

# NEWS LETTER

Vol. 15 No. 2

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

June 1977

## Keep Those U.S.-British Links

(Eastern Daily Press)

Britain's special relationship with America must be maintained if there is to be any hope for the world, Mrs. Anne Armstrong, US Ambassador to Britain, told an audience at the University of East Anglia last night.

Educational institutions such as UEA, with its large American studies department are vital for strengthening the ties between the two countries. Mrs. Armstrong — who is on a two-day visit to Norwich — added.

In these days of shifting relationships the countries' common beliefs of liberty and order must help combat the ever-growing threat from the Soviet Union, she said.

she was sorry at the prospect of leaving Britain after only a year in office, but added that Mr. Carter's choice of a new ambassador to this country indicated the concern he had for the best interests of both American and British people.

She said she was leaving with a feeling of optimism about Britain — perhaps greater than anybody else in the country.

"This country has never depended on the quantity of natural resources. The standard of Britain is in the national character: intelligence, common sense, tolerance and justice."

the library by Miss Joan Benns, principal assistant librarian, and after being presented with a library brochure and a book of photographs featuring Victorian and Edwardian Norfolk, she was introduced to Lady Mayhew, one of the founder-governors of the Memorial Trust.

At City Hall she emerged from a massive black Cadillac — bearing the registration number USA 1 — resplendent in a salmon-pink ultra-suede suit.



Mrs. Armstrong inspecting the Roll of Honor in the Library Memorial Room. Mrs. Joan Benns, Principal Assistant Librarian, (center) explains a point while Mr. Tom Eaton, Chairman of the Governors, looks on.

"It is absurd to contemplate a weakening of this alliance," said Mrs. Armstrong. She praised President Carter for emphasising what Churchill termed "the special relationship" that existed between the United States and Britain.

Mrs. Armstrong — who returns to the United States next week — said

Earlier in the day Mrs. Armstrong toured the American memorial section at Norwich Library and afterwards described it as a fitting tribute to those United States airmen who served in Norfolk during the last war.

She was to have been accompanied by her husband, Tobin — himself a fighter pilot with the United States Air Force in Essex during the war — but he was called away on business at the last minute.

Mrs. Armstrong was introduced to Mr. Tom Eaton, chairman of the governors of the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAF, and among those who joined her on the tour of the Library were: Mr. Richard Gurney, a former chairman of the governors; Mr. N.J.D. Walter, clerk of the governors; Commander M. E. Cheyne, chairman of Norfolk County Council libraries committee; Mr. D. P. Mortlock, the county librarian; and Mr. J. F. Viles, the divisional librarian.

### 'FITTING'

### IN STYLE

Mrs. Armstrong was shown round



Tom Eaton, Chairman of the Governors, introduces Mrs. Armstrong to Lady Mayhew, one of the original Governors of the Memorial Trust. In the background, left to right, are two other Governors, Commander Cheny, and Mr. Richard Gurney, and in between Mrs. Armstrong and Mr. Gurney is the Lord Mayor of Norwich, Mr. Raymond Frostick.

She was introduced to the Lord Mayor of Norwich, Mr. Raymond Frostick, and the Lady Mayoress, Mrs. Claire Frostick and they talked of East Anglia's connections with America before viewing the city's regalia. Mrs. Armstrong was presented with a souvenir plate and history book by Mr. Frostick.

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## Second Air Division Association By-Laws

Last year at Valley Forge, a committee of Past Presidents appointed by Goodman Griffin submitted to the Executive Committee a proposed draft of a new set of by-laws for the Association.

The draft was gone over with a fine toothed comb by the Executive Committee, and the revised draft was read to the Membership at the General Meeting. Comments, criticisms, and changes were solicited from the membership at large to be submitted in writing to the Secretary within sixty days after the meeting. There being none, the revised draft was forwarded to our legal counsel, Henry Dietch. Incorporating his suggestions, the by-laws are now in final form for adoption at the General Meeting during our Convention at Lake Geneva in July.

These by-laws will become effective if approved by two thirds of the regular members present and voting at the meeting. We urge you therefore to be present, and make your wishes known.

Some of the highlights are:

1- The purpose of our organization emphasizes our intention to support financially and in every other way, the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division.

2- Our membership, in addition to regular and associate members can include Subscribing members, and Honorary members, the criteria for whom are clearly spelled out.

3- The elected officers of our Association will consist of President, Executive Vice President, two operating Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer.

4- The Executive committee will consist of the above six elected officers, the 2AD Association representative on the Board of Governors, three immediate past presidents, and three group Vice Presidents selected by the Nominating Committee — a total of 13 members.

The revised by-laws will be published in the Newsletter following their adoption.

## The Hunt Is On

Pete Henry of the 44th BG travels quite a bit in the course of his work, and when he puts up for the night at a motel or hotel he takes the time to write a 'Letter to the Editor' of the local paper or papers in the following manner:

To the Editor:

The Second Air Division Association is making every effort to locate anyone and everyone who served with the 2nd Air Division of the U.S. 8th Air Force in England during WW II.

All Personnel ever identified with the following Bomb Groups and Fighter Groups and attached units are eligible to join the Association. Bomb Groups are 44th, 93rd, 389th, 392nd, 445th, 446th, 448th, 453rd, 458th, 466th, 467th, 489th, 491st and 492nd. Fighter Groups are 4th, 56th, 355th, 361st and 479th. Anyone who served at any time with one of the above units please contact (your name and address). The Association publishes a quarterly Newsletter and an annual Roster of current names and addresses. If you want to meet a wartime buddy this is the place to do it.

The next annual reunion will be held at the Playboy Club in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin in July 1977. There were over 700 in attendance at the 1976 reunion in Valley Forge. (Unquote)

The above has brought excellent results and we urge all of our members

## Facts— Not Fiction

by John H. Hoffman (361st FG)

During its tour of operations in the European Theatre planes of the 361st Fighter Group flew a total of approximately 16,800 miles. For one airplane to accomplish this it would necessitate a continuous flight of eight years duration; a flight that would encircle the globe 672 times.



Approximately 5,381,000 gallons of gasoline were consumed by the airplanes of the Group. This is enough to run the average automobile a distance of 80,715,000 miles, 3228 times around the globe at a speed of 40MPH; a trip that would require 226 years of continuous traveling.

(ed note: compact or gas guzzler?)

to write a similar letter to the Editor of their local paper. You might find that your next door neighbor served in the 2nd Air Division.

# About the Memorial

by Jordan R. Utial (Hdq.)

Just before leaving for England in February, I wrote a few lines for the March issue, but unfortunately the material arrived in Bill Robertie's hands after he had already "put the issue to bed." Since then I have attended the annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the Second Air Division Memorial Trust, and there is so much to be said that I can only give you the highlights at this time. I hope to be able to report to you in greater detail at our Convention in Lake Geneva this coming July.

Let me start by conveying our thanks to all of you who came thru with contributions for the Memorial along with your 1977 dues. I am happy to tell you that we are making progress towards the goal we set in Wilmington in 1974 — to raise \$50,000 in five years in order to supplement the Trust's Capital Fund. The need for these funds, and the additional annual interest they will produce, is dictated by "old devil Inflation". To maintain the flow of new books in our American Memorial Room takes twice as much money today as it did five years ago. In addition, physical improvements are needed periodically, and most important, in order to keep up with modern Library techniques and keep our Memorial indeed a living one, we must branch out into the audio-visual field.

You may recall mention in the March issue that our Board of Governors were having difficulty in securing the approval of the Charity Commissioners, the body which supervises the administration of all Trusts, to develop with the times. In short, the Commissioners were strongly inclined to keep our expenditures confined to physical maintenance and the purchase of books. To help out in this situation our president Earl Zimmerman wrote to the Board as follows:

"For the record, we approve the utilization of books, tapes, films, cassettes or any other type of recognized modern library equipment which may be recommended by the Central Librarian, and approved by the Governors. We also believe that any material which may be deemed surplus by the Librarian be distributed to branch Libraries in Norwich, or for that matter throughout Norfolk and Suffolk, the areas in which our 2nd Air Division Bomber and Fighter bases were located. However we are not disposed at this time to the utilization of any of our Trust funds for any other activity."

At the meeting of the Governors, we

were happy to learn that the Commissioners have come around to the thinking expressed above, and our Board is now free to carry out the intent of our Memorial — to maintain a living tribute to the memory of our Comrades who gave their lives defending the freedom we all hold so dearly.

Yes, we are making progress towards our goal of \$50,000 for the Capital Fund. Thru the end of 1976 we had turned over to the Governors \$16,000 which you had contributed, and at the Convention in July we will announce the amount of our collections for this year. This leads to another interesting development that took place at the meeting. The members of the Board look with favor of the proposal we introduced relative to keeping the funds we are currently raising in a separate account in the United States until British currency problems are stabilized. This will be gone over in detail at Lake Geneva.

Our good friends Tom Eaton and Alfred Jenner were respectively reelected as Chairman of the Board and Vice Chairman. Attending the meeting for the first time, was Col. Robert Jenks the Air Attache at the American Embassy in London. He was most enthusiastic about his first exposure to our unique enterprise.

Two of our English Founder Governors graced the meeting with their presence — Lady Beryl Mayhew and Mrs. Michael Barne who have both given so much of their time and energy since 1945 in our behalf, and, of course, the presence and the strong continued interest of Dick Gurney

whose Bank has so conscientiously guarded and nourished our funds. Also lending their good counsel and devoted interest were Mrs. Frank Thistlethwaite, and Commander Mark Cheyne, rounding out the members of the Board.

We are extremely grateful for the contributions at the annual meeting of Dick Gurney's colleague, Mr. Nobbs, who helped us analyze our financial position — and our devoted friends from the Library, Joan Benns, Sam Nortlock, and Mr. J.F. Viles. Binding the whole group together was the efficient and energetic Clerk to the Governors, Nick Walter whose family and legal firm have been such good friends of the Association over the years.

There are two vacancies on the Board, and two outstanding young men were nominated. Their names will be announced when their acceptances are reported from Norwich.

Several physical improvements were deemed necessary this year, new carpet tiles, new blinds, and repairs to the Memorial fountain. A fund of 1800 pounds was voted for the use of the Librarian for these purposes, a sum quite in excess of the amount of interest that will be generated by our current investments which have a total value at February market values of 26000 pounds. So, you see the need to increase the capital is obvious.

This is only scratching the surface of what you should know about your Memorial Trust Fund. We hope to be able to give you additional details in person in July, and in subsequent issues of the Newsletter. Meanwhile, we thank you again for your support, and we earnestly seek your further help in the years to come.

## NOTICE

### Roster — When?

To answer a question being asked by many, a new Roster will be printed about November of this year. The reason we can't come out with one sooner is that we simply can't afford it.

For the past several years we have kept our dues at the current \$5.00 figure in spite of the rising cost of everything we did, not the least of which is postage. To put out a Roster at this time means we would have to skip the September issue of the Newsletter, and that we don't want to do.

We still have about 200 members who have not, as yet, paid their 1977 dues. It would help a great deal if those who have not paid would do so as soon as possible. Again, if you are experiencing financial difficulties please let Evelyn Cohen know. Our policy of not asking for dues from those members who are financially strapped is still in force.

One other thing. If your planning on attending the reunion at Lake Geneva this July but haven't made your reservation yet please let Evelyn know as soon as possible so we will have some idea as to how many are coming. Reunions take a lot of advance planning and you can assist us by declaring your intentions now.

# Remember June 10th, 1944?

by Charles Freudenthal (489th)

From the 489th Group record

"Target was Conches Airfield, France. Command pilot was Major P.B. Woodward, 844th Commander. Twenty seven aircraft were dispatched and 25 attacked the target with good results. Bomb load: 1249 100 lb. demolition. Bombing altitude 20,500 ft. Flak reported intense and accurate."

Lt. Chester S. Weeks, Navigator, Acft. 42-94759 "Sharon D."

"Could have been tough, but wasn't. Moderate heavy flak at few miles southwest of Caen hit someone's #4 engine. No other flak to mention, and no fighters, although the target was a fighter base. Visibility was pretty good except at the target, which was overcast. Bombed on Gee. Could see big fires and smoke in Caen, and many fighters milling around below.

"... We carried 52 100 pounders in clusters. At the target they released improperly, and many caught in the shackles, some jamming against control cables. We dropped 46. As a result some bombs fell after the doors were closed, and eleven ships came back with doors torn off or flapping. Bombs were dropping all the way from the target back to the base. . . We went over the North Sea trying to drop our remaining six, but could only get rid of four, and had to land with two bombs hanging in the shackles. Nothing came of it, as they were too tightly stuck to fall."

Roger Freeman "The Mighty Eighth"

"The new groups were still having their trials with forming and assembly and there were also technical difficulties, notably with bomb clusters in the B-24 racks. Cluster attachments allowed a greater number of small bombs to be carried but the attachments and the bomb bay gear were not good partners. On June 7th several clusters failed to release and eight fell through the bomb doors as 491st Group aircraft returned over England. Similar trouble was experienced by the 489th three days later when the Group attempted to bomb Conches. Many clusters of two or three 100 lb. bombs jammed in the shackles. Some clusters were not held all that tightly and by the time the Group arrived over Halesworth eleven Liberators had their bomb doors torn off and flapping by dislodged clusters falling through. Again some bombs fell on the English countryside; as Liberators sought their bases. . ."

Pfc. Thomas H. Baker, 328th Station Complement Sqdn.

"We had more excitement today than

# "There I was . . . ."

THE BEST OF BOB STEVENS

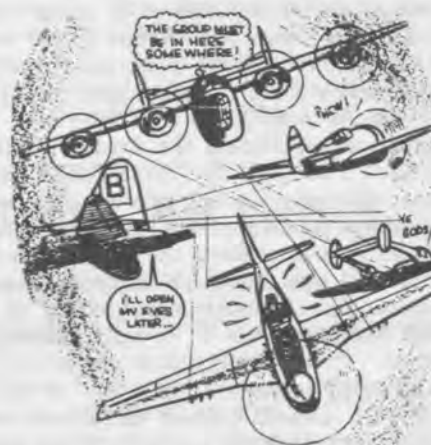


Bob's cartoons have been previously published in two paperback books which were best sellers in the aviation world. NOW he has combined the best of these two previous books plus new material, including all those great songs and ballads of WW II, into one beautiful hardbound book which has become an instant success as a Jeppesen Aviation Book Club selection.

CROSS SECTION OF THE BOMBARDIER AND NAVIGATOR WORKING IN THE 24' SPACIOUS NOSE SECTION.



"There I was . . ." How many times during the 2nd unpleasantness did you hear those words followed by an outrageous story? Those of you who are in touch with Air Force Magazine know of Bob Stevens' top-rated cartoon feature by "There I was . . ." which has delighted readers for two decades. Bob's sparkling cartoons of the humor and pathos of that great conflict have been described by critics as "the best cartoon book about airmen in print." Those of you who haven't seen his work have missed the Air Force's answer to Bill Mauldin.



Remember the Battle of Buncher 6?

We included a flyer on his book with your last Newsletter, but in case you have misplaced it, and for the benefit of our new members, we'll give you the straight poop once again. Cost is \$11.95 with one dollar of that going towards the Association's Memorial Trust Fund. Send you check or money order to THE VILLAGE PRESS, P.O. Box 310, Fallbrook, California 92028.

any day so far, I think. We were taking exercise this morning when we heard a loud roar of an airplane motor. We looked up and saw a man in a parachute, than another — and kept on until we saw eight. We thought there were more and we couldn't see them for clouds, then we got a call to get our guns and get on the trucks. We all went to hollering, we thought they were Jerries and we would get some action. . . (But) They were Americans whose plane went wrong. We brought them and their parachutes in. Then about eleven o'clock this morning we were sitting in our tent when we heard a noise sound (Sic) like a pistol went

off, so went outside — and a lot of GIs were running — we found out two bombs had landed about fifty or seventy-five feet from our tent at the back. One hit under a plane's wing. They didn't go off, for the pin wasn't pulled out before it was dropped. An American plane dropped it. I think it was an accident. But it was real close. We weren't allowed to go closer to them than our tents for fear they might go off yet. But they have got them out now."

(Note: Anybody have a clue about this? I don't have any record of a 489th aircraft loss on this date.)

# A Dog's Life

By George A. Reynolds (458th BG)

14 October 1944: Super-maximum effort was the brand name going around as crews were awakened this Saturday morning. Some were routed out of the sack and sent directly to briefing without chow. Ideal weather accounted for the extra emphasis and haste on this mission. The briefer identified the target as Cologne, and stated there were 307 guns, guarding the city on the Rhine, which would provide seven full minutes of flak for the airmen. The 458th was the last element in a fleet of 2,000 heavies scheduled for the target.

Most of the Group got off late and brought up the rear, as planned. Some of the ships even lagged behind their own formation, and then observed the hell their comrades caught firsthand. In fact, nearly all Groups caught it, for 54 Libs went down in the accurate, intense groundfire. A beautiful covey of 51s and 47s went with their big friends, but no enemy fighters came up to challenge.



Approaching the objective, a lead B-24 of the 755th, #50864, was hit, dropped out of formation and sailed

earthward into a broken cloud deck far below. No chutes blossomed. At bomb release, Lt. (now Col.) Bob Vincent and crew #24, 753rd, of "A Dog's Life," dropped and closed the bomb bay doors. Moments later, a very near-miss removed those doors, knocked out #3 engine and seriously injured the nose gunner, Jess Simpson. The nose flew straight up, throwing *A Dog's Life* into a hammerhead stall, (yeah, they said it couldn't be done) and it dropped from 30,000 to about 6,000 feet before Vincent and his copilot regained control.

Then, on reduced power plus added drag of the open bomb bay, maintaining altitude became a problem. They threw out all excess weight possible and made it to the Channel. Now #1 and 2 engines began losing power. That dreadful, uncontrollable and slow sinking had returned. There was enough altitude to make England, they thought, but concern arose about the tall radar towers at Great Yarmouth. Woodbridge was discussed, but the gunner's wounds somehow dictated Horsham, and besides, all the crew wanted to go home. *A Dog's Life* eased by the towers at eyeball level, then crept by the Cathedral and finally to AFS 123 on a straight-in approach spouting red flares. Simpson recovered, and *A Dog's Life* was patched up to fly another day. Actually, "Old Napoleon" (drawing came from a comic strip) galloped over the "ditch" several more times before going down with another crew at Norwich 13 February 1945 and was completely destroyed.

Since the Cologne affair, Bob Vincent is certain that "Dog's" really was a man's best friend. And speaking of friends, Chris Gotts, (FOTE) recently sent Bob parts of his old ship salvaged from their diggings at the crash site.

## Name Linking Church with US

(Eastern Daily Press)

In the United Reform Church, Wymondham, are two bronze memorial plaques. Over in the United States a similar plaque can be found in the Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis — dedicated to the same man.

John Archer, of Earsham, who has been researching the subject recently, told me something of the background to the plaques, and of the man in whose memory they are dedicated.

Older members of the Wymondham church may recall the late Chaplain Earl O. Widen, who served with the USAAF at Hethel during the second world war. He was then chaplain for the men of the 389th Bomb Group, but when he was informed the parishioners of the local church were without a rector he offered to minister to the community. Each Sunday after that he attended the church.

After D-Day, Chaplain Widen continued his ministrations in the little church, but on June 28th, 1944, he died.

Spontaneously, a plan was decided whereby members of the Bomb Group would place a plaque in his memory in the Wymondham church. But members of the congregation wanted to do something as well. So they collected money for a plaque to be erected... in Minneapolis.

In turn, the Wymondham congregation received a similar plaque from Earl's home church, and thus both sides of the Atlantic were joined together in a unique expression.

## SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

8th Air Force



### BOMB GROUP

44th	445th	458th	491st
93rd	446th	466th	492nd
389th	448th	467th	
392nd	453rd	489th	



### FIGHTER GROUP

4th 56th 355th  
SCOUTING FORCE - FIGHTER GROUP  
361st 479th  
OTHER GPS AND ATTACHED UNITS

Over the past few years we have had many requests for a 2nd ADA bumper sticker and now they are available. Ed and Gert Holgate got tired of waiting and had some printed up on their own time and their own expense. Cost is \$1.00 each and checks should be sent to Edward N. Holgate, 601 Bowsprit Pt. Rd., Tanoka Harbor, N.J. 08734. **BETTER HURRY.**

# SHOOT LUKE

Submitted by Floyd Mabee (93rd BG)

On October 9, 1942 "Shoot Luke" (93rd BG) and its crew had one thing in common. Both were fledglings to the art of war in a world at war. Unfortunately when the day had ended their designation remained the same. On the way to the Group's first target in Lille, France the Navigator became sick and they had to turn back while the remainder of the Group continued on. Once on the ground again the crew made a solemn vow that never again would they let the rest of the Group go on without them — and they never did.



Original Crew #4 of "Shoot Luke"  
(L to r, back row) - Capt. Ed. F. Janic, Bombardier (deceased); Capt. John Murphy, Pilot (deceased); Col. (Ret.) Frank D. Lown Jr., Co-Pilot; Col. (Ret.) Arch J. Rantala, Navigator; (l to r, front row) - S/Sgt. James D. Cowan, Tunnel Gunner; T/Sgt. Arville D. Sirmans, Engineer; S/Sgt. Paul B. Slankard, Tail Gunner; T/Sgt. William D. Mercer, Radio (deceased); S/Sgt. Floyd H. Mabee, L. Waist Gunner; S/Sgt. Mahlon W. Cressey, R. Waist Gunner.

"Shoot Luke" and crew #4 received their first baptism of fire on the Group's next raid which was to the submarine pens at Brest. This and the next few raids, while uneventful, built the confidence of the crew in themselves and their plane. Their first raid on Lonent was something else.

On this one a volley of three flak shells exploded under "Luke's" left wing almost turning him over. Luckily the damage consisted of no more than several holes in the wing. The journey back, however, brought a few problems. "Shoot Luke" became the target of several JU 88s and for forty five minutes they were engaged in a running fight which saw the tail gunner, Paul Slankard, drawing first blood for "Luke" when he shot one down and saw it burst into flames before crashing into the sea.

The first anniversary of Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1942, saw "Luke" and his crew flying from England to Africa to aid in the fight for control of the Libian desert. Christmas eve found them gathered around a campfire in the desert singing Christmas Carols and drinking

Canadian Club. None of them were churlish enough to ask how it got there. It was there and that answered any and all questions.

Several raids from this new base saw "Luke" come through with flying colors. No hits, no runs and no errors. This situation prevailed until the raid on Sousse.

Nothing much happened over the target and it looked like another mini milk run. It was not to be, however, because as they turned for home all hell broke loose. One FW 190 got through the guns of the formation and put a burst of four 20mm cannon shells into "Luke" along with plenty of machine gun bullets.

The cannon shells severed 8 spars and made two ribs look like a piece of cheese cloth. The skin was blown away destroying the air foil characteristics. One cannon shell lodged in the fuel cells and started them smoldering. Another penetrated the control cabin wounding two of the crew and damaging the hydraulic system and radio. The plane limped into Malta with the crew praising the consolidated people for building a truly rugged aircraft.

They say there is no rest for the weary, and so it proved in the case of "Luke's" crew. Within a week "Luke" was on his way over Naples and crew #4 heard the harps calling again. Two turrets froze and the crew didn't know it until they were attacked by fighters. They remained under attack for one hour and fifteen minutes.

One fighter closed to within 50 feet of the tail and just sat there. All the tail gunner could do was wave his guns around since they were frozen and couldn't fire. The Italian pilot thumbed his nose at "Luke" and his crew then pulled up to be greeted by an accurate burst from one of the other ships in the formation. Why that pilot didn't chew up "Luke" and his crew amazed everybody who witnessed the incident.

"Luke" and crew #4 then returned to England to join with other Groups in the task of softening up France, Bel-



Members of "Shoot Luke" Liberator Crew (l to r) - T/Sgt. Floyd H. Mabee, Top-Turret Gunner; S/Sgt. Mahlon D. Cressey, Gunner; S/Sgt. Adam J. Hastak, Waist Gunner; T/Sgt. Wm. D. Mercer, Radio Operator; S/Sgt. James D. Cowan, Tail-Gunner; S/Sgt. George W. Foster, Waist Gunner and Luke the "Wog Dog", their mascot that they brought back from N. Africa.

gium and Holland. All of these were tough but nothing spectacular happened until the day they hit the biggest of the big leagues — a raid on Germany itself. They knew it was going to be tough, but how tough they had no idea.

The trip was uneventful until they reached their altitude about 50 miles off the German coast. From then on they were under constant fighter attack for one hour and forty five minutes.

The run into the target was good, but as they turned away and headed for home the fighters began to get warmed up. At one time a mass attack developed in which about 30 fighters ganged up on their nine ship element.

One ship in the element took a hit in the #4 engine which began to smoke as the pilot eased it out of the formation. The pilot of the stricken ship was well known to the crew of "Shoot Luke" as he had been their Co-pilot on those early missions until he obtained a ship of his own. A hurried conversation was held over the intercom and to a man they voted to go to the aid of their former Co-pilot, Frank Lown. They left formation and took up a position off his right wing.

From out of nowhere came a FW 190 and he came in firing his cannons and machine guns. He was soon joined by others and they took turns working over the two struggling bombers.

T/Sgt. Floyd Mabee was in the path of an exploding cannon shell and took several hits, one in the eye. In spite of this he continued to fire his guns and shot down one of the fighters. In the meantime the tail gunner, S/Sgt. Paul Slankard, was having his problems.

Two hits from a 20mm cannon blew him half out of the top of the turret and for interminable minutes he was flying 22,500 feet above Germany half in and half out of "Luke". Only the fact that his left foot caught in the gun controls saved him from being shot, projectile fashion, through the turret roof.

He tried to crawl back into the turret but the winds were too strong. Floyd Mabee, himself badly wounded, crawled to Slankard's aid and pulled him back into the ship where he slapped an auxiliary oxygen mask over Slankard's face. Mabee covered Slankard's wounds with sulphur powder then dragged him to a hole in the plane's side. They had to stop the bleeding and with outside temperature at 40 to 50 degrees below zero exposing the wound to this frigid temperature was all they could think of. There were no narcotics to ease the pain as all the hypodermic needles were frozen and all efforts to thaw them in their mouths proved futile.

The Navigator, although wounded, remained at his post and successfully

(Continued on page 7)

# I REMEMBER: A Most Disastrous Mission (Part 2)

by  
Col. Myron H. Keilman (392nd BG)  
Col. Robert Berger (392nd BG)  
collaborated by  
Col. Vernon Baumgart (392nd BG)  
Mr. Donald Clover (392nd BG)

Twenty-one times we returned to Wendling for a debriefing, but on 18 March 1944, we never got back to tell our story. As you have read in the disastrous story up to the bomb drop and fighter attack, here is what happened in the second formation (12 planes) of the 392nd Group and the crew of the Jungle Princess.

Our crew had lost the Jungle Princess after the 13th mission; she made it home one day too shot up to fly again. The name came out of those wonderful days of the late thirties. Remember Dorothy Lamour and her sarongs? We had thought in our training we might be going in the direction of the Far East. Even after the plane was gone we always thought of ourselves as members of the J.P.

The crew assembled with the others for the briefing in the same old way, no big deal. We were old timers by now, and like the rest, looking for that 25th mission with only three more to go. We were to lead the second formation of 12 planes as part of the 392nd effort. The bomb drop was to be by 12-plane formation; we were to follow the lead 12 planes in, pick up the target and our 12 planes would bomb on our drop. The rest of the briefing was routine. We had an extra navigator with us that day. He was on his first mission for an orientation ride. The crew chief was heard telling him how lucky he was to be with this crew, as it was a good-luck bunch. Even though we never made that debriefing late Saturday, 18 March, we were lucky.



Col. Bob Burger

It has been described as a beautiful day, and it was. Everything went well until we passed the Channel when our tail gunner reported the mid-air collision of the two new crews behind us; otherwise, things were going well. The loss of the new crews would have been a major event on some of our other missions; today it was only a starter.

On this day we were flying with our full crew that had gone through training together. One of the waist gunners had been in the hospital from a flak wound but had returned and the old gang was working together again.

As mentioned in the briefing we were leading the second formation of twelve planes, flying low and behind the lead formation. Our bombardier, Lt. Paul McDonald, was an old hand at this game and took over the auto control as we hit the bomb run. After we were into the run, the flak really started coming in; it sounded like old wash tubs were being banged right under us. We had had plenty of this before, but this time they had us zeroed in. We lost one engine and this held us down, but throwing on more power, we were able to hold in on the bomb run. The flak was getting worse, and about the time we had the power under control, a round came up in front of the windshield between the navigator's bubble and the cockpit. Luckily, it did not explode. It just left a nice five-inch hole as it passed through.

When we started the bomb run we had 10 planes, flying a nice tight formation. Though the flak was scattering us a little, we were still holding in fairly well and were just before bomb release when the top turret gunner sounded an alarm. Another formation had pulled right over us and had bomb doors open, ready to drop. They had evidently turned on their bomb run early and this had brought them right over our squadron! It was necessary for Don Clover to take over control of the plane and move the formation to the left. We were able to get most of the

planes over far enough that the bombs from the group above came through the right edge of our formation. We didn't lose anyone to the bombs, but as much can't be said for the flak. We lost four planes, either shot down or scattered during the bomb run. Since McDonald had had to hold his drop when we made the move to the left, he picked up a target at the edge of Friederickshafen — which we think was a marshalling yard. Still in the flak area, we were able to release and start pulling back toward the lead formation of the Group. Our group was now headed toward England, and we were a long way behind the groups ahead of us. We could see specks to the right front, really more to the front of us a good distance. They were right in the sun and reflections rather than shapes were about all we could see. Our formation had pulled together pretty well and, although we were on three engines, we were getting on ok. There were only six of us left out of the twelve we had started with that morning, an element of three behind and a plane on each wing. Some of the missing planes may have been stragglers.

The specks mentioned before suddenly turned out to be 109s and FW 190s. Our crew thought afterwards that there must have been at least 24 of them. They launched their attack from about one-third and high, coming in elements of four and five, flying wing tip to wing tip as they sliced through the formation. We had lost both of our wing men, and the element behind us was down to two planes.

It must have been the third pass in which we received some solid hits; we were burning and the fire had spread into the wing roots and into the bomb bay. The fire retardant had been exhausted, and the fire continued to spread; there was nothing left to do but leave the ship. Again, training paid off — every man knew where he was to go and what he was to do. There wasn't a hitch in the bail-out. It was timely and the fact that the plane was seen to blow as the last of the crew had left it attests to the fact that it was none too soon. Three men had been wounded, but their conditions were such that it didn't keep them from performing the bail-out procedures.

After we had left the plane, it became eleven separate stories. We were scattered and ended up in different prisoner of war camps. Over the years we have seen each other on occasion, and the Christmas cards still come every year. They always remind us of the cold, deep snow over Germany that 18th of March, 1944.

## SHOOT LUKE (Cont. from page 6)

navigated the two ships home. "Luke" and his crew had been badly bruised on this one.

In less than two weeks "Luke", with his patched up and glued together crew, was back in business at the old stand hauling heavy loads of iron to Rotterdam and Antwerp.

The remaining missions for "Luke" and crew #4, up to the magic 25th, were relatively uneventful. Bordeaux was the last one, and as the pilot and crew slipped out of the ship they knew

they were saying farewell to a metal hillbilly that never let them down. Up to that date "Shoot Luke" had carried his crew to targets in France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Tunisia, Sicily, Tripolitania and Germany.

The much decorated crew went home, but the much decorated "Shoot Luke" — with his antique rifle and jug of sauce — stayed on and continued to carry other crews to other targets.

(ed. The above account of "Shoot Luke" was condensed from the diary of the Pilot, John H. Murphy and submitted by Floyd Mabee.)

# Mission 18 September 1944 — Supply Drop - Holland

by Anonymous

Mission normal and routine as briefed up to point 'A' just between target and IP. At point 'A' at 1623 hit by enemy machine gun and 20 mm fire. Ship hit as airspeed decreased and altitude increased for release of load. Damages from enemy fire at point 'A' were:

1. Direct hit in nose below bombsight with 20mm. Bombardier wounded and came up to flight deck unaided for first aid.
2. Direct hit in rear hatch with 20mm. Exploded inside plane. Numerous holes in surface. Drop master wounded. First aid given by gunners.
3. Direct hit in starboard aileron 20mm.
4. Direct hit in starboard flap and wing 20mm.
5. Two direct hits in bomb bay catwalk — #3 gas cell leaking — hydraulic line broken.
6. Numerous machine gun holes on all surfaces of airplane. Radio operator hit by shrapnel from #5.

In the target area the load was salvaged by the co-pilot and bundles were thrown out by the crew. Gasoline containers on the catwalk could not be dropped due to battle damage.

Owing to abnormal and dangerous flying characteristics we climbed to 1000 feet and turned off target. Airplane vibrated excessively — sluggish on controls — pulled sharply down and to the left. Required effort of both pilot and co-pilot to control.

We were unable to stay with the formation leaving the target. On heading out we were hit again by enemy

machine gun fire. No effective damage to the plane. Left coast at point of penetration. Owing to adverse weather and wounded navigator, plus difficulty in controlling the airplane, we were not certain of our position. We called for fighter escort but could not give him our position.

Approached unidentified convoy in channel. Fired colors of the hour and cleared to the left. Airplane could not be turned to the right and convoy extended out of sight to the right. Continuing at altitude of 1000 feet we passed convoy and discovered we were over Dunkirk which was confirmed by flak and machine gun fire.

Owing to poor visibility we did not see the coast until too late. We received a direct hit in the bomb bay with 88mm. We also received numerous flak fragments one of which damaged engine #1. Engine smoked profusely. Believe the oil line was broken. Propeller governors inoperative. Radios, interphone, turrets, flap indicator, manifold pressure gauges (#1 and #2) and airspeed indicator inoperative. Vibration increased.

We decided against bailing over France because of the wounded aboard. We decided to head for any field in England in order to be sure of care for the wounded and of an intact airfield. We selected Swingfield near Dover which was the first we saw. Weather was closing in and pieces of the airplane were falling off.

It was necessary to crank the gear down and kick out the nose wheel which was flat. There was brake pressure in the accumulator. We were able, with the co-pilot's hand pump, to put

down 30 degrees of flaps of which we could not be certain because the flap indicator was out. Main gear indicated locked from the waist — no green light on the panel.

Approach was fast to insure safety with no airspeed indicator. Touched down gently on a grass field, ballooned over the hump in the center of the field. At this point the right gear wobbled and collapsed. Booster pumps and all switches turned off by the co-pilot when the gear collapsed.

Plane skidded toward the left and came to a stop on the field without hitting any obstructions. Right wing was now ablaze. Crew which had been in ditching positions left the airplane when it stopped. Every one got clear of the plane without further injury and the wounded were aided by the remainder of the crew in leaving the airplane and were immediately taken care of by medics (RAF).

Right wing and engines #3 and #4 were completely burned. Much personal equipment was lost and destroyed as a result of battle damage, wounds and extinguishing of fire.

Wounded were placed in the hospital at Canterbury after medical care at air-drome sick quarters. Each member of the crew was wounded, seriously or slightly, except the pilot and co-pilot.

On final approach the #4 propeller fell off the engine and the engine was on fire. We were informed later that pieces of the airplane were seen to be falling as we circled the field. The propeller was later retrieved and had several bullet holes in the blades. Another day, another dollar — and a half!

## News of the 44th Eightballs

by Joe Warth (44th)

"Art Sale and Auction" Yes, this odd and unusual auction of objects d'art, home crafts and wartime memorabilia will be conducted by the wives of the 44th Bomb Group at Lake Geneva during our annual reunion. Mrs. Jan Wold will be in charge of the auction and sale and all profits received will be donated to the Memorial Library Fund — Now — We need your help too — If you plan to attend the reunion, bring some items to add to the collection for auction, and just in case you will be unable to attend the reunion this year — WHY NOT, send Jan something that can be added to the auction. Send your contribution to Mrs. Jan Wold, 1749 Sun Valley Drive, Beloit, Wisconsin 53511. She has an extra large mail-box and lots of storage room — Remember the more you send —

the bigger the auction will be — therefore — more money for the Memorial Library Fund.

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Orders are now being taken for the "EIGHTBALL" patches. Have you sent for yours yet. The initial order has gone in and the first lucky ones who ordered them will have them in time to wear at the Reunion. Don't delay any longer — get your order in. Cost \$2.50 each, this includes postage — so send your order and check to me — Joe Warth 5709 Walkerton Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45238. All profits received from the sale of the patches is being donated to the Memorial Fund. They will look good on a jacket or framed and hung on the wall.

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The 44th continues to grow, we have added a dozen new members to the

rolls since the first of the year, space in the Newsletter being limited means we can't list their names, but they will be in next roster when published so watch for that old buddy of yesteryear — he may turn up yet. Its good to add new members — so welcome back to the 44th. Hope you can attend our reunions.

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The "Shipdham Pub" will be open for drinks and talk all during the Reunion, so plan now to make it your home away from home while you are at the Playboy. Plans are afoot for a Polka contest plus music, lots of talk about the good old days of WWII. But the reunion won't be much fun unless YOU are there — so get your reservations in to Evelyn NOW.

Nuff for now — See YA at Lake Geneva.



## Line Shack News

by Martin H. Schreck (389th BG)

There must be a lot of ex-2nd Air Divisioners whose most dangerous mission was the liberty run to Norwich, (ever fall off the tail gate of a 6 x 6 while eating fish and chips?) and feel that they too have a story to tell even if it was eclipsed by daily events when heroism "above and beyond" was the order of the day.

Larry Schroh's (389/564) mention of crew chief Tony Mammolite started a flood of recollections of faces, situations, and names dimmed by the erosion of 32 years — but one event does stand out and I'd like to tell it.

I was part of 564th Squadron Auto Pilot Shop (September 43 to September 45) and on one occasion was faced with two test flights in one afternoon (we had to endure practice mission to accomplish our A.F.C. Systems tests). Anyway, my section Chief T/Sgt. Frobese just happened to arrive on duty in time to opt for the best of the two flights leaving me to test hop a bird and crew of unknown qualifications. We suited up (Ha-Ha-Ha) with the most mis-matched-ill fitting assemblage of hand me down G.I. and British flying gear imaginable and I swear that if the Luftwaffe could've seen us they'd've been too busy laughing to fight, but off we went to our respective aircraft.

My aircraft (name and number long forgotten) preflighted normally and being lightly loaded, rotated and was flying in about half the runway length and at that critical moment the pilots seat catch broke loose and slid full back pulling the yoke with him putting us on the verge of a text book take-off and departure stall. Our alert co-pilot threw his entire weight against the control column while I grabbed four throttles holding them forward for dear life. Recovery seemed to take forever and ultimately we did gain sufficient air speed to climb and the remainder of the practice mission was routine and ANXIOUS.

The story could end there but there is more — the other B-24 carrying my boss, Sgt. Frobese, had a fuel starvation problem at 10,000 feet, lost all 4 engines and crashed the same afternoon. Frobese and most of the crew bailed out OK but I recall we did lose 2 fine flying officers who couldn't get out.

Ground crews didn't come home with many medals — but we did bust our humps for 300+ missions - and some of us might even have earned the "order of the brown stain" had there been one!

I'd like to say "Hi" to all 2nd A.D.

people and especially 564th Squadron ground crews.

P.S. If any of you still get nostalgic about WW II airplanes I heartily recommend a visit to the A.F. Museum at Dayton — but if you really want to blow your minds visit the Confederate Air Force at Harlingen, Texas where they have at least one of everything in flying condition.

## News of the 448th

by Joseph T. Michalczyk (448th BG)



Upon my arrival home there was a letter from Ron Kramer awaiting.

He asked me to please convey his congratulations to George Dupont for the manner in which he organized our formal gathering in the absence of Ken Engelbrecht.

Ron also enclosed an outline of suggestions for the Lake Geneva, Wisconsin reunion in 1977. Since that time Ron and I have been busy in putting together a short summary of the 448th B.G. history while in Seething, England.

At the present time we have completed a rough draft of the 448th souvenir booklet. The cover design along with charts and graphs are completed. What remains is to place all information in their proper sequence to assure an attractive booklet. We anticipate at the present time to have the booklet completed in ample time before the 2nd Air Division Reunion in July, at which time the booklet may be purchased.

To all members of the 448th Bomb Group:

As your Vice President I urge the following:

*"Don't walk in front of me . . . I may not follow.*

*Don't walk behind me . . . I may not lead.*

*Just walk beside me and be my friend."*

## Anne Armstrong — A First

Not since our Memorial Room in the Norwich Central Library was dedicated has an American Ambassador taken the time to visit it to learn what impact the room has had on the people of East Anglia in particular and Anglo-American relations in general.

Before she was replaced by President Carter — not one of his better decisions — Anne Armstrong took the time from a busy schedule to visit the Memorial Room to see at first hand what the Memorial Room is and to learn how the people of Norwich regard it. She was high in her praise for what the Association has accomplished since the war years.



In addition to visiting the Memorial Room she took a tour of several of the bases in the area escorted by the Association's pride and joy, and old friend, Roger Freeman, the author of *The Mighty Eighth*. It was not one of East Anglia's better days being cold and wet, but both Mrs. Armstrong and Roger braved the elements and plunged ahead.

It is to be hoped that the new Ambassador takes a page out of Mrs. Armstrong's book by paying a visit to Norwich and the Library soon after he, or she, is settled.

## PAPER WEIGHT OR DESK ORNAMENT



Leroy J. Engdahl is offering a B-24 item which can be used as a paper weight, desk ornament or shelf piece. This is a pewter model depicted "in flight" and is embedded in lucite — a beautiful item and a work of art. Price for this is \$10.50 and you can order one by writing to Leroy at 1785 Wexford Drive, Vidor, Texas 77662.

## **RUDE COMMENTS — A Sandy, Sunny & Salty Sojourn**

by *Walter Rude (448th)*

We're leaving beautiful Boise, Idaho and heading for the Great Salt Flats area surrounding Wendover Field, Utah.

Not much can be said for Wendover. Its primary purpose was to provide facilities for gunnery training, but to some of our more pessimistic souls, being sent to the salt and sand of Wendover was just a fair indication that our ultimate destination would be North Africa or worse.

Our living quarters (and I use the word living loosely) consisted of one story, tar-papered shacks, and for fun and excitement you could hike up to the Stateline Hotel in neighboring Nevada and allow yourself the dubious pleasure of being relieved of your hard-earned money by the one-armed bandits and high-priced drinks.

The only excitement created at Wendover for your writer came on the day we were to depart the salt-flats for the rolling cornbelt, hogs and cattle-feeding

area of Sioux City, Iowa. As all flying personnel will know, it is cockpit procedure to apply the brakes after lift-off and prior to the retraction of the landing-gear. Our pilot, though one of the best, had the bad habit of locking the brakes during this sequence. Unfortunately, and with brakes locked, we hit the prop-wash of the aircraft taking off just before us, and the result was our being put back down on the runway, then bouncing into the air again. Both main tires blew sounding only too much like a couple of 75mm cannon going off.

Then there followed a long-winded radio contact with a group of experts gathered in the control tower. What to do was the question. Their first decision was that all aboard (about 32), with the exception of the pilot, co-pilot and your narrator would bail out. This decision, was discarded when the power in the tower came to the conclusion that a mass bail-out of some 29 almost completely inexperienced parachutists would

which dropped lightweight launches in which survivors could make their way back to England. When high seas made it too hazardous for the amphibious patrol planes to set down on the water.

The groundwork was laid by Captain Fred W. Graf, controller of the fighter wing which directed air-sea rescue operations. The unit started with P-47's and combat-wise fighter pilots whose primary assignment was to act as spotters of distressed aircraft, and communicate by radio with planes and boats of the British rescue unit.

The P-47's also provided cover for surface launches which often ranged dangerously close to the German-held coast.

Upon learning the exact position of a distressed plane the controller immediately contacted the P-47 spotters patrolling the North Sea. These spotters flew to the last known position of the crippled plane in search of the aircraft or survivors. These P-47's were mostly WW (War Weary) aircraft. A second call was made to the Catalina's which were always out on patrol whenever allied planes were flying a mission. They, too, headed for the area where the plane was last heard from, and, with the aid of the spotters, located the survivors, landed on the water, and picked them up.

The P-47's remained in the area during the rescue for other possible survivors.

A record air-sea rescue was established near the war's end. A 2/Lt. Donald E. Hicks and his Catalina crew got a fighter pilot aboard five minutes

probably result in more injuries than a potential hazardous landing.

After circling the field for several hours to lighten the fuel-load, our super-pilot set that B-24 down like an old hen squatting down on a clutch of hatching eggs. However, when the weight of the Lib settled down on the struts and the blown tires, the vibration became terrific. And where was yours truly? I had been assigned the task of getting as many as possible under the top-turret to support it and prevent it's breaking loose when the vibration became excessive. Needless to say, I was far from being ecstatic about being used as a support piece for a flimsily mounted turret.

All went well, though, and we finally braked down to a very gentle stop. At that point no one had to give an order to evacuate the aircraft.

The only sad part to the entire experience came when a number of us were informed that we would have to remain at dear old Wendover and assist in the replacement of the strut assemblies.

Next "COMMENT" — ON TO SIOUX CITY SUE! Until then — CHEERIO!

## **Small Unit — Big Operation**

by *John W. Archer*

A unit which never hit the headlines, but a very important outfit that more than held its own among the "big boys" of the 2nd Air Division. That was the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron. Operating within the 65th Fighter Wing, it was formed in May 44, under the command of Major Robert P. Gerhart at Bosted in Essex County.

The 489th Bomb Group received orders in November 44 to prepare for re-deployment to the Pacific Theater of operations. Having vacated Halesworth (Holton), the 5th E.R.S. moved in to the former B-24 station early in the new year 45. Under their new commander, Major E.L. Larson, it was in constant operation until hostilities ceased in the E.T.O.

It aided in the rescue of hundreds of distressed airmen. Close liaison was maintained with the R.A.F. upon which the 2nd A.D., and indeed the 8th A.F. had long been dependent for saving its downed flyers from the icy English Channel or North Sea.

With the procurement of Catalinas — patrol aircraft — from the U.S. Navy, and the development of releasable airborne lifeboats, the 5th E.R.S. were a well-drilled rescue unit, locating airmen in distress and picking them off the water or providing them with life-saving devices.

In addition to Catalinas, this outfit employed P-47's as spotters, and B-17's

## **389th Bomb Group Badges**



The above 389th Bomb Group badge was designed and produced by Aaron Schultz, P.O. Box 18 High Point, North Carolina 27261.

These badges are 2 1/8" x 3 1/8" printed on a celluloid material in five colors and are mounted on a metal backing with a safety pin back suitable for wearing at the 2nd Air Division reunions.

Anyone wishing a limit of two badges please send \$.25 each to cover postage and handling directly to Aaron. Aaron has stated that any donations above the \$.25 postage and handling will be turned over to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Fund for the purchase of books for our Memorial Library in Norwich.

Remember, anyone can purchase two of the badges, but no more than two because only 500 were manufactured.

after receiving direct word from a P-51 on fire with the pilot ready to bail out. The pilot saw the Catalina coming towards him while parachuting down to the North Sea. The 2nd A.D. were proud to have the 5th E.R.S. within its ranks. A 'great little' squadron.

# Centurians

by Roger A. Freeman (Asso.)

A B-24 Liberator that survived 100 trips in the face of Hitler's flak and fighters — to say nothing of the vagaries of the north European weather and the overloads it was continually made to lift — deservedly commanded special respect. It was not until late in the war that the first 8th AF B-24 reached 100 when, all things being relative, the average combat life of a heavy bomber in the ETO had nearly trebled, largely due to the demise of the Luftwaffe. Thus 30 missions was a significant milestone early in 1943 although divisions of one hundred were the appropriate point to acclaim a veteran.

First 8th AF B-24 to reach the 25 mission mark has apparently never been conclusively established although the chief contender is said to be "Jerk's Natural", but if not it was certainly one of the other early B-24s of the 93rd BG. First to 50 was "Bomerang" of the 93rd who got there in December 1943. "Duchess", a sister ship, was next in line and unlike "Bomerang" she had achieved the half century without incurring any turnbacks for mechanical reasons, a fact not always considered as important in the early days when lauding an individual aircraft's record. The 8th AF Public Relations people do not appear to have highlighted the Lib that was out in front at the 75 mark which must have occurred sometime in the late spring or early summer of 1944. The reason could be that at this time Command had ordered that publicity only be given to combat aircraft which had put on record numbers of missions without a turnback for mechanical reasons. The purpose was to encourage crew chiefs vying for the leading place to be even more thorough in their maintenance operations. For this reason when "Ronnie" of the 446th BG hit the 100 mark on 30th December 1944 there was no publicity as she had aborted on her 81st trip. "Ronnie" was apparently first to the century mark and although this has been disputed no one has as yet produced conclusive proof for another claimant. "Witchcraft" of the 467th did receive the limelight when she hit 100 on 14th January 1945, having done so without once aborting. This B-24H held its lead until the end of hostilities and 8th AF HQ credited it with a record 130 missions without a turnback. All told some 30 other 8th AF B-24s reached the century mark with and without aborts. The runner up to "Witchcraft" appears to have been a 446th Lib with 122.

But what about the centurian B-24

# Fields of Little America

by Martin Bowman



Believe it or not but there is now a History of the Second Air Division in print. The Author, Martin Bowman, is a long time Associate member and has been helped in this project by many of our members, for which he sends his profound thanks.

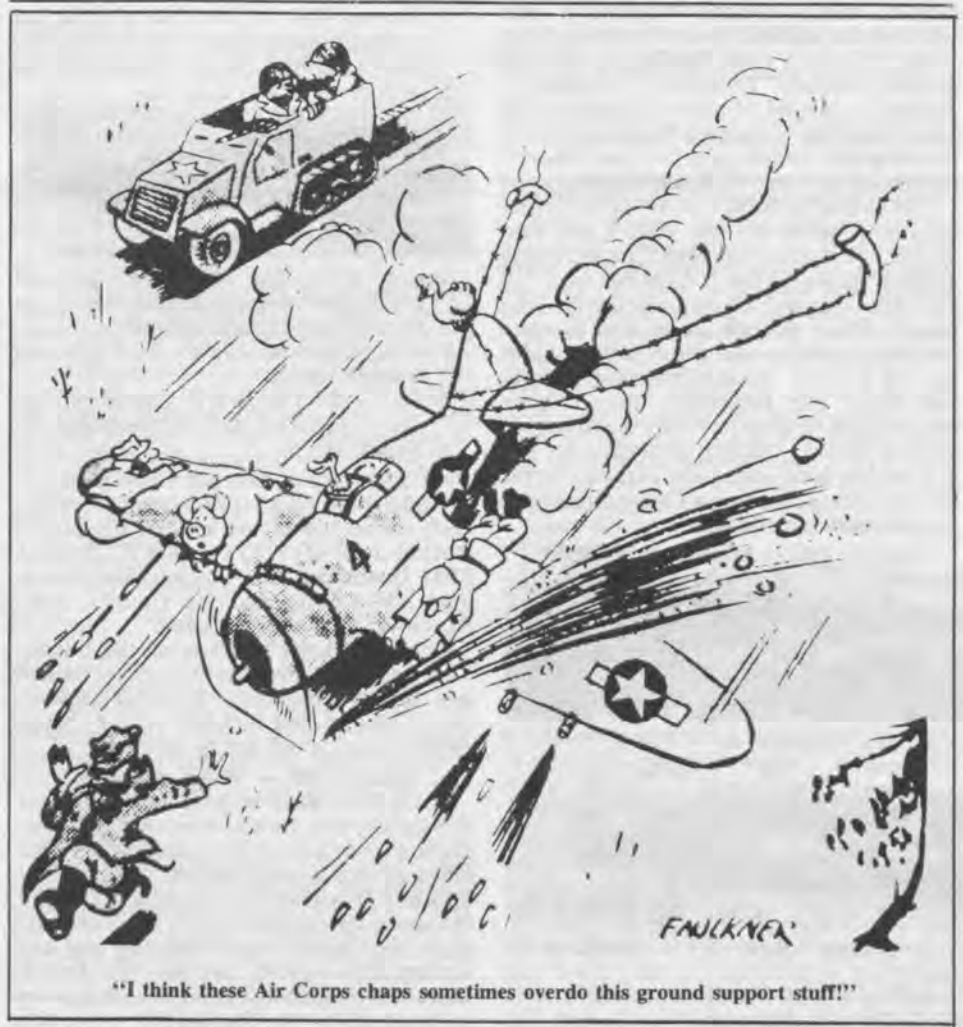
The Fields of Little America is an illustrated history of the Liberator squadrons of the Second Air Division from 1942 to the end of the Second World War. It is the story not only of the combat crews but of the ground crews and the airfields the B24s flew from in East Anglia. The book contains a large selection of previously unpublished photographs and includes aerial views of all the Second Division air-

fields. As well as drawing upon official U.S.A.A.F. records the Author has also used many stories from the men who were involved in combat and many of these accounts were written down at about the time they occurred. Thus it forms an emotive study of a fighting force that grew from near obscurity alongside the Flying Fortresses to a unique and powerful arm of the Eighth Air Force.

It is well known by all of us that the Liberator, unlike the B-17, was built around the bomb bay and was superior to the fortress in performance, payload and range. The Second Air Division survived attempts to re-equip it with B-17s and so the Liberators and men of the Division became an integral part of life in a small corner of eastern England — Little America.

Published June 1977. Size: 11¼" by 8½". 128 pages. Approx. 120 photographs. Hardback \$9.75. (Add \$5.45 extra if you require us to post airmail)

Orders to: Wensum Books Ltd.,  
33 Orford Place,  
Norwich,  
England.



aviators? Little information is available on Liberator men who may have reached the century or come near to it.

Can any 2nd AD men stake a claim for the most missions in a B-24? Who was/is the Liberator daddy of them all?

# The Smithsonian's new National Air & Space Museum

by Rick Rokicki (458th)

My first visit to the Smithsonian's Aircraft Building in Washington, D.C. was in late '45 shortly after discharge from Andrews Field Air Force Base in nearby Maryland. The building itself was a structure not unlike a large Nissen hut and certainly nothing very impressive. The value of course, was what was stored inside. Today, as almost everyone knows, that "hangar" has taken on a new look and might be rightly called a Premier Showroom for Aviation machinery. The facility is definitely first class and the same must be said for the displays and exhibits inside.

The building is three (3) blocks long and is really eight (8) block segments joined together by bubble-topped, smoked glass skylights. Constructed of Tennessee marble, the 40 million dollar National Air & Space Museum stands as an excellent credit to proper planning and project management. Staying within its budget with no cost overrun, the facility opened its doors to the public on July 1, 1976.

Once inside the Independence and 6th Street entrance, 2 huge wall murals surround you with the space program achievement. No attempt will be made here to cover the space exhibits except to mention that in several "Galleries," you will find the Manned Space Programs from Project Mercury thru Apollo 17, artifacts include Mercury "Freedom 7," Gemini 7, Apollo Command Module (Skylab 4), the Lunar Roving Vehicle (back-up unit to the original) and Lunar Surface Experiments with 4 types of lunar samples.

The aircraft exhibit was my prime target area now, after my 4th visit, I still find things I missed the other three times around. Although the NASM has over 250 aircraft, "only" 64 are presently displayed. Many aircraft are on loan to other museums, such as the Navy's Pensacola, the Air Force's Wright-Patterson at Dayton, Ohio, etc. However, there's more than enough to keep one fully occupied for several hours. Gallery grouping as the NASM has done seems the best way to list the exhibits, so you don't miss an aircraft of that particular display.

## Gallery 100 — Milestones of Flight



Wright Brothers' Kitty Hawk Flyer  
Samuel P. Langley's Langley Model 5,



Lindbergh's Ryan NYP "Spirit of St. Louis"

Bell X-1 and North American's X-15 rocket powered aircraft.

## Gallery 102 — Air Transportation

Pitcairn Mailwing (Eastern Air Transport)

Fairchild FC-2 (Pan American)

Northrop Alpha (Trans-World)  
Ford Tri-Motor (American)  
Boeing 247 (United)  
Douglas DC-3 (Eastern)

All above aircraft are suspended from the ceiling in an in-flight attitude. You have a choice of viewing them from the first floor level or the balcony. In either case, when you consider that the building height is 82 feet in the exhibit area, you can get a variety of camera angles that would not be possible if the aircraft were "on the deck."

## Gallery 103 — Vertical Flight

About a dozen machines that range from the experimental Hiller Flying Platform thru autogyros to helicopters.

### The West Gallery contains:

Wright Military Flyer. The first air machine sold to the U.S. Signal Corps.;



Grumman Gulfhawk 11. The only civilian version of the Navy's carrier fighter/bomber flown exclusively by Major Al Williams for Gulf Oil in the '30s.



Boeing P-26. The Air Corps' first all metal, low wing monoplane that made the military biplane obsolete.

North American's F86-A of Korean conflict fame.

Curtiss P-40E. The WWII aircraft of Flying Tiger and early campaigns in North Africa.

## Gallery 203 — Sea-Air Operations

Highlighted by a reproduction of an aircraft carrier deck, the exhibit displays a Boeing F4B-4 (1930's), WWII Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bomber and Grumman FM-1 Wildcat. The Douglas A4C Skyhawk jet is also included.

Special effects: standing on the Carrier "bridge" you will witness a carrier launch and retrieve operation in what appears three dimensional movies. A very good exhibit that should not be missed.

## Gallery 205 — WWII Aviation

No B-24 or B-17 aircraft here, however this gallery has a wall mural of a B-17 formation complete with vapor trails that looks as real as anyone can remember. I watched this mural being painted before the museum opened and it is a fantastic sight. Extremely good lighting and the strategically placed aircraft (the Italian Macchi is suspended in flight and appears to be attacking the formation), make this scene. Other aircraft on display include: North American P-51 Mustang, British Supermarine Spitfire, Mk VII, German Messerschmidt Bf 109G, Japanese Mit-

subishi A5M-6 (Zero) and the "front office" or cockpit section of the Martin B-26 Marauder known as "Flak Bait." Don't fail to see this.

## Gallery 209 — World War I Aviation

Billy Mitchell's SPAD 16 (two-seater) and the SPAD 7 that I believe used to be in the old museum as Elliot White Springs' aircraft and the German Fokker D-7 are arranged in a WWI setting. The diorama features a capture of the Fokker and an interrogation of the pilot. Very real and Hollywood film-making could learn a thing or two from this set.

Other interesting and historical aircraft include an OX-5 powered Waco 9 of mid-20s vintage the German Buecker Jungmeister aerobatic biplane that was used as an advanced trainer by the Luftwaffe fighter pilots, the Roscoe Turner/Laird "Special" racer, Wiley Post's Lockheed Vega "Winnie Mae" and Jimmy Doolittle's world speed record breaking Curtiss R3C-2 on floats. Charles Lindbergh's Lockheed Sirius "Tingmissartoo," Amelia Earhardt's red Lockheed Vega and the "round the world" 1924 Douglas World Cruiser #4 "Chicago" are also there. The coast-to-coast record setting flight by military fliers in the giant Fokker T-2 aircraft powered by a WWI Liberty engine is an unforgettable sight. Another very famous aircraft that established a fantastic land speed record across the U.S.A. was the Hughes H-1 Racer, designed, built and flown by Howard Hughes. This aircraft set design criteria for future military machines that later became WWII fighter aircraft. This mid-30s racing aircraft was powered by the Pratt & Whitney Twin-Row Wasp 1830 engine that later was to power all B-24 Liberators!

In Gallery 206, called "Balloons and Airships," you will see the last survivor of a noble experiment by the U.S. Navy during the 30s. The Curtiss F9C-2 Sparrowhawk, a biplane that was designed with a "skyhook" to engage the trapeze extended below a lighter-than-air dirigible. Known as a "parasite" fighter and used as a scouting airplane over ocean operation, the entire program failed when the "mother" ships the Akron and Macon dirigibles, were destroyed in crashes. Of 9 such aircraft, Navy Bureau #9056 is the lone survivor. The restoration of this aircraft was my "labor of love" for over a three-year period during its rebuilding at the Smithsonian's Silver Hill, Maryland restoration center.

Other non-aircraft exhibits are the Albert Einstein Spacearium (#201) and the theater (#215) where films relating to flight are shown. Perhaps the most important thing to those of you who will make the visit is car parking. You will be happy to know that the designers of the NASM incorporated an underground car park for 400 cars. However, one thing to keep in mind is the length of stay. After the third hour, the rate increases steadily with no maximum. This is intended to keep the all-day parker away. Now that the bicentennial rush has somewhat subsided, why put off visiting the Museum any longer?

# Letters

Dear Bill:

I just returned from three weeks in England. While there I met a business associate of the people my Wife and I stayed with, Charles Haliday.

I have copies of all correspondence to Al Blanco and other regarding Lt. Clarey.

I contacted General Hoffman, Commanding General of Marine Corps. base here. He has some friends who will do a little research in D.C. for us.

I did not know of the Association and would like the necessary forms to join.

I was in the 93rd Bomb Group — 329th Squadron — February, 1944 to September, 1944 when I completed my 30 missions. Had both Bombardier and Navigator classifications.

My old field at Harwich still has all three runways, and my old Nissen Hut was still standing in a very dilapidated condition.

Sincerely,  
Bob Shaffer

Dear Bill:

This is to advise that I am in receipt of both films that you sent me; one the "Mission" film that Harvel put together and the other the Memorial Room film which was made in 1963.

As mentioned in a previous letter, I will take care of these films and return them after it has been used for the purpose of showing same in this area. At this time I am waiting for the Pope AFB to send me the necessary information so that I might secure a copy of the "Polesti" film from them.

When I receive this film from the Pope AFB I will make a showing here in High Point, then I will get together with J.D. Long for a showing in Greensboro. After that if it is feasible, will get together with Willie Elder in Burlington for a showing there.

I am advising you of my intentions so that you will know that I am holding this film until I can get it all together for a complete showing.

Will keep you posted as to my progress on this project.

Aaron Schultz

Hi Evelyn,

I had a very nice summer which included four weeks in Britain: a week total in London, a week in Norfolk, then through the north with five days at the Edinburgh Festival, four in Inverness and the Highlands and back to London for the flight home.

I hired a car for the three weeks out of the city, so was able to drive out to Old Buckingham and the old 453rd B.G. site. Not much there, it's a big farming operation, but the manager saw me at the gate looking out over the old runways and hardstands and invited me in to drive around—which I did. The main runway is still there, somewhat battered and weed-bestrewn after 30-plus years and is used as a road for tractors, farm machinery and the like . . . couldn't help but wonder if I really took off from that decrepit strip on 35 combat missions and a goodly number of practice flights and test hops.

Driving out I was somewhat amused to note that about where the old Officers' Club was, there is now a bustling "Chubby Chicken" processing factory!

Really loved the visit and have revived thoughts of possibly retiring in Britain permanently after my second and last retirement from my school teaching job. I just might . . .

Best wishes for the coming year.  
Don C. Baldwin

Dear Ms. Cohen,

After some thirty-odd years now, I am glad to find out there is still interest being maintained in our former units in the ETO.

A couple of weeks ago, I received a tele-

phone call one night from Ralph Morrow up Denver, Co. way. I haven't had contact with him since the waning days of the WWII conflict. It was like old times again conversing with him and he told me about the Second AD Association.

Enclosed please find check for \$10.00 for membership application in the Association. I hope this will cover the application. If any is left over, please place in the Association fund.

Thanking you, I remain  
Sincerely yours,

William F. Dillon  
467th/801st/492nd BG

Dear Evelyn,

This time of year has come up too fast for me. I did not want to be late with the dues.

Have enclosed a \$20.00 check, \$10.00 for the Memorial fund, \$5.00 for my dues and \$5.00 for a new member, I hope — he was a good friend of mine overseas, have not seen him since. Last heard from him in 1970. I would like to see him as one of our members and I think once he gets the Newsletter he will enjoy it and want to belong to our 2nd Air Div. Assoc. His address is on the back page.

Hope you had an enjoyable holiday season and wish you a good year for 1977.

Mary and I are planning to be at the reunion at Lake Geneva this year. It could not be more convenient. Our last reunion was at Colorado Springs and we surely enjoyed it, so we are looking forward to seeing everyone again this year.

Allen Welters

Dear Evelyn:

Thank you for changing my room reservations to one day earlier, I do appreciate this.

Do you remember this from Wilmington, N.C. (picture)?

Best wishes, I am,  
Sincerely,

Richmond Henre Dugger, Jr.

*jed note: We remember. What we can't figure out is how you still manage to get into it!*

Dear Evelyn,

Needless to say, I want to be with "The Gang", if at all possible . . . Sorry I am so tardy, but trust you will appreciate the fact it took me 32 years to line up this gang (via Air Force Magazine.) I am looking forward to this more than you can possibly imagine. I was in the original group, and believe I was the first original member of the 577th squadron to finish. I flew the very first mission to Abbeville, (Sep. 9, 1943), and wound up on May 8, 1944.

Many thanks for your help, and I am looking forward to meeting you.

Best regards,  
Bob Beatson  
(Ex-Navigator)

Dear Bill:

I did get the copies I requested — and thank you for your prompt response. I must say that all my correspondence with the 2nd AD Ass'n has been promptly and accurately answered. So — don't think you're losing your marbles. . . you and the others do a terrific job. Amen.

Walter P. McHugh

Thanks Evelyn,

Keep up the good work. I am one of the totally disabled veterans but I still enjoy hearing from some of the old crew I met and flew with. I might be considered one of the lucky ones, but the pain still persists. I have already sent you all the names and address of all my crew members that are still alive. Hope you recruited some of them.

Wish I could make the trip but am mostly wife hunting now — as my mate died Dec. 1974

As ever,

Charles B. Holley

Dear Bill,

I received the December issue of the News Letter on schedule. I read through it, put it away for future reference and haven't been able to find it since.

In it there was an article requesting help with membership, locating potential members, etc. I should like to volunteer to do what I can to help this individual. I should like to ask one of two things of you. Could you either send him my name and address or could you send me another copy of the News Letter and I could write to him myself. Either way would serve my purpose very well.

If you can help me in either of these two ways, it would be very much appreciated.

My wife and I do plan on attending the reunion the last part of July.

Sincerely,

Maj. Leo L. Mower, Ret. — 466

Dear Miss Cohen:

I was visiting with Bob McGuire, Secretary of the Liberator Club yesterday, and he showed me a copy of your Newsletter. I expressed my surprise that an organization existed of the Division in which I flew 30 combat missions — with the 491st Bomb Group.

I am interested in joining if you would be kind enough to tell me what the dues are.

Thank you much

Lin Hendrix, Editor  
Hangar Flyers Liars Association  
for Aviation and Space  
855B Woodlawn Ave.  
Chula Vista, Calif. 92011

*(Ed: What's the hangar flyers liars association Lin? Sounds like we could all belong!)*

Dear Evelyn,

As you know, I gave up my job in Nov '74 and took an early retirement, I'm happy to say, my health has improved considerably: since then.

When I learned that Ed Goldsmith (407th - Skokie, Ill.) was going to be at the Valley Forge Reunion, I drove down on that Saturday, and got there in time for your business meeting, the films etc. Goldsmith slept across the aisle from me in a Nissen hut at Rackheath! I couldn't get over how little he changed in 30 years!!

I stayed with Goldsmith until it was time for the cocktail hour and dinner dance; I got back to Westport (Conn.) by eleven that nite, with a warm feeling inside!

Sorry I didn't get a chance to have a chat with you, but time ran out on me.

Looks like we might have an early Spring, sure hope so.

Keep up the good work, its appreciated.  
Warmest Regards,

Walt Laughlin

Dear Evelyn & Bill:

Received our copy of the Newsletter and as always read it from cover to cover. Little item on page 7, saying dues, dues, dues, caught our eye, sure enough upon checking discovered we hadn't paid ours. Some people you have to hit in the head.

Over Christmas we did some checking on some of Al's crew members, some were returned for various reasons, several answered and several no word at all. One which we enclose (and hope you will print) made us realize what a great blessing we share with the other members of the 2nd A.D.A. that many will never have the pleasure of sharing. Every year our reunions get bigger and better (thanks to you all on that end, and our past presidents), and we should be thankful each year we are still able to attend.

Sincerely  
Albert and Emma Franklin (44th B.G.)  
*(Ed: Read on Emma)*

Dear Albert, (Franklin)

Was so happy to hear from an old friend of Ken's from his service days! Ken died of a heart attack on Nov. 5, 1958 while hunting deer on our place. It was a terrible shock and loss to us! We had been married in 1945 just before his discharge, and had thirteen great years together. Ken's pride and joy were his children — Melody, now a thirty year old mother of two, and Mick, who just became the father of a little boy whom he named Kenneth Ryan after his dad.

Twelve years ago I was diagnosed as having Multiple Sclerosis and have now been in a wheelchair for 7 years. Am very glad that Ken didn't have to see me this way.

Mick said he wished he could go to the reunion and meet some of the guys who knew his dad. He was only seven when his dad died, and would like to be able to talk to some fellow who had shared some war memories with Ken.

Had so often heard Ken talk about you and Joe Flaherty. Would you, by any chance, have any pictures taken during those years? I would love to see something like that!

Please look us up if you're ever in Minnesota and thanks so much for writing — Ken would have been so thrilled!

Sincerely,

Erla Caroon (Mrs. Kenneth Caroon)  
Hinckley, Minn. 55037

Dear Ms. Cohen:

I recently learned of the Second Air Division Association in my V.F.W. magazine and wrote to Don Olds, who sent me a very informative letter, including a Sept. 76 Newsletter. I intend to answer him as soon as I receive addresses of some of our crew from my former pilot Capt. "Mike" Boyd.

Having served as aerial engineer with the 453 B.G. and 732nd Squadron. I would like to receive an application for membership at this late date, and, needless to say, I am sorry I had not heard of this organization years ago.

Enclosed is \$5.00 dues and also a check of \$25 for the Memorial Library.

Thanking you in advance, I remain

Very truly yours,

Anthony C. Corbo (453rd BG)

Dear Sir:

The other day my wife was reading the Denver Post and she asked me what bomb group I was with in England. I told her I was with the 489th Bomb Group, and she said to me "why that number is here in the open forum of our Denver Post." Boy, did I ever jump up to see the paper. For all these years I had never ever heard of my Group, and I must say there were a swell bunch of guys in the 489th Bomb Group. I am 71 years old now and I was the oldest guy in the bomb group. There should be a lot of the men still living for they were all so young. I was a truck master and I was there every time when a mission would come back and the boys would need a truck to get to their place so they could change their pants, guess you would know what I mean. Thanks Sir.

Mr. Anthony Teichman (489th BG)  
3310 E. Mexico Ave.  
Denver, Colo. 80210.

(Ed: Welcome aboard Tony and I hope all our members take note of the fact that you read about us in your local paper. Those "letters to the editor" listing all the Bomb Groups DO pay off.)

Dear Evelyn:

I received a letter from Clinton E. Wallace, as a result of a letter I wrote to the 8th AF Historical Society. I didn't know there was the 2nd Air Division Association

as I have been living in Saudi Arabia for the last 25 years working for an oil company.

I am enclosing \$5.00 for membership.

I am also writing my pilot, who just left here on his way back to Detroit. He proclaimed interest in the 8th. We were with the 458th when it was formed. We got shot down and were interned in Switzerland, but escaped after 6 months.

Unfortunately, I can not make the reunion at Lake Geneva, Wis. in July as we still are getting ourselves adjusted to returning here.

Sincerely,

Ralph T. Ritter (458th BG)  
ex-First Lt. Bombardier  
754th Squadron

Dear Bill,

After receiving the last news letter, I decided to look at some of my old pictures. After looking at them, I thought that these might bring back some memories to someone who served with the 446th at Flixton.



One picture is an aerial view of Flixton Castle. I went to see the old air drome in the summer of 1973. I had to shed a tear because the top two floors of this magnificent building were removed because of the high taxes. All grounds are now used to grow vegetables because a farm combine now owns the estate.



The other picture is the ship that I served as part of a ground crew in the 705th. This picture was taken on April 5, 1944, just after she came back from a mission. This is Q — Queenie with a flak hole in her name. Maybe this will bring back some memories to someone who served on the ground crew or flew her.

Sincerely,

Homer VanFleteren  
446th B.G. 705th.

Dear Evelyn,

Even though my buddy and I arrived Saturday P.M. at V.F., we enjoyed ourselves very much and hope to see you at Lake Geneva.

I'm sorry I didn't know about these reunions in '75 because I'm a native of Scotland and could have visited my relatives over there. When is the next one in Norwich? My cousin, Sir Matt Busby, lives in Manchester, England. He is general manager of the soccer club, winner of several European titles.

Thank you for such a fine organization.

Good luck,

James Mathie  
407 Calif. Ave.  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15202

Dear Miss Cohen,

My wife Gladys passed away on Dec. 26, she had been sick for several years.

She really never got over the shock of losing our oldest son Frederick who flew a B24, as he used to tell us about in his letters, as he said in the best, the 44-66th.

Sincerely,

Frederick M. Ritter

Dear Evelyn,

Enclosed is our payment for the reunion at Lake Geneva. It will be my first, as I did not have prior knowledge of the existence of your organization. We are looking forward to this affair.

You will notice that I list the 392nd as my group. However, I was originally assigned to the 93rd upon my arrival in the ETO. Our crew joined the 93rd during their stay in North Africa, arriving just after the disastrous Ploesti mission. Upon their return to England our crew was reassigned to the 392nd to help bring their strength up to the required level.

Upon completion of our combat tour our crew was dispersed and reassigned to various groups until after D-day. I was sent to the 448th for about three months. So I can technically be at home with any of the three groups.

Looking forward to meeting you at Lake Geneva.

Sincerely Yours,

Vernon A. Baumgart

Dear Ms. Cohen,

We have been planning on sending this little note of appreciation. You and your committee did a marvelous job — all of your efforts were not in vain. Our visit to Valley Forge last summer was the first Reunion we have attended and you can be sure all future reunions will have the Eks in attendance.

Enclosed find check covering our small donation to the Memorial Trust and also a check covering Membership Dues for Allen Ek — 453rd & Elaine E. Ek (Wife) and proud to be an Associate Member.

Reservations for Playboy will be forwarded later.

Allen Ek

Dear Evelyn:

Sorry about the long time lapse since the re-union but you must forgive me — Busy

I probably have the youngest family in the 2nd AD — The children are 14 - 13 - 10 - 7 - I am just about to open a new restaurant in the Montgomery Mall (The Sherlock Holmes) — So you can see — I'm Busy.

Anyway, enclosed is a check for 50.00. Use 5.00 for my dues and the rest for any guys who might want to pay the dues but can't afford it — or anything.

God Bless,

Lee Lowenthal (44 BG)

Great Job at Valley Forge

(Ed: That's a wonderful gesture on your part Lee as we do have members who cannot afford the dues. Good luck with your new restaurant.)

Gentlemen:

Please tell me the procedure to follow in becoming a member of your association.

I was in the 453rd Bomb Group, 735th Bomb Squadron near Attleborough, England during World War Two.

After my separation I stayed in the Air Force Reserve and will be retiring from the Air Force this 2 May 1977.

Yours very truly,

John M. Roth (453rd)

(Ed: The procedure is easy John. Just send us your \$5.00 dues check and your home free.)

Dear Mr. Robertie,

I am writing to you hoping you can help me out with my problem. A Mr. T. Allonby of Sheffield, Yorkshire recommended you to me. I am trying to trace a crew member of a liberator which crashed, this man was the only survivor, so you can see why I am looking for him.

Here is all the information I have so far —

B-24H-FO Liberator 42-94841  
857th B.S., 492nd B.G. Base — Harrington,  
Northamptonshire, England  
Crashed — 9th October 1944, Holme Moss,  
near Holmfirth, Huddersfield, Yorkshire.

Staff Sergeant Curtiss B. Anderson is the man I am searching for, I know he was returned stateside owing to his injuries. The only clue I have to his state, is that just after the crash he kept saying "I come from California."

Here is another incident which some of your members might remember. 1st Lt. E.D. Pitsenbarger crashed B24 44-40146 Coded 5Z-M of the 856th B.S. 492nd B.G. at North Pickenham, 6th August 1944.

It is said in this crash he stalled and hit the ground, killing one crew member.

Details on the rest of the crew — Flying officer Frank Cser came from New Jersey, 1st Lt. Pitsenbarger came from Iowa. Cpl C. Watson was on the strength of the 36th Bomber Squadron at the time of the crash.

This is all the information I have amassed over the years. If you can help me in any way at all I would be most grateful.

Faithfully yours,  
R. Ives

Dear Ms. Cohen

Hope to see you in Lake Geneva and glad to be aboard.

It sure was nice of you to use "JERK'S" NATURAL B24 picture in this month's News Letter. I helped Vic with making it, so you could use it. He started me out with the association.

I was supply Tec with the 470 Sub Depot, which was part of the 467 BG. In fact we were one of the first ones there, to get the base ready for them. It was a fine group to have been part of.

Will always remember when it arrived. Lord HA HA welcomed it to Rackheath on the BBC, that was some day.

Was transferred to the Inf during the Bulge like a lot of us were. Made it out OK. Signed up with the Reserves and by luck was with the first Troop Carrier outfit called up, the 437th of Chicago to go to Japan and Korea.

I have two pictures of Witchcraft the B24 of the 467BG which made over 100 missions without turning back.

Sincerely,  
Jack F. Rothschild (467 BG)

Dear Evelyn Cohen,

My name is Joseph Errante (pronounced E-ran-ti). I am a member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. I am wondering if you can help me. I am looking for former members and information on a unit assigned to the 2nd Air Division during 15, September (then with 2nd BD) till VE Day (from Jan 1, 1945 under 2nd control).

The unit was 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron. I hope you can contact some former members of this unit or anyone with any information pertaining to the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron (formerly the Air Sea Rescue Squadron under 8th FC, 65th Fighter Wing Control under 15 September when re-designated 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron under 2nd AD control).

I need this information for research for an article that I hope to write. I really hope you can help me. If you do contact former

members please ask them to write: Joseph Errante, 5020 Oceanview Ave. Brooklyn, New York, 11224 and ask them to write me and to answer the following questions:

- 1) Name & Rank and Duty
- 2) Position
- 3) Type of craft you've flown or serviced
- 4) Most dangerous and/or memorable missions, leaves, experiences.

I hope you can help me out,  
Thank you very much  
Joseph Errante

Dear Ms. Cohen:

Recently I attended a meeting in Denver of Lee Enterprises marketing people. One night a group of us went to dinner at the 94th Aero Squadron restaurant, located adjacent to Stapleton Field in Denver and built with a decor to resemble Eddie Rickenbacker's famed squadron facilities of WWI vintage.

Naturally, the talk turned to flying and I was interested to hear that the fellow sitting next to me, Ray Carlson of the Davenport Newspapers had been a B-24 Navigator in the 8th AF. By co-incidence, it happened that I was also in the 8th in B-24s...but in a different group — the 93rd (409th Squadron). As you can imagine, we had a lot of stories to swap.

Ray was good enough to alert me to the existence of the 2nd Air Division and since we returned home, has sent me a couple of your newsletters and information of your up-coming convention. I've found all the pieces extremely interesting and am enclosing my check for membership dues. I'm sorry to say that it probably will be impossible to attend the annual convention despite the proximity of it being held at Lake Geneva...only about 70 miles from Madison. My wife and I have relatives coming that same week from California and Alabama for a reunion...but if the chance presents itself, I'll certainly try to break away for a day to attend.

My tour of duty in the ETO started in the summer of 1944 (after D-Day) and ended abruptly in Jan. '45 on the 20th mission when we had to force land at Bulltofta and were interned in Sweden. I had lost my original crew after 11 missions and was flying as pilotage navigator on lead crews — heading for the magic number of 25. My MOS was 1035 — Bombardier, but as you know we had all been checked out in navigation too in the ETO.

I'm looking forward anxiously to more of the kind of news and information I've already noted in your newsletter.

Cordially,  
Karl Eisele (93rd)

Dear Bill:

Reading Earl F. Zimmermans "Hethel Highlights" in the March 76 newsletter brought back vivid memories of seeing that particular B-24 break formation with black smoke pouring from it.

I remember the aircraft finished about two meters from some trees shielding quite a hollow in the ground.

Thanks Earl.  
Sincerely,

David Sergeant  
329 Parkland Cres  
Laingtom. 2641.  
Albury. N.S.W., Australia

Dear Evelyn,

Our crew was shot down Sept. 12, 1944. We were captured — only two were killed. To the fellows who flew in our Squadron No. 577 the same day on the same raid, we made it ok. Thanks for the help — moving out of the way when we bailed out.

Henry F. Jurgens

Dear Evelyn:

I am a past member of 2nd Air Div. — I have not paid my dues since about 1973 or 74 — I do wish to reenstate, inclosed is my check for \$21.00 (don't know if dues still 3.00 per year) Please advise and also how long this will pay me up to as I do not wish to drop out again.

A few years ago we moved from Illinois to Texas. Here is my new address. I miss the 2nd div. news.

Thank You,

Dan W. Underwood  
400 No. Wisconsin  
League City, Texas 77573

Dear Evelyn:

I wish to join the Association; year's dues enclosed.

I was pilot on B-24s with the 704th Bomb Squadron of the 446th Bomb Group stationed near Bungay, Suffolk, England.

My time with the 446th was from about July 25 to October 25 of 1944; termination after twenty missions due to a severe crash at Aimsdale near Liverpool, in which my copilot was killed. We were riding as passengers on our way to a standard mid-tour rest leave.

I have orders and other papers supporting my status in the Group, should you desire.

Mr. Henry asked for a copy of the recent Denver Post article which seems to have elicited a fine response. I enclose one.

Regrettably, I cannot attend the 1977 Reunion.

My present address: Lloyd G. Furthmyer  
2307 Oak  
Hays, KS 67601

Dear Mr. Eaton:

(Tom Eaton, Chairman, Board of Governors)

Thank you very much for making it possible for me to visit the Second Air Division Memorial at the Norwich Central Library last week. It made me realize how deeply rooted good British-American relations are in East Anglia, and how much persons like yourself have done to make that so. I know Mr. Armstrong has good memories of his time in East Anglia, and the members of the Second Division who founded and have helped maintain the Memorial must feel very much the same. I only regret Mr. Armstrong was not able to be with me in Norwich: he would have enjoyed visiting the Memorial.

Many thanks also for the fascinating book on Victorian and Edwardian Norfolk: I was able to use it immediately to help me decide what I most wanted to see in Norwich, and it will be a permanent memento of a very pleasant visit.

I know a little of your problems, and of the plans you have for making the Memorial an even more significant element in the life of the people of Norfolk. I wish you every success in your efforts.

Sincerely,

Anne Armstrong  
Ambassador



"Let's make a clean break and start all over again."  
—Cpl. John W. Murphy



The first phase of the trip home began by truck. Everyone took a last look as now familiar sites on the base gradually faded in the distance. This photo shows a convoy leaving Hardwick with the then empty hangar and a deserted control tower in the background.



With the troop train's arrival in Greenock, or on the Firth of Clyde, the first phase of the trip home comes to an end. The next phase would be by boat — the Queen Mary or the Elizabeth. This photo shows men on the ferry going out to board one of the Queens. The weather? Sorry you asked! It was cool, damp, windy and with occasional bursts of drizzle. The same as it was upon arrival almost three years earlier for some.



Photo of medal purchased for 10 shillings and designed specifically for the folks back home honoring the next-of-kin in the service. Actual size from bow knot to bottom is 1 3/4 inches. A nice memento.

## LOOKING BACK

by Bob Coleman (93rd)



Maj. Ramsay Potts left examines shell fragment he picked up in his plane which sported the same serial number as his plane — 985. Coincidence or fate?



The next best thing to being home for Christmas — opening the packages. The wrappings and cartons also provided fuel for the fire!



The first of the new models B-24 with the nose turret arrives at Hardwick. Not only were the flexible nose guns gone but there were many other improvements and modifications.



British ladies do their bit. Not only were they good but they were pretty also. They could handle a shovel as well as any man — and better than most!



This is not something out of the dark ages. It's a British steamroller circa 1942, and a mighty steamroller it was when it came to smoothing out those runways.



Sacks of cement make for relaxation and comfort during noon break for this civilian worker.