granville Drive, Winter Park, FL 32789. Those of us involved with the So. California dinner wish you success, Larry, and strongly encourage those 2nd ADA members in the area to attend.

T/Sgt. Christopher Jones recently helped put real joy into doing this VP job. Chris is stationed at Bentwaters, England and wrote that his uncle, Harry J. Withers, was a bombardier in the 700th Squadron, but that the family knew very little of Harry's activities while with the 445th. Unfortunately Harry Withers folded his wings in the late 70's. John Archer, a friend who also happens to be an honorary life member of the 2nd ADA, took Chris and his mother out to Tibenham. "My mother got pictures as well as a video of the airfield to take back to show her sister where her late husband Harry flew out of. I know that my aunt and her children would be elated if someone could get in touch with them about Harry. We found the memorial to the 445th as well as a few photographs in the club house. Just before we left, we made mention to one of the club members that my uncle was stationed at Tibenham and the fellow introduced us to a gentleman by the name of Terry. Terry showed us four photo albums comprising the four squadrons, 700-703rd. The albums were quite diverse, showing most if not all of the flight crews, including one of my uncle's Group. I would also like to receive the 2nd ADA *Journal* on a regular basis."

It goes without saying that I dispatched a two page letter to Chris and to his uncle's widow all about the 445th. His uncle was on James Holmberg's crew and I sent them the names and addresses of the other crew members (four are currently members of the 2nd ADA). I also included applications for associate membership and made a point of describing the Heritage League and its goals and encouraged Chris and Harry's children to join that fine organization.

I said it made this job a delight because it gave me the opportunity to use the knowledge I have gained as VP to help a family close a gaping void in their family history. You too can help if you knew Harry Withers by writing to Winifred Withers, Mr. and Mrs. Roach, 8943 Rucker Road, Grosse Isle, MI 88138 and/or T/Sgt. Christopher Jones, PCS 53 Box 2409, APO AE 09497.

The next issue of the *Journal* will be full of Las Vegas reunion news. You will regret having missed it if indeed you did, but will revel in the pleasure of reading about it if you were there. See you later, Yanks!

NOW HEAR THIS

Immediately following these words of wisdom is a "How To" Guide for the benefit of our members. This tells them where to write and who to contact for a given question or problem regarding the Second Air Division Association. Neat, no? It would be if you used it but too many don't. For example:

When is the *Journal* published? The *Journal* is published four times a year; March, June, September and December. At times it will be about the middle of the month before you receive your copy as we mail third class. You get anxious and pick up the phone. Who do you call? Dial Bill Robertie and you're right on target.

If you move, please notify Evelyn Cohen as soon as possible, as it takes nearly a month for your change to get into the computer. If you do not do this, you stand a good chance of missing a copy of the *Journal*.

Now read this — one more time.

A Quick "How To" Guide For Members

*Who to contact for the answer to your question or problem.
(See page 2 for addresses of those named below)*

Lost Buddies, Group Historical Info, British Village Contacts

Ask your Group VP

Help in search for WWII acquaintances; information on those you now have located; info on any Group rosters ("then" as well as "now"); village contacts in England for info about your old base, today and yesteryear. All Group VPs are listed on page 2.

Journal Data

Ask Bill Robertie (508-356-5470)

Questions about articles, people, photos (those already published, or ones you would like published in a future issue); extra *Journal* copies; lead time for submitting data; *Journal* policy.

Membership Policy and Dues

Ask Evelyn Cohen (215-632-3992)

Membership categories; Association membership policy; questions on dues (send dues payments to her); membership cards.

Some notes: (1) Association policy is to provide free dues coverage for those members unable to pay; (2) Dues paid by new members joining after July apply to the rest of that year; (3) Dues are on a calendar basis; statements are sent each year end; please send dues statement back with dues payment.

Lending Library

Ask H.C. (Pete) Henry (609-655-0982)

Pete is the custodian for our library of combat (and misc.) video cassette tapes that you can borrow for mini-reunions and other get-togethers.

Second Air Division Memorial

Ask E. (Bud) Koorndyk (616-949-5784)

Ask about any and all information regarding the Memorial Trust and the Memorial Library in Norwich, England and supporting programs.

Donations: (1) ALWAYS make check payable to "2nd Air Division Assn." (2) Specify on lower left corner of check (or by separate note), designation such as "book(s) in memory of..." (3) To offer a specific book, write first to "Memorial Trust Librarian" in Norwich and ask procedure. (4) Donations to Capital Fund: Send with annual dues to Evelyn Cohen; otherwise send to Dean Moyer (Treasurer).

Other Memorial Library Items

Ask Jordan Uttal (214-369-5043)

To set up an endowment; to make special cash contributions in memory; to inquire re. Roll of Honor.

Association Policies and Procedures

Ask Dave Patterson (510-837-1667)

Questions regarding Association Bylaws, Executive Committee policies; organization, plans, history of the Association; suggestions for improvement of the workings of the Association.

2nd Air Division Association Heritage League

Ask League President

The Heritage League is a separately chartered auxiliary formed to support the same purposes as the 2ADA and to carry on after our "last man" Association is no more.

In Memoriam



JAMES P. HODGES
Major General USAF
1895 - 1992

Major General James Pratt Hodges, age 97, made his last flight on 19 June 1992 at Air Force Village I where he was a resident.

A native of St. Mary's County, Maryland, General Hodges enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1917 as a flying cadet, was rated a Reserve Military Aviator, and commissioned a Second Lieutenant, Signal Corps on 29 April 1918.

In World War II he commanded the 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force, and flew missions over Germany from bases in England. Following the war he was Chief of Intelligence for General Hap Arnold in Washington.

He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross, Silver Star, Air Medal and foreign decorations from Great Britain, Belgium and China.

General Hodges was a Founder Member of the Order of Daedalians, one of only about 40 surviving Founder Members. He was initiated into the Order on 4 December 1934.

He was preceded in death by a son, Captain James P. Hodges, USAF, and by his wife Eunice F. Hodges. He is survived by a daughter, Lois Hodges Elder, and by several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Interment was at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery on 25 June 1992 with full military honors.

*Hail, Farewell
and Happy Landings!*

A Tribute

by Janet Chambers

In the dark days of the Forties
In the middle of the war
Those young men from America
Arrived upon our shore.

The locals were suspicious
Of this unfamiliar breed
Who filled our towns and villages
Helping Britain's hour of need.

But as the months progressed
Their cheerful, friendly ways
Began to charm the natives
And brightened those dark days.

They looked so young and handsome
In their uniforms so smart;
No wonder many a maiden
Completely lost her heart.

And when they left on bombing raids
There were sad farewells and tears,
But on returning safe and sound
There was happiness and cheers.

The many who did not come back
And sacrificed their lives
Are remembered through the ages
By girlfriends, Mums or wives.

Now, half a century later,
We're looking back with pride
As the Yanks are on the wing again
They will come from far and wide.

Welcome back to all our allies
To an England now at peace;
We'll forever pray together
That all the wars will cease.

I'm Free

Author Unknown

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God laid for me.
I took His hand when I heard him call
I turned my back and left it all.

I could not stay another day
To laugh, to love, to work or play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way.
I found that place at the close of day.

If my parting has left a void
Then fill it with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Ah yes, these things, I too, will miss.

Be not burdened with times of sorrow.
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My life's been full. I savored much.
Good friends, good times,
a loved one's touch.

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your heart and share with me.
God wanted me now.
He set me free.

Folded Wings

44th

Henry T. Chiba
Kenneth S. Dropek
David H. Woo

93rd

Theron Collins
Herman Cook
Mathew D. Burnett
Robert G. Faulkner
Charles A. Roesch
James F. Wand (446th)

389th

James F. Bradley
Franklin A. Guild
William C. Hart
Herbert J. Newman (93rd)
Maj. Marcus A. Pharr, Ret.

392nd

Paul D. Malloy

445th

Lt. General
Robert H. Terrill (Ret.)

448th

Roy L. Barbee
Richmond Dugger
William E. Ruck
Gail A. Sheldon
Robert A. Sidner
Clarence H. Stark

453rd

Henry DeSautel (389th)

458th

Vernon E. Goring
Gregory F. McDonald
Roy L. Slover

466th

Howard W. Dallman

467th

Theodore M. Wheeler

489th

Robert Allam
Carroll Kimpell
Francis X. Ramie
T. Howard Warren

491st

Wilmar L. Curry

HDQ

Dorothy S. Cully
Maj. General
James P. Hodges (Ret.)

4th FG

Carl I. Youngworth

Letters



Dear Bill:

When the B-24 "All American" and the B-17 "909" were here in Arcata we made a long video which attempted to describe to the public the airplanes and what all the excitement was about. This video was made for the local Community Access TV Channel and it was a great success! I have no idea how many times it has been shown. After a time the request was made for more, and I thought of the excellent video made by Dick Peterson on the 389th Bomb Group. So, without asking him, I gave it to the channel which has been running it, and running it, and running it again. They say that they have never before had so much favorable comment.

I have had to make a lot of copies of my video. None of the 389th one as they are available should anyone wish to secure one.

One result is a lot of phone calls. One call today was from John Heaton, P.O. Box 4333, Arcata, CA 95521.

John says that his father was William R. Heaton. He does not know what Bomb Group his father was in, but he was on the low level Ploesti raid. Later he was shot down and spent 11 months in a POW camp in Stuttgart. John says his father, now deceased, was probably a nose gunner.

Working back, if Stuttgart was "liberated" in May of 1945, he was probably shot down in about May/June, 1944. John says two other crew members were Billy Freileng, who died on that mission, and a man nicknamed "Tank." "Tank" was from Cleveland, Ohio.

Specifically, if anyone recognizes these names, John would very much like to hear from them. I have looked in the 389th book but do not find him. Perhaps someone in the three groups who went to Ploesti can furnish some information. I know Mr. Heaton would appreciate it.

Dan Raymond
1841 Stewart Avenue
Arcata, CA 95521

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Why is it that you keep referring to Confederate Air Force's "Diamond Lil" as a B-24? See page 26 of Summer 1992 *Journal*. A B-24 has bomb bays. "Diamond Lil" does not.

Most everyone knows "Diamond Lil" is an old LB-30 that got butchered up along the way to carry passengers. It's got windows and all sorts of niceties. A better reference might be "LB-30." Or put B-24 inside quotation marks.

Front cover of same issue gave me two reactions. Top picture reaction: Great. Bottom picture reaction: Who cares?

Publishing pictures of headquarters personnel merely gives credence to the growing belief that the *Journal* and the Association are but merely headquarters tools. If you are going to do this, then why not give continued recognition to the four combat wings? The various groups flew as combat wings. We of the 446th flew as a part of Brig. Gen. Timberlake's 20th Combat Wing. And we were proud of it.

But today it's almost as if the combat wings had vanished and the 2ADA has become our mother hen and protector. I wouldn't be surprised if next year a new motto appears under the word "Journal" on all future issues which might read, "We Know What's Best For You."

Fred Breuninger
5021 Lake Harbor Road
Muskegon, MI 49441

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

This photo was made for a company in-house publication. The item shown in my hand is a fragment of a German V2 bomb, which I picked up in a field near Horsham St. Faith. If I remember correctly, two of these bombs fell near the airfield. One fell short and hit in Norwich, and the other overshot the base and landed in the country. We were all waiting for the third one to hit the base, but the third never came, much to our relief. Maybe someone else remembers this incident and can fill in some of the gaps.

Ben R. Hooker
Lufkin, Texas



Ben R. Hooker, 754th Squadron, with V2 fragment found in 1944.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I saw a program recently on public television which showed some countryside in England with good photography taken from a helicopter. A thought suddenly came to mind. Wouldn't it be great if this could be done at all the air bases of 2nd Air Division? I believe that many of us and our families would enjoy seeing such a video with a well-narrated story of the layout of the base as it appears today and perhaps pictures of how it looked in 1942-45.

Perhaps this could be carried out by using the library records and personnel at Norwich, and would be profitable enough to be perpetual income for the Library. Enough of us old boys would buy videotapes, but with our bad hips, knees, hearts and bank accounts, will never make it to reunions over there in the future.

Joseph R. Mitchell
16109 Glendora Drive
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

Ed. Note: It looks like somebody's been reading your mind. See letter below, just received from Mr. Alec Dawe of Norfolk.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

In this 50th anniversary year of the first visit of the Second Air Division USAAF in East Anglia, we now have a second friendly invasion of American airmen, returning to visit old haunts and old friends.

However, it occurs to me that there could be many veterans and/or their families who are unable to visit England for any number of reasons, but who would like to see their old bases and see how they, and the towns and villages, have changed.

Although I was born after the war, I have a great interest in the aircraft and events of that time, and as my job takes me all over Norfolk, I have visited many of the old airbases. If any of the veterans would like to contact me, I would be happy to photograph any of the airfields (assuming that access is possible or can be arranged) and any of the towns and villages as they are now, even specific buildings if possible. I also have photographs of some of the British and American aircraft of WWII flying at displays in East Anglia.

This is NOT a money making idea, but I would have to make some sort of charge to cover my costs and postage, etc. If there were sufficient interest, it might also be possible to make a short video of the old bases, but this would be more difficult, especially as I would have to hire or buy (!) a video camera, and get the film transferred from British to American standard. I must stress that I am not a professional photographer, just a fairly good amateur, and any photographs, etc. would reflect this. However, I would do my best to help anyone who contacts me, and try to meet any specific requirements.

Alec C. Dawe
4 Iris Close
Attleborough
Norfolk NR17 2PR
England

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Does anyone who flew Ploesti remember an officer flying with them by the name of 1st Lt. James C. Haverty from the 98th BG? I find his name flying as pilot with the 93rd BG for missions after Ploesti, but can't find his name on any of the 93rd Sortie Reports for Ploesti. There is one Ploesti Sortie Report, of Lt. Kendall, where I can't read the officers' names. Please let me know.

Also, if anyone can help with information regarding these six pictures of 93rd men, it would be greatly appreciated.

Floyd H. Mabee
28 Hillside Avenue
Dover, NJ 07801



(l-r): Ben Kuroki, Ray Weir (409th line chief), Art Ferwerda, Abraham Sheldon and Ralph Jacobs (ground crew) in front of "Tupelo Lass."



Warren K. Doerner, tail gunner on "Ready & Willing," sent me this picture of unknown crew. Can any of you identify them for me and Warren, and address also if known. #909.



Harry Albright would like to find some of these fellows, and so would I. The plane is #42-72872 F, "Flying Wolf." He didn't note left to right or front or rear for these fellows. Stan Keller, gunner; John Carter, pilot; Tommie Conden, co-pilot; M/Sgt. Red Adams, bomb-nav.; Johnnie Graham, gunner; John Mosier (member), nose gun; Syl Kerpel, radio; Harry Albright (member), engineer.



I think Dick Trousdale sent me this picture; correct me if I'm wrong. These fellows have had good luck finding six of their crew, who are now members. Hopefully this picture will bring results to find the rest. Top row (l-r): George F. McNulty (member), Dick Trousdale (member), Harry Karber (deceased), Paul E. Meyers (member), Murry Muscatel (forget about him), Stan Berriman (member). Bottom row (l-r): Harold R. King (whereabouts unknown), John Kerler (member); Mo Gozonsky (member); Jack Parrish (not in picture), replaced Gozonsky and is a member.



Here is another crew that needs to be found. Pilot Robert Bieber, who sent me the picture, is the only one who is a member. Back row (l-r): Leon Farrell TG, Claude Oliver, NG, Evert Martin ENG; John Schmidt T-T, Charles Hopp Ball. Front row (l-r): Jack Fields NAV, Robert Bieber P, Forrest McClain CP.



Robert John Farrell, 93rd man stationed at Hardwick between 1942 and 1944. Last known home address at that time was 44th-136th St., Brooklyn, New York. Anyone who knew him, or knows of him, please contact me.

+ + + +

Dear Colonel [Leroy] Engdahl:

I am writing to reintroduce myself. You may recall from a couple of years ago that I was engaged in writing a thesis which will lead to a doctorate at King's College, University of London. I've resumed my studies after a two year posting to N.A.T.O. Fully sponsored by the U.S. Air Force, I was sent to the U.K. to study aircrew selection, training, morale, stress, and combat effectiveness. My thesis deals with these sensitive subjects in some detail. Currently in the "writing-up stage," I've finished about five chapters of the study.

Whenever I can find the free time I try to locate and visit 8th Air Force airfields. Last weekend I took the family to Seething. My wife, children and I very much enjoyed the opportunity to see an actual airfield tower and view its collection of artifacts. What a thrill it was to finally get to see the wartime home of your unit. After we visited the tower we investigated several of the old buildings not far away. These too really made history come alive!

During our visit I was fortunate enough to meet Mrs. Pat Everson and some other members of Tower Association. She told me of the plans for a visit by the veterans of the 448th in September. I regret that my work will have to be completed before then and that I'm due for transfer to Carlisle, Pennsylvania in August. It would have been great to meet American combat veterans over here, especially some of those who responded to my questionnaire. In any event, please accept my wishes for a super reunion.

Mark K. Wells
Lt. Col., USAF

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

On 16 October 1944 a B-24J crashed near our tiny town in central Vermont. The plane was 42-51067 from Westover Field, MA and nine of the crew were killed instantly. The lone survivor lost both hands and feet to frostbite. We are seeking any airmen who might remember the crew:

Lt. David Potter, pilot; F/O John Ramasocky, co-pilot; Lt. David McNary, bombardier; Lt. Robert Geoffroy, navigator; Cpl. Luther Hagler, engineer; Cpl. James Perry, radio operator; Cpl. Robert Denton, armorer; PFC Casper Zacher, nose gunner; PFC James Wilson (survivor); PFC Richard Wynne, tail gunner.

We are also searching for photos taken at Westover Field between June and October 1944. 42-51067 would have had "1067" painted in large black numerals on either side of the nose.

In October 1989 our community erected a monument to honor this B-24 crew but we would like to learn as much about them as possible. Thank you.

Brian Lindner
Waterbury Historical
Society, Inc.
Rte. 1, Box 4316
Waterbury Center, VT 05677

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Thank you for the excellent job in reproducing my article about the 2016th Engineer Aviation Fire Fighting Platoon, which appeared in the Summer 1992 issue of the *Journal*, page 10.

I received a response from Thomas E. McDonald, Esq. of Mullet Lake, Michigan whose father was Gregory F. "Mac" McDonald, crew chief of the "Wolves Lair," 458th BG, 752nd BS. Thomas told me how much his father enjoyed the article and wanted to contact me, but sadly he passed away on July 7 before he had the opportunity.

The letter reads in part, "... My father... told me many times about the airfield fire you described. As he recounted, when the 'clear the field' order was given, he and several other men hopped a fence and headed to the local pub! I thought you might find this humorous — but wish you could have heard it from my dad... I have always enjoyed reading the *Journal* and plan on continuing as an (associate) member of the Association now that my father has passed on. Thank you for submitting your article. My father really enjoyed it, as did I."

I also refer to "Pete" Poulos' article on page 12 of the same issue ("Flare Launch and Murphy's Law"), describing how he attempted to fire a rocket flare up his chimney. For Pete's information, I responded with the apparatus to that incident, and remember it well. But to clear a point, we had engines stationed not only on the "line" but at the base fire station as well, for the protection of all sites on the base.

I enjoyed the last issue, as I enjoy all issues of the *Journal*, but the photo of all the C.O.s was great.

Thomas R. Wholley, Jr.
90 Rounds Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Many thanks for your helpful comments in regard to my tracking down some information that I hope will lead to hearing from one of your readers who knew my late father, Paul Diamond.

I believe that it was October 1943 when he enlisted in the Air Force. He trained in Casper, Wyoming and served in the 8th, probably in either the 44th or 93rd Bomb Group. I know with certainty he was in North Africa and England as a navigator and second lieutenant. He volunteered at the end of the war to fly fifty missions over Holland with food and supplies.

I do not know his original squadron but know that few survived by the war's end.

He enlisted in Los Angeles but was from New York City. In 1943 he was 27 or 28 and perhaps was called "Grandfather" for this reason. He died in 1954.

He held the Distinguished Flying Cross; I don't know the others.

If one of your readers remembers him, I would be most grateful for a note or a phone call. They may call collect, (707) 442-3503.

Daphne Diamond Bernard
639 16th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I received this photo of a painting of 448th aircraft "Back To The Sack" by Frederick T. Searle, 45 Stoke Road, Poringland, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 7JN, England.

Fred is doing a "one man show" at the Assembly House, Norwich on September 14-19, 1992. He invited all ZADA members who may be there at that time to visit him. The exhibition will show aircraft and bird paintings.

Rick Rokicki
365 Mae Road
Glen Burnie, MD 21061



Photo of painting by Frederick T. Searle of Norwich, depicting 448th aircraft "Back To The Sack."

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

The accompanying picture is of the PFF crew of Capt. Ed Malone. Twelve members included two extra navigators; one was Pilotage, the other Micky (H2X & Micro Wave H). We also carried an assigned Command Pilot as the 13th man.

The picture was taken in early September 1944 at either the 389th or 489th Bomb Group. I believe it was the 389th but I can't be absolutely sure, as we flew with both during that month.

You can see names painted on the A/C and they were all over it both inside and out. We were told that it was used in a bond drive. I would sure like to know what became of the A/C. If anyone knows I would appreciate a note from them. I also would like to know the whereabouts of crew members Malone, Singerman, Bryan, Hobbs and Beteau.

William F. Lantz
9533 Laura
Wichita, KS 67216



PFF Crew of Capt. Ed Malone

+ + + +

Dear Pete [Henry]:

After years of searching and study both here in the U.S. and in Europe, I have located the site of the crash of Lt. Harold Pinder's plane from the 44th Bomb Group. With the help of a Belgian air crash researcher, Cynrik De Decker, I have a photo of the area of the crash of 29 Jan. 1944. Lt. Pinder's B-24 was shot down on a mission to Frankfurt.

This has been one of the main objectives of my lifetime, to find this crash site and to learn the full details of the crash and what happened to the crew. I have been trying to find these facts for more than 40 years.

I would like to ask if anyone remembers the final days of Lt. Pinder's crew and what happened to them following the crash. One of the crew members was on my crew, T/Sgt. Abe Sofferman, radio operator.

Forrest S. Clark
703 Duffer Lane
Kissimmee, Florida 34759

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I am interested in obtaining information regarding Trolley Flights over Germany after VE Day; i.e. 44th Bomb Group, 67th Squadron out of Shipdham, Saturday 12th May 1945.

Would any of your readers know of any other civilians who had flights on "Myrtle the Fertile Turtle," the name of the pilot, and if he is still alive?

Once a week two officers from the 44th Bomb Group visited my grandparents at Hill Farm, Barford, on the main road to Norwich from Shipdham, to buy eggs. Can any of your readers remember this episode? One of the gentlemen was Jewish, and the other had spoken in the House of Representatives in the U.S.A.

Any assistance you can give me would be most helpful.

J. Dann
Hill Farm
Barford
Norwich
NR9 4AR
England

+ + + +

Dear Evelyn:

Thank you very much for the *Journal* and membership card, and please find enclosed a check for reservations in Las Vegas, Nevada from October 2nd to October 8th.

Also please find enclosed a picture of our crew and their names. We were in the 453rd Bomb Group, 734th Squadron. If anyone knows the whereabouts or any information about these men, please let me know. I found our co-pilot, Lloyd Smith, through Dan Reading, but he doesn't have any knowledge of the whereabouts of any of the other crew members.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Richard M. Dean
1492 Bay View Street
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689



Richard M. Dean, 453rd, is looking for these crew members. Back row (l-r): S/Sgt. J.J. Weaver, arms gunner; Unknown, tail gunner; T/Sgt. R.M. Dean, radio operator, gunner; S/Sgt. D.D. Thomas, arms gunner; T/Sgt. S.R. Romagnouls, eng. gunner; S/Sgt. R.M. Kirkwood, eng. gunner. Front row (l-r): 2nd Lt. J.J. Simms, navigator; 2nd Lt. H.H. Bates, bombardier; 1st Lt. M.J. Guiman, pilot; 2nd Lt. L.W. Smith, co-pilot.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I was going through my late mother's address book the other day and found an address of an American my father and mother got to know during the war, who was stationed at Hethel. I would be pleased to know if he is still alive and if he is coming over to England for the 50th Anniversary. My son, John Dann is interested too; he keeps in contact with many because he

belongs to the Norfolk Military Vehicle Group and helps with these reunions.

The name of this American is Mr. Patton, Western Grove, Arkansas. I do not know his rank but I think he used to fly. I never met him because I was married then and lived a few miles away. I married a farmer; my husband died three years ago but my son who lives near me now runs the farm. We would like to meet Mr. Patton if he ever comes to England. My father-in-law and mother-in-law used to have Americans call at their home for eggs.

Marjorie Dann
"Casa Mia"
Watton Road
Barford
Norwich
Norfolk
NR9 4AR

+ + + +

48 YEARS LATER



Ira P. Weinstein (center), bombardier; Robert White (left), waist gunner; and Jim Ely (right), waist gunner; met in Palm Beach, Florida in March 1992. They were all on the same B-24 crew in training and flew as a crew on their missions in England with the 445th Bomb Group, 702nd Squadron, out of Tibenham.

Bob White and Jim Ely finished their missions. Ira Weinstein, flying with another crew on his last mission, was shot down on September 27, 1944 during the Kassel, Germany Raid and was a P.O.W. until the end of the war.

+ + + +

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION BILL ROBERTIE

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IPSWICH, MASSACHUSETTS 01938



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