



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



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THIS IS SWEDEN?

by Joseph Sirotnak (458th)

In our last episode entitled "Is This Sweden?" we had arrived in this neutral country after a hectic flight from Germany, fleeing from a lot of angry guys after destroying their last remaining oil refinery at Harburg. (See Sept. 1981 *Journal*.)

The beginning of our six months confinement in this rugged country began on January 17, 1945. Most of us had bailed out of our Liberator just after we crossed the Swedish coast. We were soon rounded up. Our "captors" incarcerated us for the first night in the Grand Hotel at Falkenberg. But first, before retiring we had a substantial dinner at which the writer discovered how tasty fish could really be. In the morning we consumed a menial breakfast of cereal, eggs, cheese, toast, milk and coffee. Then we were dragged away to be put onto a train bound for a destination unknown.

"RATTVIK" — the sign at the train station read as we disembarked. We were met by a tall, handsome, mean looking Swedish Army officer. He was most certainly a very distinguished looking individual, and he presented himself in a uniform which was, at least, impeccable. This very impressive looking officer was Lt. T. E. Tistrand. (He will no doubt be reading this article.) "Jimmy" as he became known to his friends and other people escorted us to a group of taxis which were standing at the front of the station. These vehicles all appeared to have a furnace hanging on the rear, not unlike the one my Mother had in the basement of her home. These "furnaces" were stoked with charcoal, and then the damn taxis drove off in a cloud of smoke.

Our new home was called the Hotel Turisthemet. It was a small hotel with about 35 rooms. Roger Hicks and I were assigned to a comfortable room on the third and top floor — our new home for the next three months. Other rooms in the building were occupied by the other members of our crew, and the men from a B-17 which had landed on the same day — a total of 21 souls all wondering what was in store for them, and especially, where they would get their next beer. The most crushing blow of all; discovery that Sweden had some type of prohibition. No booze!

Beer was available, but it contained no alcohol. Now, at last we know why they have been so nice to us up to this time. The immediate question came to everybody's lips. Where are the bootleggers?

Rattvik is a small resort type town which had a population of about 900 in 1945. It is on the eastern shore of Lake Siljan, a rather large body of water in the middle of the country. It is both a summer and a winter resort, although at that time there were not yet any ski lifts. The town's activities were centered on the main street. We soon took off in the direction of the action.

Klingberg's Konditori, a coffee shop and bakery of the first order, was the target. We homed in on those pastries like guided missiles, and once again all was right with the world. Martin Klingberg and his family were delighted to see us, and we were delighted to see his baked goodies. We had found our foster home.

As internees in a neutral country we were required to wear civilian clothing. This required extensive shopping in the town's only men's wear store. I bought a cocoa brown, double breasted suit with tan stripes, and a grass green, single breasted suit with a black plaid design. I ought to say that I was being conservative compared to some of my fellow Americans. I have a theory that the high altitude flying gave us all some kind of brain condition which made it impossible for us to be aware of the fact that our selections were, at best, ludicrous. And even worse — we all thought we looked great!

Now, what does a group of healthy, red blooded Americans do with their time in Sweden in the middle of the winter. Well, how about skiing? You got it. So let us trudge to the local sporting goods shop. The proprietor was ecstatic. We had to buy skis, poles, boots, pants, jackets, hats and gloves for 21 confident and eager skiers. We should also now have to take into consideration the consequences of 19 of these having no measurable experience. Well, it turned out that we were to avoid a plague of broken bones. However, the replacement of broken skis and poles gave a great lift to the local business environment.

Then there was "Slug", the toughest tail

gunner ever to come out of Cicero, Illinois. What we would consider to be excruciating pain was no more than an itch to Slug. He looked like he could run at the wall of a brick building and make his own door. Underneath it all, he was the kindest, sweetest person you would ever be likely to meet. This is all leading up to a description of Slug's skiing technique. He had a singular method of getting down the hill. He would make his way to the top on his skis like the rest of us. He would turn around to face the slope standing ramrod straight. He would push off, travel about 40 feet, and then tumble to the snow. He would clamber back to his feet, once again assume the position of attention, and shove off. After another short distance he would go down again. He would continue this routine until he reached the bottom of the slope. His progress was similar to that of a bouncing ball. He skied daily, and we had to admire his perseverance. He never changed his technique!

Slug's indifference to pain made him the ideal tail gunner for the bob sled. This vehicle was a home made device constructed from miscellaneous debris located around the town. The main body was a heavy plank about 8 feet in length. To this were attached wooden runners with metal on their edges stolen from the local blacksmith shop. The entire contraption weighed a considerable amount. It was steered with the use of two ropes attached to the somewhat moveable front runners.

Our ski slope was mostly a straight hill which crossed some railroad tracks and then made a bend on to the main street leading through the center of the town. The skiers generally slowed down after the tracks and then made their way into town. The bob sled, however, was just about reaching top speed at the rail crossing so it was common for it to clatter through the main street at 40 or 50 miles per hour which was, at least, twice the legal speed limit.

At the spot where the run crossed the tracks the ground leveled off and then suddenly dropped away. This resulted in the sled leaving the ground for a bit and then crashing down. Invariably, the last

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GOING AND COMING

by Tom Rogers

Probably, the part of my AAF experiences that is still most prominent in memory is the trip over. To a lesser extent, the trip home.

When the 491st Air Echelon (ground-stompers div.) learned at Pueblo that some would fly over, replacing a crew member to travel by boat, we wondered if our 853rd S-3 EM head, Leo Shohan, was a quick pick but then Maj. Stephey learned Maj. Parmalee — 854th — had overlooked a slot so he slid me into it. Things were touch and go for a time but I made it, to fly with Lt. Tom Yurcina's crew.

Their original fly-away was being repaired so we were ferried the first day to Herington by Lt. Rock's crew — he didn't buzz that trip —. Had never flown before and standing on the catwalk for landing and take-off-watching that runway go by thru the little gap between that and the doors was an experience!

After meeting the new ship flown in from Ft. Worth, lots of red dust, we had a night departure from Herington, check Memphis, Atlanta, for West Palm Beach. Thunderheads, oxygen, until daybreak. Then we let down and flew down the Florida East Coast, lovely beaches, water, landing craft exercises all the way down, or so it seemed. All of us EMS WERE IN THE waist, changing from ODs to suntans, when Yurcina came thru headed for the relief tube. We got royally chewed out, no chute harnesses, etc. Morrison was camouflaged as a golf course and it did look pretty good. The briefing there as to destination was something else. Since they didn't know our final we got it for all possibles. The points I remember most were!

1. Carrier pigeons
2. Brazil jungle, walk out for WW III
3. If to India, China, don't go down on the South Arabia coast, slave for life.
4. Kharachi, open the window when don't see it when due, that smell is it.

Night take-off for Trinidad, orders read 8th, as hoped. Turn at Bahamas, cross Puerto Rico, go into Waller, Trinidad. There a 25 hour inspection had to be pulled — new plane —, can't remember when, where we ate.

Take-off for Belem and that jungle really is something! A small clearing here and there, maybe a shack. The Amazon, fantastic, now I'll swear it took us over an hour to cross an island in the estuary.

Belem, got out, looked around and all around the clock, in the distance were storms. On leaving there for Natal, ground changed, more open, hills, red dirt, browns too.

Natal — all I remember is buying "mosquito" boots at the PX and the different sizes used there. I jumped from 7½ to 58. Again night-take off, look for a 2 engine down in the South Atlantic, thru the West

Coast of Africa turbulence, then landing on steel mats at Daka. That was a thrill. We all felt the plane was falling apart with the noise.

We hit the tent area and after dark the show started. The natives showed up to sell "ju-ju". They were in the tents before you knew it with the lighting and their dark skin and robes. The head-man, in white, came around to chase them out but not much luck. We pulled out when one came in with about an 8 ft. snakeskin, claiming killed in the area a few days before. We planned on sleeping in the plane but ran into one of those 6'plus Sengelese boys, before fez, with that Lebel and its nasty French bayonet. Needless to say we wound up in the main airport building.

On to Marrach the next AM. The Atlas was interesting, small village here and there in the hills, colors of the buildings, what they did to live puzzled us. On landing, followed the Follow-me to the hardstand and then up comes the weapons carrier with ammo. I cleaned my carbine then that's sure. Here we lost the bomb-bay bins of mail we had carried.

Due to weather, we had a few days there and got into town. It was quite interesting to see the modern French as compared with the Arabic buildings. The Arab kids really tried to make deals, Parker 51 much in demand. Quite a transient trade, B-24s, PB4Ys.

When the weather broke, we headed for Cornwall where we joined other planes for a cross-England formation to Metfield. The constant jockeying as a result of little formation flying did create a problem for the bombardier, little touch of airsickness. On arrival, into the daily routine.

The 491st supplied a clerical staff for the Mary on the trip home and we boarded a couple of days before the real loading. Was able to see some of the ship. One of the sailors gave two of us a quick visit to the bridge. The trip was uneventful, can't even recall seeing the Statue of Liberty, do recall the firecall the fireboats and girls.

After docking, they unloaded the Canadians and we got off that afternoon, ferried to Hoboken, DLW to Kilmer, after bedding issue, had the Army late chow of coldcuts, etc. The steak the next noon was great! Off to Dix that evening and had German POWs do the cooking the following AM. On our way for the 30 day R&R that evening, into New York, cross town and out on the NYC for Buffalo. Pretty crowded, lots of GIs on the way home. When we arrived the next morning, two of us grabbed a cab and I reached home to find an empty house. Family didn't believe the Army could turn us loose so fast and left town for a wedding. Had the reunion on a bigger scale that evening and a great R&R before heading for McChord.

8-BALL-Y-HOO

by Pete Henry (44th BG)

I want to thank one and all who heeded my plea for reunion name tag donations. I received more than twice what was needed and the excess will be presented to the Memorial Fund from the 44th B.G. We now have a supply of 8-Ball name tags that will last five years or more.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Just when I thought I was out of material, my "Assistant Group Vice-President", Will Lundy sent me a story he received from one of our newest members, former T/Sgt. George Lemley about the "Pas-de-Calais Milk Runs".

After several rough missions into Germany the 44th B.G. was given what was hoped would be another of the so-called "milk runs" to hit the "V" weapon sites. The date was January 21, 1944. T/Sgt. George, radio operator on Lt. Paul Ugarte's ship, recalls that it didn't turn out that way.

He states that there was some rapidly changing cloud cover and the lead ship (Lt. Cookus) was circling around to get a better aim at the target. Each time the formation circled, one B-24 was shot down. Sterling Holm, Bombardier, kept track of the number of times we circled and each time he would say, "There goes another one. Let's get the hell out of here, Paul!" But the pilot, Lt. Ugarte, had to stay with the rest of the formation and said so.



Front Row (l to r): Lt. Koontz, Co-Pilot; Lt. Loeffler, Nav.; Lt. Ugarte, Pilot; Lt. Holm, Bomb.
Back Row (l to r): S/Sgt. Beachesne, Asst. Eng.; S/Sgt. Forcich, Asst. Radio Op.; S/Sgt. Dwyer, Armorer Gunner; S/Sgt. Daves, Tail Gunner; T/Sgt. Kokta, Eng.; T/Sgt. Lemley, 1st Radio Op.

Sgt. Lemley said, "Well, Sir, we are the next to get it." And Lt. Holm continued, "Paul, I have a wife and family to go back to."

No sooner had he said that when the lead ship started back over the channel, followed closely by the "Abbeville Playboys" in their FW-190's.

Lt. Cookus in that 44th lead plane did not have benefit of PFF equipment and had made five attempts to seek a break in the clouds through which to bomb. Failing in this and having already remained too long in the target area, he turned the Group towards the channel, having decided to drop the bombs there.

Meanwhile, the German gun batteries, having determined the range while the for-

mation hovered over the target, continued to fire with deadly accuracy trying to add to the four ships already downed. This time the shells began to burst around his lead ship. Within 30 seconds the aircraft of Lt. Cookus received seven direct hits. Number one and two engines were completely shot out of the left wing; number three had burst into flames; the catwalk and half the bomb-bay were blown away; a burst had blown off half the nose turret; the bomb-bay set afire; the right landing gear shot away; and the wings and fuselage perforated with flak in hundreds of places.

The Command Pilot, Major W.N. Anderson, the Bombardier Lt. Cole, and the top turret gunner S/Sgt. Becker were severely wounded by the flying shell fragments. The radio operator, S/Sgt. Trechel, was blown completely clear of the ship, but managed to parachute safely to become a POW. The plane trembled and shuddered violently, but somehow held together.

Diving the remnants of the B-24 three thousand feet to escape the intense barrage of flak, Lt. Cookus with superb skill leveled the craft off and headed for England, trailing smoke and flame. Captain Ager, Group gunnery officer, and Lt. Weiser, Group bombardier, believing it would be an impossibility for the aircraft to reach England, bailed out either over the Channel or near it. (Both became POW's.)

Meanwhile, the wounded bombardier valiantly battled the flaming bomb-bay with grim determination, depending upon his hands to release the majority of the bombs from the twisted wreckage. On the flight deck, Major Anderson, flying his 25th and last mission, was given first aid unsuccessfully as he was fatally injured. In the waist of the ship three gunners bravely fought the flames which scorched them as they attempted to jettison equipment.

Just as the coast of England loomed into view, the number three engine exploded, but the gallant ship continued on its course with but one engine still remaining on the ship. Fighting magnificently to keep the craft level and airborne, Lt. Cookus sighted a plowed field just beyond the shore line. With superb airmanship he brought the twisted wreckage in for a belly landing. Plowing through the soft earth, the ill-fated craft skidded to a stop.

The casualties were three men POW, two KIA, and five survived to fight again. Lt. Cole, the bombardier, did not survive.

The 66th Squadron lost one plane; the 68th Squadron, four; and the 67th Squadron lost Lt. Cookus' craft in the crash-landing.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Another letter was received from Herb Davis of BAD-I about a B-24, the "Joplin Jalopy" that flew with the 68 BS, 44th Bomb Group. J-J was returned to the city of Joplin in August 1946 where it was subsequently vandalized, scrapped and smelted in a very short period of time. J-J had 68 combat missions in its log book, one was Ploesti, and Herb is writing a story about the "Death of a Liberator". If anyone remembers this ship, please send details

to Herb whose address is 4702 McNab Street, Lakewood, California 90713.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A small group of 44thers (I think we had about 15) met for dinner and general bull-session in February. This was one of those spur of the moment things and Forrest Clark, another new member, did most of the organizing. We hope to have another mini-mini reunion in New Jersey later in the year and will try to give more advance notice and contact more people. Two 8-Ballers who were invited but could not make it were Mary and Bob Wagner from Denville, New Jersey. Bob has been having an eye problem and is unable to drive at night. They send their best to the 2ADA and 44th members in particular and hope to make it to one of our reunions again real soon. Bob and I have been trying for a couple of years to get together for a game of golf and, maybe this year, it will happen.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I was very pleased to locate Mike Curtin late last year and sign him up as a 2ADA member. Mike was the crew chief for "Myrtle the Fertile Turtle" in the 67th



Sqdn. and the first plane my crew flew in combat in June 1944. Mike is living in Vancouver, Washington and has been raising registered Jersey bulls until recently. He is now retired and spends part of his free time judging cattle shows at State Fairs. Mike was with the 44th at Shipdham from September 2, 1942 until June 1, 1945 so many of our members should remember Mike. He plans to attend the 44 SMW reunion in Rapid City, South Dakota May 27-31 and I look forward to seeing him again at that little get-together. Mike said that he'll never forget the time he was at his hardstand when General Johnson (then Col. Johnson) asked him if he was the crew chief and Mike said "yes". The General said, "let's go, you are my co-pilot." It didn't bother Mike one bit because he knew that ship inside and out and had over 1,000 hours as an Engineer in it.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Speaking of the reunion in Rapid City, May 27-31, Evelyn Cohen said that a lot of our members must be going to that one because the 44th B.G. reservations at Nashville are way down. This is regrettable because the 44th has usually had the largest contingent at our reunions. I plan to attend both reunions and certainly hope that we will see all of you at the reunion in Norwich in 1983. In the meantime, it will be great to see you at Nashville, those who do make it. Your correspondent will really be celebrating at this one. I am retiring July 1, 1982 after 32 years with General Motors.

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
Vere A. McCarty



I reported in March '81 that Jim Schultz had brought back a painting from Bungay and I would try to get a picture of it. Lt. Charles Coates, his boss and club officer at the base, had painted a western pioneer scene to decorate a spot over the fireplace at the club. Now, after 35 years in a box, it has been restored and hangs in Jim's den in his Mesa, Arizona home. Here are photos of "Old Charlie" in its two, very far apart, locations.



In connection with this article, I tried to contact Coates but was informed by Veterans Administration that he died in 1964. While on this sad note, I must tell you that Milton R. Stahl, Group S-2 Officer who was beloved by all who knew him, died in 1961, according to VA records.

Sometimes I get letters just too long to use all the material. One such from Warren Blower, a group lead pilot (707th Squadron). He tells of his first mission: "We flew a new B-24J over and spent the usual time at Stone replacement depot, arriving at Bungay on September 12, 1944. The usual orientation and training lasted a couple of weeks, then we were declared operational and were alerted to fly to Hamm Sept. 26.

"I was co-pilot on Thomas Gill's crew and when 1st Lt. William G. Raynor, an experienced pilot was scheduled to fly with my crew, I was tapped to fly with Lt. Gardiner because his co-pilot was off flying status with a bad head cold. We took off on the mission in "Gerty the Gremlin" and the rest of the crew flew "Lil' Max". As it happened, Gardiner and I had problems with one prop governor and two turbo waste gates (oil controlled in Gerty). Just inside enemy lines, Gardiner decided to abort because we were not keeping up and were holding back the second element. We were number four with Gill and Raynor as number five. After we aborted, Lil' Max moved into number four spot to close up. Then their problems began. They feathered a runaway prop on number three engine but

continued on and dropped their bombs over the target. They suffered battle damage and by the time they had returned to the North Sea they were on one engine. Unable to get back to England, they turned south and the crew bailed out near The Hague, Holland.

Harold Jansen of Holland recently visited the U.S. to interview surviving crew members in connection with a book he is writing to be entitled, "They Left Us a



Duty". His parents (10 and 15 years old at the time) witnessed the bail out and the crash of Lil' Max. The book will be dedicated to Tom Gill, who bailed out too low for his chute to open and was killed. Raynor was killed by ground fire." According to Warren, Jansen's book will be essentially about the 446th Bomb Group and the airplane, "Lil' Max". Harold, by the way, is an associate member of the 2nd ADA. (Note: I paraphrased some of the above for brevity).

Warren Blower became a group lead pilot, taking over the crew of Captain James Moyer when he was made 707th Squadron Operations Officer. At the same time (December, 1944) all lead crews were assigned to Group Headquarters under Lt. Col. William A. Schmidt, and according to Warren, from then on the four lead crews (including the deputy group lead) were assigned the four H2X planes that were in the best shape no matter to which Squadron they were attached. Also, the lead crew would be assigned to lead any Squadron, not necessarily its own.

Fred Breuninger, saver of historical tidbits, has this from Group Ops: 20 Dec. 1943 — Pilot, Lt. Long. The main force abandoned the mission due to weather, but Lt. Long of the 7084th became separated from the formation and did not return to the field. A telephone conversation with Colonel Johnson of the 392nd revealed that a plane with an "H" on the tail had tacked on to his formation. This plane received a

direct burst of flak. The burst knocked the number four engine off the wing and before the plane could recover, it rammed into the tail of one of the 392nd planes, shearing off the tail turret and putting another engine out of commission. A/C 494 (B-24H 42-7494), Lt. Long's aircraft, recovered and turned out of the formation. A few minutes later it was seen to turn back onto the course to the target. When last seen this plane was flying at about 5,000 feet and appeared to be under control. No parachutes were seen to open by crew members of the 392nd. Lt. Long received sortie credit. Target: Bremen, Germany.

31 Jan. 1944 — Pilot, Lt. Thompson, and Pilot, Lt. Beyer. 23 A/C of the 446th took off but abandoned the mission due to weather and 21 A/C returned. The above two A/C tacked onto the 389th Group formation and completed the mission. Both received Sortie credit. Target: Siracourt.

6 June 1944 (fourth D-Day Mission) Pilot, Lt. Kinsella. The main force abandoned the mission due to weather, but A/C 093 (B-24H 42-110093, "Black Magic"), continued on, dropped bombs, and received Sortie Credit. Target: St. Lo, France.

13 Sept. 1944 — Pilots, Lt. Meyer and Lt. Domke. The 20th Combat Wing was recalled due to weather, but Lt. Meyer and Lt. Domke joined the 389th Group formation and bombed the primary target with that Group. Target: Ulm, Germany.

29 Dec. 1944 — Pilot, Lt. Frutchy. A/C 724 (B-24H 42-50724, 706th Squadron "G"), Lt. Frutchy's A/C, was the only A/C airborne. Remainder of A/C scrubbed from the mission by the Group Commander because of heavy fog over the base. A/C 724 tacked onto the 93rd Group and bombed with them and received Sortie credit. Target: Heinbach, Germany.

The above were among those cases where individual flight crews received Sortie credit when the Group did not get mission credit for those targets.

I have developed a card file of nearly 500 former 446th Bomb Group personnel with current addresses. Over half are current Association members and, occasionally, I work on the rest hoping to get them on the team. I mention this because you may be looking for a former buddy or crew member, so do not hesitate to drop me a card if you need an address. If I do not have it, I might be able to find it if I had an Army Serial Number that you might find on a copy of some old Army "Order". Here are some of our more recent members: Selden Adkins, Edward Bortmess, John Green, Dick Herman, Howard Horton, Frank Kiely, John Kivlehan, Ben Lesley, Harris Reames, Mitchell Reno, Charles Rinheimer, M. J. Saxton, George Quigley, Lloyd Telschow, Lee Toothman, Nick Tuit, and John White. Two of my most recent addresses are for former 706th Squadron Operations staffers, Harry Mayer and Jim Schreck. I expect their dues any day.

I have my fingers crossed for a very large 446th BG turnout at Nashville. See you there!

458th COMMENTS

by George A. Reynolds (458th BG)

A number of interesting "finds" on Group aircraft have turned up in recent months, and I'll pass these on for others keeping tabs. First, by way of my good FOTE buddy, Chris Gotts, "Yankee Buzz Bomb" (41-29340), 752nd Sq., lost two engines, then had a bomb salvoing accident over the North Sea, 7 Oct. 44 and turned back from the strike on Magdeburg. It crash-landed near Southrepps after most of the crew bailed (including a gunner who's chute didn't open). But in Nov. a pilot from the 3rd SAD, Tommy Land, flew it out of a corn field and back to Horsham, and it continued flying combat after an overhaul that included stripping off her OD suit. Next, "Time's A Wastin'," #42-110163-M has been identified as "Marie" previously. It was an Axon ship flying with the 753rd Sq. Can anyone clarify or add any info to the dual names bit?

Hans Stapfer wrote from Switzerland with a list of 458th ships that landed there along with a brief account of their disposition. "Meat Around The Corner," #41-28738-D, 754th Sq. crashed near Jegenstorf (Canton Berne) 11 May, and was scrapped. "The Cat's Ass," #42-94946-R, 754th Sq. landed at Payerne 27 May, and was moved to Dubendorf for internment. It flew back

to Burtonwood, Eng. 8 Oct. 45. "Bombs Away," #42,95096-U, 752nd Sq., landed at Payerne also, moved to Dubendorf and returned to Burtonwood 1 Oct. 45.

Glenn Matson's pilot, Charley Melton, sent some photos of birds not on many lists to my knowledge. "Betty", "Gwen", #110184-F, and "Sleepy Time Gal". Probably, all of the planes flew with the 755th Sq. during early '44. "Gwen" was lost 25 Aug. at Tertre, Belgium with a different crew. Charley retired from the FAA's Western Region Hq. training division a couple of years back, and I look forward to swapping a few "flak stories" from the agency with him at some future reunion.

Will Lundy (44th BG) wrote about quite a coincidence recently. He knew an ex-8th AF pilot who lives near him in San Bernardino, CA, and after reading the March *Journal* (take a bow, Bill), decided B.E. Ballard mentioned in 458th Comments about 42-52450 crashing in Holland was the same pilot. Indeed he was, and B.E. writes that he's sending his application in for membership — welcome aboard! The only flak we have comes from typos, mistakes on mission dates, aircraft serials, names and this sort of thing.

Bob Mattson from Eau Claire called about info on Horsham, and said he intends to make Norwich '83. I made contact with William Kelly from NJ, and John Kelly from VA. They had a mini-reunion in

Norfolk last year, and now have the poop to join a few hundred others for the full-fledged occasions in the future. Welcome back to the 458th, Kelly's.

Dick Gibson wrote that Art Hendrickson, nose gunner on the crew with Dick and George Ferrell, has been in a V.A. hospital since Thanksgiving for two by-pass operations. Art attended the San Antonio reunion, and hopes to make Nashville — he would be pleased to hear from the troops with a story. He can be reached at 26225 16th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68502.

Rick Rokicki is still diligently following up on all leads for new prospects as well as contacting the dropouts as time permits, and the count on "acceptees" is about .300 — not a bad batting average in this "league". I sincerely appreciate and enjoy your letters, stories and photos sent to me — keep 'em coming, and see you in Nashville. . . .

Mr. Courtney, manager of Norwich airport, has written that plans for their new terminal building are progressing well, and actual construction possibly will begin as early as 1982. A 458th memorial in this facility will definitely be considered in the detailed design work. Ideas or suggestions on its form and contents are urgently requested to submit at the earliest time possible to obtain a more permanent arrangement and location. Now is our chance, let's tell 'em what we want.

392nd BG REPORT

by J. Fred Thomas (392nd BG)

As we were saying, the correspondence goes on. We average getting a letter out with the information about our Association to some one every day. We receive letters every week from former Second Air Division people who have seen the Veynar poster at the CAF museum, the Queen Mary, and we still get the odd letter as the result of the article we had in the AARP papers last year. In fact, we recently had a letter from a Judge Edward K. Washington from High Point, N.C. He had seen the AARP article. It turned out that he was the co-pilot on Charlie Neundorf's crew when they flew to Britain. Seems Charlie decided to become a lead crew commander, and Ed was made commander of the crew and finished the tour in that capacity with his crew. Again, we appreciate those organizations helping us with our membership drive, and hope all Second Air Division Association people will express appreciation to them when the opportunity arises.

We have noted, and we appreciate, the increase in the exchange with the other Group V.P.'s who send names and addresses of former 392nd people. We have reciprocated quite a number of times with names of other Group members obtained from the above efforts. We have a number of new members since the first of the year; each has been sent a letter of welcome. On the other hand, we occasionally get the word of a member who has "peeled off"

and left the Association. That is always discouraging and saddening. We know we will lose some of our members despite all we can do, but if anyone is tempted to leave us, we will appreciate a note telling us if his reason for leaving is due to something we did or didn't do. We urge all who haven't done so to forward their dues and take a more active part in the Association to make it more interesting and enjoyable for all.

We attended the Association Executive Committee meeting in Washington, D.C. the 17th of April. Our knowledge was increased as to the policies, philosophy, and the general workings of the ruling body in office. We left with the impression that the Association is in good hands, and the democratic organization is there so the will of the members will be done. As with all such organizations, the only reason that things would be otherwise is the lack of input from the membership. The committee meets again at Nashville. We are asking for any input you wish to make as to how we might make the Association more attractive and worthwhile. Also, we will discuss any business concerning the 392nd Bomb Group at our mini-reunion at Nashville. We would like those attending to plan to present any suggestions, questions, etc. Should anyone who can't attend wish to present anything, we will be pleased to hear from you before June 25.

We continue to press for a new and up-to-date roster. We believe every member should have a roster of his Group if he so desires. It is our opinion that more and better communications between members

would result. Anticipated costs of printing seem to prevent that from coming about. It is expected that when Bill Robertie's computer is programmed he will be able to furnish print-outs in several categories. That will be great for those who plan to promote Division mini-reunions in their areas. In the meantime, if anyone knows of an "angel" who will aid in printing or in the reduction of the expense of a new roster, we would like to hear from him.

We look forward to Nashville and the reunion with old friends and the meeting of new. We invite all attending to bring items for our bulletin board; also, any memorabilia that will make our mini-reunion more enjoyable. We invite, and expect, all attending to take part and add to the occasion. Any suggestions as to the content of the program will be appreciated.

The Nashville reunion is a sell-out. Evelyn says she will be able to accommodate others only due to any cancellations. We regret any who wanted to attend and were unable because of limited space. With that in mind, we believe it is not too early to start planning Norwich for 1983. Give it your earliest consideration and make your commitment as early as possible.

In closing, we thank again those who have contributed war stories. We have submitted some, and the others will be submitted as space permits. The date of printing in the *Journal* is at the Editor's discretion as his space will permit. We expect all of your articles to be printed in time.

Good night, Pete O'Neill, wherever you are!

467th POOP FROM GROUP

by Phillip G. Day (467th)

The title of this effort comes from that used in the Group for official and unofficial notifications to its members from training days at AAB, Wendover, Utah, to its departing from England on 12 June 1945. Activated 9 September 1943, the Group arrived at Station 145, Rackheath, about six miles northeast of Norwich, on 11 March 1944 and flew its first mission on 10 April 1944. The third or fourth to last Group assigned to the Second Air Division (then Bombardment Division), it nevertheless had a distinguished combat history.

From 10 April 1944 through 25 April 1945, the Group flew 221 missions (Group numbering, 212 official AF statistics) against targets in France, the Benelux countries, but principally against Germany. It participated in Air Offensive Europe (Missions 1-41), Battle of Normandy (Missions 42-83), Battle of Northern France (Missions 84-112) and Battle of Germany (Missions 113-221).

It completed its first 100 missions in only 140 days and mounted three missions on D-Day, 6 Jun. In November 1944, after "trucking" over 646,000 gallons of gasoline to France during late September, early October, the Group again achieved the level of excellence it was noted for, which led to the best overall standing for bombing excellence in the Eighth Air Force, culminating in the unsurpassed record for bombing accuracy, achieved on 15 April 1945 (Mission 215), when the three squadrons, twenty-four airplanes, dropped their entire pattern within 1000 feet of the MPI, with over half the bursts within the 500 foot circle.

The Group dropped 13,353 tons of bombs during the 212 credited missions with 5105 aircraft attacking the targets and an average of only one aircraft per mission returning early (aborting). Operational flying time was 35,537 hours, non-operational time was 13,208 hours. It is remembered that we flew nearly as many practice missions as we flew combat missions, it wasn't so, it just seemed that way. Over 13,000,000 gallons of aviation gasoline was used in accomplishing the above.

Assigned to the Group were a total of 160 combat B-24s (during "trucking" we had over 100 on the field, mostly "war-wearies" from other Groups), 69 were brought back to the ZI in June 1945. Of the others, 20 were lost and 29 missing in action on combat missions, 34 were lost or destroyed in non-operational flying or ground accidents, the others just wore out and were replaced. But not "Witchcraft", probably the most celebrated B-24 in the Eighth Air Force, possibly the entire Air Force. Her ground crew called themselves the "League of Nations", Ramirez, Crew Chief - Mexican American; Dong, Asst. - of Chinese

descent; Butcher of Dutch ancestry; Yetter - German and Elliott who claimed only American ancestry. The "Witch" flew 665 hours of combat, wore out or lost to flak 13 engines, dropped over one half million pounds of bombs. Through the diligence and dedication of her ground crew and, on occasion, extra, sometimes assinine, effort by those flying her, she completed 130 combat missions without aborting, every mission assigned. And though she received over 300 flak holes and was on two occasions so damaged that the Sub-Depot had to effect the repairs, there was never a crewman injured or killed aboard her. A substitute, "Witchcraft II" was displayed in the vicinity of the Eiffel Tower in Paris after the cessation of hostilities so that the French could see up close what they had seen and heard from afar during the war. The "Witchcraft" came home with the Group and was broken up in Arizona in 1946 with thousands of others. What a waste!

For you history buffs, Allen Healy, photo interpreter of the Group, wrote and privately published, in 1947, *The 467th Bombardment Group, September 1943 - June, 1945*. A reprinting is about sold out. Vince LaRussa, President of the 2ADA, has less than 30 copies left at \$30 each. His address is in the *Journal*.

Now for you patch collectors, we have one of the finest. Four inches in diameter, royal blue background, silver 2ADA and 467th Bomb Group surrounding the Group's Sword and Chain on Shield in red,



black, silver and gold over Liberamus in black on gold. A first quality, damn good looking patch. Five dollars, cheap, from me and all profits will go to 2ADA treasury.

The 467th Group roster is growing, our Group's membership in 2ADA is growing. I now have about 625 active, valid addresses, 50 or more are being looked for, a couple of hundred more names but little way to find them. And those numbers are very distressing, over 5000 were at one time

or another assigned to the 467th. You other Groups had similar or greater numbers. We have just scratched the surface of membership and the 2ADA is in the same shape. Bud Koorndyk (389th) gave every 2AD member an outline to use, in the last *Journal*, in finding new members; Pete Henry (44th) is responsible for hundreds of inquiries by using the outlined method; you read what Charles L. Cooper (445th) said of Dave Patterson's search and success; Carl Weiss (93rd) said it, every member find a member. Send me names, work to find those I send you, I would like all 467th personnel to know of us, the 2ADA.

Those on the roster of the 467th are presently enjoying (?) my efforts toward reinforming them of the history of the 467th. Being a co-pilot, I was not aware then of the efforts made by so many, probably over 2000, to get the roughly 900-1000 combat crewmen over the targets. Mine was an eat, drink and be merry and try to live through thirty-five missions existence and I'm not sure that wasn't my order of it. In our Group newsletter, "Poop From Group", I've detailed our base, Rackheath, have told of the geography of it. I've written of the ancillary units, the 1229th QM Service Group, the 79th Station Complement Sq., Detachment A - 862nd Chemical Co., 1951 at Ordinance Supply and Maintenance Co., the 2105th Engineer Fire Fighting Platoon, 470th Sub-Depot, 270th Finance Section, the 1286th Military Police Co. and the 259th Medical Dispensary Aviation; and how they became the 375th Air Service Group. The Group has been brought from activation to combat status, next will be of its combat history. Bill Robertie has the "Poop", space permitting, maybe, he can publish some of it in future issues of the *Journal*. It probably will closely parallel the histories of most Groups in the 2AD.



453rd BG NEWS

by Don Olds (453rd)

In several past issues of the *Journal*, I've asked you 453rd BG members to write and let me know what you'd like to see in this column, or better yet, send me some material for it. Since I don't hear anything I'll just have to give you more of the same old thing. So this will be a combination of mail bag, grab bag, pot pourri kind of article.

Visitors to our town of Rolla, MO since Christmas include Gertrude & Gordon Tanner of Flint, MI. I visited them one snowy night in a local motel. Gordon was a member of the Francis Gionoli Crew and flew most of their missions in LUCKY LUCKY. Virginia and E. G. Ehrman of St. Paul spent a few days in the area including one Sunday afternoon at our house. Ed was one of the original pilots of the 732nd SQ, Crew #11. He was shot down on the 8 Mar. 44 rain on Berlin. Lois and John Ersparmer of Gillespie, IL was in town for a Saturday night and paid us a visit at our home. John was a crew chief with the 734th SQ. Finally, Shirley and Herman Neeck of Park Falls, WS were visiting the area and stayed overnight in Rolla. I met them at a local restaurant the following morning for breakfast. Herman was on Ed Perro's Crew of the 735th SQ and ended up in Sweden on the raid of 9 Apr. 44. Mimi and I welcome any and all of our 453rd friends to give us a call on your travels through Rolla and pay us a visit if possible. The coffee pot . . . and tea pot . . . are always ready.

The Memorial to be erected by the members of the 453rd BG to their fallen comrades is still accepting donations. The last report I had from the Memorial treasurer

Frank Thomas, was that \$12,523 was deposited in the account. If you haven't made a contribution as yet, please be thinking about it. Some of our people have made two and in some cases three donations. We hope to be able to dedicate it in 1983 when the 2nd ADA goes to Norwich for their reunion.

Charley Parker is making some fine art sketches of the Attleborough Train Station . . . The Gateway to Old Buck . . . that he will be offering for sale to those interested. The money from the prints would be donated by Charley to the Old Buck Memorial Fund. He will be making a hundred of them and then destroy the plate. He should have some with him in Nashville.

I thought Tony LaCalle, (Ole Flameleap himself), had a good idea when he purchased a book with blank pages and asked everyone to write something about what they considered their most memorable experience, good or bad, into it, then send it on to someone else so they could do likewise. After the book made the rounds he thought we could donate it to some library, perhaps Norwich. I started the book around last year and it hit a snag. I have it back now and will bring it to Nashville and hope everyone gets a chance to write a page in it.

We've researched some of the existing 453rd records and have found more names of men who were listed as killed but whose name does not appear in the Roll of Honor in the Norwich Library. After checking with the Veterans Record Center for verification we will submit the following names to be included in the next revision of the Roll of Honor, Lloyd E. Bentley, Melbourne F. Bey, Samuel D. Borenstein, Vincent N. Crupi, Raymond J. Diederich, Arthur F. Ege, Wallace A. Reed and Billy L.

Williamson. If you know of anyone who was killed and is not in the Roll of Honor please let me know. Also, on 1 April 45, Lt. William E. Lofton of the 734th SQ was slow timing an engine when the Lib crashed. Lofton's name is listed in the Roll, but we're not sure about the two enlisted men riding with him, both crew chiefs, we think. If anyone remembers the names of these two men, please let me know so we can check and see if their names are included.

An 8th Air Force Memorial will be dedicated on 9 Oct. 82 at the AF Museum in Dayton, Ohio. Several whose names are synonymous with the 8th AF are planning to attend, Doolittle, LeMay, etc. I'm happy to report that both surviving Group CO's of the 453, Larry Thomas and Ramsay Potts have said they will be there to take their places in the VIP seating section.

Letters, letters . . . Heard from Roy Carlson down in Orlando. Says he hopes to make it to Nashville and meet his old buddy Bob Wolfe, his traveling companion in England. They were on the Moeller Crew of the 735th SQ and flew 34 missions between 12 June 44 and 21 Sept. 44. Mike Benarcik writes that he's still working on the 453rd pictorial history he has been working on the past couple of years. We'll get a progress report in July. Clyde Colvin sent some old negatives from WW 2 and I've been getting some of them printed up. He's got some good stuff and we'll probably want some of them in the history. My letter from Evelyn in March said that over 70 had already signed up for the Nashville reunion. That's already more than we had last October in San Antonio. Now I've heard we're up to 85 so it sounds like we're going to have another good time, and the more the merrier. Hope to see you all there in July.

RECOLLECTIONS

by William E. Smith (392nd BG)

What I have to offer is more of the same except it happened to me and our crew. I must say, in an effort to establish some credibility, that I flew as first pilot on 26 missions with 576th Bombardment Squadron of the 392nd Group.

We arrived in England in late 1944 and were told many times that "we should have been here when it was really rough." It was rough enough for me and as a retired lieutenant colonel command type, I later came to realize what the 8th Air Force people did and how fortunate many of the air crews were to survive. "But for the grace of God, etc." I suppose I was at least an average pilot; however, when we arrived at Wendling, I had never flown any weather unless an instructor pilot was in the right seat. I quickly concluded that this could be a real problem and spent a lot of volunteer

time in the Link Trainer. No amount of Link time would give anyone the skills to fly an often overloaded B-24 in formation and in the clouds too.

I aborted only one mission and that was because we were flying in substantial solid clouds and I flat lost the fella I was flying off of. I was close enough to him to be picking up his wing wash when the visibility went from terrible to zero. At the time we were picking up a lot of ice, pulling excessive power, and I figured the hell with it. The mission had seemed doomed to failure for me right from the start because before takeoff we had switched aircraft twice. My plane had a bad fuel leak and the first spare had a bad oxygen leak. When we finally got off, several minutes after the last scheduled possible time for takeoff, our navigator, Lieutenant Charles G. Purvis, did a superlative job and allowed us to pick up the formation shortly before it left the last checkpoint on the English coast.

When I lost the fella I was flying off of

and made the decision to get away from the formation, I got on the gauges, turned right about 45 degrees away from the heading the formation was on, and started to let down. A minute or so later after completing a 180 degree turn back towards the field, we broke out below the clouds. The fellas in the waist said that there were parts of two planes below us on the ground. They were fires and as I circled we could see the bombs exploding just like little firecrackers. As we got still lower, but not too low, someone identified the planes as from our group.

It developed that it was the wreckage of two planes who were flying the high right element. I was flying the #5 position in the slot, and I'll never know how close those two planes came to us, out of control, as they descended in their plunge to death. The date was March 25, 1945, and the men involved were the crews of Lieutenant Kaiser and Lieutenant Markuson. Incidentally, no one ever said anything about our turning back.

ALL ALONE ... and LONELY!

by Bob Mallick (453rd-467th)

This story is dedicated to all the B-24 Co-Pilots who really wanted to fly fighters and never intended to fly a 'hotel' from the front porch! Get your 50 mission 'crush' caps on and grab your prescription sun glasses and open up a beer for you are about to fly with Leavenworth and Mallick, just one more time.

All you jokers who asked to fly 4 engine aircraft, please pass over this article as the performance of our new B-24 on 2½ engines sure as hell won't thrill you at all, and it will make all the B-17 pilots smirk and grin, and giggle to beat hell!

Briefing Time: 04:30 hours — We sat there and squirmed around on those rock hard benches. Our guts were into a gas burn from greasy fried eggs and sour bread garnished with marmalade. Waiting, for the moment the curtain would be drawn back from the mission board to show the secret route and the mission that the Krauts had been busily preparing for the whole damned night.

Spies everywhere! My Irish girlfriend was a Spy! She had a notebook with a complete map of Picadilly Circus and a name list of every Bobbie and taxi driver in London. Her flash light even worked!

We put up a solid smoke haze in that room that rivaled a Pittsburgh smog in December. We shuffled our feet, we coughed up flem, threw butts on the floor, and groused at grey haired, old, Colonel Hubbard.

We all groaned in unison when G-2 Charley drew back the drape. Colonel Stewart wasn't there to cheer us. G-2 Charley had completed 30 missions and hung around the 453rd so they gave him a Captaincy and a damn skinny pointer stick and stuck him up front every morning. That great big 'stay at home' smile of his quickly alerted us to plenty of gun fire and scrap iron that was coming our way. He loved to point out heavy 'flak' emplacements and probable trouble spots.

All the Arctic green weather blurbs of fronts on the map that might come, the ones that were coming, what was already in the area, and the promise of a 250 ft. ceiling when we returned, served to upset our stomachs more. We got one great big goose pimple on the bottom of our bodies that

puckered all up!

Let me shift gears right here and tell you more about G-2 Charley. I don't even remember the bugger's last name but he will be remembered as the only man in the E.T.O. to be shot down on the passenger manifest of a combat B-24 while he was fast asleep in his Quonset hut. Much, much later, Charley gave us more confidence in him and proved his worth as our Troop Train Commander on the journey from Fort Dix, N.J. across country to Sioux Falls, S.D. regroup station. With his guidance we made every beer stop at every Whistle stop, and never lost a man! The guy proved to be an 'out and out' genius at management. He took us into the cook car, one night, on that dirty, noisy, clinker ridden, ash filled troop train, and we raided it for steak sandwiches.

When the beer got low he always knew where more quart bottles were hidden in water coolers. You can see how he attained Genius status with us. About 50% of us were sick and almost dying when we reached South Dakota so the home coming trip was a bang up success. The sliding doors of the cook car were open at night to the sights, sounds, and lights of the passing country side on the good old, U.S.A. Some guys became so exhilarated that they hung out in the train's slipstream, dangling their legs from the rusty safety bar across the doorway and thrilled the local people as we whizzed by at 70 M.P.H. I believe the energy from the steaks did this, and not the beer. Charley, wherever you are out there, I salute you, and now return to the mission. Our 25th, I believe.

After briefing, we preflighted a new B-24 that Wagner and Kessler had been flying. They were stand down for the day and we were taking the new bird. We were sure as hell happy to get away from old "Corky" as that weary old bird would stall out almost completely at 125. It would shake and shudder like it had Malaria and toss out a few more rivets. Once the putt-putt was going and the big engines were running smoothly, we all settled into our routines, concentrated solely on the mission and began to taxi out for take off. We bumped and rocked along behind a long string of aircraft and finally reached position at the head of Old Buck's 'lump in the middle' runway where we waited for the 'green' biscuit gun to hit us. The temps all in the

green and manifold pressures looked steady on the run so we ran the ship into the air and started that grueling grind up into formation around Buncher 6 radio beacon. God, how I hated that low left position on the inside of the circle. Man, oh, Man! All we could do was stall and stagger around the traffic circle trying to fit in and hold position at marginal speed with that full load of 2,750 gallons of hi-octane and cargo fo 250 lb. demolition bombs. Yessir, the old 733rd. Squadron was forming up.

On the way now! The flight leaders pulling us along behind them on visible streams and strings of contrails, grinding along between 125 and 130 MPH, climbing slowly over the continent and steadily for the 19,000 feet of altitude we wanted in order to dump the tons of explosives down the factory smoke stacks at Cologne, or Kassel, I don't remember which. I do remember how the Liberator would wallow and mush along at high altitude with that Davis air foil wing clutching at the thin air and how I would have to strain and work those rudders and correct and recorrect on the sluggish wheel. Work those throttles gently and skillfully to stay in tight. Nudge in and nudge out, easy, gently. A quick side glance shows 42 degrees below zero on the windscreen thermometer yet the sweat is running down the insides of my legs and it must be time for Leavenworth to rap me on the arm and take over for his stint at the wheel.

What a relief to sit back and ride and run a few routine checks on the crew. Oxygen check o.k. — guns have been tested for function — microphones all plugged in — nobody with frost bite. I take a big bite of fresh oxygen by breaking the emergency safety wire and bypassing the auto-mix regulator. Seems to keep me wider awake.

Seems to be an aircraft out to our right by itself holding course and speed with us and probably radioing information to the ground. I wonder where all our fighter escort is? Most are probably sight seeing thru their gun sights and neutralizing enemy air fields with .50 calibre fire, or dropping captured tip tanks full of gasoline on them. (They did this towards the end of the war).

We are getting very close to target now and turning off the I.P. following the first groups towards the town. The Germans are getting excited and tuning up their anti-aircraft guns. They are beginning to fire the 88 MM stuff into our altitude and the 105 MM stuff is beginning to burst above us at B-17 level. The stuff is thumping pretty hot now and popping all over the place. First, out to the right, then left ahead, then dead ahead with some red centers (*red centers meant down to earth trouble*) blooming and dying out black. This must be 'blanket flak' day for the city below. I'm beginning to twitch around in my coffin seat as the clear skies are rapidly turning black with smoke puffs from these ground guns.

Doug is still flying the ship and I'm waiting anxiously for the telltale smoke streamers to go out from the leaders signifying the perfect drop zone. I want to tell Dave Parke to salvo the load and get the hell out of there! I do not like those red centered bursts beside us that are starting to ring and ding off the ship. Sounds like the skeletons on the tin roof.

Smoke streamers are streaking down, pure white now — Bombs away time. As the Navigator kicks them out from his nose position with the salvo switch we are hit and hit hard with 3 close rapid bursts that we absorb with one hell of a lurch and sag. We slow down immediately — we have to nose down and punch hell out of the left rudders. We are hurting somewhere!

The instrument panel goes wild with the tachometers swinging crazily and the manifold pressure gauges joining in the whole gyration. It dawns on me that #4 engine has quit cold so I shut the gas mix off right to the stop. I reach for the shut off switch making damn sure I get the right one and Doug is yelling "Feather #4". I have to loose my belt and unplug my suit to raise up and punch at red buttons over Doug's head. #4 feathers out then goes back to a bad position. #1 engine is vibrating and detonating and running hot. Sweat drops are flying as the engineer comes up front with a screwdriver to dig at the feathering button. He gets it to work and we lose some drag off #4. I rich up the mix on #1 as we sag downward and lose altitude and Doug turns slowly after the formation which is long gone. They look like gnats way out there fading swiftly away for home and I know instantly what 'lonesome' means. I can almost feel the ME-109's coming after us on W.E.P. to register a kill.

We are losing altitude steadily now and within a period of less than 12 minutes we are down to 10,500 feet and still sagging lower, but then the #1 engine settles in with a fine smooth roar and I set the mixture to normal again and watch as the temp stays down beautifully in the green. We start to hold our altitude at about 9,500 feet and I nurse the ship back to the West as Doug and Dave Parke pour over the maps for an emergency field. We really have those cigarettes going now as we fly towards A-92 Emergency station in Belgium.

Those stories about B-24's coming home all shot to hell on 2 engines just don't sit well with me. I don't believe them! If our #1 engine hadn't come back on the line we would have had to jettison the whole damn interior of the aircraft including the crew, and even then I don't think we could have made it back! And this was a new ship out of Willow Run. Anyhow, knowing what a graveyard the channel was for aircraft and not being sure of the #1 engine we decided to put down safely and maybe fly another day.

As we descended in a circle into the good

engines around the field we frosted up badly on the inside cockpit windows and had to scratch holes in the stuff and smear alcohol on them. We landed that 'sucker' thru little round holes in the frost, took her down to the end of the runway, pulled off in the grass and waited for transportation to the mess hall, of course.

We were billeted in captured German barracks that were beautiful. All clean and shining tile. Immediately we started bitching about our Quonset huts back at the base. I knew we were all back to normal. We were fed with the Tactical fighter group based there and I bumped into a few guys I had trained and flew with at Basic flight. These boys were really riding their P-47 jugs hard and long, flying at least 2 sorties a day in ground support of our troops, and sometimes 3 sorties. They were skinny and tired looking and constantly going out with what earlier had been considered 'over loads' on their fighters. We watched them for the 3 days we were working on our ship as they locked up their brakes, locked their throttles wide open, then jumped the brakes loose and started a ponderous slow, roll. As they reached the end of the take off runway where we were working they would just barely get airborne with all the ordnance they carried to the Krauts. Our infantry would fire smoke shells into the German lines and mark the target area for these P-47 jockeys who were out to end the war in one hell of a hurry, and they sure helped.

We almost came home the easy way by truck to Brussels and a C-47 ride back to England but Doug in his usual mild way asked for our cooperation in possibly repairing the aircraft. He kept choking me and shouting, "No girls, no booze, no Brussels," finally I agreed and we all pitched in.

We were issued 10 Phillips head screwdrivers and one Line Crew Chief to show us the way and it really wasn't too tough. The total number of holes we kept discovering was about 23, as I recall. #1 engine had the super charger controls cut off and #4 had the throttle cable cut in half by the enemy fire. The other stuff was superficial and we didn't patch up any holes.

We worked about 2 days solid, tearing off the leading right wing edge and installing a scrounged up throttle cable. No one there had experience with turbo controls so we left the #1 engine alone. I never saw before or since, so damn many Phillips head screws.

Naturally we found a beer stube in town and enjoyed 2 nights of drinking the finest, coldest beer we had seen in 6 months, to soothe our blisters. We tried the local Calvados but it tasted like aviation gasoline, so we stuck to suds.

We got airborne again the morning of the 3rd day and since we didn't refuel and carried no load we came up easily with just

Folded Wings

John W. Schliesman	44th
George M. Prince	44th
Charles W. Walters	93rd
A. B. Clement	446th
Donald J. Noble	489th

a little turbo run in for 2-3-4 engines. We went out a ways, gained some air space and came back down to give those fighter boys a real 'farewell'. Doug laid that B-24 down at grass level across the field, we came right at the tower, cleared it at the last possible second and then chandelled up over the field and almost gained all our altitude back, then we headed for England.

The British welcomed us back with some sort of a gun salute as flak came up when we crossed the coast inbound. I don't think they ever did know what the blips were that our I.F.F. sent out. But anyhow, Wagner and Kessler were glad to see us as we had brought their new 'baby' back in fine condition, and I think we cadged some drinks from them.

This all occurred towards the war's end and was the last combat mission we ever flew. Old Buck, the 453rd, went off operations and we were transferred to the 467th at Rackheath where we stayed till early June of '45 when the 467th cleaned up and we flew one of their aircraft home to Bradley Field.

I firmly believe that if all this had happened to us at any earlier point of the war and all the paper work botch up for closing the fields hadn't been going on, that Major Don Heaton of our 733rd Squadron would definitely have gotten Douglas Leavenworth some recognition for his fine work under fire and his real initiative in repairing and getting that new aircraft home again. Doug could have left that ship there to be cannibalized for parts and went on to have a real 'blast' in Brussels, but that wasn't his way. He felt the aircraft was needed too much and it was. It was one of the ones that successfully flew home with many passengers and air mail sacks loaded on.

I knew that air medals and good conduct ribbons won't buy a cup of coffee out there in today's world, but we ought to pinch old Don Heaton a little and see if some sort of an award could be made or dug up for C.D. Leavenworth, of the old 733rd.

Get me another Coor's beer, waitress, I'm damn tired from typing.

A TEXTBOOK ON ESCAPING

by Lt./Col. Edward W. Appel (389th)

I was first pilot of a B-24 which we flew from the States around the southern route up to England in Feb. of 1944.

After flying 29 missions, I had one to go before my tour was completed. My original crew had already completed their 30 missions by volunteering to fly with other crews when we were not scheduled to fly, so this time I would be flying as command pilot with Lt. Frazee's crew, a crew I had never met.

It was Sept. 5th, 1944 and the target was Karlsruhe Marshalling yards. We were to fly deputy lead and I remember we were flying on formation instruments nearly all the way.

Just before reaching the IP we broke into the clear. We had just started our bomb run when the 88s hit. We took a monstrous hit in the right wing which knocked out the right two engines. The left two engines were still going strong but we had no turbos and the fuel cells were ruptured. The rudder cables were also cut, so we had no rudders. The windshield had come in with the first blast and with gas flowing around I thought we were going to burn.

cer he wasn't supposed to be on this mission with us and now we were in a position where he, and we, might not make it.

First we salvoed the bombs (must have scared hell out of some cattle on the ground) and then had the crew throw out anything loose in order to lighten ship. We were at 24,000 feet, but within 25 miles we were down to 10,000. At that point I knew we couldn't make it as our front lines were 100 miles away. Time to bail out, which we all did. When my chute opened it was only seconds until I hit the ground in a plowed field. I found out much later that we had lost four men. The Navigator had jumped before we did and never got his chute open. Also, two of the crew hid out at a French farmhouse (this was in Alsace Lorraine) for about a month but then decided to get out. I understood they got in with the French Underground, put on civilian clothes and tried to make it through the lines. They were caught and shot by the Germans as spys. My friend, Capt. Paul Anderson took up residence in a Stalag Luft.

After landing in the plowed field, I shucked my chute and looking back about a

shot me easy, but they kept yelling "HALT!" so I pretended I didn't hear them and kept walking away. I didn't run because then they certainly would have shot. I walked into a clump of trees and then ran like a scared rabbit out the other side and down into a slew where I jumped into the water and hid among the slew rushes. They knew I was in there somewhere because they kept walking around the edge of the water. They would all get together on one side and fire their burp guns through the weeds. Scared the hell out of me!

Finally they all left except for one man. I could see him standing and watching the place. After awhile they all came back and went through the same procedure - shooting and all. Finally they left and I stayed right there until dark when I sneaked out.

I traveled at night toward the west end of the front lines and hid in the daytime using any cover I could find. When I got hungry I would feast from a farmer's field. I also had my escape kit with concentrated rations which helped. Drinking water was another matter, but I found if I walked into a village after dark and stomped around as if I belonged there, I could go up to a pump and pump water into a bucket and carry it out of town and nobody paid attention to me.

Finally after about ten days, I started walking across a field in daylight. There was a farmer and his wife picking rutabagas and putting them in a wagon. They asked if I was an American and I said yes, after which they motioned me to get into the wagon. I was so darned cold and hungry by that time that I didn't figure I had much to lose. I still had to get over the mountains to the west where both sides were dug in and shooting anything in sight. After getting in the wagon they covered me with gunny sacks and took me to their home in a little village. They hid me out with their son in a hayloft (they were French) as the son was also hiding out from the Germans. We stayed right there until the end of November when the Germans were pushed out and our tanks and trucks came down the road. I was out!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I went back to England and while orders were being cut to send me back to the ZI, I decided that instead of going home I would stay and try to hook on with a Fighter Group. I guess I was a little flak happy! I took off for the 56th FG and told Col. Dave Schilling I wanted to fly fighters. He said, "Sure. Come on down."

That was quite a kick getting out of bombers and into fighters. Like getting out of a truck on to a motorcycle. After checking out in the P-47 I flew 16 dive bombing, strafing and escort missions. My last, the 16th of April 1945, saw me busily strafing Muldorf Airdrome 50 miles east of Munich.

I came in on the deck and was shooting



Myself, top left, and part of my crew. I was not with this crew when shot down. They had all finished up and gone home.

We managed to get turned around using the ailerons and headed back, holding direction with ailerons but losing altitude fast. Two engines out on one side, and without turbos and rudders a B-24 is like a falling rock. At this point I was feeling sorry for Capt. Paul Anderson who was a good friend of mine from my home town of Redfield, S.D., who had elected to fly my last mission with me. He took up a position between us pilots. Being an ordnance offi-

half mile, I could see the last two men running towards each other, but there were farmers running toward them, so I didn't go back there. I hid in a vineyard for awhile, but then decided it wasn't a very good hiding place, so I started to get up. I should have looked first.

As I started to get up there was a lot of yelling "HALT!" I looked back and there in line abreast across the field were German soldiers with rifles. They could have

into ME 109s sitting on the field when I picked up a lot of ground flak and remember seeing holes appear in the wings. Then the engine started running rough and losing power. I started to pull up, which I shouldn't have done over an enemy airfield, and then they really started to get in the hits.

I was soon out of range, but at full throttle I still wasn't getting any power and the airspeed continued to fall off. I tried to get over one last hill before bellying in but as I started to clear the hill the right wing stalled and went under. The plane cartwheeled across the countryside and I thought school was out again. The wings broke off along with the tail, but by some miracle it came down right side up. I cut my knee and elbow a little bouncing around in the cockpit. At first I thought I was all bloody, but it was just hot engine oil from the ruptured oil tank.

I left the Mae West and parachute in the seat and crawled out. Some farmers were watching but they didn't do anything so I took off running. I ran into some trees and beyond there was a little village strung along a road. I had to get past this village as German soldiers were coming from the airfield I had just strafed and were behind me shooting.

As I came to the village two German soldiers came out and drew their guns hollering "HALT!" With all the shooting going on behind me I thought I'd pretend I was a German running away from the Americans. I yelled back "NICHT HALT, AMERICAN COMEN". They turned and looked back where I came from with wide, startled eyes and I kept on going. Then they swung back towards me again pointing their guns and yelling "HALT!"

I stopped and waved an arm back towards the woods and yelled "NAY, NAY NICHT HALT, AMERICANS COMEN!" They again turned around and watched the other woods for the Americans they thought were coming, and I made tracks. I ran into the woods and actually sat down and laughed, thinking how they would catch hell when the German soldiers came and found out that they had let me get away.

I couldn't find a good place to hide in the woods as the underbrush was all cleaned out, so I climbed to the top of a big tree and just sat there. The Germans soon came a line abreast again, hunting around under the trees with rifles, but they kept right on going. I stayed in the tree until dark then climbed down and took off northwest toward the front lines.

I walked at night and hid in the daytime, as I had done before. I had a couple of escape kits along with compasses, maps, hacksaw blades and concentrated rations in them. I also had my .45 which was a big consolation even if I didn't fire it.

I came to the Danube river at night and used the hacksaw blade to saw a chain that

moored a boat. The boat was on a cable to a pulley on another cable across the river. I jumped in and used the tiller to get across because of the terrific current coming down out of the Alps. I came to another river and did the same thing to get across. I came to what I thought was a third river and gave a repeat performance only to find out that I was in the middle of a lake. I could have walked around it. I felt like a sitting duck out there on the lake but nobody saw me. So far I was home free.



Myself and the plane I lost.

I came to someplace in the mountains that looked like a big hotel or hospital. I didn't see anybody around and on a closer look saw that one end was a barn with a horse in it. The rest of it was the inn or hotel and between the two was a driveway. I walked into the driveway and opened a door into the barn part. I took the blanket from the horse and filled my pockets with some potatoes and started back out. Just then some German soldiers came out and walked right past the door where I was hiding. After they left I ran as fast as I could for the woods.

Another time I was just sitting in the woods in the daylight waiting for night when I heard a noise behind me. Turning around I saw two civilians with axes raised coming towards me. I pulled my .45 and drew down on them hollering "HALT!" They would not stop and I hollered some more. One finally did stop but the other kept coming. Now he was only a few feet away and would not stop. I was already aiming between his eyes and starting to squeeze the trigger before he split my skull. The other one said something to him and he finally stopped. The first one left and the other stayed there to watch me. I supposed he was going to get more help. I didn't want to kill anybody if I didn't have to because if I did I would be in big trouble if they caught me.

I took off running with the guy behind me hollering "HALT!" I outran him and kept on going. After that I would go up to a house right after dark and knock on the door. Usually the man would come to the door and I would tell him straight out that I was an American flyer and that I needed food. Many times they would have me come in and sit at the table and give me bread, meat and coffee. I wouldn't let anybody leave the house while I was there. I

would lay my gun on the table and keep everybody at a distance. Then I would leave and make many miles that night so they wouldn't catch me. Actually some families would give me some food to take along.

I finally got up near the front lines where there was a lot of shooting. I hid under some small, thick evergreens in a hollowed out spot. Looked like an old WWI foxhole, and probably was.

One night the German Army moved over me and then for two days I was between the two lines that were shooting at each other using mostly artillery. The shells that hit the trees would really blast things around there.

One night the shooting went to the east so the next morning I crept out to the edge of the woods and watched the roads. Finally I spotted weapon carriers and tanks that were definitely ours. I came out of the woods with my hands held high as I didn't want to get shot by our own army.

I went back through an Artillery outfit that was the same outfit I came through the first time. The same officers, the same Colonel. The Colonel was a little suspicious of me by this time and thought maybe I was spying for the other side. HOME FREE AGAIN!

By the time I got back to Paris the war was over so I rode an LST across the ocean along with a whole load of ex POWs.

I was home on R&R helping my dad harvest in the summer of '45 when over the hill comes Capt. Paul Anderson. They had just freed him from a POW camp. His first words were "You son of a gun. You take me on a trip over Germany and you dump me out."



MORE LOST AND NEVER FOUND

by Charles Freudenthal (459th)

My March recollection of lost crews should have been called "Lost - Never Found, but Remembered" judging from the response. A number of dusty memories were brought out for examination. Much of the comment was about Florcyk's crew, so let's look at that first.

Richard Linn: "I have an interesting remembrance of Frank Trowbridge, the radio operator of that crew. Frank had managed to acquire a back parachute as opposed to the chest packs most of us used. I had a short leave in London and was walking alone somewhere near the Strand Palace Hotel one evening when I ran into Frank, after the crew had been shot down. He (said) that he regained consciousness while falling through space, and having the good fortune to have a back pack reached the ground safely. He made his way through the German lines to the American lines and was taken to London, where he came under the care, custody, and control of Army Intelligence for a prolonged debriefing session. He told me that after his debriefing was completed he was scheduled to return to the states. He led me to a pub, and we spent a pleasant evening together. I never saw him again after that."

Irv Schildknecht: "The following is as I remember it told to me by Frank Trowbridge. When the formation was over the target, it was completely obscured by clouds. The bomb bay doors were open however, and Trowbridge was on his knees by the catwalk. Suddenly he saw a wing fly off and he either jumped or was blown by an explosion from the plane. About a week later I was called to Group Intelligence and questioned about how well I knew Sgt. Trowbridge. It seems that an airman claiming to be Trowbridge had been picked up by an Army tank unit in the St. Lo area and was being held by Intelligence in London. I was placed on TDY to verify his identity.

"At that time escapees and invaders were housed at 63 Brooke St., a large old house in central London, until their stories could be checked. I met Trowbridge there, and, of course, he was who he said he was. Escapees and evaders were 'loosely' confined pending verification of their stories, but a convenient basement door gave an easy out to the fleshpots and pubs of London, so that evening we had a night on the town. According to Frank he had landed in a field, and some farmers nearby started after him. He ran for a short way, and when he saw the farmers weren't too eager to catch him he looked for a hiding place, finally 'holing up' in the basement of a church. He was there for four days, coming out at night to steal carrots from a nearby garden. On the fourth day he saw an OD colored tank with a big white star on it come rumbling down the road. Frank ran

out, waving his arms and yelling. The tank crew gave him some C rations, then turned him over to Intelligence."

Bud Chamberlain: If you recall, I tried to resurrect a song from our 100 mission party, which went something like this — 'Over Pas de Calais and over Buncher 8 We're up in the AM, 'cause we've gotta date

And with Zeke still around, oh
The lid will stay on
We are the 489th...'

Well, the man I believe wrote the song was T/Sgt. Tommy O'Brien, and that's him, hatless, kneeling in the first row of the Florcyk crew photo, second from left (photo in March issue).

Bombardier, Yes or No?

Bob Angle comments: "...you said that apparently there was no bombardier aboard Bryan Wooten's aircraft. There was, and also an observer. Capt. Garth Fletcher was the replacement bombardier and William R. Whittington, CWO, was the observer. Both of these fine young men were attached to the 489th, and both were Intelligence Officers for Special Operations... Capt. Fletcher, or should I say Sgt. Fletcher, as he was known while he was with the 845th Sq. performed many duties for the 489th, the general staff and special operations section, and for Counter-Intelligence. CWO Whittington was attached to the Motor Pool and was better known as Pfc. Bill Whittington. Wooten's aircraft was assigned to the 44th to drop special clusters of incendiary and yellow phosphorus bombs two miles short of the target, to mark the way for the English Lancasters to follow that night. Wooten's aircraft was hit over Aschersleben and went down about six miles from Ballenstedt, and the word we got was that only four men bailed out before the crash. Fletcher and Whittington were two of those and Whittington was shot by German Home Guards, while Fletcher somehow got to Bernburg with the help of another agent, but was later killed while on his way back to England on 21 July 1944.

We were never informed of the identity of, or what happened to the other two men who bailed out... And I never would have found out myself if it had not been for a friend in Naval Intelligence I was visiting at the Royal Navy Hospital in Lowestoft..."

Were Any Chutes Seen?

That was always the question at debriefing when losses were reported. All too often none were. But on June 25th, 1944, four chutes were reported coming out of Lt. Blackburn's #94909 (SAFU, 846th) on the Villacoublay mission. And on 9 September 1944, Capt. Tom Please's #50897 took a direct hit in the bomb bay just before release point at Mainz, and 7 chutes were

seen. Crew members according to the record, were Richard Tustin (CP), Joseph Risovich (B), Clifford LaFary (N), Joseph Safy (N), Roy Herndon (E), Dale Stensrud (BG), Gabriel Latsko (EG), Joseph Holmes (RO), John Davis (TG) and Roland Cheyne (NG). In addition to Blackburn were John Burke (CP), Constant Debany (N), Elmer DeYoung (B), Richard Klaus (E), Gerald Olivine (WG), Antonion Navarro (WG), Adolph Kirbelis (RO), Kevin Walsh (TG), and Fletcher Johnson (BG).

There were others of course, and no doubt we'll never know all of the stories. But who remembers something — a hometown, a later meeting, a report or rumor? What can you add?

Poet's Corner

Sweating It Out

*With Focke Wolfes high at six o'clock
With Messerschmitts at ten
With Focke Wolfes diving through the top
To climb and dive again.*

*Another boring in at twelve
With neon leading edge;
Nine men can be oblivious,
But one of ten must hedge.*

*Oh pity the poor co-pilot
His wavering glance belied,
He gazes at the instruments
With fighters in his eyes:*

*Although it looks like July the 4th
The pilot never shirks
His eyes are on the leading ship
Not on the fireworks.*

*Navigator and Bombardier
Are wont to view the fight,
As do the eager crewmen six
Through a machine gun sight.*

*Oh God, pity the poor co-pilot,
His forehead dripping wet;
Nine men are working for their lives
While he for ten must sweat.*

(OFFERED BY JIM O'BRIEN)
Stolen from some Kriege diary
Block 128, South Compound
Stalag Luft III
Sept. 1943

NAPALM!

by James G. Coffey (467th)

It was April 14th, 1945, before dawn. We were assembled in the briefing room of the 467th Bombardment Group at Rackheath, England. We were waiting to learn our mission for the day. With German armies in retreat, our target was likely to be one of the remaining isolated points of defiant Nazi resistance.

The briefing officers arrived. Finally, after preliminary remarks, the curtain was pulled to show the target for the day: Pointe de Grave, France. Pointe de Grave is at the confluence of the Girond estuary and the Atlantic Ocean, about 65 miles northwest of Bordeaux. The Germans were holed up in massive underground submarine pens. The plan for the day was to assemble over Belgium, then fly southwest to the target. We were to soften up the Nazi defenders; waiting Free French forces would then move in. There would be no flak on route to the target, but flak was expected from the target.

The Armament Officer explained that we would be using a new kind of bomb, containing Napalm, a jellied gasoline. Although the deep, reinforced concrete pens were virtually impervious to blast damage, the occupants were vulnerable through the pen's ventilation system. On detonation, the Napalm would burn with such intense heat that the oxygen would be sucked out of the pens and their defenders asphyxiated if not burned to death. The Armament Officer told us all this with a malevolent gleam in his eye, with matching voice and gestures.

We were warned that some of the bombs might be defective: under certain conditions, the phosphorous grenade (intended to detonate the bomb) might pop out. The resulting hole would permit the Napalm to escape into the plane. If this happened, the armament expert continued, we must plug the bomb immediately. Thereafter, we must keep use of electrical switches to an absolute minimum: the slightest spark would explode the plane.

Because the mission was a long one — about 1,400 miles — we were given an emergency field about 60 miles west of Paris where we could refuel, if necessary.

Impressed and apprehensive about the new bomb, we checked out our flying gear and went to our assigned plane on the hardstand. In the approaching dawn, the Armorers were still loading the 600 pound bombs, eight to a plane. They worked carefully and treated the bombs with obvious respect.

As usual, we had picked up extra flak suits for protection from flak bursts for below. Our Engineer, Andy De Biasse, carpeted the flight deck; in the waist, Gunners Bill Smith and Bill Hayes covered their firing areas.

We took off, uneventfully, at the usual 30 second interval, and climbed in loose formation, headed across the North Sea toward Belgium. As I reported to Squadron the next day, we were proceeding to buncher C-17 (Liege) . . . About 40 miles from the buncher, the fuse in one of the bombs burst loose, causing the Napalm to be sprayed throughout the bomb bay. The bomb bay was almost completely covered by the substance, and the flight deck and waist were filled with fumes and some spray.

Just seconds after the bomb burst, Engineer DeBiasse plugged the leak (with his brand new white World War I style scarf, a gift received from his Mother the day before plus anything else he could find to stuff in the opening). Any yelled through the intercom that he wanted pliers. When asked what for, he almost screamed "God-damit, give me pliers!" Radioman, Don faford was quick to deliver. The phosphorous grenade, still attached to the arming wire, fell through the bomb doors and banged repeatedly against the catwalk. DeBiasse managed to cut the arming wire and the phosphorous grenade fell clear. As Tail Gunner Carl Shaut watched it fall away, we knew we had had a close call.

Basing my judgment on the briefed danger of the Napalm bomb, I turned off the generators, batteries, radios, and electrical equipment. This meant we could not change any of the electrical switches; we could not change the pitch of the propellers, use our radio, the auto-pilot, or intercom. (We could use the hydraulically operated bomb bay doors, which DeBiasse opened to air out the plane). We made a 180 degree turn, heading for the Channel in order to jettison if necessary.

Thorough inspection convinced me it would be safe to continue to the target with all switches off. We found our Group assembling in the usual counterclockwise pattern, at 21,000 feet, flying at about 160 mph. I tried to join the Group — but could not safely slow down below 165 mph. I waved to the Squadron Leader, pulled out, and asked our Navigator, Al Muller, for a heading to the target.

We followed the rivers to the estuary and the target was in sight. Co-pilot Harmon J. ("Hymie") Small, Jr. and I took turns flying. Navigator Muller "had to navigate between nose turret and waist gunner area, crossing the catwalk" through the fumes.

Oxygen at both ends of his trips kept him going.

We tried to form with a B-17 Group but with our higher-than-normal B-24 speed and the B-17's normal slower-than-B-24 speed, we couldn't do it. (We gave up when we saw a Fortress opening its bomb bay doors, just over our heads.) We circled for another try, this time with a B-24 Group. We intercepted the 44th Bomb Group. With flaps lowered, I slipped into a "slot" below the plane flying the slot position (just below and behind the Squadron Leader) on their low Squadron, to the astonishment of the tail gunner, just above our nose. Bob Miller, our Nose Gunner, gave him a friendly wave.

We bombed in formation with them. The bombs dropped on time. The Germans were unable to put up any defense. We continued in formation with the 44th, north toward England. The plane was thoroughly aired out by now, so we felt confident in using the intercom and gradually all the other electrically-operated gear.

We had used our fuel at an inefficient rate while flying on our original climb prop setting. As we approached the emergency landing field, we considered whether it would be prudent to land for more gas. With an estimated half hour margin of fuel, we flew on to England with the 44th.

Eastern England was 10/10ths covered by low clouds. The 467th tower instructed us to fly well beyond the northern coast of Norfolk over the North Sea before turning back to our base at Rackheath. Heading for the Cromer beacon, as we descended, we broke through the clouds about half a mile from the coast, below cliff-top level. We flew across Norfolk at about 50 to 60 feet above ground through yellowish sunlit haze, with Navigator Muller providing course corrections. Low on fuel — we had not expected to fly so far out to sea — I asked for and received clearance for a straight-in landing at Rackheath. With red shots from our Very pistol signaling our condition, we landed uneventfully. Our Engineer reported we had 20 minutes fuel left.

Later, I learned that on the April 15th mission to Pointe de Grave, the 467th was "the first Group in 2nd AD history" (and no doubt the last) "to achieve the perfect bomb score of 100% accuracy within 1000 feet of the assigned MPI for all squadrons." I'm sorry we weren't part of it.

Notice

If you do not have confirmed reservations for the reunion in Nashville PLEASE do not come. We are completely sold out and due to the Worlds Fair in Knoxville there is absolutely no chance of obtaining any more rooms.

Evelyn Cohen

HALF A MISSION GETS YOU

by W. A. Henderson (392nd)

A person flying combat always takes for granted that it won't happen to him. Then, the day of reckoning comes and you are listed as, "Missing in action". You always wondered what happened when a plane went down, and now you know. Our turn was Gotha — 24 Feb. 1944.

We were in B-24J 42-7511 - 576th Squadron, 392nd Bomb Group. Capt. Mervyn Johns pilot; I was co-pilot. Our crew was on its 22nd mission.

Just as we turned on the bomb run, six FW 190's came in at 12:00 o'clock level; eight more 2:00 o'clock high. We were hit in #4 engine and the oil pressure zeroed out, so #4 was feathered. Another pass just after bombs away and they got #3 engine and set it on fire. Number 4 engine was unfeathered in hopes we could keep up with the Group, but since it had no oil, it promptly ran away. Johns put the airplane in a steep dive to try to blow out the fire; #4 tachometer had wound around beyond the numbers — screaming away. There was no question — get out and walk! He slowed the aircraft down for bail out — leveling off about 8,000 ft.

The bail out was accomplished, but not without a bit of unintended humor. When we rang the bell, "prepare to bail out" the bombardier was locked in the nose turret. He called the navigator to let him out. And what was the navigator doing? Folding

maps, putting things away nearby. He finally did open the nose turret door and out tumbled the bombardier. As the navigator was first of the two to bail out, he crouched over the open nose wheel doors, turned to the bombardier and said, "Push me". The #11 shoes did that — post haste.

I made a free fall from about 7500 ft. to about 2000 ft. because we had been told the German fighter pilots might shoot you in your parachute if it looked like you might get away. You never think of the chute not opening while free falling, and mine opened just as it was supposed to. As I was coming down in my chute, I counted the others. Two chutes were missing. We later learned after the war that the graves registration teams had found the graves of waist gunner, Felix Zerangue, and engineer, Jack Indahl. As I neared the ground, our B-24 had made a steep 360° diving spiral and was headed for me when a friendly hill came up between us.

The search party sent out by the Germans had about 8 people in it. They were coming on foot on a road that had a very elongated bend because of a long ridge covered with pine trees about a foot in diameter. I reasoned that it would take some time for them to reach that bend, so after burying my chute in the foot deep snow, I hurried over the hill onto the same road and ran toward them — wanting to be in a position

nearer to them so they would pass me before starting the search. At the bend I got off the road and into the timber and watched them pass by, about 100 ft. away. They had guns, pitch forks, and the like for weapons, not a very friendly reception committee. After they had gone past, I continued through the trees to the road on the far side of the bend; got on it and walked away as if I was one of the search party returning.

I walked across a field in foot deep snow to a railroad to head south, and home. A troop train went by. The soldiers waved and I waved back thinking, "You would be off that train in a hurry if you knew who I was." This gave me confidence in my lack of identity, so I walked down the railroad through a small town, acknowledging greetings with a raise of the hand or a nod of the head, but not speaking. Apparently this was customary of the German populace at the time.

The next town was larger. I could speak very little German, but I could understand it to some degree. I asked a German for a drink of water, but I could not say it like a native. He became suspicious. My ankle was swollen, either badly sprained or broken. He took me to the Mayor of the town, who in turn called the authorities.

Thus ended my missions with the 392nd Bomb Group, and the start of sixteen months of prisoner of war time. Next came the ride to the P.O.W. camp, the interrogations, and the delousing, but those events are another series of stories.

448th Bomb Group Profiles



by George DuPont

Although Military regulations prohibited keeping animals, there were always a few who managed to find a stray dog or two. As crews passed thru places like Belem and Marrakesh, they also found ways to collect other animals such as the Spider monkey.

One such monkey made it half way across the South Atlantic before a joyful urge compelled him to jump out the waist gunners window. (He was not seen again.)

Another such monkey with better manners made it to England. "Flak" as he was called was not your ideal house guest. Anything on a shelf or left unattended was at your peril. Among some of his more notable bizarre escapades was jumping onto a red hot stove (much to his chagrin) and eating a whole can of cheese from our "K" rations. The cheese weighed half as much as he did. The results were almost final. Only the love of a friendly medic

(who gave him an enema with an eye dropper) saved him. He was adopted by a radio operator who (using a razor) cut an oxygen mask down to fit him. He carried Flak on his missions, keeping him warm between his heated suit and his sheepskin jacket.

He made quite a sight peeping out of the jacket, only his beady eyes and furry head visible through the open zipper.

As the fates would have it, people were more concerned about Flak than whether the target was hit.

One day Fate terminated his career. Two bombs failed to release and the radio operator (forgetting about Flak) stepped into the bomb bay and with a screw driver started prying the lower bomb latches loose. At this moment he caught sight of Flak sitting on the fins of the top bomb. Just as he reached up to grab him, both bombs fell away with Flak still attached.

When things got dull around the bar racks someone would remark, "Boy, I'll bet if the Germans saw him they'd think we had guided missiles." or "I wonder if Flak ever let go?" To which another would add, "No way, he was too smart for that."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

M/Sgt. Alexander was a hard working dedicated crew chief. I remember the pride he felt when he learned that our base commander Colonel Mason was to fly his aircraft and lead the formation. He and his crew labored all night to fine-tune the engines and then; to complete their task, used buckets of varsol and, mopping away every evidence of crude and mud had the aircraft as shining as a new dime. It actually glowed in the misty dark.

Col. Mason noticed it too and approaching M/Sgt. Alexander asked politely, "Don't you like me sergeant?" Puzzled Alexander replied, "What do you mean?"

"Come with me," he motioned and walking across the perimeter he pointed to all the other dirty, dingy aircraft and said, "Sergeant, if you were a German fighter pilot and you saw this aircraft glistening in your eyes, wouldn't you want to *put out the light*? I want my aircraft to look like every other aircraft!" The sergeant and his crew mixed some mud with varsol and re-washed the aircraft to make it look dirty and dingy.

JUST ONE OF THOSE DAYS, Dec. 30, 1942

by Will Lundy (44th)

With a flash of barracks lights and some sadistic "gentleman" yelling "Mission on!" our *day* has begun. There is always hope it might be a bad dream, but not this time. It's for real. A quick glance at my watch tells me it's 3:30 AM, and I didn't get back from Norwich until after midnight. Oh well, what's a little sleep more or less.

It was cold, very cold, as I rolled over to quickly survey my work clothes. You must have a system just like a fireman, everything going on in nothing flat. All around me in this large, one room barracks about 35 aircraft maintenance men were too busily occupied with dressing to grumble or complain. First things first — get your body weatherproofed!

In a few minutes we are out into the inky black night on our way for some coffee and a little food. Site One is located near the center of a large rectangle, with the longer parallel roads running north-south connecting the hangar area to various sites. In daylight hours, the way to the messhall requires the devious following of the road south, west, south, east and south again, a distance of nearly 3/4 of a mile. But under the cover of darkness we merely climb over a small wire fence, follow a hedgerow, cross the street and sneak into the rear of the Communal site. This path is taboo as it, supposedly, would indicate to the enemy some activity. It never did.

After a breakfast of powdered scrambled eggs, cold toast washed down with scalding hot coffee from our metal G.I. cups, its back out into that cold. Our job starts early but just when did those cooks start? It seems they are in operation around the clock, and do a darn good job of it considering what they have to work with.

The jaunt to our dispersal area must be at least two miles, so the four of us were especially grateful that we timed it right, for a passing truck headed for the motor

pool picked us up. Those rubber goloshes keep the feet dry but a pain to hike in. But walk we must, around the hangers, eastward along the perimeter taxiway, around the bend and across the end of the main runway, and then back west. Finally, there she is, Miss Dianne, tucked away in a cul-de-sac back by another fence.

To ready for preflight, its up through the rear hatch, forward, and open the bomb bay doors. Many times the armament men are ahead of us, loading bombs and installing guns and ammunition. Not this morning. Then up on the wing and fuselage to remove canvas covers. Have to do a balancing act up here or find myself trying to keep from sliding off that frosty, high wing.

No need to check the gas tanks as we just filled them a few hours ago, but I did anyway. Can't take a chance of anything which might jeopardise a mission. While I was performing my high-wire act the rest of the crew was going over Miss Dianne from stem to stern — all is in order.

George Baccash, Crew chief, climbed into the pilots seat, I followed him into the co-pilots seat as Carl Stoddard and Bailey were "pulling through" the propellers, then become observers. Carl started the A.P.U., a gas driven generator that provided auxillary power for instruments and starting engines, lights, etc.

No matter how many times I experience it, the starting and run-up of those engines, I always get a tremendous thrill. The feel of all that harnessed horsepower at 50 inches of mercury is exhilarating. All four engines having successfully passed all instrument checks, we quickly shut them down to conserve that precious blue, 100 octane gasoline. And with all other visual inspections completed, our immediate job was done. Now, the waiting begins. There still is feverish activity all over the airfield, however, as other preflights are progressing, mi-

nor repairs completed, bombs loaded, etc. The sounds are all there but nothing is visible except occasionally a momentary flash of light as someone becomes careless with his "torch."

Time drags on as we wait for daylight. There is no place to go to escape that bone-chilling dampness. The cold comes right through our fatigues, sweaters and jackets. So each of us in his own way tries to keep warm either in the planes or out on the hardtop, slapping his hands, jogging, etc., but still shivering. Finally, with the arrival of dawn, comes the power wagons, jeeps and trucks bringing the combat crews, and the discomforts are forgotten. Now its the business of getting the mission underway. The crew quickly unload their gear, verify and get everything in readiness, then joined us in our huddle for small talk.

Time drags as the rising sun fought a losing battle with the thickening fog. The weather kept getting worse as did the temperament of all. Time and again we've gotten this far — all set for take-off and then had the mission scrubbed. So far this month we have had credit for two, maybe three missions, and none since the 20th. As we can only drop bombs on occupied countries when the target is visible, chances of successful winter missions are rare.

There goes the red-red flare, mission scrubbed again. Dammit! It's easy to feel sorry for yourself, so much wasted effort and needless suffering with the cold. But wait, think about those combat men. Think of the physical and *mental* anguish they must have suffered thinking this might be their last day — the waiting, preparing yourself to face it, then nothing.

My heart goes out to them as they slowly reload the vehicles and leave. We have nothing to do now but wrap up our planes and try to catch up on our sleep. And do it all over again tomorrow???

A PUT ON?

by Flyboy Anon

Check this outfit, looks like they just came back from a Milk Run. A Noball no less. I don't see any oxygen masks, no heated suits and the short officer still has a nice crease in his ODs. Everyone is smiling and the best thing yet they are met at their hardstandby the head honcho of the Red Cross and his best dispenser of doughnuts. They either just got back from a leaflet dropping mission to Calais or it's their last mission, or both.

I flew 35 missions and I was lucky to be met by a grubby driver in a weapons carrier. Perhaps I was stationed at the wrong base. I know some of the earlier Groups like the 44th and 93rd had it made but to be met with coffee and doughnuts as you fall out of the 24, that has got to be a put-on.

(ed: One more crack about the 44th and 93rd and this guy gets exposed.)



THE PX PAGE

The Mighty Eighth



Roger A. Freeman

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(units, men and machines)
by
Roger A. Freeman

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This print shows planes of the 453rd, 389th and the 445th over their home airfields with Div. Headqtrs. and Norwich in the distance.

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LETTERS

Dear Bill:

I wish I knew more about human nature and what causes people to do and say the things they do. Specifically, I refer to March issue of the *Journal* and the letter from new member William R. Ramsay of Group Ops-446th wherein he states "Helping the officers plan and execute battle plans, we had to rush out and get peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and steaming coffee for the planning room when the field orders came down. Fred Breuninger and Dan Hutto were the prime fellows with their jeep from messhall to Group Ops."

There are two misstatements of facts. One pertains to when the field orders came down. Dan Hutto and I were close friends. We each had charge of a group Ops night shift, working 14-hour shifts from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m. the next morning. I would work one week of nights and Dan the next week, and so on. As everyone knows who has experienced the scene at Group Operations at night, *that* is when the place comes alive. *THAT* is when the field orders come in. *THAT* is when the real planning occurs. Dan and I "trained" many a Group Navigator and a Group Bombardier as to how things are done during mission planning. The misstatement: Ramsay worked days only. The field orders came in at night and thus he couldn't be aware of what transpired.

Other misstatement: that we drove jeeps to obtain sandwiches (you see in the article who is pictured in the jeep). True, sandwiches and coffee were obtained from officer's mess about midnight every night (after all, 14 hours is a long haul without something on the tummy). During 2 years at Bungay I never so much as saw the inside of the Officer's Mess and I never so much as transported one sandwich. Just think: It is illogical to think that the chief NCO in charge of Group Ops would consider to absent himself when a crucial message might come down from Wing, 2AD, or 8AF that conceivably might affect the entire mission and Bungay personnel.

Fred R. Breuninger
446th Group Ops-Bungay

Dear Mrs. Veynar:

When I volunteered last year to be the 65th Fighter Wing Unit Contact for the 8th Air Force Historical Society, I also attempted to contact many of the personnel of the wing headquarters and supporting units to form our own association.

Using a few names from the files of the 8th AFHS, I managed to locate a few more individuals, and to obtain small cash donations to support our own newsletter. However, in spite of items in service-oriented periodicals inviting former 65 FW personnel to contact me, only two responded. I concluded, therefore, that the project should be terminated.

However, a copy of the outstanding December 1981 Second Air Division Association *Journal* recently came across my desk in the Retiree Affairs Office at March Air Force Base. (glaring error on the cover; 479th FG, not 379th FG). The thought came to me that perhaps my project could be transferred instead of being terminated.

I have \$90.00 and seven names. I suggest that both be transferred to your association, the money being used initially to pay for seven memberships, the balance for whatever is considered appropriate. I await your decision.

George M. Epperson
Lt. Colonel, USAF (Ret.)

Dear Evelyn:

Please enroll me as a member of the Second Air Division Association. My check for \$10.00 is enclosed. I don't have an application blank but will try to give you the information about me which you may require.

I flew 21 missions with the 392nd BG out of Wendling - the first five with my original crew, Vince Cerrato, pilot. Then I was sent to Alconbury for radar (Mickey) training after which I returned to Wendling and flew sixteen more missions with various lead crews as radar-navigator.

I joined the 8th A.F. Historical Society shortly before the convention in St. Paul, Mn. last fall. When I received the roster, I spotted the name of one of my gunners from our original crew, Paul Roche, who now lives in Wilbraham, Mass. I contacted Paul who I hadn't seen since leaving England after the German surrender. Needless to say we both had lots to tell each other and it was a great feeling to renew that bond which was forged 37 years earlier when we were flying together as crew members on B-24s.

Paul encouraged me to join with you and all the Second Air Division gang - so here it is:

Donald C. Bailey
6260 Able St. N.E.
Fridley, MN 55432

Dear Bill:

On Page 5 of the March 1982 Newsletter, was a suggested letter to the editor to secure new members. The only problem is the 392nd was omitted.

I learned of the Association through such a letter to the editor which likewise omitted the 392nd.

Let's not be forgetting the 392nd.

Odell F. Dobson (392nd)
(ed: Hereby let it be known that the 392nd was indeed in the war and part of the 2nd Air Division. For Bud Koondyke and myself, 100 lashes with a wet noodle. He for leaving the 392nd off his list of 2nd AD Groups and me for not catching it.)

Dear Bill:

In 1981 we were able to locate 6 members of our crew. Crew #8434 - 445th Bomb Group. We are still trying to locate 4 other members of our crew:

Thomas A. O'Neill - Co-Pilot #0-834485 (last known address Pennsylvania)
Emery L. Durbin #0-1166963 (Bombardier)
James L. Reilly #34911182 (Florida)
Gerald G. Provart #36481802 (Missouri)



Enclosed is a picture of Crew #8434. Back Row, left to right - R. J. Campbell, William Luce, Gerald Provart, Charles Kuhlman, Curt Crouch, Basil D. Red. Front Row: Emery Durbin, Thomas O'Neill, Steve Illar, James Reilly.

Thanks, Bill. We are planning to see you in July at Nashville.

H. Curt Crouch
1226 North Seventh St., Grand Junction, Colo. 81501

Dear Vere (McCarty):

Your letter was a welcome call from the far distant past. Often in reading the *Retired Officers Magazine*, I have searched for news of the 446th and 93rd Bomb Groups as well as the 56th Fighter outfit since I had served with all three. Now, I find them all at the same address. Thank you for writing.

I was retired from service years ago with a physical disability and Major's rank with pay. But I have been able to serve as Pastor in two parishes and as Superior of our Novitiate. Right now I am in charge of the Retirement House for our Padres. Thank God, my health has been excellent.

We are overlooking a golf course in a Resort area not far from Hemet. Retirement has been pleasant for me and I am able to help in several of the nearby parishes from time to time.

I would be delighted to hear more from you and those with whom we shared those unforgettable days in England. My greetings, please, to all with whom you make contact.

Father Joseph B. Murphy, C.S. Sp.
Holy Ghost Fathers
20075 Sublette Road
Gilman Hot Springs, CA. 92340

Dear Evelyn:

Please send me a membership application to Second Air Division Association. I was a member about 20 years ago, but I've been on the move so much I lost contact.

I visited Europe on business in October and had a free day in Norwich on October 10th. I visited what is left of 448th field at Seething and 389th field at Hethel (now Lotus car factory). I also visited the Second Air Division Memorial at the Norwich Library. While there I met Mr. John Wright, an Englishman, and an avid fan of 2nd Air Division. He helped me locate some books in the library and gave us a tour of Norwich.

This visit renewed my interest in the 2nd AD, so I would like to renew my membership.

Julian W. Blake
929 Oak Park Blvd.
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

Dear Evelyn:

Some time ago, I ordered a 2nd Air Division patch, and I told you in my note that I would wear it in Norwich, England in the Fall. Well, I did just that! My wife and I left the U.S. on the 21st of September, spent a couple of days in London seeing the "sights" and then went to Norwich. I must say, there have been a lot of changes since I left Norwich in 1945, but they are all for the better. The one thing that hasn't changed, however, is the friendliness and kindness of the people who live there. When I was there from 1943 to 1945, those folks were having plenty of troubles, but they were always good to the Americans that were stationed at Horsham St. Faith. They had suffered some terrible raids before I got there, their city was a shambles, food was scarce, but the people were still smiling. I was just a kid, only 19, and far away from home, a gunner in a B-24, shooting and being shot at, and if it hadn't been for those good people, most of us who were there then wouldn't be here now.

As I said, the people in Norwich haven't changed. They may be of different generations, but they are still warm and friendly, and still smiling. We were treated like members of a family everywhere we went. Because of the friendship of a man named Bob Hume, I was able to see the old airport where I had been stationed, had a tour of the hangar where our plane was, I went up in the control tower which, incidentally, is the same one except it is now higher. I also saw the plaque dedicated to the 458th, and it sure brought a lump to my throat. Bob Hume isn't even a Norwich native, and he is also a young man, so it was even more of a friendly gesture on his part to take time to take my wife and I to the airport and show us these things. He also took us a little on the outskirts to a pub where we met some folks who were in Norwich during the war years, and from there, Bob took us home with him to meet his lovely wife and small son. On another day, he took me with some other men to Bungay to another pub where there were folks who also remembered those years. My wife and I were very fortunate to have met Bob Hume, and we will never forget his kindness.

Another day when my wife and I were taking a walk, and I was wearing my blazer with the patch proudly displayed, a man in a car honked his horn and waved frantically to us. We thought he had mistaken us for someone else and we kept walking, but he parked his car and came after us. It turned out that he had recognized the 2nd Air Division patch, and that he is an honorary member from the British group. His name is John Wright, and he also was very good to us. He took us for a ride through Norwich, pointing out some of the places he thought I would remember. I showed my wife the plaque to commemorate the place where the plane crashed missing the small neighborhood, and the night before we left Norwich, he and his friend, Geoff, came to our room at the hotel and showed us movies actually taken on a bombing flight. John also came to see us off at the train station when we left Norwich to return to London. It gives you a warm feeling when people put themselves out to make you feel wanted. We really hated to leave Norwich, and we can't wait to go back again.

And now let me introduce you to Dora and Fred Evans. We met Dora at the Cathedral where she is a volunteer guide. We started talking about the beautiful windows in the church, and she asked what the patch was for! My 2nd Air Division patch again! She said her husband had been in the RAF during the same years, and she would like us to meet him. This was on a Friday, and we made arrangements to get in touch with her sometime over the weekend. On Saturday evening she called us and invited us to attend Church with them at the Cathedral on Sunday morning. After Church, they took us for a ride in the countryside and we had lunch at a beautiful inn at Cotishall. We had a lovely day, the weather was wonderful, and we saw a lot of scenery that we would never have seen without their friendship to us. They wanted us to

Dear Bill:

I am sending a snap shot that you can keep. It is of *Short Snorter*, 128 missions, no aborts. Crew Chief M/Sgt. S. A. Dergo, 579 Sqdn., 392 B.G.

Would like to see it in the *Journal* some day.

Walter C. Weicesser



(Left to right): Captain Brooks, Sq. Engineering Officer; T/Sgt. David Lawson; M/Sgt. Karls, Flt. Chief; M/Sgt. S. A. Dergo, Crew Chief; M/Sgt. Glenn Englehart.

see the American Cemetery at Cambridge, which we had heard about everywhere but never expected to see, so on Tuesday, they picked us up at our hotel bright and early, and we went to Cambridge. We saw that most wonderful cemetery and then, from there, they took us to Duxford the Air Museum. Alas, there were no B-24's there, so my wife still has never seen one except in the movies, but we did see a lot of old planes and we had a wonderful day. It turns out that Dora and Fred have a niece married to an American, and she lives in New Hampshire which is only a couple of hours from where we live. When we got home, my wife called their niece, and so I think instead of two new friends, we have now added her niece to our list. Dora and Fred also were at the train station to see us off when we left Norwich. They are planning to come to the U.S. in a year or so to visit their niece, and we are certainly hoping to see them again at that time.

All in all, we had a most wonderful trip to England. My wife had never been there, and we saw all the usual things in London, Buckingham Palace, Big Ben, House of Parliament, etc. etc., but my wife says she wouldn't care to go back to London, but she would go back to Norwich today, or any time. We both fell in love with that city and its people. I certainly hope that the 2nd does have a convention there in April of 1983, and that my wife and I will be able to go along. We stayed at the Hotel Nelson, which is lovely, and the people who work there are terrific. We couldn't have asked for anyone or any place any better.

Now — if they could just learn how to fry bacon in England, everything would be perfect there!

So that's my story. I only wish I had known about the 8th Air Force Historical Society and the 2nd Air Division Association sooner than I did, but thank godness I know about them now and am a proud member of both. Keep up the good work — we love to read the bulletins and look forward to them all.

Enclosed is a small check to be contributed to the library at Norwich for books or whatever for the 8th Air Force Room. I only wish it could be more, and I will certainly contribute from time to time to whatever I can.

Thanks for being such a good friend to all of us old timers!

Lucien Albert
25 Woodside Drive
Lewiston, ME 04240

Dear Evelyn:

I just realized that my dues are not paid, so I am enclosing \$10.00 and hope that you will receive the money safely.

On January 7th, I returned from a 45 day trip to the United States to visit former 446th Bomb Group crew members who were shot down on 26 September 1944 during an attack on Hamm, Germany. As you perhaps will know I am writing a book about the USAAF air raids on that day, and it was just fantastic to talk with those crew members.

I collected during this trip a lot of information and photos, I even returned to Holland with two complete USAAF uniforms, POW photos, crew photos, German souvenirs, etc.

During my stay in Williamsville, New York, I had the chance to meet Mr. Vincent LaRussa, the 467th Bomb Group contactman, now the President of the Second Air Division.

On July 14th I will return to the USA to make a visit to the west coast to see another crew member of this bomber, shot down on 26 Sept. 1944.

Harold E. Jansen
Dr. L.J. Rogierstraat 112
2552 LB THE HAGUE
The Netherlands

Dear Bill:

Hamm was a helluva raid. I was on the raid to Hamm, Germany that Glenn R. Matson wrote about in the March 1981 *Journal*. I was the original tail gunner on "Final Approach."

We were alerted that German fighters had infiltrated our formations, and to be especially on the ball, particularly on landing, as we would be most vulnerable then. No one pulled their guns, and I was still sitting in my turret when we landed. Later I heard, on the ground, that it was British Ack Ack that shot down the planes from the 752nd Squadron.

Glenn, you might be interested to know that our Squadron Commander, Maj. John LaRoche is alive, and kicking in AltaMonte Springs, Fla., and is now a retired Col. Spoke to him on the phone, thanks to Rick Rokicki, Group Vice President of the 458th BG, who sent me a roster book. I'm also very happy to know that the "Final Approach" flew more raids than any other plane in the Group, 200 to be exact.

Looking forward to meeting you some day.

"Mike" Eagen (458th)

Dear Evelyn:

Many thanks for the check for \$63; it was a pleasant and unexpected surprise! On the subject of checks, I received, about a week ago, a bank statement covering account activity through mid-October. Even by that time, I had not received the cancelled check for my San Antonio reservation (\$500) nor the much smaller one for blazer patch and decals. Have you cashed them yet? Perhaps the bank debited someone else's account.

Phil Day was elected head of the 467th at the reunion. I would like to get in touch with him on a couple of points, but do not have his address. Would you please send it to me? Thank you in advance.

I, too, enjoyed the reunion! I especially enjoyed the special events at the Lone Star Brewery and Lackland A.F.B. Despite the mixups at the hotel the first day, I found it a charming place. Congratulations!

James G. Coffey
39 Hardscrabble Hill
Chappaqua, N.Y. 10514

Dear Evelyn:

Had the great pleasure of visiting the 2 A.D. Memorial Library in Norwich this past April, while on a visit to the U.K. They are doing an enormous job and it pleased me no end to see what the Division left behind. It was also a real pleasure to see so many students from the University of East Anglia — as well as many local residents — making such full use of this facility.

Glad to report that I've just completed a quarter century with the State University of New York. Another outfit with colors of Blue & Gold!

Alfred V. Sloan, Jr.
(445th BG)

Dear Editor:

On Dec. 24, 1944 our B-24 ran out of fuel and made an emergency landing on a single strip near the front lines in either France or Belgium. There were many other disabled planes landing there also.

We gassed and gave a crew of the 466th bomb group a ride back to our base at Shipdam, England. I would be interested to hear from anyone that was on that crew.

James A. Struthers
6113 Ashcroft Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minn. 55424

Dear William:

First, may I thank you for the flyer describing Freeman's new book "The Mighty Eighth War Diary". I received mine as a Christmas present and would recommend it to anyone. I have spent many hours in the facts and data and don't feel that I have scratched the surface. As a suggestion another book "Diary of an Air War" by Gerrit Zijlstra compliments Freeman's achievement as it adds a brief description of each days mission. I appreciate your bringing Freeman's book to my attention.

I have not received my 81 edition of the 2nd Air Division Journal yet and am assuming the Christmas mail situation is the problem. I value each copy and keep each copy in prime conditions.

Last year I loaned my collection of Journals to a friend who is a history buff. I had a difficult time getting them back and as a suggestion he believed we should bind them in Volumes and offer them as a gift or at cost to historical Libraries — The content of our journal can not be picked up in history books — If I don't receive my Dec. 81 journal — is there a way of getting a duplicate? I would be pleased to pay for your efforts.

Archie MacIntyre

Dear Mac (Vere McCarty):

As a follow-up on my letter a while back, I am enclosing a couple of photos. The one of Hell's Belle has special significance for me. Am I right that the vulture insignia was 704th? (Right - Y.A.M.) I don't remember for sure. Anyhow she brought us in for my last.



Captain Warren Blower, 707th Sqdn.

The Dirty Deed I don't remember much. We only had a photo taken here for some forgotten reason. This crew, less me, Cooper, and Dempsher, was the crew of Captain James Moyer. I flew as pilot with this group for my No. 12 thru No. 30.



Back Row: Paul Halecki, Francis Huber, Christie Mike, Lyle Wood, Frank Kiely, Calvin Cook. Front Row: Warren Blower, Stokely Gray, John Dempsher, Boyd Cooper, Robert Alexander, Chester Caton.

I am looking forward to attending a reunion one of these times. The trip back to Bungay sounds great, but I don't think I'll make it. I did visit the old site in 1972 and again in 1974 with my wife. It was really a test to try remembering locations of buildings no longer there. The foundation pads and brick rubble helped some.

I always look forward to the Newsletter and especially your 446th Bungay contributions.

Warren Bower

Dear Evelyn:

I received this application from Charles Weiss last fall, and am finally sending in my check. I hope the membership dues haven't gone up since I first received the application. Let me know if they have and I'll submit whatever is necessary.

My father, Gerald G. Gray, was a bombardier with the 93rd Bomb Group, 328th Squadron. He was shot down over North Africa in January 1943 and spent the rest of the war in Stalag Luft III. He died on January 30, 1978. We had many opportunities to talk about his experiences and I have become very interested in keeping this type of information preserved for succeeding generations. I'd be honored to become a member of the Second Air Division Association.

David G. Gray

Dear Bill:

Please run the following request in the next 2nd A.D. Journal.

If you flew to any of the following targets, I need your help: Merseburg, Politz, Bohlen, Zwickau, Misburg, Ruhland, Brux, Zeitz, Magdeburg, Leipzig, Lutzkendorf and Hamburg.

I'm writing a book on the 8th A.F. campaign against the German oil industry (May thru October 1944) and would like to include some of your personal experiences. If you have a tale or information to share, please write. This includes the ground personnel, who had to load and repair the aircraft for each mission. Also, if you have any photos of your aircraft or crew during this time period, I would like to make copies of them and will return ASAP. Your help will be most appreciated.

Robert M. Foose (Associate)
1175 Weybridge Rd.
Columbus, Ohio 43220

Dear Bill:

I have enclosed check for \$24.00. Please send a copy of "Mighty Eighth War Diary" by Roger Freeman. I'm a member of the Second Air Division Association. Thanks.

Leask Hermann (93rd BG)
(ed: Copies still available.)

Dear Bill:

Just completed reading your excellent Journal and always enjoy it. Reference: Pete Henry's article "The Last One?". M/G Tyree may be the last old 8th AFer to retire to date, but he wasn't the last one on active duty.

While I don't put in a claim on our (94th BG) M/G Donald L. Evans as being the last 8th AFer on active duty, he is still at it. He was born 12 Nov. 1925, joined the 94th in August of '44 (before he became 19), flew 27 missions, got a Purple Heart and was returned home.

He got commissioned and has spent a good deal of his career in SAC. Just recently he was transferred to the Joint Staff at the Pentagon. He was our guest speaker at our Oct. '81 reunion in Denver. Our 80 year old Prez, Col. F. H. (Pappy) Colby was identified as the oldest there. Pappy then asked who the youngest was. It turned out to be M/G Evans, both sitting at the head table.

Thought this might make an interesting postscript to the Henry article on page 7 of your March issue.

Col. Frank N. Halm, Ret.
(ed: 94th I - 2nd AD Zip.)

Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed is a check for \$10.00, plus stamp money, for membership in the 8th Air Force - Journal. I recently received the Dec. copy from Tom Scott (Nose Gunner). Recognized gunners on crew — page 13.

I was a waist gunner on the Kendzie crew (35 missions) 93 Bomb Group — was in the 329 and 328th squadron. 328th on discharge papers.

Our crew plans to have a reunion in July at Nashville, Tenn. — details not sure at this time. I have not been in contact with the crew since about 1949.

Since the Air Corp days — or July 1945. I went to USC — 1945 to 1949 — graduated Civil Engineers. Been working for Calif. State Department of Water Resources in Los Angeles since Dec. 1949, Supervising Engineer. Married - 8 children - live in Wetchester, near LA.

Thank you in advance for any information, and hope to meet you in Tenn.

Paul E. Hood
8940 Lillienthal Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90045
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THIS IS SWEDEN? (continued from page 1)

man on the sled was thrown off. Needless to say, it was very difficult to recruit people to fly in this position. Slug loved it!

Sad to say, the reign of the bob sled was short lived. There were some problems involving the local constabulary having to do with reckless endangerment, a broken plate glass window, and a few other minor difficulties including disrespect and insults involving a police officer. (This is about the time we discovered that most Swedes speak and understand English very well.)

As we mentioned above, there was no legal booze available. The beer was tasty, but the alcoholic content was nil. However, faint heart never conquered, etc. so in our minds there was the vague hope that perhaps there existed in this beer some small remnants of alcohol which could be gleaned by drinking a case at a time. This theory was tested again and again with each one at the party bringing his own case of foamy brew. It was all very scientific. We can report that it did not generate any mellow feelings; nor did it generate any carousing; nor did it generate any hangovers. It did definitely generate a lot of trips to the bathroom.

As the weather became warmer, we knew it was only a matter of time until we would have to be moving on. The war news was good, and we became increasingly aware that our days in Stalag 000 would not be many more. The skiing was still not bad, but each day more and more of the snow melted, and we went up to the hill less and less. Finally, when April arrived we received the word. We would all be moving down to Vasteras.



At Vasteras there was a Swedish Air Force installation. It was a rather crude accommodation with one paved runway and several grassy ones. The Operations Hut was exactly that — a hut which seemed to be put together in a rather hurried and even haphazard fashion. However, the hotel in town was pleasant, and there was one other redeeming feature about the location.

It was only about 35 miles from Stockholm. This made it easy for week-end excursions to that Scandinavian metropolis. We had discovered that wine was available in many of the restaurants.

The reason for Vasteras was that it was being used as a staging area to get the repairable Libs and Forts into flyable condition. Many of the ships which had survived their landings in Sweden were eventually brought to this field where they were worked on by American and Swedish personnel, and test flown by American pilots. We actually ended up with about two dozen aircraft in slightly better than marginal condition. With a long running start they could even get off the ground. I had a couple of these short test flights. I would rather have been back in the flack over Hamburg.

Our life in Vasteras was different. We had a job to go to during the day now, so playing was mostly restricted to the night time hours. The spring weather was delightful. There were dances in the city park on the week-ends, and there was bicycling in the town and countryside. Then the war ended.

VE DAY in Stockholm! We had a party at a restaurant where we were joined by some Danish refugees, a couple of Norwegians, and assorted other people whom we never got to identify. Champagne! It flowed like water as we drank one toast after another. Why not? It meant that we would be soon going home. The uncertainty of not knowing how long we would have to remain in this rugged country far from home was now obliterated. It was all

over! Let's cut the orders and get going. But wait! It was not to be.

The leading question remains. What is to be done with the detachment of aircraft lined up in not very neat rows at Vasteras? "Well, men, that there bunch of aircraft has to be repatriated. That means, men, that they have to be gotten out of the country. In fact, men, those Libs and

Forts, they have to be gotten back to England, and the only way that can happen is if somebody flies 'em back. Now, we're real sorry about this, but if we get real eager we ought to be able to get the job done before the summer is over." Well, all told it didn't turn out too bad. Our crew made two trips, and by the middle of June it was all done.

We had no uniforms, of course, so we flew the ferry trips in our Swedish made civilian clothes. On the very first trip after we landed at the base in England, our patched up Lib with peeling paint and leaking oil taxied off the runway to the hardstand. The engines were shut down, and after a few moments, out of the open bomb bay doors erupted this handful of "civilians" dressed in an assortment of clothes which by any standards reflected only very poor taste. This sight caused a bit of a flap at operations. However, it all calmed down, and the welcoming crowd dispersed, and now there were photographers shooting our pictures — the crew of the first aircraft to be returned from Sweden.

In 1972 I made plans for my first visit to Europe since the war. Of course, I had to include in my itinerary a visit to Sweden, and with my wife and daughter I arrived in Stockholm on a bright and sunny September day. We had arranged for a rental car to be available for us at Arlanda Airport, and after a night in this pretty city we made our way north.

We arrived in Rattvik late in the afternoon, and checked into a local hotel. The Turisthemet where we had stayed years before was still in operation, but it was closed now until the ski season began. After settling into our rooms, we went into town and up the main street, where I commenced to search for Klingberg's Konditori. It was nowhere to be found, although I was positive that I was standing directly in front of the building where it should have been. I discovered that the premises were now being used as a gift shop, so I made my way inside. The proprietor assured me that the premises had once housed the Konditori. He informed me that the Klingbergs still lived upstairs where they had always lived. I asked him if he would be kind enough to go upstairs and ask Martin Klingberg to please come down to see me. I also asked him not to tell Martin who was there waiting to see him. After a few minutes this kindly gentleman whom I had not seen in 27 years appeared, and from across the room said to me, "Hi, Joe. You got a little fat, didn't you."

Oh yes, before we end this story we should address those of you who would be asking, "What about the girls in Sweden?" I can only say, as I have told my wife many times, we were much too busy skiing, bob sledding, playing cards, etc. to really bother very much with the girls.

Amen.