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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Summer 1988

Meet Our Newest Member of the Board of Governors

by Jordan Uttal

In the summer of 1987, Dr. Ronald D. Clifton assumed the duties of Cultural Attache at the American Embassy in London. He succeeded our old friend Anne Collins. When I was over last November I had the pleasure of meeting with him in London, and attending the Governors meeting with him a few days later in Norwich.

At the time I asked him for a "bio" so that he could be properly introduced to the members of 2ADA, and just recently I received the following splendid letter from him. Not only does he give some details as to his previous diplomatic career, but also, happily, he expresses his views about our Memorial. I think you will agree that what we have helped the Board of Governors achieve with our 2nd Air Division Memorial is indeed an outstanding accomplishment — a fitting tribute to all who perished, and to all of us who served.

So, without further ado, I give you Dr. Ronald Clifton:

I understand that the 2nd ADA is meeting soon and that among other things you and your colleagues will discuss the future of the Memorial Library. As you know from our first meeting, I am very impressed with the Memorial. It is a tremendous monument to the veterans of the 2nd Air Division. Daily, as visitors and local citizens pass through the City Library, it pays tribute to all who served in Norfolk, but in a special way, as a living memorial to those who gave their lives during World War Two.

During my service in Tunisia and Belgium, I frequently paid personal and

official visits to ABMC cemeteries which serve as the final resting place for thousands of Americans. As fitting, moving and vast as they are, they do not offer the tangible dimension, the real touch, the reminder that the books and displays of your library do. Last week I saw quite a few British people sitting in the Memorial Section going through books and documents of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library collection. They were enjoying



what they were doing in memory of those who served on their soil, as a result of those who cared enough to make the memorial a reality.

For twenty years now I have worked abroad with American libraries as a part of our public diplomacy. None have served the United States better than the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich. I commend you and your colleagues for the wonderful, appropriate tribute you have paid to

your colleagues and the people of Norfolk by establishing and maintaining the Memorial.

As Chairman of the U.S.-U.K. Fulbright Commission, I am pleased that our Commission has been able to contribute to your noble venture by making the American librarian available. The presence of a U.S. Fulbright librarian for the past two years has led to much greater awareness in the community of the Memorial, has led to more use of the materials and has therefore further honored all those whom the Memorial represents.

We have demonstrated our support by funding the librarian for two years to show the way. I sincerely hope that the 2nd Air Division Association will be able to sustain the presence of an American librarian, even if only part time. It makes a great deal of difference to have an American touch at the Memorial.

Let me close by making another observation. The Board of Governors of the Memorial strike me as exceptionally dedicated and competent people, interested in perpetuating the memory of and links with the veterans of the 2nd Air Division. It is clear they serve because they care. Their concern is evidence of an obvious appreciation of the positive contribution that the men of the United States Air Force made to the winning of the war and the preservation of our mutual freedoms.

I am pleased to be associated with the Memorial Trust and assure you and the members of the 2nd Air Division Association of the continued support of the Cultural Services of your Embassy in London for your venture.

Dr. Ronald D. Clifton
Cultural Attache

Second Air Division Association Eighth Air Force

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President's Message

by Carl I. Alexanderson



This will be my last message to you as President of the 2nd ADA. A wise man once said, "Tempus sure does Fugit." In a sense, this is very true. Then again, I can harken back to the days of my early childhood — the long languid days of summer that seemed to be almost endless. I would conclude from this that it is all in your own outlook and perspective.

This being the case, I can only look back on this past year as one that has given me a great deal of satisfaction, pride, fulfillment and honor. At times it has been hectic and somewhat difficult. Decisions were not always easy to come by, but somehow always made. It has been a learning process second to none, and I thank you, the members, for giving me the privilege of having partaken of it. I was not always in agreement with the Executive Committee, and they were not always in agreement with me. I'm sure some of you may have considered me out of step at times. However, out of this seeming disorder there arose this inspiring institution we know as Democracy. It still works!

We have recently returned from a very busy and productive EXCOMM session in Pittsburgh. We will soon embark on what I suspect will be an even more busy and if possible, more productive convocation in Colorado Springs. So you see, our work is never done. My part this past year merely maintained the continuity of these forty some odd years.

As Andy Low said, "Pick up the baton and press on from here." My successor shall indeed do just that, as shall his, fourteen months hence. And so it goes.

In this past year I have had a multitude of correspondence from you. I will readily admit that I have not responded to all. For this I apologize. For those of you who are not yet retired, let me assure you that it is not as leisurely as you may have been led to believe. I will, however, in the coming year (when I have more leisure) try to make it all up.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Colorado Springs this month. Till then, "May the wind be always at your back."

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by Rick Rokicki

Have just returned from the Executive Committee meeting held in Pittsburgh, where I served on the Audit Committee "checking the Ass'n books" kept by Dean Moyer. Want you to know that Dean is doing a great job with the accounts and all Ass'n members owe him a big Thank You. Dean has held EVERY elected office in the Second Air Division Ass'n from President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer to Committee appointments, since the founding of the Ass'n, the ONLY one so honored.



752nd Bomb Sqdn., Code
7V



755th Bomb Sqdn., Sqdn.
Identity J3



754th Bomb Sqdn., Sqdn.
Identity Z5



753rd Bomb Sqdn., Sqdn.
Code J4

SQUADRON INSIGNIA: As promised, I have included the photos of the 4 bomb squadrons of the 458th. 752nd, Golden Eagle, Sqdn Code 7V. 753rd, Thor's Hammer, Sqdn Code J4. 754th, B-24 through White Question Mark, Z5 and the 755th, B-24 in Caricature with Bomb, J3. One thing I could not do was to photograph all 4 insignias at one time. I will try to get them back for that purpose and make such a photo available to our members. All photos were made from actual leather or embroidered cloth, WWII issue/purchase. Needless to say, I have had requests for actual "patches," and there seems to be a demand for them, but it will have to be worked out in the near future. Also had requests for the official 458th BG insignia, but no such insignia exists or was ever approved. Several Groups have had insignia made representing their Group, but not all have an "official" status.

458th BOMB GROUP HISTORY: Frankly, the response to this question which I had devoted nearly half the space in last Journal, was not overwhelming. Actually, only one phone call and 5 letters to date. There must be more of a conviction than this, although those who have responded feel very positive about this possible 3rd publication. There are two possible reasons for the delay in response. One, the Journal has not been delivered, as yet, to some states. New York delivery was not there until three weeks passed before the first zip codes found their "targets." Also possible, that this issue was too close to the December or "Spring" issue which was held up waiting for necessary information regarding the Colorado Springs reunion. Secondly, it is entirely possible that the column was misunderstood, since I received a "donation on request" from one of our members who thought we were soliciting money to pay for this printing. Please read the column on page 17 of the Spring '88 Journal. You will note that all such money collected will be returned to the "lenders" once the book sales start. There is little doubt that the third printing will once again "sell out" just as the last two publications did. I've advised George Reynolds that my "loan" should be the last one to be paid, and only when all debts are satisfied. Personally, I cannot conceive that anyone will lose a red cent. So, if you're interested in this printing, don't wait for someone else to do it, be a participant. If you are a new member and interested, but have not seen the Spring 1988 issue of the Journal, please drop me a note and I will furnish you with a copy of a Xerox of the page. Once again, write or call me, Rick Rokicki, 365 Mae Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21061 or telephone 301-766-1034. This may very well be the last opportunity for those who haven't seen a previous 458th History. Those of you who plan to attend the Colorado Springs reunion will have a choice in this matter by vote. Just one parting word: When the 467th went to publish their History, they still needed \$3,000 to get it going. Three members offered a thousand each and publication followed. Bill Carrico was one of these three. He and I attended Embry-Riddle School of Aviation together. Bill advised me he received all his money back over a very short period of time. I was saddened to hear of his passing a few months ago.

TAILWINDS: This is an attempt to inform our members as to what has been going on that might be interesting to others. First, after our return from Pittsburgh, I had 9 more applicants for membership. All were sent to Evelyn Cohen for their registration and membership cards, plus the last issue of the Journal published. That, it should be noted, raised our 458th membership to 602. I've been busy updating the Roster copies that you've been requesting. A short note here, I must increase the cost of a 458th print-out to \$3.50 because of the extra sheets that must be copied, plus the increased postage. However, it's still one of the best buys if you want an update on who's with us. I ask that you do not submit these names to any mailing list for any purpose whatsoever. I write this knowing that there are many such requests to me which I refuse to reply to.

Recently received a letter from Durward "Duke" Trivette who advised me he now works as a volunteer for the Wright-Patterson Museum. Duke has stated that all 458th members can be assured that our Memorial will receive TLC (tender loving care). Also, I

wish to tell you that several months ago, I requested he write to the DAV, VFW, American Legion, etc. and issue a small notice of our 458th reunion in Colorado Springs. As a result I received inquiries from 13 former 458th people, of which the following became members: George Ramerman, Ed Marston, Don Ranwy, Ken Severi, Fred Goldfaden, George Costage and James Parish. In addition, LeRoy Engdahl, 448th BG VP and Paul Homan, also 448th, gave me the names of Charles Bosshardt and Howard Warrell, both of whom became new members. Our Bob Renn and Homer Knisley found two more whose names were given me and Russ Colvard and Ben Pientka also became new members. Bosshardt and Warrell also had some names that I sent information to, and Jim Scott, Ernest DeVries and Gerry Miller joined. John Mason sent me Dick Robertson's name and he, in turn, advised me of Charles Hollis...both are new members. Ned Humphrey, who organized "The Bombardiers, Inc." organization sent me Ed Eichorn's name and he responded to my letter advising of the 2ADA and our Group. I'm sure I've left off someone's name, but I'm getting used to that. When I advised the membership (in this column) that I had a listing of all who attended the Memorial Dedication, I inadvertently left off two members. To those of you who requested this listing, please add Len Armstrong and Jackson Granholm to your list. Somehow, while alphabetizing this list, I dropped their names. By the way, I received a Xerox copy of an article Granholm wrote for "WWII Magazine" which I felt was an excellent bit of work. Joe Fisher and Jake Krause have been working on a 755th Squadron Armament Reunion in September or October of this year and have written to advise those members of their intention. All ex-armoreders are requested to write either one regarding these plans. "Bud" Walker wrote saying he hadn't received his Spring copy of the Journal. My reply was that he let his membership drop when he moved and didn't give his forwarding address to Evelyn Cohen. Bud reinstated and is back with us again. While on that subject, I sent several bits of communication to the 23 "dropped for non-payment of dues," and am happy to report that 16 are back with us. While 5 asked to be dropped, I did hear from Mrs. LaRoche that Col. John LaRoche had passed away. Sent regrets from all of the 458th members.

From Tony North who is attempting to complete information for his well-kept file of 458th photos, the following request: Need full serial number (or at least last 3 digits), individual aircraft "call letter," squadron, crash site, etc. of each of the following aircraft: Admirable Little Character, Big Dick-Hard to Hit, Downwind Leg, Dixie-Bell II, Envy of 'em All, Here I Go Again, Jolly Roger, Lilly Marlene, Miss Carriage, Ole Satan, Sky Room, Spitten Kitten, Ten Gun Dottie, The Travelin' Bag, Wabbit Twacks, Wolf Gang, Wurf'less and You Can't Take It With You. Anyone who can help, please write Tony North, 62 Turner Rd., Norwich, NR2 4HB, England. Tony has been working as Memorial Library assistant part-time. It is my understanding that his work is very valued and he will spend even more time working there in the near future.

Southern California Members Score Again

by J. Fred Thomas (392nd)



2ADA Dinner Guest, Seth Wolcott, and Charles Walker (445th BG)

Two hundred twenty-five members and guests of the Second Air Division Association gathered at the El Toro Marine Air Station Officers Club on the evening of March 19 for the seventh annual reunion dinner for members in the general area. As usual, members came from not only the Southern California area, but many came from other States and more distant areas of the USA. As Bill Davenport reported in 1986, these are the largest gatherings of 2ADA members other than the Association's annual conventions. We are more than proud of that fact. Under the direction of dinner chairman Charles L. Walker (445th BG), another occasion of great camaraderie was enjoyed by members of every Group of the Second Air Division.

As has been the case the past two years, the Marines provided their full cooperation. Introduced by Chairman Walker, Lt. Commander Coapland represented the El Toro Commander. Commander Coapland welcomed all aboard and gave the invocation, followed by the ever impressive color guard ceremony and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Thereafter, the members enjoyed another fine dinner prepared and served by the Officers Club personnel.

The dinner committee was pleased to have the cooperation and presence of a number of the ruling body of the Association. Present were Executive Vice President and Mrs. C.N. "Bud" Chamberlain, 446th BG Vice President Wm. F. and Mrs. Davenport, and Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Lindsay. Amber is Membership Chairwoman of the Association auxiliary, The Heritage League of the Second Air Division. Regrets were sent by Gen. and Mrs. James Stewart.

It had been planned that the program not include a speaker in order that the members have more time to visit and swap war stories. However, Julian Ertz (44th BG) brought to the attention of the program committee an occurrence that Mrs. Ertz had recently experienced. Seems Mrs. Ertz had the family auto at a shopping mall. The

auto displays a bumper sticker proclaiming "I am a survivor of the B-24 Liberator." Mrs. Ertz found a lady admiring the sticker and that led to a friendly conversation. The lady, Mrs. Wolcott, was attracted by the sticker since her son had recently composed an essay for his English/History assignment in school. His essay was entitled "The Flying Boxcar - The B-24 Liberator." He had dedicated his paper to his grandfather, Earl S. Wolcott, who had flown the B-24 in the Pacific theater in WWII.

Upon learning of the occurrence, the program committee thought it fitting that Julian and Paula Ertz invite the student, Seth Wolcott, and his father to our reunion in order that Seth could present the highlights of his essay. After all, it isn't every day that we find a 13-year-old fan of our old B-24. Seth's paper is much too long to reproduce here, but we were impressed by its composition. He traced the history of the B-24 from the drawing board to the end of the war. Not only did he provide a lot of information, but each page had footnotes which cited the source of his statements. You just know he was given a big round of applause when he ended his presentation with "The purpose of my report is to show everyone that the B-24 was just as great a plane as the B-17. In my opinion the B-24 was a better airplane."

Further entertainment was provided by an accordionist, Guy Massano, a transplanted New Yorker who had in yesteryears appeared on the Major Bowes Amateur Hour, the Arthur Godfrey Show, and other radio programs and nightclubs of the era. Mr. Massano presented a short period of patter and medleys reminiscent of radio days and WWII. That was followed by requests from the audience and concluded by the audience joining in a loud rendition of The Air Force Song and God Bless America.

Another enjoyable 2ADA reunion is history. However, no report would be complete without credits to all who cooperated to make the event a success. First, we thank

and applaud our members, both new and old, who always do all possible to make our reunions successful. They are too numerous to mention individually, but it would be a sad day if we ever failed to have the likes of Col. Al Shower (CO 467th BG); George Dong (467th BG), assistant crew chief of the famous "Witchcraft;" Fred Breuninger (466th BG), who helps us decorate the club with his many portraits and prints of B-24s; and Jack Stevens (467th BG), who contacts and recontacts all members down San Diego way. And so on down the list. Also, since we have always worked and hoped for more participation from our 2ADA 65th Fighter Wing, we were more than happy to have a table of those from the Fighter Groups. Those were George and Phyllis Epperson (65th FW), Donald and Kathleen Henley (56th FG), Alfred and Iris Waggoner (355th FG), and Warren and Margo Johnson (4th FG).

Everyone knows that a lot has to be done to direct and produce a reunion program, but as we explained at the dinner, we owe a special vote of thanks to our program committee and their helpers.

Dinner Chairman Charles Walker not only headed the effort, but he did a yeoman's job otherwise. He designed and had the mailer printed, furnished and hung the Group tail fin designs, printed the name tags, and made up the table assignment cards for the various Groups, etc. Harry Orthman (492nd/44th BGs) was principal liaison man with the Marines, typed up the mailer, wrote many letters and made many calls. Dick and Val Boucher (445th BG) handled the reservations and the checkbooks...probably the busiest job of all. Charles McBride (448th BG) was busy with door prizes, meetings, and general all-around aide and advisor. This writer (392nd BG) was around someplace, mostly providing liaison with the parent organization and acting as critic. Then, there were the wives who not only had to live with the planning, but Val Boucher, Sally Orthman and Agnes McBride took care of the indispensable job of checking in the attendees as they arrived. A job well done.

Further, we are deeply appreciative of the cooperation and support of those of other veterans organizations similar to ours with whom we reciprocate. Dick Butler (44th BG), who is deeply involved with The March Field Museum Foundation. George Epperson (65th FW Rep.), head of the So. Cal. Chapter of the 8th AFHS. Representatives of the Liberator Club, and so on.

While the committee is pleased with the reception and success of this year's reunion, any and all suggestions for our 1989 dinner reunion will be welcomed. Also, participation by any who wish to serve on the planning committee will be greeted warmly.

The next event planned by the So. Cal. 2ADA members is the annual 2ADA golf tourney at the Los Alamitos Navy Golf Course on Friday, August 12. All those wishing to enter the tournament and/or joining the group after golf for the dinner and festivities are urged to contact Harry Orthman, 714-581-0755.

B-24 Restoration

by Art Cullen (44th)

When the 50th anniversary of the first flight of the B-24 is celebrated in May of 1989 at Fort Worth, Texas, No. 44-852 is expected to be there in all her glory.

This as-new restoration is roughly 50% completed with final assembly of components to begin this summer in Kissimmee, Florida. It has been a tedious and expensive project; however, the results are beginning to show.



Cleaned and restored

The tail components, horizontal stabilizer and vertical fins are completed with all interiors etched and painted. These surfaces have had 80% of the outer skins replaced, all work requiring more than 3,000 man-hours. Rudders, ailerons and elevators, all fabric-covered, have had the frames repaired, reconditioned and recovered by Nate Mayo of Bolton, MA who has been rebuilding antique aircraft in this area for many years. The outer wing panels have been reskinned with interiors painted and are now ready for assembly. The wing center section, which carries most of the weight of the aircraft both on the ground and flying, has undergone extensive structural rebuild and is ready for installation in the fuselage. While in Florida this winter, I was given a quick tour of the project being undertaken by the Reilly Aviation firm, specialists in WWII warbird restorations, and can attest to the factory-new condition of these 44-year-old components.

The fuselage, still in the hangar at Stow, MA, is essentially a shell at this point. Everything has been removed for renewal or replacement, including all wiring, control cables, hydraulic lines, etc. The flight deck is empty; only the floor remains. The exterior skin has been honed down to the original reflective, natural metal finish. A specialist in aircraft handling will load the structure on a flatbed trailer in late June or early July for the long haul to Florida, where final assembly will take place.

While viewing this phase of the work in Massachusetts recently, I was shown many of the restored sub-assemblies. These all appear as newly manufactured. The nose wheel assembly is a masterpiece, completely rebuilt, painted and ready to be installed. Workers said that prior to being rebuilt, the oleo strut was in perfect working order; however, all seals and gaskets have since been replaced.



Bomb bay to tail

The turrets (3) are completed except for the plexiglass, which is currently being molded. Guns are installed.

Bob Collings, the force behind this historic effort, has recently returned from England in a search for parts and equipment. He stated that the British are enthusiastic about the project and offered their cooperation. It seems that the British, those who remember and the young who have studied WWII, have a great respect and affection for the Liberator and appear to realize the important role it played in the outcome of WWII in Europe. No. 44-852 was at one time attached to RAF Coastal Command.

The four Pratt Whitney 1830 engines are in Sebring, Florida undergoing 0-time rebuild.



Outer wing panel

Because of the approaching anniversary in 1989 and attendant publicity to the restoration, public donations are increasing and many private contributions have been received. Mr. Collings pointed out that if everyone ever involved with the B-24 would make some contribution either in parts, equipment or funds, the trust would soon realize the \$600,000 needed for the entire project. All contributions are deposited into a trust, and the aircraft is owned by this trust. No one receives any profit from the restoration except the professional contractors who are hired to do the work that volunteers are not capable or equipped to accomplish. Incidentally, most of the clean-up and paint stripping has been done by Second AD members who have donated their time and efforts.

The final paint scheme will be the natural metal with the national insignia. No group or squadron markings have as yet been selected. Hopefully one from the Second Air Division. It would be most appropriate to have a reborn B-24 attending, where local airports permit, the locale where Second AD and other related organizations have their reunions. This will be the only completely restored and flying B-24 in the world.

Interested and concerned members of the Second Air Division Association may send their contributions to: The Collings Foundation (Trust), River Hill Farm, Stow, Massachusetts 01775.



Nose turret

Bunchered Buddies of Old Buck

by Milton R. Stokes (453rd)

It is spring again. A very nice time of the year. It won't be spring when you get this, but we all need some introduction, a new beginning. Our woods are showing soft light green as the leaves on the trees make a hesitant appearance, as if to say, "Can we come out?" Dog tooth violets spring up on the trail down to the stream. Walking upon them doesn't seem to discourage their appearance each year. Their yellow blooms add new life to the dead forest duff. Dutchmans' Britches, May Apples, even skunk cabbage push forward new growth. The confusing spring warbles, wrens, sparrows and lesser members of this choir push leaves aside looking for food. One is reminded that is a hungry time for wildlife, too. It is an orderly life, though. The growth is regulated, controlled by forces much beyond our understanding. You and I must try to appreciate it all to the best of our ability.

Do you remember Robert B. Bieck? Many of us do. He was the ambitious one who flew two planes as they dragged targets through the skies for gunners on B-24s to shoot. He says he hated that job. Bieck answered my request for information on a Major Trevor as follows:

"I noted your remarks in our latest spring edition of the 2nd Air Division Journal. You had a question about a Major Trevor. As I recall, a Captain Trevor arrived at Old Buck in late summer, 1944. He did not have a crew, and he was assigned to the 733rd Squadron. He was a former instructor pilot in the air training command. Bob Coggeshall...took to Trevor. Captain Trevor filled in as needed as an aircraft commander. I might add that as a captain he was much, much senior to any of us. Nevertheless, he was humble, if I may use that term. He had yet to be blooded. Trevor was a good guy."

Dear Bob, we look forward to seeing you in Colorado Springs. Many more of our people will be on hand. Maybe Bob Coggeshall will show up, too!

Carl DiMedio wrote a card giving the itinerary of Major Trevor's sister, Claire, for the next couple of months. She was to be in Washington, D.C. this spring. What this leads to is the need to find the address of Major Trevor and get him to join up. Finding some Old Buddies is even more involved than this!

Thanks to Ralph McClure, we have finally located Marvin C. Aaker in Crookston, Minnesota after forty-three years! McClure wrote to a E.C. Vangsness in Fargo, North Dakota, and asked for help. Vangsness located Marvin Aaker's brother in Grandforks, North Dakota, who gave him Marvin's address. Vangsness sent me a copy of McClure's letter with all his notes thereon. It is really something to see. I added my notes to the same letter; and finally, we found Marvin Aaker! He was sent an application to join. During a long telephone conversation, Marvin Aakers gave me the following: John Butler lives in Mobile, Alabama; John Anthony lives in Monroe, Louisiana; and Robert Perkins in Cleveland, Ohio. We must keep on trying; maybe you could help? I bore some of you with this information because I wish to encourage the faint of heart to keep digging to get these new members. It really takes a lot of work. If you live in any of these cities, please use your phones and call any you can find in your area.

Lester C. Hardwick writes that he is in contact with our friends at Old Buckenham. He married a girl from England and makes many trips back. He writes as follows:

"The 453rd Memorial wing on the Old Buckenham town hall is in constant use by the villagers, and is a reminder of the friendships established in World War II. Mrs. Dennis Burton, who resides at the Mill Farm with her husband and son, recently wrote, 'The Memorial Hall is being used by the village every day. I've just come from a meeting there, as we run a Luncheon Club for the elderly and lonely on Wednesdays. It's so rewarding to see how they enjoy the company and have a good meal cooked for them.' In previous letters Mrs. Burton has told of cricket club meetings and other events at the room dedicated to the more than 366 men who lost their lives in combat."

"The Book Shelf" section of the Spring 1988 Journal mentions a good book called *Home by Christmas*, by Martin Bowman. I read it and recommend it to you. Now, I realize how fortunate some of us were to survive without being shot down and becoming a P.O.W. You can buy the book from Bill Robertie.

In the last Journal, you must have read the articles by a number of 453rd Bunchered Buddies: Bob Mallick, Mike Benarcik, Hubert Cripe, Abe Wilen and Odo Oliva. All of these men write well. I'm

so glad to see them get their papers included in the Journal. There is also a long "Battle Diary," by Joe Thuring, that is excellent. Joe sent the "Diary" to me some time ago and I must talk to our editor about its inclusion in the Journal. This "Diary" is extremely well written. The descriptions are vivid, crisp and factual. It really holds your attention. It is so well written that at first I thought that it must be a story written by a pro. But no, this was written by a young gunner/engineer; no professional. In fact, he had so much talent that after the war, he became a judge.

All of you must have been as impressed as I was with the poem "A Red Haired Boy From Idaho," by Roger Freeman. He really has talent! He must have done much more than keep a lot of cold statistics on airplane crashes and battles. We see a side never revealed to us before by Freeman and we love you for it, Roger.

There is much that should be said about how we live, how we govern our lives and our organizations; in thinking of our coming reorganization of the 453rd at our meeting in Colorado Springs, may we all consider some ancient rules for success: 1) Are our actions and principles of the truth? 2) Is it fair to all concerned? 3) Will it build good will and better friendships? 4) Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

These ideas are taken from the four way test of Rotarianism. If we as 2nd Air Division Association members practice these guidelines in our lives, we would better serve our God, our country and ourselves.

You have served your country. A lot of our Buddies gave their lives in that service; let us not forget their sacrifice. But we must continue to serve as long as we have breath. As the poet said, "...life is real and life is earnest and the grave is not its goal..." So live your life more fully. Come to our conventions; offer your continued service and support.

I must close now. My space has been utilized, so before all this becomes trite and meaningless, I thank you sincerely for letting me serve a good bunch of guys and gals in these pages. I'm not sure if you want me back next year and I'm not making a campaign for any job. Just accept my heartfelt thanks for letting me serve you.

Humor

Submitted by Jim E. Rutherford
93rd BG

Some folks are not very bright —

I know one guy who lost twenty dollars on a televised football game and another twenty dollars on the replay;

When he got his varsity letter in football, he had to have his girlfriend read it to him;

A fortune teller offered to read his mind for half price;

He thought Einstein was one beer;

And then —

Life is snap, crackle and pop. When you're young, it's cereal. When you're old, it's your joints.

It's tough to be at the age when you have to find your hearing aid so you can ask where your glasses are;

A scientist just crossed a porcupine with a sheep and now has an animal that knits its own sweaters.

About the Memorial

by Jordan Uttal

As I write this in mid-April for the summer issue I have just concluded a lengthy telephone meeting with the Chairman, Tom Eaton. So, I am about as up to date as I can be, and share with you the latest word about the state of the Memorial.

VIDEO TAPE COLLECTION: The equipment necessary for viewing American cycle videotapes has been purchased by the Trust, and is in place and available at the Library. At present our collection contains only "The Chicago Tapes," fourteen hours of interviews with 2ADA members taken at the St. Charles Convention in July 1986. In addition we have one tape donated by a member about the San Diego area, and as noted before, tapes from members about their areas will be very welcome. It would be well, however, to check with the librarian (or ask me to do it) before sending anything so that we can avoid duplication).

I am already advised that more tapes will be presented in Colorado Springs by the Dzenowagis family, including one on the 40th Convention last May in Norwich. It is hoped that this collection will grow and get to be of great value to visitors to the Memorial Room as reminders of personnel of the 2nd AD as well as all areas of our country.

BRANCH LIBRARY COLLECTION: While it is regrettable that it takes so much time to get these projects started, I can tell you that a formal recommendation has been prepared by the librarian for presentation to and approval of the Norfolk County Council Libraries Committee on 27 May. It is hoped that before the year is out there will be 2AD collections in five branch

libraries, one each in every Combat Wing area, as further reminders of our presence and our efforts.

MEMORIAL ROOM ALTERATIONS: Have been approved by all concerned. According to Tom Eaton, the project should be completed by the time I attend the Annual Governors meeting at the end of May. He expressed satisfaction with the final plans, and apologized for the delay caused by contractors who promised completion dates that they ignored. (Ever have to wait in for a service man to come repair something?)

MEMORIAL ROOM STAFFING: In the light of Bertha Chandler's departure from Norwich at the end of September 1988, this was gone into at great length at the 23 March 1988 meeting of the Governors. Conversations will have taken place by the end of the week of 18 April with a thoroughly qualified American Librarian living in Norwich, and with Tony North about the arrangements to be made for the coming year.

Bertha is coming over for a librarian's convention in June and will be attending our convention in Colorado Springs. I would urge those attending who have questions to ask her about the Memorial and the need for an American Librarian to feel free to do so. Bertha has prepared for the Executive Committee of 2ADA a comprehensive report on her views about the importance of an American Librarian, and elsewhere in this issue you will see the views of our newest Governor whose experience and background qualifies him as an expert. I am convinced that we cannot expect the

same amount and quality of service from County employees as we had from the start of our Memorial. This is due largely to economic conditions there. Just as here, when budgets are rolled back, one of the first services to suffer is the library system.

There have been too few expressions of opinion from the members on the subject, but it will be discussed thoroughly in Colorado Springs.

ROLLS OF HONOR: The original Master Roll of Honor contained approximately 6,032 names of 2nd AD personnel lost to enemy action. This figure has been increased to 6,394, thanks to diligent efforts by Group VPs and others.

It should be understood, however, that the additional names have not been inserted in alphabetical order. To have done so would have destroyed the appearance of the book. Rather they have been inscribed on additional pages at the end of the Master Roll of Honor, as we have found out about them and had them authenticated.

The same is true of the Individual Group Rolls of Honor, each of which is in its own niche in the Memorial Room. Names are added once a year. When I go over in May I will, in all probability, have more names that have been authenticated. These will appear on more additional pages.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Colorado Springs. In the meantime, as always, I send my most cordial greetings to all of you along with repeated thanks for your support of the memorial.

Threshold of Disaster

by Bud Chamberlain

Do you know who wrote, "Les sanglots longs des violons de l'automne?" Of course. Everyone knows this to be a Paul Verlaine line about autumn. Translated, it says, "The long sobs of the violins of autumn." There is another line, too. It reads, "Blessent mon cuer d'une languer monotone" or "Wound my heart with a monotonous languor." But, what does that have to do with disaster — especially in June?

Consider this. Forty-four years after the turn of the twentieth century and forty-four years ago on June 6th, the free world was at a major turning point in WWII. It turned out to be a threshold of victory in Europe. But, it could have been a threshold to disaster. Here's why. The BBC regularly broadcasted coded instructions to the French underground. On the 1st, 2nd, 15th or 16th of the month, Verlaine's first line above about "autumn" was to be transmitted. It was a directive to listen for the se-

cond half of the signal. Verlaine's "heart" line would indicate invasion within 48 hours. Thanks to a French double agent, the Germans were already forewarned about this invasion starting signal. At 9:15 p.m. on June 5, 1944, German intelligence officers intercepted the confirming signal four times. They dutifully notified their superiors, but to no avail. Rommel ignored it. He preferred to believe that the bad weather over the channel would prohibit an invasion and took a quick trip to Germany. Gield Marshall von Runstedt was no less skeptical. He felt that Eisenhower was too great a tactician to implement such a decision under the circumstances. Then, the German situation turned more bizarre. Rommel and von Ronstedt became involved in a jurisdictional dispute over control of six armored divisions held in reserve for the Normandy sector. The argument went all the way to Hitler. Hitler gave three of the divisions to Rommel. The other three were

to be employed only by Der Führer's personal command. The orders never came and Rommel lost the use of troops which may have repulsed the invasion.

Besides the above story, the weather and the daunting physical obstacles to taking the beach, there were other opportunities for invasion failure, too. But, for one reason or another, "net luck" was a positive in the allies' column. Success elements in a military operation include resources, preparedness, will to prevail and luck. We can do something about the first three, but luck is unpredictable and fickle. So, to reduce its impact, we must do the best we can to maximize the other three. We did so in spades in 1944. Had we not, and had it not been for the breaks, D-Day may still have been a threshold of disaster for the Allies instead of the enemy. Let's hope we are always so lucky.



491st BOMB GROUP

THE LAST AND THE BEST

the RINGMASTER REPORTS

by Patrick J. Perry

The Halls of the Unheralded Part II

A wartime air base in England can be compared very closely with small country towns in many developed countries. These stations were self-contained communities that had all the major skills, capabilities and personnel to conduct the normal functions and activities that were required to complete their assigned missions.

The analogy is close and interesting in a brief walk through as follows:

The command and control of Bomb Group, Combat Wing, Air Division and Air Force HG compares with the Town Council, Township Trustees, County and State officials.

The station's complement supplied all necessary craft people and housekeeping such as mess halls (restaurants), recreation (movie clubs), PX (stores, barber shops, etc.) and motor pool (bus & taxi).

The Military Police and Fire Fighting Platoon are self explanatory. The Finance Section was our bank and the medical dispensary supplied our medical and dental needs.

The Quartermaster Comp. was the main department store and served us well.

We had our own specialty groups to take care of peculiar needs such as the 479 Sub Depot, 1450 Ordnance S&M Comp. and 882 Chemical Company for the needs of war.

We had our own chaplains, schools, military and other (remember the "North Pickenham College of Practical Knowledge") dance bands and assorted other activities to use our discretionary time such as sports, games of chance and learning the customs of friendly natives.

We enhanced our level of general knowledge and education by visiting points of historic, architectural and carnal interest in surrounding burroughs, cities and London.

The combat crews were very dependent on the hard work, energy and extra effort of all of these dedicated but unsung men who made it possible for them to continue to carry the war to the heartland of Germany and thereby make a major first rank contribution to ending hostilities and the resumption of a peaceful and bountiful life that we all enjoy.

A standing ovation is the least we can do for all those legions of men and women who are large in number but have received belated recognition — "They too served who worked and waited."

The 8th Air Force Historical Society held their annual reunion in Pittsburg and the weather was grand, crowds were large, featured speakers were interesting and informative and the 2nd Air Division was well represented.

The 491st had 20 members in attendance, led by Carl and Louise Alexanderson. I have mislaid the list of our people — mea culpa! John Leppert sent me a packet of data on our Group operational history and statistics which I will bring to Colorado Springs — thanks John!

Lt. Gen. James McCarthy, the featured speaker at the reunion, was very much at home in that he is the current commandant of the 8th Air Force. He gave a fine tribute to us "Old Hands" who first formed the "Mighty Eighth" and carved its sterling military reputation and unequalled heritage.

The general then gave a short but imposing description of the awesome destructive power and rapid response available on a global scale.

Another gentleman, with instant name recognition and acclaim for his talent, gave us a delightful illustrated tour through his youth, early, middle and mature years.

This man called the "Rembrandt of the Comics," the father of "Terry and the Pirates," "Male Call" with Miss Lace and "Steve Canyon" was given a standing ovation. Sadly I learned that this April, Milton Caniff died. However, he carried with him the appreciation and gratitude of millions of loyal fans.

The 2ADA had a hospitality room of good size which was the focal point of repeated viewings of a VCR tape that had been woven into a fine tribute to our veterans by the CBS affiliated station in Atlanta, Georgia. It has been screened on area TV as a short segment every day for one week. It was titled "The Last Mission" and ran about 30 minutes. All who saw this were very positively impressed, and even though it was centered around last May's reunion in England, we had many B-17 types who really enjoyed it and gave generous comments!

A note of recognition and thanks goes to Hap Chandler for his efforts and salesmanship which ultimately resulted in the station sending a two man crew to England to film 8 to 10 hours of our reunion activities, which formed the basis for this special program.

I understand that "The Last Mission" has been nominated as a candidate for recognition in one of the many categories in the "Emmy Awards." If you have not already done so, I would strongly recommend that you contact Pete Henry and obtain an expanded version of this tape that covers in some fine detail our reunion and the various events. Very good, 80 minutes long and a collector's item! I will show my copy at our reunion in Colorado Springs.

A final aspect of our Pittsburg reunion was that, due to space limitations, a general all-members banquet was not held and there were many smaller rooms where one or several Bomb Groups shared the area.

Our 491st was privileged to have three guests break bread with us in a very open and friendly manner, including Mr. and

Mrs. Roger Freeman, the aviation historian and author of the universally acclaimed trilogy of "The Mighty Eighth," "The Mighty Eighth War Diary," and "The Mighty Eighth War Manual. The third guest was Allan Blue, who is also an aviation historian and has authored two very interesting books, "Ringmasters" (491st) and "The Fortunes of War" (492nd). Allan Blue's brother was a navigator and was KIA on Ringmasters' first mission. Allan has agreed to work with us on a project about the Misburg Raid which I will describe to you in later issues.

We warmly and openly endorse these gentlemen, who with their talent and dedication have and continue to chronicle that portion of recent history that we were privileged to participate in. As spokesman for our Bomb Group I have pledged to assist them in future efforts wherever possible.

Lastly, there are two items of significance to the 491st. In February, the first issue of our Group's newsletter was sent to all veterans for whom we have a current address. We have long felt the need to have a communique that would allow our members to describe personal experiences, questions, and a channel to seek old friends and flight mates. The "Ringmaster Log" is a supplement to the 2nd Air Division Association Journal and in no way meant to compete with this fine publication. It is an accepted fact that sufficient information and material is available to Bill Robertie, on a continuing basis, that if not diligently edited, would result in Journals containing close to 100 pages. We are all aware that this is not possible with the staff or budget available. That which is the staff of life to some people is non-meaningful chaff to others.

We look upon our newborn newsletter as a potential "Group Peculiar" benefit to all Ringmasters. However, like all infants, it needs care, attention, assistance and the mother's milk (monetary donations) to sustain it in its formative period. As of this date, we have had less than 7% response to my initial request for seed money — keep those cards and cash coming and send it to Hap Chandler.

Another big first will be on June 22, 1988 in Colorado Springs when we will have our Ringmasters Reunion and we are expecting a large turnout based on initial responses. Each of you should have received information concerning all of the details in the mail by now. We will have the use of a private club (The Retired Enlisted Association) for drinks, dinner, dancing, a guest speaker, Group memorabilia, and VCR tapes of last year's reunion and other related subjects — you all come! A special thank you to Dean Sorrell, his wife Placida, and Harry and Laura Mellinger, who did the lion's share of the hand and foot work necessary to set this up.

I look forward to seeing you in Colorado Springs.

Keep the faith and keep in touch.

A Few Words From Bertha Chandler, Fulbright Librarian

by Bertha Chandler

What has been happening at the Memorial since May 1987, when so many Second Air Division Association members visited Norwich?

Over sixty talks and tours have taken place. Nearly all of these events have used items from the archives to explain the history of the Second Air Division in East Anglia. Although the Memorial's archive collection is small, it contains a variety of stimulating material.

Audiences hold their breath as they listen to oral histories of Frank Thomas telling about the farmer and his son who lived near Old Buckenham; of David Hastings being interviewed by a youngster, explaining what the blackout was like; of a woman recalling the bombing of her home on Ber Street and the canary next door which had lost all its feathers but continued to sing its heart out; and of others. These oral memories bring history to life. The eyes of youngsters light up as they listen, paying close attention to each word. At the end of the playing of several cassettes, older adults can almost always be heard saying, "That reminds me of..." or simply, "That brings back so many memories."

Both adults and children are interested in looking at navigation charts, seeing the silk maps and the miniscule compass which were carried in escape kits, learning about mission parties and seeing certificates for the completion of various numbers of missions, looking at photographs of nose art, hearing excerpts from diaries, seeing programs from shows like "Skirts" and laughing about the ad in the back which instructs the reader, if hit directly by a 4,000 pound bomb, not to go all to pieces, but to notify his first sergeant who will probably be found hiding under the pool table and reading descriptions of "cool and wet"

English summers in letters. The material in the archives is an invaluable part of the talks and tours which I give about the Second Air Division Memorial, because these items bring history to life.

A tremendous variety of groups have been learning about the Memorial recently. These include Seething Primary School, the Old Hall School, the English Speaking Union, the Out and About Club, Norwich South Rotary, British Telecom Horticultural Society, Lakenham Evening Townswomen's Guild, St. Anne's Women's Fellowship, WRENS, Langley School, Framlingham Friendship Circle, Broadland Rotary Club, Alysham Local History Society, St. Peter Mancroft Chantry Club, and the Thorpe Probus Club. The Friends of the Norwich Museum Volunteers and guides from the Tourist Information Centre have been given talks so they will be able to tell visitors to Norwich whom they host about the Memorial. Especially gratifying was the response to an evening program for members of the Norfolk County Libraries Staff Association. Over 50 members came to hear a talk about the Memorial, to be given a tour, and to see some slides about the United States.

Talks and tours stimulate and increase the use of the Memorial. People use the Memorial's books, magazines and newspapers for a variety of reasons. Some have a special interest in the 8th USAAF or WWII and eagerly search out each new book on these subjects added to the collection. Some are planning a trip to America and want a travel guide or pictorial book about a specific area. These users are pleasantly surprised to discover the many travel pamphlets which are in the Memorial's files. Some are working on school projects about topics like lend-lease or the gold rush. Some are curious about

American cookery or American music. Some like to read biographies about American movie and television stars. Some are seeking answers to questions, like the address of the Air and Space Museum, a picture of a Mississippi steamboat, entrance information for U.S. universities, the name of the governor in New York, the address of the A.D. Smith Company, rules of American football, information about United States product safety laws, the location from which space shuttle Challenger was launched, a picture of American plums to use to illustrate a book, the date when Prohibition ended, and more!

Out-of-date material has been removed from the book collection and many new books about all aspects of American life have been added to the collection. Gifts of state travel and pictorial books are always welcome because they are heavily used and may be difficult to obtain "over here." Several new magazines, including *Travel/Leisure*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Better Homes and Gardens* have been added to the collection. *New Mexico Magazine*, a gift from Carl Hein, is being well-used and appreciated.

Visits from travelling Americans, which averaged over 50 people per month through last fall, are beginning again. Special thanks to all who have written to say they plan to come to the Memorial. Tony North is in charge of planning for visitors, and finds it very helpful to know in advance of intended visits.

The Memorial has, over the past twelve months, been full of activity. It is a unique Memorial. It is a living Memorial. It is, in my estimation, a very special Memorial which, as it celebrates its 25th anniversary in 1988, is bursting with potential.



392nd B.G.

by
John B. Conrad

In our continuing search for information on air crews and crew members who completed combat tours prior to 1 June 1944, it is a pleasure to report that additional data has been received. In the winter (1987-1988) issue of the 2nd ADA Journal, we listed the correspondents from whom data had been received by mid-October leading to the identification of the eight members of the Guy D. Carnine crew, 578th BS, as the first crew in the 392nd BG to complete a combat tour. They flew their 25th mission on 5 March 1944.

Since that issue of the Journal was published, we have now received information from Burrell M. Ellison (pilot) and Albert J. Riley (gunner), 576th BS; Winston Dorrell (co-pilot), Robert F. Gries (navigator) and Robert D. Copp (pilot), 577th BS; Philip J. Sweeney (navigator), Louis M. Stephens (pilot), additional data from Delmar C. Johnson (navigator),

Harold Schildknecht (pilot), J.D. Long, Jr. (sqdn. operations), Marion V. Winters (bombardier), Joe McNeil (tail gunner) and Michael Moncuso (ball turret gunner), 578th BS; Ken Healing (navigator) and additional data from Myron Keilman (sqdn. commander), 579th BS. This information reveals that most crews completed tours piecemeal; that is, many crew members flew most missions with their regular crews, but also flew some missions with other crews. Individuals completed tours on various dates, with varying requirements as to the number of missions to be flown, depending on how many missions had been flown, individually, at the time requirements to complete a tour had been increased from 25 to 30 missions.

According to the information received, 147 crew members completed tours before 1 June 1944. This listing by name, position, crew, number of missions and date of the last mission for each person, is too voluminous for inclusion in the Journal. You may obtain a copy if desired by sending your name, address and \$1.00 to John B. Conrad, 2981 Four Pines Drive, Unit #1, Lexington, KY 40502.

"Black Thursday" Anniversary Reunion

by Fred DeRolf

The Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association is hosting the 45th Anniversary of Mission 115 known as "Black Thursday." This mission was flown on Thursday, October 14, 1943 from England by the 8th Army Air Corps. There were sixty B-17 flying fortresses destroyed, either by enemy flak or German fighters and subsequently the greatest single loss during the 8th Air Force history.

We are inviting all 8th Air Force former prisoners of war and all 8th Air Force personnel.

This five-day affair is to be held in Clearwater, Florida, October 12th through the 16th. Some of the events scheduled are as follows: October 13 — evening boat ride; October 14 — Gala Banquet; October 15 — all day picnic starting with breakfast at 0800 continuing with food, music and fun throughout the day.

For further information, contact:

Past National Commander Stalag XV11B
American Former Prisoner of War
Fred De Rolf, Reunion Chairman
808 Tuskawilla Street
Clearwater, FL 34616-3440
Phone 813-447-3600

We have a limited amount of rooms, so make your reservations early!

Target: Berlin

by Dale R. Van Blair

Our crew for the mission of April 29, 1944 consisted of 1st Lt. Alfred H. Locke, pilot; 1st Lt. Errol A. Selve, co-pilot; 1st Lt. John Hortensine, Mickey navigator; 1st Lt. Kenneth Reed, instrument navigator; 1st Lt. John Bloznelis, dead reckoning navigator; 1st Lt. Arthur Delclisur, bombardier; T/Sgt. Harold Freeman, engineer; S/Sgt. Pete Paez, asst. engineer and left waist gunner; and myself, tail turret. As a PFF crew, we had just been assigned two extra navigators, and Lts. Reed and Bloznelis were flying with us for the first time. Because we had a sick engineer and radio operator, Freeman and Wallace had been called on to fill in.

We were one of several crews which, after special training on a PFF Liberator, had been attached to the 564th Squadron of the 389th Bomb Group. As a PFF crew our assignment was to fly as the lead or deputy lead plane of a formation, and for this mission we were to lead the 20th Combat Wing, with Col. Ralph Bryant going with us as Command Pilot. The target was railroad yards in the heart of Berlin. It was my eighteenth mission, fifth on PFF.

Shortly after we took off, two generators went out; but because the deputy lead had not left the ground because of mechanical problems, Col. Bryant decided that we would have to lead the mission.

After getting the formation assembled, we crossed the North Sea and Holland and flew on across France. Aside from moderately heavy flak, the flight was without incident until shortly before we crossed the German border. At that time our formation was attacked by several FW190s that were quickly driven off by our fighter escort. About twenty minutes later we were again hit by FW190s, but again our escort of P-51s drove them off quickly, destroying at least one that I saw go down.

As we approached Berlin, Lt. Delclisur reported that not enough power was being generated to operate the bombsight properly and that we would have to bomb by radar, even though there was no undercast to interfere with visual bombing. Immediately upon entering our bomb run we ran into intense and accurate flak, and in the few minutes we were over Berlin our plane was hit several times. Lt. Locke had to feather #3 engine. Also, the main tank in the right wing was punctured and seeping gas. Then, just after Lt. Delclisur released the flare that signaled the other planes to drop their bombs, our remaining two generators went out, leaving us no power for gun turrets, radio, interphone, etc.

Shortly after turning away from the target to begin the return flight, our formation was again attacked by a group of FW-190s plus a few ME-109s. Since we were now without fighter escort, the Germans were free to concentrate on us. Frequently they did not break off their passes until they were extremely close. One flew by so close to me that I thought I might recognize him if we ever met face to face in the future.

I quickly learned that operating my tail turret by the emergency had cranks and foot firing pedals was a frustrating experience. I could not begin to keep up with an enemy fighter by using the hand cranks unless he came almost straight at me, and none was foolish enough to do that.

After our #2 engine was hit and had to be feathered, Lt. Locke dropped to the rear of the formation. The loss of the interphone and my limited view from my tail turret kept me from being aware of the loss of the two engines and the leaking gas tank; however, I figured we must have problems besides the loss of electrical power when I realized that we had dropped back.

I watched German fighters gang up on and down four Libs that had been hit and were unable to keep up with the formation. That's us if we can't keep up, I thought, and kept an eye on the nearest Lib to see if we were dropping behind. A few minutes later I was relieved to note that we were maintaining our position.

Finally a few P-47s picked us up and the enemy fighters left. When I at last saw the North Sea below us, I breathed a sigh of relief, for I thought we had it made. We had not gone far, however, before I felt a tap on my back. It was Hank Boisclair. "We're going to ditch," he shouted. "We don't have enough fuel to get back."

I went back to the waist and helped throw all removable equipment out the waist windows. Because the loss of the generators left us with no power for the radio, we could not send an SOS. We fired up flares calling for fighter support, and soon two P-47s flew over to us. By hand signals we managed to convey to them that we had to ditch and that our radio was out. They signaled that they understood and flew along with us until the time came to hit the water.

When Lt. Locke dragged the tail of the plane in the water to slow it prior to setting it down, the escape hatch flew open and icy water sprayed us. It was unbelievably cold. Someone jumped up from where we were sitting on the floor between the two waist windows and tried unsuccessfully to slam the hatch shut with his foot. Then as Lt. Locke attempted to set the plane down, a large wave caught the nose. It was like slamming into a concrete wall. The plane broke just behind the rear bomb bay, and the bottom skin of the waist section was ripped off. There was not even time to take a deep breath before we plunged into the water.

As I fought to get back to the surface, something banged hard against my forehead. Just as I thought I could not hold my breath another second, my head broke above the surface, and I found myself still inside the waist section, which had not broken completely free of the forward section. Seeing that the right waist window was completely blocked, I turned to the other window, but Pete was struggling to get through the half of it that was not covered by wreckage. Fearing the waist section would break loose any second and sink, I looked for a way out. After what seemed like an eternity but could only have been a few seconds, I saw a small opening in the side of the fuselage. As I was about to exit through it, someone screamed for help. I turned around but could not see anyone. I swam back a few feet. Still not finding anyone and not hearing another call for help, I went through the tear in the fuselage, inflated my Mae West, and began paddling away from the wreckage. I spotted four men in the water, but the only one close enough to recognize was Lt. Delclisur. He had a large gash over one eye. I tried to swim to him, but the waves merely washed me further away, and I lost sight of everything but the plane wreckage.

A B-24 flew over very low with its bomb bays open, and I thought it was going to drop a life raft; however, it circled twice and flew off. Why didn't they do something, I wondered. I continued to paddle around, finding it more and more difficult to hold my head up out of the water. I was exhausted. Finally I turned over on my back and discovered that the Mae West held my head above the water and rode up over each wave with no effort on my part. Someone should have told us about that during our training, I thought.

Then, off in the distance, I saw a boat approaching, which had probably been contacted by the P-47s. As it came closer, I waved and saw someone wave back. After watching the boat pick up two of our crew, I neither saw nor felt anything except for a vague sensation of someone trying to pour something down my throat.

When I next opened my eyes, I found myself lying in a bunk on the boat, with Lt. Locke looking at me from the bunk above. He told me that he was all right and that we were docked at Yarmouth and would be taken to a hospital in a few minutes. I had been in the water about forty-five minutes and was the last one to be picked up. My recollection of someone trying to pour something down my throat was the result of their trying to get me to drink some scotch after picking me up.

Of our twelve-man crew, seven survived the ditching. Col. Bryant and Lt. Delclisur died of injuries and shock shortly after being picked up. Lt. Reed was seen by Lt. Hortensine with his head hanging into the water. John tried to hold onto him but soon became exhausted. Kenneth slipped away from him and was not seen again. Lt. Bloznelis and Sgt. Freeman apparently were killed in the ditching and were never sighted. What made Harold Freeman's death especially tragic was that he had completed his missions and was waiting for orders to return to the States when he was ordered to fill in on our crew.

Lt. Selve, our co-pilot, suffered a broken back and chipped shoulder bone. He later received the Soldier's Medal for freeing the assistant engineer, who had got caught on wreckage while trying to get through the waist window. It was probably the assistant engineer I heard calling for help. Lt. Selve had come up outside the waist window and immediately pulled Pete loose after the one call for help.

I received a minor skull fracture from the blow on the forehead, then three weeks later developed spinal meningitis caused by pneumonia germs and lost the hearing in my right ear. The other surviving men escaped with only minor cuts and bruises.

Lt. Locke later received the Distinguished Flying Cross for holding the plane up in the formation with only two engines and bringing it back as far as he did.

Clouds Got In Their Way

by George A. Reynolds (458th)

Controversy, confusion, conflict and error usually go along with aircraft accidents. The Dooley crew's crash in Norwich 24 Nov. 44 was no exception. Almost to a man, ex-458th types recall this incident, but most have carried some incorrect "facts" with them the past 43 years. Official records, likewise — even the actual crash report had the aircraft serial number wrong. But additional research and cross references have eliminated most of the more common mistakes (names of crewmen wrong, date of the incident, which church the ship hit, etc.) This account is accurate, based on all information available, after four decades.

Some 458th crews were on practice flights over East Anglia because continuing poor weather over the Continent had scrubbed combat missions for the day after Thanksgiving. Lt. Dooley and his crew, 753rd, were flying B-24 No. 42-95133. Late in the afternoon a weather observer at Horscham recorded the ceiling as 500 feet, visibility 2½ miles, temperature 47, wind NW 13 knots, pressure 29.24 and there was haze with intermittent drizzle. Just a lousy day for flying, but Dooley had logged only 10 hours of instrument time over the past six months and there was a need for practice on the gauges at every opportunity during the winter of '44 — the worst in 40 years, according to the English.

The Air Inspector's investigation summary read in part: "While returning from

base from a practice mission, #95133 was in the process of making an instrument landing approach when it crashed at 1730 hours. The aircraft hit the steeple of St. Phillips Church on Hamm Road, damaging the right wing and right tail assembly."

"It continued 1,000 yards, apparently in normal flight, then impacted the ground and burst into flames. All nine crew members on board were killed."

In one story about the crash, Roy Walters did extensive research that included several eyewitness accounts. Collectively they said: "Base personnel were certainly sweating the airmen back in, the day was very murky. Without let-up, yellow flares were flying at the runway's end to help them locate it. Lt. Dooley's ship attempted a landing but overshot the field. In a go-around, the aircraft appeared to stall, then climb slightly, but appeared unable to gain any additional altitude. The thundering roar of the engines at this low level drowned out all other sounds along Millhill Road, and the rumble of collision was almost an expectation."

Under these circumstances, many pilots will attempt to keep the field in sight after a missed approach and remain beneath the clouds to shorten the landing procedure; especially in deteriorating weather. That is, rather than climb back into the clouds and set up the full instrument landing sequence, they remain clear of clouds and make a visual approach. This is quicker, but it is also more hazardous. The approach was in-

itially made to the field's shortest runway, 35, and a left turn out placed the ship back over Norwich at a lower altitude. Since witnesses said the aircraft appeared unable to climb, there is no speculation intended now.

Directly over the city, the Liberator struck the steeple (about 200 feet above ground level) a glancing blow that tore away part of its wing and an oval.

The aircraft continued directly toward a populated area, but at the last possible moment turned away to hit an open strip near Heigham and Barker Streets with no loss of civilian life.

Lt. Arthur Akin, Jr. replaced Lt. Burt Wheeler of Rockland, MA as co-pilot, and Lt. John Kowalczyk, the bombardier, was not aboard. Otherwise, the entire original crew perished in the crash.

Immediately, grateful townspeople began a collection to erect a memorial to the crewmen. A year later on 6 Nov. '45 a bronze plaque bearing all the crew's names was erected and dedicated near the crash site on Heigham Street. The inscription reads: "To the memory of the undermentioned members of 753rd Sq., 458th BG, 2nd AD, USAAF, who died near this spot 24 Nov 44. The pilot as his last act avoided crashing on this and surrounding cottages, thus preventing loss of civilian lives." The plaque has been moved slightly because of construction, but is still near the site today.

Records of the 458th mention that the entire crew was recommended for the DFC; however, the award was never made then, and the official recommendation document cannot be located for a belated, posthumous award.



The original Dooley crew at a training base in the States just before they departed for the ETO. Standing, l-r: Sgt. Oscar B. Nelson, gun, of Seattle, WA; Sgt. Paul A. Wadsworth, radio, Big Springs, TX; Sgt. Donald P. Quirk, gun, Munci, IN; Cpl. Ralph Von Bergen, gun, Denver, CO; Sgt. John J. Jones, engr, Gem, TX; Cpl. John A. Phillips, gun, Norwood, NY. Kneeling, l-r: Lt. Burt Wheeler, CP, Rockland, MA; Lt. Ralph J. Dooley, P, Philadelphia, PA; Lt. John Kowalczyk, B, Steubenville, OH; and Lt. Paul E. Gorman, N, Brooklyn, NY.

Notice

The English daughter of a U.S. Army Sergeant is searching for her natural father in America. She's now Jane Burden and lives in Devon, England. Mrs. Burden was born on December 10, 1945 in Heacham, England, which is in Norfolk County, where the Second Air Division was stationed during the war.

Her natural mother was named Mable Burnell Turner. She lived in Heacham. The only thing Mrs. Burden knows about her natural father was that he was named MacNeil or McNeal, that he was a sergeant in the U.S. Army/Caucasian, and that he came from Chicago, Illinois or somewhere near Chicago.

Mrs. Burden's mother died ten days after she was born. She only recently discovered the identity of her natural mother. She would like any information about her natural father or any leads to information about him or his present location. So, information from men who may have worked with the sergeant would be greatly appreciated and of value for follow-up investigation.

Information should be sent to Mrs. Jane Burden, "The Barn," Higher Churchtown Farm, Peter Tavy, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9NR, United Kingdom. Telephone 011-44-822-81-337.



POOP from GROUP 467

by Jeff Gregory

Let's begin this time with a correction. The last Journal carried a statement that a sports complex would be constructed in Rackheath. My information was faulty — the sports complex is being built in Norwich. This facility will be most welcome nonetheless.

Hopefully this Journal issue will be mailed and in your hands before you leave for Colorado Springs. At this writing I have no indication of the attendance for the 467th; however, I believe that a number of you will arrive early for our "laugh and scratch" session commencing at poolside, 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, June 21.

Plans to present a Mike Bailey painting of the "Witch," graciously donated by Fred Jansen, are going forward, and we hope for the Academy's permission to present it on June 22. If you plan to arrive early and would like to attend the presentation, please send me a card to that effect. It will help our planning.

As you have read elsewhere, the 467th will host a premier showing of the "Faces of the 2nd Air Division" tape to ALL members of the 2nd AD. This tape will be shown in the main banquet room of the Clarion, immediately following the theme dinner on Friday night. All of you who were privileged to see this tape in Shreveport last September know what a treat the members of the 2nd AD have in store. Also, a specially edited tape of our '87 Norwich reunion will be shown.

Anyone who enjoyed that great Norwich reunion will especially want to see this tape; and those who were unable to attend will wish to see what they missed. Please make a special effort to be there. We are so indebted to Joe and Helen Dzenowagis and their fami-

ly for helping to plan our program in Colorado Springs.

We hope you enjoy the reunion activities we are planning for you. Personally, I can hardly wait! As for the "Shreveport Hecklers," I can assure you the dinner program is set up to move right along. Maybe even faster than that!!!

My thoughts turn to the Memorial Library, the decisions being made as to its future, and the financing involved. Who could have foreseen the changes in library science in the past 25 years? Who could have dreamed of the changes in technology which have taken our Memorial Room Library from the printed page to audio tapes and now video tapes, VCRs, TV monitors, and the like? Who would dare to predict or project the needs of the Library for the next 25 to 50 years?

I am *personally* of one mind and purpose. That is to provide our Memorial Room with the very best future we can; so that it will be there as our legacy for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Thus, I feel the present deliberations concerning the funding of an American Librarian and Assistant, as important as they are, are only addressing part of the problem. I hope to make *my* personal views known in Colorado Springs. You may agree or disagree with me. It is important to *hear your views* on these matters, so that I am not just promulgating my own views.

Thus, the "laugh and scratch" session prior to the reunion is *an ideal time to make your views known*. Believe me, I will represent *your* views, as well as my own, but only to the extent that I *have your views in hand*.

Thus we approach our 41st reunion of the 2nd Air Division Association. Let's have good food, good friends, and enjoy the beautiful surroundings. Also, let us keep in mind our great 2nd AD Association and its focal point, the Memorial Room in Norwich; and take a minute to thank the dedicated people who have spent many years of their lives ensuring its success.

See you in Colorado Springs!

Subsequent to the submission of the above article, I learned of the sudden passing of Fred Jansen. I know you join me in expressing sympathy to his widow Clio, and to his family.



by H.C. 'Pete' Henry (44th)

Your Group V.P., Art Cullen, has discovered, as so many of us have, that retirement sometimes means giving up a 40-hour week for a 40-hour day. In addition to an extended trip to Florida this winter, Art has been spending long hours with Bob Collings in Stow, Mass. on the restoration of B-24J, 44-44052. (See Fall 1987 Journal, page 7). To provide him some relief, I agreed to write the 8-Ball column for the Summer issue.

The first item of business is to contact Carl Frazier, from the 492/467 BG, at least that's the name I thought he gave me on the phone recently. He is not listed in the 2ADA Master Roster and asked me to help him locate a former friend from the 44th B.G. If Carl sees his name in this column, here is Norman D. Brown's address: 2503 Judson Rd., D-1, Longview, TX 75601-1708.

Early in March, I received a two-page letter from Virgil W. Falkner in Tucson, AZ, listing all the known existing B-24s, twelve in all, including 44052 above. Virgil is a Retired Chief Master Sergeant from the 394th Bomb Squadron doing volunteer work at the Pima (AZ) Air Museum where he is trying to establish a fund to build a hangar for B-24J, 44-44175. He explains, "Most former B-24 men who visit the museum become a bit enraged when they see the way the B-17 is displayed in a separate hangar." Further on he continues, "those of us who flew both aircrafts, but more in B-24s, are somewhat ashamed that the B-24, which more or less started this museum, sits outside while the B-17 rests regally inside." If anyone wishes to contribute to this memorial fund, send a check payable to Pima Air Museum with the notation "B-24 Memorial Fund" and mail it to Virgil Falkner, 8936 Calle Kuehn, Tucson, AZ 85715. Be sure to include your bomb group and they will keep each particular unit aware of contributions by their members. If anyone is interested in reading this 2-page letter, drop me a line and I'll send you a photocopy — Pete Henry, 164B Portland Lane, Jamesburg, NJ 08831.

In the "Folded Wings" section of this Journal, you'll see the name Eugene DeWaters. Gene passed away in September 1987 and it was not brought to my attention until I wrote and inquired why he had not paid his dues for 1988. This caused his widow, Flo DeWaters, some distress and for this I truly apologize. Jake Elias, from the 68th Squadron, has been in touch with the family for the past year, during Gene's illness, and it was he who conveyed the sad news to me in mid-March. Jake has been working on a novel about WWII for the past year and a half and has been greatly helped in his efforts by Will Lundy's book, "History of the 67th Bomb Squadron;" a war diary from Webb Todd; "Elusive Horizons," written by a 44th man whose name he couldn't recall as of that writing; John McClane's book (name not given) from the navigator's point of view, and some of his own war letters.

Many of you are aware that I have been shepherding "The Last Mission" tape program and so far we have sold over 200 copies. Some members have written to me with their comments pro and con after receiving their copy. Will Lundy said, "It was great! We managed to see ourselves two or three times as well as Mary and Ray McNamara and this makes the films almost priceless for many. The air show at Coltishall struck me as most impressive, especially when those 9 Red Arrows performed." Norm Tillner wrote, "Enjoyed watching it but the library shots were conspicuous in their absence." (We had no control over what was photographed, Norm.) Will Lundy also mentioned that a reprinting of his book, "History of the 67th Bomb Squadron," should be ready to mail by the end of March. If anyone did not get a copy the first time around, drop me a line and I'll pass your name on to Will. I don't have the cost figures at my fingertips. I have a copy and it will make interesting reading for all four Squadron personnel, not just the 67th people.

Forrest Clark is seeking personal accounts of the WWII North Atlantic ferry route for aircraft. If you remember any incidents that occurred on that route or happened to an aircraft you were piloting or in the crew, write to Forrest Clark, 703 Duffer Lane, Kissimmee, FL 32758.

This just about exhausts the information I have on hand pertaining to the 44th B.G. I would be interested in hearing from any of you who have stories and/or anecdotes to pass on. I'll try to use them in the next column if I write it or will pass them on to Art Cullen for his consideration.

Before the Green and White Tails



The eight surviving members of John Jacobs' former 846th crew got together late last year in Orlando, Florida, for a four-day reunion; their first, but probably not their last, they say. They flew 34 missions with the 489th (Jacobs and Bronaugh flew 35); most of them in "Stinky." Front row, l-r: Horace Loo, radio operator; Joseph Kessler, Eng.; Marion Mitchell, gunner; Bill Laseter, ball turret. Standing, l-r: Louis Duke, co-pilot; Earl Garrett, navigator; John Jacobs, pilot; Hugh Bronaugh, bombardier. The empty chairs were for Stephen Molina and Ralph Gregory, deceased.

by I.D. Brown
(489th)

On 29 November 1943, ten newly organized aircrews left Salt Lake AAB for Casper, Wyoming, to begin Replacement Crew training at the 331st Combat Crew Training School. I was assigned to Crew Nine.

Four second lieutenants were also assigned to the crew: John Tankersley, pilot; John Nading, co-pilot; James Pace, navigator; and Harry Haid, bombardier. The six enlisted men were William Bobo, radio operator; Marcus Smith, waist gunner; Francis Hoffman, waist gunner; Pickens Houston, Jr., engineer (he had flown a tour in the Pacific in the original B-26, the Martin Marauder); Cleo Rowley, tail turret; and myself, the ball turret gunner.

When we first got together, Lt. Tankersley introduced himself, checked the roll, and shook hands all around. He said he was from Texas, had six years service, had been a First Sergeant, and we should call him "Tank."

We all played poker during the trip, intermixing officers and enlisted men in several games. I won about \$400. Lt. Haid was the big loser and had to borrow \$45 from me until next payday.

We reached Casper on the 30th and were taken immediately to the base theater and seated by crews for an orientation lecture. My all night card playing, a comfortable seat in a warm, darkened theater, plus a droning lecturer, soon lulled me to sleep. Suddenly I was tapped on both shoulders. The lecturer, a Major, shouted "Have that man stand up!" I woke up in a standing position, and the Major chewed me out, ending his tirade with "I certainly wouldn't want that man on my crew!"

Training started the next day. Busy days were long and filled with lectures and classes relating to the flight duties of a B-24 crewman: survival, first aid, aircraft recognition, gunsights, deflection firing, pressure chamber and use of oxygen masks and parachutes. There was day and night flying too, and more studying - VD lectures, crew specialties and mock-up training, practice with the bomb trainer, and mock-up turret practice. During all of our training at Casper, not one time did we fly a plane with an operating ball turret!

I remember Lt. Tankersley receiving a "Well Done" one time when we lost an engine shortly after take-off and he made a good landing. Another time Cleo Rowley's tail turret motor caught fire and he and Houston beat the flames out with their flying gloves.

Then there was the day that Francis Hoffman was driving a tug, taking the crew to the plane. Lt. Pace was the last one on, sitting on a fender. Before he was quite ready, Hoffman released the clutch with a jerk, and Pace, plus his navigation gear, went can-over-tea-kettle into the snow.

Rowley operated the target camera through the back hatch when we were on practice bomb drops. When Lt. Haid dropped a bomb, Rowley would sometimes delay his picture until the smoke was nearer to the bulls-eye than the initial flash, hoping to improve the score. We never did hear anything about his camera technique, good or bad.

In the town of Casper there was a roller rink where we went to skate and meet girls. The rink closed at ten p.m., but there was a bar/ballroom called "The Crystal" where we could take our new lady friends. Suspended from the ceiling in the middle of

the dance floor was a multi-faceted, mirrored globe. As it slowly turned round and round, it picked up light and reflected moving dots around the room. One night a stray cat wandered in. That cat went ape trying to catch the dots before they disappeared. Best floor show I saw in Casper!

I met a young lady at the roller rink, whose name was Mary Jane. I spent a number of pleasant evenings sitting with her mother in the kitchen, visiting and eating popcorn while waiting for Mary Jane to get ready to go dancing at the Crystal or to a movie. As a 19-year-old small town Iowa boy, I didn't know how to make a pass. The best I managed was a little smooching. I had Xmas dinner with the whole family at Mary Jane's brother's house, and New Year's Eve Mary Jane and I celebrated with her family at the Crystal.

On New Year's Day a few aircrew members were late for roll call, so flight crews spent two hours of the day marching and drilling on the ramp, in the snow, with a chill wind blowing and a temperature slightly above zero. This included officers and enlisted men.

On 4 January, our group of ten crews were transferred to Wendover, as the nucleus of the 844th squadron. I said goodbye to Mary Jane and later sent her my new address at Wendover. The answer was a "Dear John" letter of sorts from her mother. Mary Jane was pregnant! Not to worry, she had married another GI who had shipped out before I arrived at Casper, and everyone knew he was the father.

I didn't feel bad about losing Mary Jane, but what an ego crusher! I had spent all my poker winnings dating a pretty, married, pregnant woman, and all she ever gave me was a kiss!

Wendover Field Lament

Submitted by B.R. Hooker
754th BS

We're the boys from Wendover Field
Earning our meager pay
"Guarding" the folks with millions
For one-sixty a day.

Out on the wind swept desert
Wendover Field is the spot
Fighting the terrible dust storms
In the land that God forgot.

No one cares if we're living
No one gives a damn
Back home we are forgotten
Cause we're loaned to Uncle Sam.

All night the wind keeps howling
It's more than a guy can stand
Hell, folks, we're not the convicts
We're the defenders of this land.

For the duration we must stand it
Many years of life we'll miss
Don't let the draft board get you
And for God's sake, don't enlist.

But we're the men of the U.S.A.
So we'll do without green grass
For some day we'll catch "Old Adolf"
And shove Wendover up his (censored).



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Forty-Three Years Later...

by Geoffrey Goreham

This article is a collective expression of comments, memories, feelings and correspondence of former 2nd Air Division personnel whom the author met and escorted on visits to the old bases during the 1987 Reunion in Norwich, England.

I found my hut down a concrete path that pretended to be a concrete roadway leading somewhere.

Huge tufts of grass, knee high to the hedgerow, coarse, triumphant winning grass, sprouting out of spits and cracks, creating natural disorder and chaos of neglect where once we sailed free on cycles so long ago...

The hut was in the grip of bramble in the silence of a site where once there was no silence. I knew it as site 5, now an abandoned wood where a walk can bring the sudden panic of a wood-pigeon, slapping the air, cracking the branches and freezing the

spine in plunging fear.

On the site the cleared patches, the faint outline of a barrack hut in the trees — just a concrete patch, moss-covered, long forgotten. At my hut the shape is there, the number too, flaky white spots on the green stained wall. Bramble and nettle thick around the door, ever open. Windows bursting out in small trees and branches framing the intruders like aboral paintings.

Inside like rebellious plants they run amok, tall, heavy, bursting through roofs and windows...

The skeleton framework of the roof against the sky leaking in the sunlight in the wrong places and in corners that seemed forever dark.

Nearby on closer look the ghosts in the abandoned wood emerge. Lumpy mounds of blast shelters, bearing trees like battle standards, merging into the landscape withdrawing into the comfort of obscurity

yet showing their tails. Patches of shiny brickwork beyond the nettles.

The abandoned buildings given like gifts to nature, guttered, windowless, rusting deep brown sagging roofs. Thick undergrowth and trees, smothering, engulfing, blurring the outline except the memory, hiding my past like a hand against a photograph.

My hut — where in youth I felt fear, anxiety and a love of life in all that aim of death that held the purpose.

My hut within a space that had no meaning, walls that framed a patch of ground that was like no other.

My hut, sad, decaying, still holding my space and for the young men that have gone forever. Here in a wood, buried in time like the site, half a century on, fading into nothingness amid the trees in an English countryside.

The 448th Speaks

by Leroy Engdahl

At the time of my writing this article for the June issue of the 2nd A.D. Journal, we have about 115 signed up for the 448th Bomb Group Association's Reunion for June 21st & 22nd preceding the 2nd A.D. Reunion of June 23-26. This does not include about 20 more that I am aware of who will attend the 2nd A.D. Reunion only. I expect that perhaps 150 or more of the 448th will be in Colorado Springs for these reunions. Our Group will be staying at the Holiday Inn North located at 3125 Sinton Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80907.

To this date we have about 225 or 230 signed up for our Harlingen, Texas Reunion, October 6-9 during the Annual "Confederate Air Show."

Our reunion hotel will be the Sheraton Fairway Resort Hotel at McAllen. We have made a \$300.00 deposit for six buses to transport us the 35 miles to Harlingen for the Air Show on Saturday, October 8th and return. I expect more than 250 desiring to attend this reunion.

The 2nd A.D. Journal has a place called "Folded Wings" for our comrades who have passed on since the previous issue. I and/or Evelyn Cohen need to be advised of one of our members passing on so that we can acknowledge same in the Journal and his friends will be aware of his passing. We don't have a place in the Journal for the wives passing on but if you wish for me to make mention in the article "The 448th Speaks" I will be most happy to do so in order that their friends will be made aware.

Since our reunion in England we have lost the wives of two of our good members. George DuPont lost his wife, Laurie, just two months after returning from our England reunion; and Al Bishop, who was on my crew, lost his wife Jennette on March 12th. Both were special friends of mine and will be missed. If you wish to let our members know of the passing of either our veterans or their wives, just let me know.

Cater Lee, who is on our Executive Committee among many things, keeps up the 448th Membership Roster. He is asking those of you who have a summer and winter address to please notify him of both addresses and the dates you expect to be at each. Also for those of you in the 448th who have not yet done so, please send him your squadron number, your duty assignment and the dates you were at Seething. This is not just for those attending our reunions, but ALL our members. Thanks for sending this info to Cater Lee at P.O. Box 850, Foley, AL 36536.

In keeping with our profiles on our

Seething buddies who flew more than one combat tour in England and of our 448th Bomb Group Association staff, I offer in this issue a profile on Col. Douglas Skaggs (USAF Ret.) of Dallas, Texas and Robert "Bob" Harper of Crescent City, California. Bob, as most of you know, is our group artist and our Assistant Vice President.

Col. Doug Skaggs was born on 28 July 1921 in Wichita Falls, Texas. In 1931 his family moved to Lawton, Oklahoma, where he graduated from high school in 1938.

Doug holds Bachelors and Masters degrees in Electrical Engineering from Oklahoma A & M, now known as Oklahoma State University.

He married his college sweetheart, Geraldine Farmer of Devol, Oklahoma in 1944. They have two sons and three daughters and six grandchildren.

Doug was a lead pilot in the 715th Squadron and was in the original group who flew over in November the Southern Route via South America and Africa to England.

Upon finishing his 30 missions with the 448th and returning from R & R in the States, Doug volunteered for another tour and was assigned as Assistant Group Operations Officer until being reassigned as 705th Squadron Operations Officer with the 446th at Bungay in October 1944. Here he completed another tour.

In April, 1946, Doug was transferred to Europe for a third tour there, this time in the Army of Occupation as commander of the 325th Troop Carrier Squadron based at Ansback near Munich.

In July 1946 this base was closed and Doug's squadron was moved to the newly activated field of Rhein Mainz near the U.S. Headquarters at Weisbaden. Thus he had the privilege of being the Commander of the first flying outfit on that now huge installation.

Doug was recalled back into service during the Korea conflict and stayed in, retiring in 1973 as a bird colonel.

The members of the 448th are proud to give recognition to such a fine man as Doug Skaggs. He has given much to our country.

Robert "Bob" Harper is well known to our members who have attended our 2nd A.D. and 448th reunions. His paintings adorn the walls of the Waveny Flying Club at Seething, the Village Church at Seething, and the Village Center. His sketches appear on our programs and stationery.

Bob was born in Melstone, Montana on

January 23, 1921. He finished high school at Harowton, Montana in 1939. He graduated from Washington State College with a B.A. and MFA in Commercial Art. He has had advanced studies at Humboldt State College and San Jose State University for California Teaching for Elementary and Secondary. He has been an art teacher from the kindergarten through the college level at Oakland, CA and Crescent City, CA. He also is in building design and architecture and gives much of his time to civic activities utilizing his many talents.

His wife, Zella, is also a professional, having retired after 28 years as a loan officer with Bank of America.

Bob served as Assistant Intelligence Officer with the original 448th at Seething until October 1944 when he was transferred to the 453rd BG until June, 1945.

Bob attended pilot preflight school at San Antonio in 1942 at Kelly Field and Navigator Preflight at Ellington Field at Houston and Hondo, Texas. He attended the Air Force Intelligence School at Harrisburg, PA in 1943 and was assigned as an Instructor at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho and was Base S-2 and Asst. at Mountain Home AFB.

Bob is a private pilot, has owned five planes and has 1800 pilot hours.

It is a great pleasure and privilege to be associated with one of Bob's caliber and the 448th pays tribute to a great guy.

Our next profile will be on Col. Jack Swaze (USAF Ret.) and George DuPont, who is well-known to those of us who have attended our 2nd A.D. and 448th reunions.

Remember, for those of you who do not have one of our attractive 448th caps, you can get one and have it in time for our reunion by writing to Ben Johnson, 3990 15th St., Ft. Arthur, TX 77642. Cost is \$6.00. Also, many of you wanted a copy of James Hoseason's book, "The 1000 Day Battle." You may now get one by writing to the Air Force Museum, Attention Book Shop, P.O. Box 1903, Wright Patterson AFB, OH 45432. The books are hardbound and the price is \$23.00.

Myself and our officers are looking forward to seeing our members at our Colorado Springs and Harlingen, Texas reunions.

George DuPont of 9 Tropical Park Rd., Ocala, FL 32675 is making copies of the VCR tape made of the 448th Tower Dedication Ceremony on May 26, 1987. The tape is over 1½ hours long of excellent quality and the price, including packaging and postage, is only \$20.00.

Thanks for reading and good health.

My Rocky Road To Tibenham

by F.H. "Pete" Bradley (445th)

In the two or three years that I've been a member of the Second Air Division Association, I've read a lot of interesting articles printed in the quarterly Journals. Most of the stories were about exciting combat missions. I think, however, that my training experiences were more "unique" than my combat missions. Not that my 35 mission as Chuck Walker's navigator were all "milk runs." We had our share of rough trips, especially in "The Bunnie." My number one war souvenir is a large piece of German flak that missed my leg by just a few inches.



Chuck Walker's crew, 700th Squadron, 445th BG. Standing, l-r: Sgts. M. Such, E. Buszta, J. Demshock, R. Altmann, E. Fletcher (KIA), J. Schmidlin. Kneeling, l-r: Pete Bradley, navigator; Chuck Walker, pilot; Fred Fenske, co-pilot; Marion "Slim" Meckling, bombardier.

My childhood passion for combat flying stories undoubtedly led to my joining the Army Air Force. Back in the 1930s there were some great pulp magazines called "Flying Aces," "Battle Aces," and "G-8 and the Battle Aces." These fiction magazines were full of action stories about World War I "dog fights" between Allied and German planes. I read and reread every issue.

When the U.S. got into World War II and the Army Air Force Recruiters came to Duke University, I was ready. I signed up along with 100 of my classmates. Soon we were all down in Miami Beach, the first step in our aviation cadet training.

Everything was great in the beginning. It wasn't until a few months later that I ran into trouble. Air sickness! I should have known! I got sick enough to vomit at age 3 from my first swing in a hammock. As a

child I had to sit down or lie down after only one ride on a merry-go-round. Even as a teenager, anything in an amusement park that went up and down or around in a circle was enough to upset my stomach.

My first airplane flight came in Georgia, at age 19, as part of the aviation cadet program. It was a half-hour introductory flight in a Piper Cub. I lasted about 15 minutes before I got sick. Fortunately, I stuck my head out the window, so I only had to scrub off the outside of the plane when we landed.

but I wasn't going to admit it. The doctor washed me out, but then relented and let me come back for a re-test the next day. Thanks to a day of cigarettes, whiskey, lots of Coca Colas — plus some strenuous deep knee bends just before the doctor came in — I passed the re-test with a pressure of 118 over 60!

The second "wash out" came during my interview with a SACC psychologist. When I told him I didn't want to be a pilot, he asked if I was afraid of high speeds when I drove a car. I told him I didn't have a license to drive, because I graduated from high school at 16 (you have to be 17 to drive in New Jersey), and that I'd been away at school ever since. The psychologist must have thought that showed a lack of what they were looking for, because he washed me out right on the spot.

After thinking it over for a couple of days, I screwed up my courage and went to headquarters, telling them I thought I had gotten a raw deal. My perseverance earned me a two-hour interview with the top psychologist at SACC. He was a very sharp, understanding man. I'll never forget what he said when we finished: "Bradley, you're quite a guy. If it turns out that you got the top score (9) in the Navigation portion of your tests, I'll see to it that you go to Navigation School."

Three weeks later I found out that I had scored "9" in all three categories: Pilot, Bombardier, and Navigator. If I still wanted to go to Navigation School, the door was wide open!

I took my advanced navigation training in San Marcos, Texas. Needless to say, I was again plagued by air sickness. We flew 25 four-hour practice flights in AT-9s, and I "tossed my cookies" on 15 of them. Naturally, I didn't feel too good on the other 10 either. It got so bad that my stomach would start to turn over as soon as I got within 100 yards of the plane and smelled the gasoline fumes. I should have quit, but I really wanted those wings and bars!

(cont. on page 36)

In Georgia I had a total of 20 half-hour flying lessons in a Piper Cub. My stomach was constantly upset, and I actually threw up on 14 out of the 20 flights. An appropriately-sized tin can soon became part of my standard equipment. It was during this part of my training that I decided I'd better become a Navigator and fly on something that moved slowly and smoothly.

At my next stop, the San Antonio Classification Center, I was "washed out" of the aviation cadet program. Not once, but twice — and neither had anything to do with air sickness.

My first "wash out" was due to low blood pressure: 94 over 50. The doctor asked me if I ever got tired or fainted. I lied and said no. Actually, just two days before, I had gotten sick and passed out on the troop train coming from Georgia to Texas,



Chuck Walker & Pete Bradley

Passed by SHAEF field press censor.
May be retained or mailed home.

SOUVENIR SUPPLEMENT



SALUTE THE GROUND MAN

2nd AIR DIVISION

WEEK APRIL 8-14, 1945

"As the final victory, which must be ours, draws near, we have thought it befitting to designate a week to recognize and commend the personnel of the ground echelon of 2nd Air Division for their tremendous efforts in creating this great team.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, as I know every man who has had the opportunity to fly with the 2nd Air Division planes, would thank you if it were possible. The flying personnel know what your efforts have been to supply them with the means to perform their part of the team's work, the long hours with little glory, and they are grateful. As your Commanding General, I wish to offer you my sincere congratulations and to commend you on a job well done."

MAJ. GEN. W. E. KEPNER
Commanding, 2nd Air Division
(From an address, 8 April, 1945)



8th Air Force
Advises "Target
for Today"



LIBERATORS - MUSTANGS - THUNDERBOLTS

2AD MISSION

FEATURES 64 OF 68 KEY OPERATIONS ON THE GROUND



2AD Staff
Conference
Plans the
Mission



Weather
Checks
the Route



Gen. Kepner
Consults
Operations
Staff

In March, 8th Air Force hit Germany with the largest forces and greatest tonnage in its history. 2nd Air Division starred in this record by topping the Air Force in precision bombing accuracy. 2AD fighter planes reasserted their leadership of the ETO -- one group this week became the unit to destroy more than 1,000 enemy aircraft. Beyond comprehension are the thousands of sorties flown and the tonnage of bombs aimed -- vast in its execution is a single 2AD mission.

Tribute is offered this week to those who accomplish the 68 key operations in every mission, but frequently overlooked by press and public -- the Ground Personnel of the 2nd Air Division. Pictured here are a fraction of the equal essential steps performed each time by 2AD personnel on the ground before the radio may announce "Liberators, Mustangs, Thunderbolts of 8th Air Force attacked German targets today."

Though they may be forgotten in the news flashes, the Ground Men, by their devotion to perfection, are earning daily gratitude and praise of every combat flyer. Men with wings and men with other duties cooperate throughout each mission so that no one step, no one man, is independent -- the main reward to each of them is the final effort of this entire Division.

Code Orders
to Bomber
and Fighter
Groups

Each Group Briefs
Its Flying Crews



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Analysis of
the Mission's
Bomb Photos



Interrogation
of Air Crews
on Return

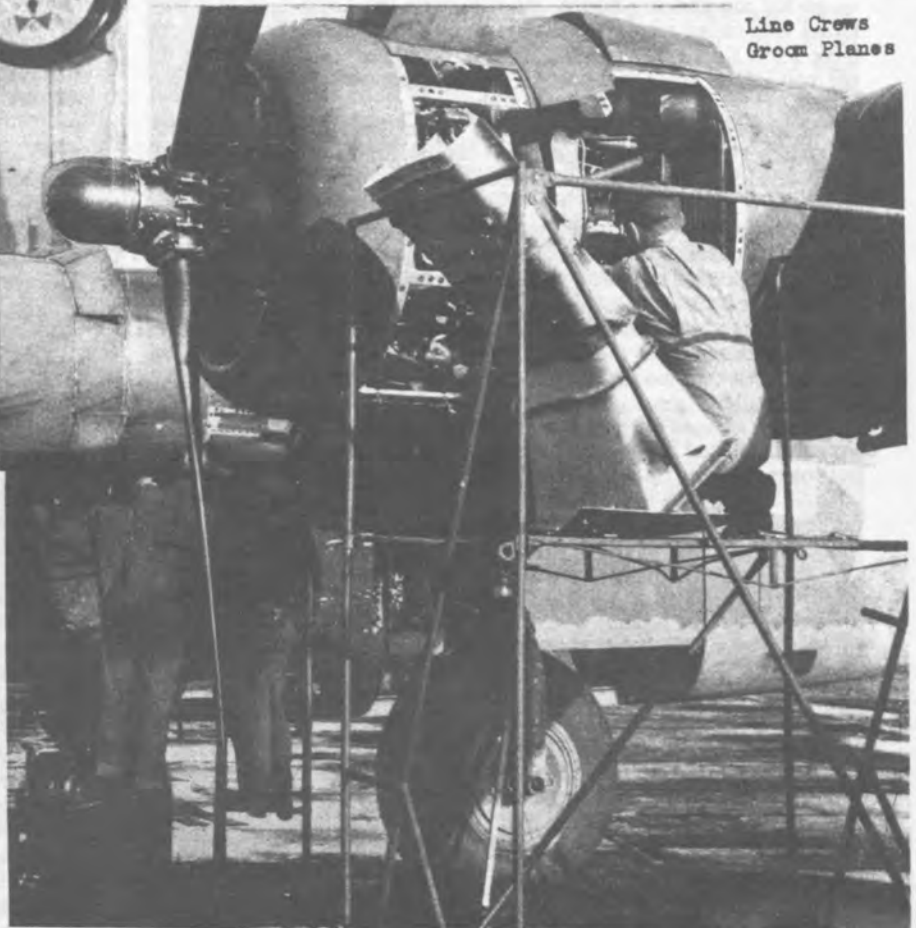


Plotters Track
the Mission



Another
Axis Target
Bullseyed

Line Crews
Groom Planes



Ordnance
Loads the
Target-Busters



All Life Is Choices - Where Do We Stand?

by Mary Frances (Willie) Elder (HDO)

It may be that we are in danger of being lulled into inactivity in our desire for quiet meditation and peaceful pursuits. We must realize that we need more of the consciousness of the world and the age in which we live, because the world cannot be won with meditation and peaceful pursuits. They have their place, but there must be action, there must be enthusiasm, there must be advancement.

The young men we have come together to honor this morning, the 6,032 young men who gave their lives that we might continue to live our lives, would want us to be conscious of what is going on in the world — to be active — to be enthusiastic, to advance toward the peace for which they gave their lives.

We must be aware of the defeatist attitude in our world today — in the magazines, in the newspapers, on TV, we are assailed with pessimistic attitudes toward the condition of the world. They point to the deceased attendance in the churches, to the decadence of our public officials, to the drug problem, the alcoholic problem, and especially the decline in leadership in our country today.

There is so much disillusionment, uncertainty and tragedy in the world today — how can we relieve it? How can we live up to the expectations of those young men who fought and died that this world would be a better place in which to live?

First of all, we can be active — active in politics — yes, dirty politics, we all say — but why is it dirty? Because we have allowed it to become that way — because we haven't bothered to find out the qualifications of our political candidates — because we haven't cared enough to register, much less vote — and you say, what does my vote count? Everything!!! If you don't vote you have no right to complain — I'm not talking about just pulling the lever in the voting booth — I'm talking about reading about, listening to, sizing up the candidates who have put themselves forward for election. I'm talking about active participation in the politics of our cities, counties, states, and the nation. We owe a great debt — the only way we can repay it is by our actions, our interest, our enthusiasm in seeing that our country is the best, the greatest, and the most honorable in the world — each one of us must spread himself enough to cover at least six times over what we would normally do to even begin to repay the debt we owe our "young eagles who will fly no more."

We go back to the Old Testament to find the fundamental things of life when Joshua said, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve — as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." In this way Israel was called upon to make a choice. In our modern times we have John Kennedy's words, "Think not what the country can do for you, think what you can do for your country." We have been called, therefore, also to make a choice.

We find three facts in these words — Choose you this day whom you will serve — or think what you can do for your country: 1) All life is service. 2) We may choose our own way of life. 3) The choice is urgent.

All life is service — we either serve good or evil — man cannot serve two masters. It is a part of man's nature to fear and serve a superior being or superior power — if men do not serve good, if they do not try to correct the evils in the world, if they do not try to overcome the lusts and wickedness prevalent in our world today — then they themselves will become evil — will become victim to the lusts and wickedness surrounding us. Is this the legacy left us by our "fallen eagles?"

We may choose our own way of life. This is one of the joys of living in the United States. No one can dictate our way of life. We can pull ourselves up by our bootstraps to the highest positions in the land — and we see it being done every day. Or, we can sink to the depths of evil — and we see this being done every day, and by people who have had every advantage money, position, and prestige can give. We make the choices — whether for good or evil — we make the choices as to being selfish and only enjoying our own way of life and not being concerned with others; we make the choice as to whether to honor our dead or to ignore what they died for.

And — the choice is urgent. Never before has oration stood in such need for men and women of good heart and conscience to stand up and be counted — to let it be known that we will not stand for our country to be smeared with the stains of greed, lust, ignorance, intolerance, and love of power. We think of the sentence "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country" everytime we see a typewriter — how many times do we think of the words and what they actually mean? NOW IS THE TIME — in politics, in industry — in our personal lives — now is the time to choose.

Dwight L. Moody said, "Life consists of making decisions." Man as a moral agent is free — free to choose, free to think, free to

act. A source of power to choose between good and evil is part and parcel of the primitive consciousness of the human race.

For this reason we are thinking of those ancient words — Choose you this day whom you will serve, and the modern words — think what you can do for your country. The power of choice implies free will and therefore responsibility. Have we accepted the responsibility laid on us? Have we accepted the responsibility of acting for our young fallen heroes to carry out their reason for living — and dying? They made choices too — and they chose to serve their nation in its time of need. Now we have a different kind of need — a need to be active against the pessimism, the defeatism, the decadence in our world today — shall we spend our lives in the service of self, or in the service of humanity?

It is urgent — this choosing — most of us are past forty now — those of us who served in the 2nd Air Division during World War II. This makes it even more urgent for us to act. The love adventure for adventure's sake is gone — the thrill of action has dulled — the ideals have become dimmed — this is a subtle danger of middle age.

Another danger is hopelessness — when we were younger we were all optimists, we believed the best of everyone and everything, but now comes the awakening. We find the world is different from what we had dreamed; we are in danger of judging everything by its worst aspect rather than looking for its best. We have lost, too, the ability to wonder — the thrill about the beauty of the butterfly flying above us — to look at the stars and the moon with awe and wonder — we know that man can walk the moon — it isn't quite as romantic as it used to be. The sense of wonder has passed. Instead, we come to take everything for granted — the beauty of the earth, the love of our friends, the noble deeds of men and women of the past — all these things we cease to thrill about.

BUT — there are compensations!!! Perhaps we do look at the world with a more jaundiced eye than we did when we were twenty — but that doesn't mean that we aren't interested in the world, it means that we see more to work with and more to work for. Maybe we have lost our optimism about the world — but looking at things honestly and seeing them without rose colored glasses doesn't mean we want to crawl in a hole and pull it in after us. It means we must work to make those rose colored dreams come true. It means we must act, and act now at the time our nation needs us most. Those of us who are over forty can see more clearly than we did when we were twenty, and we see the crying need for justice — for truth — for love of mankind — for those things we saw in our twenties to come true — in order to honor our fallen whose rose colored glasses were never dimmed — whose optimism never died — whose love for their fellowmen went above and beyond the call of duty — we owe a debt — let us not forget —

*Not what we have, but what we use,
Not what we see, but what we choose
These are the things that mar or bless
The sum of human happiness*

*Not what seems fair, but what is true
Not what we dream, but the good we do
These are the things that shine like gems
Like stars, in fortune's diadems
Not as we take, but as we give;
Not as we pray, but as we live —
These are the things that make for peace
But now and after time shall cease.*

We are not feathers in the wind, or straws on the stream, but people with souls and wills and consciences, and as people we fix our destiny by our character, and we fix our character by our actions.

Let us remember our debt — let us take action — with optimism — with enthusiasm — and choose this day — and think about what we can do for our country and for the world — in honor and memory of our fallen Eagles.

The above was written for a reunion in Wilmington, NC when I had the privilege of speaking at the Memorial Service on the Battleship North Carolina. Some of you who attended the reunion in Norwich and the installation of the Headquarters Plaque may recognize parts of this speech. Doesn't it seem strange that even after twenty years (or more) it still rings true? What have we done to change our world? We still have time to honor our "fallen Eagles" by taking an active part in the running of our country, our state, our city or town. This is what they left in our hands, and it is still our responsibility. Are we shirkers or workers?

Notes From and About the 466th

by E.W. Nothstein

After all these years of wondering, I decided it was time to ask a few questions about the old base at Attlebridge. My source of information is Ted Clarke of Norwich. Ted worked for Richard Custain, the contractor who built it.

Construction began in the summer of 1940 and it was first occupied by RAF Squadron No. 88, flying twin-engined Blenheim Light Bombers. In mid-1941, the Squadron converted to the A-20 Boston Bomber. Squadron 88 worked with Squadron 105 from Swanton Morley which also flew A-20s. It was from Swanton Morley that U.S. airmen first flew to bomb Europe. On that raid there were three RAF and three USAAF Bostons. The planes used by our airmen were on loan from the RAF.

In the latter part of 1942 the base was used briefly by a USAAF Bombardment Wing, but the type of aircraft and organization cannot be verified.

RAF Squadron No. 320 arrived in 1943 with B-25 Mitchell Bombers. These aircraft were flown by the Dutch Free Forces. This Squadron was forced to out when construction began to enlarge the base for our B-24s.

During the time that the RAF was stationed at Attlebridge the WAAF site was occupied by more than one hundred WAAFs. That will account for some of the odd plumbing in the bath house. When the 466th arrived it was used for enlisted air crew members. The 466th was there from March 1944 to June of 1945, when the bulk of the personnel and aircraft left, after flying a total of 231 bombing missions.

Upon our departure the base was used as a staging base for German POWs. Prisoners were documented, etc. before being released and returned to Germany. They were housed on sites 1 and 2 and allowed the freedom of the area. There were even some, like us, that ventured into

Norwich and a few even married local girls.

Later in 1945 the RAF moved back to the base with a maintenance unit. The primary mission was the storage of bombs and ammunition. The runways were used for bomb storage and ammunition was stored on the hardstands and in Hockering Woods. At this stage, personnel used sites 5 and 6, where they had a mess room and administration building. Personnel assigned during this period was one-hundred plus. This continued until the Air Ministry began to sell off the base in 1959.

The base continues to be occupied, but now by several families who are always glad to receive visitors, and, of course, the turkeys that are quartered on the runways.

If you have any specific questions about the base, send them in to me and I will be glad to try to answer them with the help of Ted Clarke, our contact in Norwich.

The 445th Bomb Group Reporting

by Frank DiMola

The Seventh Annual Southern California Reunion was held on March 9, 1988 at El Toro Marine Corps Air Base. The reunion chairman was Chuck Walker (445th), with a committee of Dick Boucher (445th), Charles McBride (448th), Harry Orthman (492nd-44th) and Fred Thomas (392nd). The success of this reunion can only be expressed by the 215 people that attended the affair.

One of the interesting moments of the reunion was when a young boy, Seth Wolcott, publicly expressed that "the B-24 was a better aircraft than the B-17." This brought loud applause from all the fellows and gals. Val Boucher sent me many photos of the event and I did recognize many faces. At the same time as the California reunion, the 5th Annual Southwest Regional Reunion was held in Dallas, Texas. I have no report of this event at the time of preparing my report. I am sure that somewhere in the Journal a report will be printed.

Evan Harris, the chairman of the Norfolk Glider Club, acknowledged the receipt of another \$1,000 check towards the memorial and the purchase of the runways at Tibenham. Mr. Harris sent me a list of the additional donors that he received directly and I want to thank all of you for your kindness. If you wish to purchase 25 square yards of the runway, please donate \$480.00. Either send it to me or directly to Mr. Harris. A lesser amount will be accepted and will help to purchase the land. Donations are to be made out to "The 445th Bomb Group Memorial."

The mail service is getting better somewhere in America but not for me. I received a Christmas card from Ian MacTaggart from Halstead, Essex, England on March 13, 1988, and it was mailed on December 3, 1987. Never too late, Ian, and thanks a lot. Ian Mac is an associate member of the 2nd A.D. and is very interested in activities of the association. We are looking for a photo of the aircraft "Consolidated Mess." If anyone has a photo of this aircraft, kindly send me a copy so I can send it to Ian.

On the subject of photos, I got several requests for any of Glenn Miller's photos from his visit to Tibenham. It is very interesting to have so many of the younger generation to look into our past experience while we served in the Air Force. I again repeat what I have said in previous reports: Just sit down sometime and record some of your events while in service and send them to me or the Norwich Library in England. Think about it. I want to thank Carl Rambo (462nd Sub-Depot), for the enlarged copies that he sent to me.

Howard Powell played the coronet in a band in the Norwich area and played in various spots and army clubs. Do any of you recall "The GI-ers" or "The Jones Boys" in honor of W.W. Jones, our CO?

A special news item was sent to me regarding saluting the Liberator on its 50th anniversary, May 19-21, 1989, in Fort Worth, Texas. Another site for the anniversary is being planned for San Diego, California. Maybe by that time the B-24J located at Stow, Mass. belonging to Bob Collings will be in flying condition. Then we can have one in the east coast area. More details on these events will follow.

A tale with much emotion: One of our associate members has joined the Heritage League and has been asking questions — "Did you know my dad, Robert Zoboc, who was a waist gunner on Crew #8440?" He also knew some of the members of the crew: William D. Wilkinson, pilot; Guenther E. Luckenback, co-pilot; and Hank Erich, ground engineer. Ed finally got in touch with some members of the crew with much emotion. He made contact with Jack Schmidt and Jack Mills. The wonderful part of this contact was that Jack Mills sent to the son Ed one of his father's letters. How we do cherish such events after 40 some odd years. Ed Zoboc has attended several mini-reunions in Dayton, Ohio. Hey Ed, I am still trying to sign up the rest of the crew. Drop them a line and get them interested, OK?

My two assistants are hard at work — Mary Beth Barnard in preparing a history of our group and Buddy Cross, my assistant vice president. Buddy is due to retire from the "8 to 5 Rat Race" and now he will be able to spend more time in his west-of-the-Mississippi area to get members to join up. I will see them in June to thank them for their help.

Updated rosters are still available for anyone wanting one. Look for information in the previous issue of the Journal.

A historian from West Germany is looking for info about three aircrafts that crashed near his home in Rodenroth, Germany. He gives aircraft numbers and a list of the crews. Ship 579: "Paper Doll," Alfred Looney (p). Ship 556: "Little Bil," William E. Shurtz (p). Ship 517: "Too Tired," Thomas Gray (p), and Ship 335, Peter T. Abell (p). He found a set of dog tags #18-051-576 of Robert L. Whittet. Also found was a Waltham watch with a serial number on a watch from the instrument panel from a/c "Too Tired" and still in working order. (Since I was an instrument specialist in the group, I did something right.) He has collected many fragments of these aircrafts and is going to send me photos of it all. When he does, I will have it published in the next issue.

In the Herborn Museum, West Germany, one whole department is all about "Air War in This Part of Germany." Among other things in the museum is a propeller blade of Ship No. 42-7579, "Paper Doll." This gentleman also sent me a map of the area we mentioned above.

So, till we meet again in Colorado, I will say "Ta-ta, you all."

Paralyzed With Fear

by Ken Jones (389th)

April 4, 1945 — Parchim
German Airfield — Secondary Wesendorf
Aircraft K-567th BS
Flight Time 8:15 hrs.
Bomb Load 12-150 lb. G.P.

The silver screen — hometown USA — A Sioux War Chief mounts his pony on the run. He gives a blood curdling war cry and shouts, "It's a great way to die."

At briefing we learn we are going to blast the German fighters where they eat their sauerkraut und weinerschnitzel, on the home field in northwestern Germany. Going to meet an ugly "widow maker" in the sunshine.

Flying Lead, Low Left Squadron of 389th Bomb Group. Visual takeoff from base. Some clouds predicted over target. 6/10s to 10/10s in some places.

Unopposed on penetration. A few black smudges of 88s out of range to let us know we are expected. Code word given for primary target visual. We started to uncover to trail the lead squadron at the group IP. While making this slow left turn, I looked down through an opening in the clouds and saw two German fighters taking off from an airfield. Alerted gunners, "Bandits airborne."

One minute or less later, I saw a jet turbine ME 262 coming at us from 9 o'clock level and circling to our rear. I pulled the squadron in close. I don't know why I did it but we were slightly offset to the right of the lead squadron upon completion of the turn. The clock stopped ticking and we braced ourselves for the attack. This twin-jet "bomber destroyer" can punch out 96 lbs. of 30 mm canon shells in one three-second burst.

The jet seemed to hesitate and overshot our portside. I think he was going for someone in our low squadron and he misjudged his turn. At a distance he was watching the lead squadron and thought our squadron would come out of the turn in line with the lead. The jet was faster than anything I have ever seen. Joe Walko, left waist gunner, saw him coming all the way and only got off a short burst of 21 rounds of ammo.

Untouched, the jet pulled up, climbing to the lead squadron, his speed falling off. He dropped his flaps, which had holes in them like a navy dive bomber. The Luftwaffe Sturmvogel jet was now flying at formation speed behind #6, B-24 X-, in the three plane element directly behind and below the lead ship. Jerry parked there with his motor running, about 200 yards out.

This action and the following events took place in seconds.

There was no screaming dive to attack with a few short bursts of firepower, followed by a fast, fading breakaway.

Jerry was reckless. He wanted to die — to be out of it. No one tried to help him.

Coming out of nowhere, the German pilot eased up behind X- with his engines idling. Up to this point he hasn't fired a single round of canon shells. The tail gunner in X- spins his turret and lines up his

twin fifties and the movement stops. The gunner does not fire his machine guns.

He sits there in disbelief. Time is suspended. Jerry is looking straight down the tail gunner's throat with four 30 mm canons. They stare at each other. The gunner is paralyzed with fear. The last thing the gunner will see is four orange flashes of light from the nose of the jet.

The tail turret shattered. Dissolved. The jet pilot touched his right rudder and fired short bursts. A real ace. The top turret and waist gunners on X- cannot bring their gun sights to bear on the German. Other gunners in the slot or bucket element did not fire their guns, apparently watching in fascination. Damn! I wish I had my squirrel rifle. I can hear someone screaming "Shoot...Shoot" into my oxygen mask.

The right stabilizer came off X- and came sailing down through our squadron, big as a barn door. I could see the impact of canon shell fire striking No. 3 engine and then shifting over to No. 2. Debris was flying off and sailing back into the slipstream. B-24 X-went into a flat spin, trailing smoke.

We were so close, I could see mud splattered on the fuselage of the German plane. The Luftwaffe pilot in the mottled colored jet popped his flaps and dove for the clouds. No shots were fired at him except from our plane on the way in. X- spun into the clouds and no chutes were seen by our gunners.

Like shooting fish in a barrel! I feel nauseated. Half anger and half fear. Maybe mostly fear that "there go I."

Completed bomb run and did not release bombs because clouds obscured the target. Lots of bandit chatter in the air dilutes the threat of flak bursting around us. Going full bore "at a walk" toward the rally point.

Code word given for the secondary target at Wesendorf. Made the IP and uncover from group formation to bomb by squadron. Looking for fighters. The bombardier can see the German airfield and I know we'll get this one visual. Just sitting there. Letting the auto-pilot and bombsight take us on in. Black stuff boiling up to meet us with an explosive welcome.

"Bombs Away" and let's get the hell out of here. Flak moderate to meager. Depends where you are on the dance floor when the band begins to play.

No such thing as an easy mission. If there is only one burst of flak and it gets you, it's a rough mission.

2nd Combat Wing under fighter attacks, off and on for thirty-five minutes. Must be mostly green pilots, they don't seem too aggressive and we don't see anyone else go down. The fighter screen is very effective at keeping Jerry at bay.

Saw many enemy aircraft and dog fights. P-51s diving and climbing all over the sky. The Mustangs better keep their distance — the boys looking over 50 cal. machine guns are a little nervous.

One bomber, another group, had No. 3 on fire. Trailing flame and smoke. A cripple and a straggler. Falling back of his formation. Our navigator, Pat Patterson, praying out loud for them on the intercom. Finally, prayers answered, the fire went out. Still falling behind. Hope the friendlies escorted them out. A straggler will attract a lot of attention today.

The war gives you two choices; kill or be killed. Whether you are on the ground in a fox hole or 4½ miles up in the sky, you get him or he gets you. It's impersonal and insane. You must decide ahead of time just how you will react. You can't call a "time out" while you think about it. You just do it.

Sudden death in the cold, rarified atmosphere of altitude. A tear is shed for ten young men gone in the blinking of an eye and for those who lived to see it happen. The sky has no memory because of gravity. We can't place ten wooden crosses or a granite stone here as a memorial to lost comrades. No marker can be placed to say, "This is where it happened." A scar on the brain and a terse message, "Missing in Action" is all that remains.

Change of Address

When you move please send your change of address to:

Evelyn Cohen
06-410 Delaire Ldg. Rd.
Philadelphia, PA 19114

on the form below, as soon as possible. To send the change to anyone else (Bill Robertie or Group VP) simply delays the change appearing on our records. This could mean that the next issue of the *Journal* will go to your old address and could be lost in the great jaws of the Post Office.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

name

address

group



Open Letter To the 93rd

by Floyd H. Mabee (93rd)

Please forgive me for not answering all of your correspondence. I just haven't been able to keep up with it, but will answer you just as soon as I can. I want to thank those of you that have sent me some of the information that I have asked for in the Journal. I still need copies of original orders from 329th and 330th Squadron members that flew overseas with the original 93rd group. Please check the Fall 1987 Journal for information that I have requested in several Journals; some of our 500 members must have a copy, PLEASE.

MEMBERSHIP: I have tried to set my priorities more on membership for the 2nd ADA and 93rd BG than anything else; that is the Vice Presidents' main duty. The following figures are approximately correct. The 1986 roster showed 362 93rd members, 13 other groups listed before the 93rd in roster and 9 Associate members; we can only claim our 93rd members. As of 18 April we have 504 93rd members, 32 other groups, and 17 Associates. 15 have passed away since 7/86. We did have 522 members until I received notice from Evelyn Cohen on 2/26/88 that 20 members had been dropped for non-payment of 1988 dues. I immediately sent letters to them and so far 4 have reinstated. I will also send a follow-up letter to those that are still delinquent. As of 3/31/88 I have sent out a total of 302 applications. So, along with taking care of my homes in N.J. and Florida, all of my spare time has been spent working for the 93rd.

I arrived back to my N.J. address the evening of 10 April, didn't finish unpacking and was on my way to Pittsburgh, Pa on 13 April to attend the 2nd ADA Executive Committee meeting and was also on the Internal Audit Committee. You will receive more information on this at a later date. I can assure you that the 2nd ADA is financially sound, due to the wonderful job of our treasurer Dean Moyer. This gentleman deserves a great big thanks from all of you. While at the Executive Meeting, Evelyn invited some group members and their wives who live in the Pittsburgh area to have lunch with us Saturday afternoon. From the 93rd I met Hugh & Lydia Pofi of the 409th and Marty and Elvy Naberezny of the 328th. After lunch they showed the "Last Mission" tape. We had a very enjoyable afternoon. I arrived back in N.J. the evening of the 17th to find that my 2nd ADA mail had piled up much more, and in it was a notice from Bill Robertie that the deadline for the VPs' report for the summer Journal was due 15 April. Luckily for me, he had extended the deadline to 20 April; otherwise I wouldn't have had my report submitted in time, there aren't enough hours in the day.

FOLDED WINGS: The following 93rd member I don't believe was a member of the 2nd ADA, so for the members that might have known him, I have an obituary memorial letter written by his wife and passed on to me. Anyone who would like a copy, let me know, I just don't have room to print it in my report. His name is John "Jack" Parker Doswell, 64, of Sarasota, Florida. Distinguished combat pilot with the 93rd passed away Nov. 29, 1987. Our condolences to his wife and family.

INFORMATION FOR THE JOURNAL: I didn't see very many stories or letters from 93rd members in the Spring Journal, so let's get with it, fellows. Send your stories and pictures to William G. Robertie, VP for the Journal. Please don't send them to me, I just can't handle any more work.

INFORMATION NEEDED: Anyone that might know the present address of Karl Anderson, formerly from Jackson, Michigan? He was co-pilot on "Big Fat Butterfly" B-24 #42-99939. March 3, 1944, target Oranien, Germany, 23 aircraft despatched. At 1136 hours, enroute to target, Div. Air Comm. decided to turn back because of adverse weather conditions. This ship crashed and exploded after takeoff. Three were killed, and seven freed themselves from wreckage. Killed was: 2/Lt. John F. O'Brien; 2/Lt. Stanley Jacobson; and S/Sgt. Salvatore M. Cambria. S/Sgt. Melvin M. Morrison died later in the hospital. His grandson, Donald K. Morrison, 2nd ADA Assoc. member would like any information about his grandfather and the location of Karl Anderson.

MEMORIAL AT WRIGHT PATTERSON AIR FORCE MUSEUM: Progress has been rather slow. January 6, 1988 I sent out letters to my assisting officers, requesting that they draw up on a 10 x 12" space their idea of wording for our proposed Memorial at Dayton, and return them to me as soon as possible. To date I have received two and my own. When I receive them, they will be sent to our chairman, Bill Doerner, for him and his committee to make the final decision on the wording. We have funds left that I noted in your Winter Journal, but I think we will need more, so any donations will be greatly appreciated. Send your checks, made out to the "93rd Bomb Group Memorial Fund," to Ltc. Charles J. Weiss (Ret.), 21 Moran Drive, Woldorf, MD 20601. New donors' names will be added to the list of those listed in the pamphlet we handed out at our dedication at Hardwick.

"LAST MISSION" TAPE: If you already have a copy of this tape and weren't at our reunion in England, for your information the 93rd was represented very well, but no mention that the picture was someone from the 93rd. Only once was the 93rd mentioned, otherwise it is good. A lot of our members there were shown, our beautiful monument was flashed on and

off. It is worth the donation, which is \$25.00 per tape.

93RD ROSTER: For the benefit of new members, you can purchase an up-to-date 93rd Roster from Frederick A. Stromborn, Box 646, Ogema, WI 54459. The cost is \$3.00 for roster plus geographical, or \$2.00 without the geographical listing. Any member of the 2nd ADA may purchase one.

INFORMATION NEEDED FROM 93RD AND 44TH B.G. MEN: 93rd BG, 328th Sqdn. plane No. 42-95095, "Liberty Belle," transferred to the 44th BG sometime after 8 March 1945. On the way back to the States, it crashed in the Highlands of Scotland with 44th BG crew and six passengers all killed. I.T. Shuttleworth, 19 Fairfax Rd., Virginia Estate, Middleton St. George, Darlington, County Durham, England DL2 1HF, found the wreckage as a youth while walking the Highlands in 1971. He has erected a memorial plaque at the crash site. He would like any information and a picture if possible of this plane. Possibly this plane was G.H. equipped. He would also like to hear from anyone that flew a G.H. equipped plane who can tell him about the equipment, and, does anyone remember S/Sgt. John H. Hollissey of the 93rd. He will pay the cost of any reproduction and return anything loaned.

INFORMATION NEEDED: In January 1944, the Commanding General, 2nd Bomb. Div., AAF 147, APO 558, Attn. A-2, sent to all Bomb Groups a 2nd BD instructions 45-1, dd 23 Jan. '44, asking each group to send in a list of their aircraft, with names and descriptions of any pictures on some, with colors. Would anyone happen to have a copy of this list for the 93rd? Please send me a copy if you have this.

Area Dinner October 1, 1988

We are planning to hold an Area Dinner on October 1, 1988 for members in New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland. The location is the Hyatt Regency in Princeton, NJ where we held the last Area Dinner in 1984. Notices will be mailed on or about August 1, 1988. If you do not receive one by the middle of August and would like to attend, write to:

H.C. 'Pete' Henry
164B Portland Lane
Jamesburg, NJ 08831
Tel. 1-609-655-0982

Raid on Politz, Germany - 20 June 1944

by Nicholas B. Kehoe

Take-off was at 0430. The 14th Wing of 2nd Division was to be the lead wing over the target. That put the 44th Group with three squadrons as lead Group. The 492nd, our group, was second with three squadrons. I was pilot on B-24J 44-40112 and was leading the low squadron of twelve aircraft.

Assembly and Group, Wing and Division rendezvous were normal, but the "on course" air speed was slow — quote Major Losee, 492nd Group Command pilot (who also landed in Sweden), "we indicated 150-153 just about all the way." I had a little difficulty keeping my squadron in position, low and to the rear of our lead squadron, all the way to the Danish coast, due to this slow speed.

While crossing the Danish islands, I placed my squadron directly under our lead Squadron, slightly in trail. I was gradually sliding out into position from trail when fighters struck. Reports on formation at time of enemy action seemed favorable; tail gunner of Group lead ship and navigator of another ship in high squadron said formation was in good position. Our altitude was approximately 21,000 feet.

The first indication I had of enemy action was the sight of hundreds of 20 mm shells exploding all around us. It was 0902-0915. The lead group was starting a turn to the right, as scheduled, to hit the I.P. I was getting ready to start into trail on our lead squadron.

A loud explosion was my indication that we had been hit. When I turned around the whole flight deck was in flames. For a moment, sky could be seen through the large shell hole above the radio operator's table.

Smoke became dense in pilot's and radio compartments as there was no escape for it. The co-pilot immediately left his seat to fight the fire, which proved to be too much for those (co-pilot, radio operator and engineer) on the flight deck due to heavy smoke and oxygen want (all rubber oxygen outlets were destroyed by the fire and walk-around bottles were not used.)

Sometime during these fleeting seconds, I gave warning on bell and interphone system. Bombardier must have opened bomb-bays and salvoed bombs, as smoke was sucked out flight deck when draft was created. It was only then that I was able to see that there was no one left on the flight deck and gave bail-out alarm and interphone command. Don't know whether either was successful, but plane was sure empty later on.

Several flares caught fire and went off; wiring that lined the wall behind radio table was burning as was upholstery and rug on both sides of the deck. Flak suits and extra equipment on deck and behind pilot and co-pilot seats were burning. My vision was

hampered due to smoke film on windows. I opened the side window, which seemed to draw much of the smoke back to the cockpit.

As I remember, my turn after being hit was to the left and down at about 270 mph. Gathered this excess speed while removing flak suit, helmet, safety belt and looking for action on the radio deck. Don't know what prompted me to stay at controls as long as I did for great fear of explosion was experienced. Perhaps I was afraid to fumble through that smoke and flame. Thank heavens those bomb-bays opened to clear the smoke.

No. 3 engine was out (determined by back and forth movement of throttle without power response). With oil pressure around 10-20# on indicator I feathered #3 engine. No. 1 engine registered at 30# where it remained. Later throttle and rpm changes would not register — the system out, I guess. Could not feather No. 1.

When equipment behind my seat started smoldering, I reached for fire extinguisher behind pilot's seat on armor-plating, but in doing so, my ungloved right hand touched hot metal armor plating and tore off pieces of skin from the back of my hand. I had turned my oxygen to emergency rich and had pulled down my goggles. Pulled salvo handle so violently that the whole mechanism came out in my hand.

I left pilot's compartment perhaps two minutes after the strike when plane was trimmed at 220 mph and went to bomb-bays to jump. For some reason I hesitated to leave the aircraft and started back into the radio compartment. The front of the plane (carrying nose-navigator, bombardier and navigator) was deserted. I couldn't see into the rear of the aircraft because of the retracted Sperry ball-turret. I seemed to be the only one aboard.

I attempted to use the fire extinguisher but co-pilot, radioman or engineer had used it all when fire first broke out. Tossed out several pieces of burning equipment and attempted to stamp and beat out fire with little success. A yellow emergency case containing several cans of water was in the corner of the flight deck. I split open can by can, tossing water about on the flames. All my actions were jerky and without thought. Had to climb to controls from bomb-bay and radio compartment several times to retrim plane.

Command pilot's seat, between pilot's and co-pilot's seat, was afire. I ripped it out. A piece of burning flak suit lodged between bomb-bay supports under gas tanks to add to the danger, but soon burned up and fell out. Used large oxygen bottle on flight deck — oxygen hoses were burned up. Pure oxygen saved me from suffocation.

Back in pilot's seat, I cleaned front window with my arm — coming up on island of Bornholm (Dan.). Went around it to left as light flak was coming up. Could see more land ahead through the haze. Put wheel handle to down position. Nothing happened. Retrimmed and went to bomb-bay to wind down wheels. Could turn mechanism only about 1½ times. Guess I was weak. Plane seemed to be slowing down — by sound. Dashed to controls to nose her down.

A good share of the fire was out when I reached the coast of what proved to be Sweden. I wasn't sure that Sweden lay below because I hadn't been at controls much to watch the compass.

I definitely made up my mind to jump as I could find no airports or suitable fields and was losing altitude rapidly. The plane was still burning; landing gear would not go down. Came in over land, turned 180° and headed plane out to sea at about 180 mph and went to bomb-bay and jumped. All was quiet.

The plane went straight and down for a few moments, then gradually into a stall and spin. Spun into open field at Klagstorp, two miles north of the town of Appo, Sweden.

I had bailed out at about 4,000 ft. and landed in a sugar-beet field in the township of Vallby, village of Trelleborg, county of Scania, 20 June 1944, approximately 0940. (20-30 minutes after attack).

Lt. Seitzinger, flying #4 in my squadron, said that after we were hit, smoke and flame was pouring from bomb-bays and rear section. I presume that it was because of this that members jumped. I had been unable to see the condition of the rear of the plane from bomb-bays. Other airmen said that they saw chutes opening and that fighters were circling open parachutes at lower altitude and that several boats were seen in the area.

We were hit by ME-210s or 410s — some say 150-180 attacked us in two or three waves. I saw but three of them as they crossed my "nose" and left wing at about 100 ft.

I was met by several town people and home guard and was taken to a farmer's house to wash and eat (first fresh milk since I left the States — chicken too, and a brandy to steady my nerves). Two Swedish officers came and returned me to Trelleborg about noon. At my request, they took me to inspect the wreckage. I spent about an hour looking for traces of personnel (dog tags, etc.) that might have been in plane. None were found. Plane was a complete wreck having blown up on contact with the ground.

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
William F. Davenport



Well, once again we have the opportunity to make all our Second Air Division friends envious. You know, it is really too bad that you couldn't have all been Brogger's Bungay Buckaroos. If so, the war may have ended before yours truly had the opportunity to spend five months with this glorious group. I must furtherstate that I came for the number two punch and was stateside when once again the 446th came through with number three, which we will cover in our subsequent sequels honoring the "Famed 446th Bombardment Group from Flixton Field near Bungay."

The scene: Late spring, early summer. Everyone had the feeling the invasion of Hitler's fortress was not far off. Men who had the good fortune to get to London were peppered with questions: "Was the city empty? Were there any parachutists in town? Had the Commandos moved to Dover? What was Picadilly like with only a male population?" All stories told of the English countryside as observed from the train and the eyes of air crewmen to be lanes jammed with trucks, half tracks and tanks all moving south to London and southward to channel ports.

It had been noted by the crews at the mission briefings that an apparent emphasis had been placed on tactical targets rather than strategic. The targets of the 446th were no longer the factories deep in Germany but were now the airfields and freight yards in France. *Ed comment: This was not to save fuel and maximize the number of missions, Something Big Big was in the wind. If any doubt existed, such targets as gun emplacements and flying bomb locations along and near the coast became targets not only for the 446th Buckaroos but for the Eighth and Ninth Air Force Units as well.*

The Luftwaffe was conspicuous by its absence. Had the famed marksmanship of the 446th gunners reached Goerings headquarters and he ordered his fighters to avoid those Liberators with the big circled H on the tail? (Was this really the reason we changed our tail markings to the yellow with a black stripe so as to fool the Luftwaffe into again challenging the invincible Buckaroos?)

From June 2nd to the 5th, thousands of tons of bombs hit the French invasion coast from 446th airplanes together with assistance from other units. Yes, there were signs that the important day wasn't far off. And then it came.

Tuesday, June 6, 1944 — D-Day — It was the long-awaited day. There were indications late Monday afternoon that something extraordinary was happening. People were restricted to the base. Lots of activity in the operations and intelligence areas. Crew chiefs were unusually curt to their crews, insisting on super maximum performance in readying the aircraft for the morrow's mission. (No one knew that tomorrow's mission was as many as three for some of our 446th fleet.) The bomb load consisted of a mix of 1000 and 500 pound GP, the fuel load to be 2300 gal. Flying Control — Major Charlie "Handlebar" Smith learned that six ship elements would take off at ten minute intervals. Squadron operations were alerted to the maximum efforts. After evening chow, the planes were rearranged in the dispersals areas by the crew chiefs. In the early evening hours, just as night was falling, the Libs stood ready to do their job against the faint light of the sky, and the lights from their companion's bomb bays, just as their own lights silhouetted the other aircraft. Last minute checks were run in the intricate electrical, hydraulic, pneumatic systems and the armament loads were assessed for safety and accuracy.

The Field Order detailing the mission came in. The 446th Bombardment Group with Colonel Jacob Brogger flying as Command Pilot was to lead the Second Bombardment Division and the Eighth Air Force over the invasion coast. The Tannoy system at Station

125 announced, or blared, "Lead crews, pilots, bombardiers and navigators, report to S-2 immediately." This was for special briefings. There would be an absolute minimum of sack time tonight. The main briefing was scheduled for 2230.

The Intelligence briefing officer covered the target. "You are to strike the beach defense at (pause) Vierville," he said, "dropping your bombs not later than two minutes before zero hour. (Zero hour was 0630.) Landing craft and troopswill be 100 yards to one mile off shore as you attack," he continued, "and naval ships will be shelling our targets on shore. Deadline on the primary target is zero hour minus two minutes, or 0628. After that bomb the secondary target which is the road junction at..." His voice trailed off.

More information passed. Our little friends, 51s, 47s and 38s would patrol the area with a primary mission to protect the bombers. After the bombers were safely on their way home, they would attack their previously briefed ground targets. A short message from General Doolittle stating the importance of this effort and wishing well was read. The briefing was over.

Trucks waited in a long line outside the briefing room to carry the crews to their planes. The ships were preflighted and the early morning stillness was broken by the roaring engines. At 0130 the roar of engines could be hard in all parts of East Anglia. There was a bright moon with a thick black undercast rolling in from the west. By 0200 the planes were formed in two lines on the perimeter, converging at the head of the runway. Navigation lights were out and there was an eeriness about the scene with the roaring engines and the glow of an exhaust here and there as the pilot and flight engineer adjusted the fuel ratio.

In the plane, which rested with its nose pointed down the runway, was Captain Charlie Ryan in the left seat of his familiar B-24 "Red Ass" which had just had a new nose job as the "Buckaroo" (Better public relations). In the right seat sat Colonel Jacob Brogger, who was destined to be in command of the first ship over the continent on D-Day.

On his return from this historic mission, Col. Brogger summed it up: "We had a good tail wind all the way; ran into an overcast as we passed over the channel. I could see through the breaks in the clouds strings of landing barges heading toward France. We were hoping for a break in the clouds so we could see our bombs hit, but it was a solid overcast ahead of us over the continent as far as we could see. There was no enemy fighters and no sign of flak."

The next day the Station Bulletin published the following: "I congratulate all commanders on the highly superior record and performance of the units on D-Day. You went far beyond even the heavy commitments required of you.

"The following facts are transmitted for your information: 1000 aircraft of this Division were dispatched and of these, 97.4% were over their targets. Of this great force, the majority of which took off at night, only one aircraft has thus far been reported lost, and that by a crash landing. General Dolittle observed the bombing of the first and largest wave of this Division. He has informed me that he was greatly impressed with the smoothness and orderliness of the flow over the target. The precision with which the HEX ships dropped their smoke markers and the bombing on these markers by the balance of the force. Information indicates that the landing beaches were terrifically beaten up with bombs. General Dolittle further informed me that the ground forces were most complimentary on the support they received from the Air Force and were particularly appreciative of the absence of the tragic bombing errors that it was feared might occur and which so often mar operations of this nature. This day's work reflects the greatest credit on your units. Keep it Up — Hodges"

Yes, once again all members of the 446th Bombardment Group can be proud of their efforts in the air war of Europe.

Keep Tuned to Beachbell.

Convicted – By A Short Snorter!

by James H. Lorenz (466th)



Remember the "Short Snorters" — those dollar bills (silver certificates, no less!) that we all signed during our service in the 1940s? As I recall, among the air crews, if one was caught in a pub or bar without his "Snorter," he had to buy for all those who could produce one. Needless to say, we all carried these diligently. And to this day, they are treasured mementos.

My Short Snorter is a 1935 series silver certificate — C369258774C — signed initially by our B-24 crew, B-24J 127. (Lts. Poutry, Lorenz, Coon, and Westby; Sgts. Crute, Crawford, Beckett, Fielden, Moushon, Van Winkle).

One often wonders, are all these "treasures" we save of any use or value? Let me assure you this one was!

Early in December, 1976, I worked for Union Carbide Corporation in New York City and we lived just north of White Plains, New York. My wife, Mary, often picked me up at the North White Plains commuter railroad station around 5:45 p.m. On Dec. 8, 1976, she left our home about 5:15 p.m., met me and we returned home about 6 p.m. As we entered our driveway, we noticed the shades were drawn in our front bedrooms and the lights were on — not the way we normally leave the house. As we were deciding what to do, a police car came by and we hailed them. The two policemen cautioned us to remain outside and they would search the house. One went to the rear and found the door open; the other went in through the front door. The found no one — but our house had been thoroughly ransacked. All bureau and dresser drawers were pulled out and contents strewn over the floors. Silver, jewelry, some money and other items, a total of some \$9,000 value, had been taken — in our pillow cases and our suitcases.

We were sure it was someone in the area, who must have watched Mary's departure. The police car was actually answering a call from our neighbor, whose home had also been entered. There was a rented van parked across the street; the police searched it and found some of our things in it. Our burglar apparently couldn't get the van started, so he paid a neighbor boy some cash to "store" some things in his car. The burglar then rented another car and returned to our street to recover "his" items while all the detectives were still on the street. He was apprehended. The police recovered the money paid to the neighbor boy and came back to our house. "Did you have any money in your house which had writing on it?" they asked. I thought for a moment — and wondered if they could have taken my Short Snorter. I described my dollar bill and the police said, "That's it!" They had recovered it in the money paid to the boy next door and would keep it as evidence.

We thought this case would be a cinch for early conviction. The police had found some jewelry which we could describe and some of Mary's travellers checks in the van. What more could they need?

We soon found out, as we attended the preliminary hearing in the local court. This court had to determine if the case would go to a grand jury or be dismissed due to insufficient evidence. The judge would not accept our identification and description of any of our jewelry which was found in the van as evidence. No one had seen him in our house taking it. Even Mary's travellers checks were not evidence — the judge said Mary could have given them to this guy! We were stymied — as all of our other silverware which we had photographed at a Thanksgiving dinner was not recovered. The police had determined that the silver had been taken to New York City on the train and was most likely melted down within the hour. So chances of ever recovering it to be used as evidence were zero.

At a recess, the assistant district attorney laid out everything they had recovered to check through it again. He soon spotted my Short Snorter. "What is this?" he asked. I explained it and he was delighted. "This will do it," he exclaimed. (The DA was a young lawyer born well after WWII). The judge accepted the fact that I would never voluntarily give away this treasure! Thus, by taking my Short Snorter, the burglar "placed" himself in our house (in the judge's mind) and did possess something of value from our house.



Standing, l-r: Lt. Harold Westby (bombardier), Lt. M.F. Coon (navigator), Lt. D.H. Lorenz (co-pilot), Lt. D.L. Poutry (pilot). Kneeling, l-r: S/Sgt. Terry Fielden (armor tail gunner), Sgt. Larrie Van Winkle (upper turret gunner), Cpl. Bill Beckett (ball gunner), Sgt. Bob Mousdon (radio operator), Sgt. Forrest Crute (engineer), S/Sgt. Carl Crawford (nose gunner).

The grand jury was convened and quickly agreed - evidence enough for a trial. Just as the trial was about to begin, the accused man confessed to burglary 3rd degree, a felony. Thus, my Short Snorter actually convicted the man and he was sentenced to a prison term.

So, fellows, hang on to your Short Snorters — they may get you more than a drink.

Incidentally, another story about a signed dollar bill, involving a crew from the 493rd Bomb Group, 8th Air Force, is in the September 1987 issue of *Guideposts*, pages 30-34. The article by Dan Salters, "Till We Meet Again," details his efforts to reunite a B-17 crew (all strangers to him) through finding a signed dollar bill.

Missives from the 492nd

by Bill Clarey

The latest roster count shows that we now have 172 members in the Second Air Division Association. This figure was taken from the March 1988 roster. The 8th AFHS shows that in 1984 we had 63 members in that organization. As of April 1, 1988, we have 120 members. So, a "thank you" is in order to all people responsible for getting new members into the organizations.

I wish to thank the Dave Pattersons for inviting us to a dinner at their home when Lady Barne was here on a visit. Lady Barne was on her way back to England after having visited Australia.

Does anyone know the whereabouts of a Carl Frazier? He transferred to the 467th at Rackheath when the 492nd was disbanded. Carl is looking for Norman D. Brown's address. It is: 2503 Judson Rd., D-1, Longview, Texas 75601-1708.

There has been a "lot to do" with museums these days. If you have anything to spare, please contact Jordan Uttal if you don't know what to do with your uniforms, etc. Hopefully, the 492nd will be well represented when all is said and done.

Let's get started on the B-24 display at Pima Air Museum at Tucson, Arizona. If the B-17 can have a place of honor, so can the airplane that brought us back time after time. Send your contributions to Virgil Falkner, 8936 Calle Kuehn, Tucson, AZ 85715. Be sure to show your bomb group when you send in your check.

I have only three shoulder patches left. \$6.00 each plus a little postage.

Last January 30, a dinner was held at Travis AFB for all the 8th AF people

residing in California. Over 1800 brochures were mailed out. Some were returned. We had over 300 people attend. The Air Force Band of The Golden Gate entertained us with their music and singing. There are 39 members in the band, and, believe me, the group got several standing ovations. After the concert, an auction was held by Bill Getz of the 491st in which there were a lot of items concerning General James H. (Jimmy) Doolittle.

Thanks to those people who send "kudos" to me regarding the "Missives" etc. One of these days I won't be wearing so many hats. Then, I think I'll be able to do a better job.

The May 1988 issue of the magazine *World War II* has very interesting articles in it, especially about the Second Air Division.

The Valiant 93rd

by Milton R. Watters

The fog lay on the runway
As our engines roared to life.
For, once again, we were
About to challenge fate.
Our B-24s were readied,
The ground crew saw to that,
For all were members of the valiant 93rd.
As we sped down the runway,
We lifted into the blue
To find red, red, yellow —
Our colors for that day.
Our lead ship in position,
His wingmen at his sides,
We dropped into the bucket
As Tail-End Charlie brought up the rear,
Members of the valiant 93rd.
Our lead ship in command,
Our skipper in control,
We flew the English Channel
Over Holland to Cologne,
Together, members of the valiant 93rd.
The skipper broke the tension,
"Bomb run — 30 seconds."
We felt the bay doors open
As the nose gunner came through loud
and clear,
"Flack field dead ahead."
We knew that gauntlet we would fly
Straight and true.
Neither up nor down — to nor fro,
But like the arrow leaves the bow,
Tail-End Charlie took a burst
In engine number three.
But yet, that gallant skipper
Held her straight and true.
That gauntlet they would fly,
No matter what the cost,
For they were members of the valiant 93rd.

Our left wingman just disappeared,
Our right wingman held through
As he took a burst in engine number two
And one in engine number three.
Once again we could only sit and pray!
We counted ten white, silken mushrooms
Blossom in the sky
As Tail-End Charlie took a burst
In engine number one.
We watched the smoke come out
His engine number four.
We watched those ten white, silken
mushrooms
That blossomed in the sky.
Two above and two below
And two from out the nose,
And two just seemed to blossom
In the cold blue sky.
But yet, the valiant skipper
And a member of his crew
Had that gauntlet they must fly,
No matter what the cost,
For they were members of the valiant 93rd.
His nose dropped slightly.
She seemed to shiver and to shake
Like the flesh upon our bones.
Our minds were filled with hatred,
Our hearts were filled with love
As they headed for the earth below,
That gallant skipper and a member of his
crew,
And, as all men knew
And as all men know,
They were
They are,
The valiant 93rd.

Altimeter Clock



Large, 6½ inch altimeter face clock, battery powered (supplied) quartz movement mounted into a solid walnut plaque, size 9 x 12 inch with large 7 x 3¼ inch engraved plate as shown. Can be made with Airman's wings or as pictured with 8th AF cloisonne and B-24 with your Bomb Group colors on vertical fin. Guaranteed 100% satisfactory or your money back. Please give me as much information as possible. \$85.00 plus \$3.00 UPS.

Lapel pins for civilian suit wear: D.F.C., AIR MEDAL, E.T.O., PURPLE HEART & NEW P.O.W. Cost: \$6.00 each postage paid.

Die struck, 8th AF lapel or tie-tac pin. Gold electroplate, 7/16 inch wide, distinctive. Cost: \$5.50 postage paid.

Order from: Rick Rokicki, 365 Mae Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21061

"Faces of the Second Air Division" Now Available

"Faces of the 2nd Air Division" is a special television documentary, now available to Association members for home viewing. This 55-minute color video production is a compilation of excerpts from interviews of 2nd ADA members, voice-over narration, war footage, and music, and is available on one-half inch VHS. A limited edition of "Faces of the 2nd Air Division" will be released on June 24.

The focus of "Faces," which is unlike any other military history video production, is representative of men and women who served in the Second Air Division, 8th USAAF in WWII. A graphic picture is presented of these men and women through their reflections on, and feelings about, the extraordinary experience of WWII, what they did in the war, what the war did for them. Thirty-two men and women veterans of the 2nd Air Division look back on events they lived through almost a half century ago and talk about those memories that won't go away — memories of missions — first ones, unusual ones, most dangerous ones — of the heavy responsibilities of the ground crews, of funny things that happened, of life on the bases in England, of the work of the Women's Army Auxilliary Corps. And they evaluate those experiences from the vantage of years of living. Included in the documentary are former aerial gunners, headquarters staff, support personnel, ground crews, pilots, navigators, bombardiers, radio operators, engineers, and also the reminiscences of two friends from England.

"Faces of the 2nd Air Division" is part of the Military History Project of the 467th Bomb Group and is based on "The Chicago Tapes," which are 34 interviews, each from 15-50 minutes long, unedited, compiled into seven 2-hour tapes. "The Chicago Tapes" were the first video production of the Military History Project; they have been donated to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room in the Norwich Library and represent the beginning of a video military history resource center there.

"Faces of the 2nd Air Division" may be purchased for \$39.50 (postage is inclusive) by check or money order made payable to J. Dzenowagis, P.O. Box 421, Okemos, MI 48864. The first mailing of the videotape will be on Friday, June 24. Proceeds from the sale of "Faces of the 2nd Air Division" will help support ongoing projects and the future donations of history videotapes and related documentaries about 2nd ADA veterans to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room in Norwich, as well as to other institutions with holdings of military history data. "The Chicago Tapes" are also available for purchase and anyone wishing further information on these videotapes may contact J. Dzenowagis at the above address.

Memories

by Don Newman (93rd BG)

This poem is dedicated to my crew and brothers I did not know who flew the Second Air Division, 8th Air Force.

I'll take you back in memory, when the B-24 rode the wings of war
and the men who rode them and looked down the Flak Guns bore
The E.T.O. was the Theater and enemy occupied lands the stage
and the young crews were the actors who destroyed Hitler's rage

Let me take you back to the briefing shack and the Mission of the Day
and to your chagrin the target's Berlin, and you begin to pray
On the Other Side, the Abbeyville Kids are stroking their ME-109s
and the Artillery sighting their 88s all along the firing line

You get up slow when it's time to go, you have done this all before
you came back yesterday, and you hope this will be one time more
Your duty stations takes your time as the takeoff grows like thunder
and the Old Girl shakes, and moans and she claws for the Wild Blue Yonder

The Cliffs of Dover pass behind, and the Coast of France lies ahead
no turning back, head for the Target, you face the ride with dread
The Abbeyville Kids have come up and made a pass, just to say hello
and the accurate 88 gunners are making bets on which engine to blow

The hours pass, then, there's the target, bathed in the light of the sun
We "lock on" to "Big B" and make our final run
we sit helpless, holding steady, moving neither to the left nor right
and we wish the light of day would turn to the dark of night

Bombs away, and the old girl lifts, we are finally out of the bind
as we flare out and turn and set course for the bases we left behind
We count the empty spaces in the Squadron elements, all of us wishing
that those who were gone were alive and would be listed only as missing

Escorts form an umbrella as the Groups head for the English Coast
Bombers and fighters will be patched and come back again as a ghost
to haunt the enemy occupied territory and throw down a Yankee dare
to the pride of GOERINGS FLYING CIRCUS to try to clear them from the air

You touch down at your base, flares bursting all around
as the damaged Liberators get the first chance at the ground
It's been a long and tiring day, at De-Briefing you have had your say
and murmur a prayer of gratitude that you made it back one more day

You wonder what has happened to the young men grown old
those daring young flyers made of the American mold
Who gave of themselves and their lives that freedom would live on
flying high in the hostile sky, headed for enemy lands from dusk to dawn

Then orders came ending your stay and you're headed on your way for home
making false promises in your mind, no more would you care to roam
Now your memory dims into the abyss of life's greatest mystery
and your GREATEST ADVENTURE of yesteryear fades into 2nd Air History.

Sixteen and Counting

by James (Jim) Rutherford, L/Col. USAF, Retired

The first fifteen missions aboard the B-24 U.S. Express were rather incidental. We had accumulated about 261 flak fragment holes in the aircraft, had no fighter activity, and had lost only seven of our planes. This is not to be construed that we weren't scared to death on a few occasions, but like most other crew members, we hid our fears as best as we could.

Number 16 was to be different. I was to fly my first mission as a Lead Pilot, in a different airplane and with new faces in all aircraft positions. The night before the mission was a cold, dreary one, with rain pouring down, a hint of winter exerting itself with patches of fog and human breath hanging in the air for prolonged periods. Sleep did not come easy. In fact when the C.O. made his entrance into our Nissen hut, the majority of us were still turning in the hammock shaped cots. "Is it 3:30 already?" I asked. "Yes sir. Time to rise and shine, if you will pardon the expression," he answered.

The usual ritual followed. Put on a robe, grab the toilet kit, put on some boots, a trench coat and trudge through the wetness 100 yards to the latrine for a quick shave, shower and tooth massage. I noted as I pulled the comb through my hair that globs of hair remained in the comb. Oh, Gad! Losing my hair already.

Back to the hut, dress and over to the mess hall for some delicious dehydrated (powdered) eggs, almost cooked bacon and burned toast. This morning there were no complaints. We ate quietly, and quickly. Later, I couldn't remember if I had eaten or not.

The taxi trucks were waiting outside and we clambered aboard. We yawned in silence as each truck meandered its way from the Upper WAF's site to the briefing area. The rain still came down, occasionally in torrents.

At our lockers we began adding clothing, gear and Mae Wests. Had we all lost our voices? No so. Once inside the smoke-filled briefing room, noting our mission slot depicted on the aluminum airplanes on the wall, we found our seats and a low rumble of voices began to mesh into a crescendo of unintelligible sounds until "Attention" was called. Once again it was church quiet.

Anticipation and anxiety began to rise as the Colonel and his staff walked down the aisles, heels hitting hard into the floor as they came. As his left foot hit the briefing stage, the Colonel voiced, "At ease." We sat and waited.

After a few words of praise and other baloney, the main speaker, our Operations Officer, walked over to the map, neatly covered as usual with a pull-down roll of window shade. He raised the shade and the murmur once again brought the room out of the doldrums. There were more red areas on that map than on the inside of a Texas watermelon.

OSNABRUCK.

We had heard of it before, although I had never been there. Wasn't that supposed to be a nice ski area, or a quiet hideaway to spend the winter weekend? Maybe so, but not today.

We could expect fighter activity from the coastline to the I.P., after the target and back to the coastline. Flak was "programmed" to be heavy to intense with both barrage and tracking a strong possibility. Weather would clear before the I.P., altitude to be 23,500 for the Lead Squadron and fighter escort to be P-51s and P-47s from the coast to the target. None upon withdrawal, as they would be downstairs on the lookout for their old friends — Jerry.

Off we headed to the locker room again to pick up the most important pieces of equipment — the flak jackets and hard helmets. They weighed a ton until the flak began popping, and then they were hardly noticeable and almost felt inadequate.

Our Bombadier today, Capt. Briggs, was an old hat at war, having completed 28 missions to date. He only spread the flak jacket (and one extra one) on the floor beneath him. He held the one part of the apron over his "treasure chest," as he termed it, just for precautions.

Capt. Mathison, Lt. Whitman and their Command Pilot reminded the others that "when the flak starts, just remember that they are shooting at us." "Yeah," someone said. "But, they are hitting us."

Into the jeeps and convoyed to the proper plane at the dispersal areas. The Crew Chief and his men were always cheerful and helpful. We generally provided them with our left over K rations or candy bars on our return and they always looked forward to the treat.

Today, we visually checked the plane over as if it were a new and strange craft to us. I believe that I looked at every rivet and flange twice. We boarded, checked all equipment and sat, waiting for the minute hand to reach 0610 hours. On cue we started our engines. Each one caught timely and sounded superb.

Then, the long, slow taxi gauntlet began. We were second today, as Deputy Lead of the Group. I had never been this close to the #1 ship before. It was a strange, awe-inspiring feeling. Past the Control Tower, where the Commander and his staff, plus a few uninvited guests stood, to the north end of runway 18/36. No one off the edge of the taxiway so far.

Engines began to hum as we checked magnetos, power, instruments, radio equipment and uttered another prayer.

The Ball O' Fire, a stripped down B-24 with huge orange stripes painted vertically around the fuselage, had taken off an hour earlier, and while making the usual elliptical pattern at altitude, reported cloud base at 200 feet with tops at 20,000 feet. Excellent for forming, I thought.

It's another thrill in the Davis wing plane to get to the first 1,000 feet. I had seen several B-24s settle back to the ground after takeoff, into a ball of fire. The artificial horizon, with its slow erection system, was the culprit, they said. Thank God, I had had a number one instrument instructor back at Liberal, Kansas, who taught (brain-washed) us to use the artificial horizon only as a cross check and to rely on more than any one instrument. Many lives were saved following those simple words of wisdom.

Capt. Mathison, on cue of a green flare shot from the tower, applied power and began his roll. We quickly filled his vacant spot at the extreme end of the runway, to wait for our turn. I could see the flames from under as he turned the supercharger on about halfway down the runway. He was airborne none too soon, it seemed. We were heavy today. Rain fell by the buckets full. Visibility was good. Could see about a half mile.

Green flare and we rolled. Full power, everything O.K., speed picked up, #8 position on the supercharger and we were moving like a freight train going downhill. Airborne and no tree limbs in the landing gear as we crossed the boundary of the airfield. Gear came up quickly (if it ever did that), flaps up and into the soup. Straight ahead for one minute, left turn to 045 degrees and on the way to Buncher Eight, near the coast. Out over the North Sea, heading 090 degrees to 15,000 feet, turn left to 270 degrees and continue climbing to 22,000 feet. As we broke through the last layer of clouds, we could see the Ball O' Fire dead ahead in his pattern, firing an occasional yellow-yellow flare, used today for identification.

We cut off his turn and joined on the right wing seconds after the lead ship arrived. Ball O'Fire dropped back, continued the pattern and firing flares until the first squadron was formed — loosely. Each turn found us flying through our own contrails, so we inched up another 500 feet. At last came the time to depart and we headed out over the North Sea.

Hundreds of other B-24s were still forming into squadrons and into Groups, all over England. It may not be a good mission for us, but it certainly was not a good day for Germany, with all those planes in the skies.

We meshed into the stream of bombers, closed up our formations and off we sailed, the low elements barely above the snow white clouds. We were the fifth Group in the stream and I could see the other ahead, barging on in what appeared to be tight formations.

Out over the water now, the order came by "waggle of wings" to loosen up the formation and to test the airborne weapons. A verbal warning to all gunners to insure that no weapon was to be pointed in the direc-

(cont. on page 30)

Sixteen and Counting (cont. from page 29)

tion of any aircraft, and to commence testing.

The airplane shuddered from the recoil of the 50 calibers, as each gunner aimed purposely into space. Smoke and the smell of gun powder filled the airplane interior. It is an odor that one will never forget, much like remembering the odor of spilled hydraulic fluid, only better on one's nerves.

Close in the formation, we're nearing the enemy coast. A gunner on another flight on another day chanced to remark, "If that guy's wing was any closer to me, I could change that little red light in the wing tip." Tight formations were mandator to provide more concentrated fire power against enemy fighters. It also gave you the false impression of being "next to your mother's protective bosom" — and thus much safer.

"This is Big Bear Leader. Watch for bandits and maintain radio silence for now. Over and Out." Although there had been a minimum of radio transmissions, it seemed deathly quiet for the next few minutes. Were the F-90s, ME-210s, etc. coming up to meet us? All eyes scanned the horizon — back and forth — up and down. Nothing. Maybe we would be lucky today. Only Little Friends — everywhere. Lovely.

Suddenly, in the far distance at 12:00, we saw the first bursts of flak. As more bursts showed up, it appeared to be tracking of the first Group, but much lower. I guessed that the idle gunners were no longer idle, but were dispensing chaff by the tons. We bored on as time seemed to stand still. The Navigator reported that we were on course, on time and would be coming up for a turn to the Initial Point soon. Still, no fighters. "Relax," I told myself. "It's no different from some of the other times."

Group after Group turned toward the I.P. and now we were turning. Fly close, relax, and pray (not necessarily in that order). The AFCE was blinking and ready to be engaged, if necessary. All engines running smoothly, oil pressure, oxygen, everything fine.

"Over Initial Point and Bombadier working." The Navigator had given way to allow the Bombadier more working room and to take control, if need be.

The flak was heavier now and black clouds were forming up ahead. Then, a red ball of fire and two planes were heading down in flames. We hoped that chutes would begin opening soon. I knew that about 60 miles farther we would be over the target area and in the midst of the flak concentration. Enemy fighters should not appear now.

WHAM! Black smoke appeared from nowhere. Bursts of AA shells exploded dead ahead. Looked like a polka dot of black and white. Barrage firing. A wall nearly 500 feet across and 1000 feet vertical. Now it was getting solid. The next second it was red, red fire intermixed in the black. That meant close. The fuselage was peppered. The wings were taking hits. I hung in close to the lead plane, trying to keep my eyes in one direction only.

The next second, a shell exploded in the #3 engine of the lead plane, my left window crashed, and I felt a blow in the center of my chest just below the collar bone line. That #3 engine appeared to have been sliced off with a huge knife. It fell below the plane, waiting for someone to hit it. The lead was in a sudden 45 degree bank toward us. I yanked the control column back as I applied more power and the co-pilot increased mixture and RPM. We were at the edge of the stalling point. I relaxed the yolk and dropped the left wing slightly. I called the tail gunner. "Are we clear of all planes yet?" "Yes sir, Skipper. We're clear." I leveled out and asked him, "Where are the other planes?" "All over the sky," he said.

AFCE turned on, I called "This is Big Bear Deputy. We've started a left 360 degree turn. Get back in as fast as you can." I continued the slow turn and the Germans probably couldn't figure out what we were doing. Bursts were all over the sky and fortunately hitting where we had been.

After the full 360, all planes were tucked in. We fell behind the Group which had been in back of us and Bombadier called "Center the PDI."

The run was short, but long enough to be buffeted, and hit many times by the ACK ACK. My left arm was now deadened. I didn't feel any pain, but wondered if I had been hit. I took off my right glove, put my hand under my flight suit and felt around. No warm blood. I pulled my hand out. No blood. Then I realized that I had been flying so long that my left arm was simply asleep. What a relief. Now, get those bombs on target, put up with the winds rushing in the window and get back home.

Two chutes were spotted below us. Another and then another. White chutes, black flak, red hot centers. Fuselage taking a beating. Sounded like metal chairs being thrown against a tin wall.

"Bombs away." What music. I turned left, dropped the nose and as we swung around, I got a glimpse of the formations yet to come. Those Krauts will run out of ammo today, I thought. There must be over 2000 airplanes behind us.

Back out over the water, oxygen masks unhitched, cigarettes lighted, we all began to feel more at ease and out came some K rations. I wasn't hungry. Just thirsty and thankful.

Over the English coast we were able to skim in under the clouds at 3,000 feet. Past the Buncher and straight to Hardwick.

The "Old Man" wanted a tight formation when we came home, so we really tightened it up. We dropped to 1,000 feet, passed over the field and broke into squadrons for landing.

Screech. That B-24 was the easiest plane to land I had flown to date. We cleared the runway and while taxiing in, took a look at the others in the pattern. Red-red flares were popping everywhere. three B-24s on 3 engines each. Ambulances and fire trucks raced into position. The final airplane land-

ed. We had lost a total of 3 planes, thirty good men!

The Crew Chief smiled his usual smile. He counted some of the holes in the plane and said, "I'll have those holes and that window replaced and ready to go for tomorrow's mission."

"Tomorrow," I said. Yes, I guess there will be a tomorrow. And hopefully, many more after that.

Captain Mathison's crew and the other two crews all landed in a safe combat zone, were treated and came back to Hardwick safely, I am told. They got back after I had left, I suppose.

The crew members began a search for the piece of shrapnel that had come through my window and hit my chest protector 1/2 inch below the top of it. The Crew Chief found the piece of metal on the floor in back of the co-pilot's seat. It was 1 1/2 inches long, 1/4 inch wide and lightly curved. Inside, where the thread marks are, were three initials — USA.

I'm so grateful they didn't read JER.

P.O.W. Medal Application Forms

Application forms for the new Prisoner of War Medal are available from several sources, the Department of Defense has announced.

The military services have them, as do veterans' organizations and other public service agencies.

A toll-free number, (800) 873-3768, has been established to take requests for application forms and provide information via a tape-recorded message.

Written requests should be addressed as follows:

Former Air Force POWs, including Army Air Force veterans, may write to the Air Force Reference Branch, National Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132-5199.

Former Army POWs may write to the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center, Attn: DARP-PAS-EAW, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132-5200.

Former Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard POWs may write to the U.S. Navy Liaison Office, National Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132-5199.

The Thirteenth Mission

by Wesley Sheffield (492nd)

It was August 1, 1944, and we were set to fly our thirteenth mission. We were a Liberator crew — four-engine heavy bombers — attached to the 857th Squadron, 492nd Bomb Group, Eighth Air Force. Before this day was over we would find an engine afire from a flak hit, ourselves out of gas and still over enemy-occupied France, losing three engines over the English Channel, getting them back only to lose two on the final approach.

The target was Anizy, about 50 miles northeast of Paris, and we were to bomb from 26,000 feet, each carrying a maximum bomb load of 8,000 pounds.

August 1 was a hot summer day — a surprise for England! — and our two Lib crews parked on adjoining hardstands were whiling away the few minutes prior to takeoff by casually ribbing one another about the coming mission. Bill Foster, pilot of Pregnant Angel, kept reminding me that this was my thirteenth mission and that old, battered Sweat Box probably wouldn't make it. I wasn't superstitious then, so I took his digs with good humor, telling him that my crew could come through anything. We took some snapshots of both crews, looked at our watches and climbed aboard our respective ships. In a few minutes, we were airborne.

As the formation approached the enemy coast, it soon became evident that bad weather ahead was either going to seriously hamper the mission or going to cause us to turn back entirely. Then came my first stroke of bad luck, and Bill's words began to take on an ominous sound in my ears. A burst of flak hit my number 4 engine as we crossed the coast. Smoke poured out.

I called to Evan Jones, my co-pilot, to feather the engine — but it wouldn't feather. It ran away and could only be controlled by the throttle. If I cut off its gas supply, it would act like a huge airbrake and I couldn't keep up with the formation. If I didn't, it might well blow us sky high any second. I opted to keep it running, keep up with the formation and hope for the best. That meant I was forced to pull extra power on the three good engines, thus burning extra gas. It was always possible to abort, but I decided to stick it out.

True enough, the weather got worse and worse, and though the formation strained higher and higher, it was no good. We had to turn back — still carrying full bomb loads.

When the coastline again hove into sight, I called "Butch" Carlson, my engineer, on interphone and asked him to check the gas supply. I knew that, due to the bad engine, I had been burning a lot of fuel. Carlson wasn't long answering. "We'd better get the hell out of here, because we're out of gas!" When you check B-24 gas gauges, first you get air bubbles and then a tube filled — or partly filled — with gas. Now, nothing.

My mind raced. Carlson could be wrong. It was just about the same distance to England as it was to the Cherbourg peninsula — where our troops had a widening beachhead and where a crippled bomber could crash land, under an extreme emergency. Number four was now smoking in a steady black stream. I felt as though we

were sitting inside a bomb about ready to go off. Stubbornly I didn't want to bail out, yet the thought of ditching a 24 in the Channel was enough to make me turn very, very pale.

I told the crew we were going to try to make England, giving the choice of bailing out over water or ditching if Carlson was right about the gas. We now moved fast. I left the formation, salvoed my bombs in water beneath, throttled back as far as I could, called Harry Abrams, my navigator, for a heading to the nearest air field in England.



Wes Sheffield (left) and Bill Foster

When I left the formation, Bill Foster did too and flew off my wing for a few minutes as if to say, "I'm sorry for being such a wise guy." I was too busy to do anything except fly my plane. I couldn't talk to Bill, or anyone else for that matter, since our radio had been knocked out by flak.

When the 492nd was disbanded a few weeks later due to heavy losses — we lost one entire squadron on one mission alone — Bill was assigned to fly unmarked B-24s at night to Sweden to repatriate air crews that took their disabled planes there. I went to the 93rd Bomb Group and completed 30 missions as a lead pilot and Assistant Operations officer.

New trouble soon developed. Harry had no good maps of air bases in southern England, and I couldn't contact any other ship without our radio. Our luck hadn't run out altogether, however. A lone P-47 spotted us by the trail of smoke pouring out of the bad engine, came up alongside and motioned with his hands that he would guide us to the nearest field.

The worst was yet to come. At 10,000 feet, Sweat Box abruptly nosed down and headed for the chill waters below. The three good engines had cooled off during the long descent, probably developed carburetor ice and conked out before I could move to cover up my error. I frantically pushed turbos, props, throttles full forward — to no avail. Meanwhile I had to crank in full trim

to hold the controls against engine number 4 which was still roaring away. And I pushed the "abandon ship" bell. I later learned that the only reason I didn't lose my crew into the Channel was because they were back at the waist gunner windows, arguing over who was to jump first.

At six thousand feet, I made the last possible move — I pulled the mixture controls back into emergency rich. And I remembered the old adage about no atheists in fox holes and took time to mutter to myself, "No praying around here!" Never before or since have I felt so impotent in the face of impending disaster — when I found out that that last move did it! Engines roared anew and the ship promptly went into a steep turning climb — because all the trim was set against number 4 engine. For the one and only time in combat, I yelled for help. "Jonesy, get on that rudder!" We got the plane under control and back on course for England. We were safe at least for the moment.

England now came into sight, but a low cloud cover prevented me from spotting a field from a safe altitude. The P-47 ducked down through the clouds and I could do little but follow, expecting my engines to quit at any moment. We had now been airborne for almost six hours and for the last hour of flight the gas gauges had been bone dry.

Hurrah, it's a field! The P-47 swooped low over it, then hovered above as I made a straight-in approach for landing. With only a few hundred feet to go, engines 1 and 4 quit — out of gas — but by hitting the other two throttles to the wide open position, I made the end of the runway with number 4 still streaming black smoke. We had made it!

All the way in, while taxiing, I urged Jonesy to keep trying to start the dead engines. I just couldn't comprehend what a close call that had been.

When the ground crew made their check, they found that we had landed with about 50 gallons (we took off with 2800 gallons) in the tanks of 2 and 3, and just enough oil in number 4 to wet the end of a stick. The flak had hit an oil line, which then dripped oil on the hot engine all the way home.

Unlucky thirteen had almost found its mark. And the ten men riding in Sweat Box that day have been religiously superstitious ever since. A later ground check indicated that the oil filters on all four engines were badly clogged, which had led to unusually high fuel consumption aside from the flak damage. A certain crew chief, nameless, got a great chewing out and not a few demerits for that kind of maintenance.

A postscript. When we landed, I congratulated myself for keeping cool through that long ride. Somehow, though, I guess I wasn't so cool. About an hour after landing, I found myself in the tower of that Polish fighter base, wondering where all my gear was. I took a jeep back to the plane — and found all my personal gear strewn haphazardly beneath the plane. I obviously got out in a hurry.

(Ed. Note: After WWII, Sheffield went on to become 1) a tabloid news editor, 2) a minister, 3) a college president, 4) a fund-raising consultant. He and his wife, Luise, live at Beebe Lake in Vermont.)

Letters



Dear Bill,

As you know, I have been receiving quite a few complimentary letters on "The Last Mission" tape and have sent a few to you in the hopes that you will print them in the "Letters" section of the Journal. Most of the people say thanks to everyone who had a part in the production and I think it would be appropriate to have this message printed in the Journal.

I certainly can't take all the credit. I'm just the Secretary/Treasurer — and Shipping Clerk! Mike Benarcik (453rd) deserves most of the credit for bringing the tape to fruition. He spent untold hours of editing the several tapes used and travelled back and forth between Wilmington, Delaware and the Processor in Baltimore at least half a dozen times before he was satisfied that we had the best we could get from the material available.

Many thanks also go to Kent Stokes (son of Milt Stokes, 453rd) who provided his tape of the ceremony at the U.S. Cemetery, Old Buckenham, the final night banquet, etc. and to his sister, Rhonda, who provided a copy of the WCAU-TV Philadelphia tape taken from the TV; to Odell Johnson (453rd), Carl Alexanderson (491st), Fred Meyer (489th), and Evelyn Cohen (HDQ) for their input and contributions; and to Gene Foote of Register Photo Services for an excellent final product. Forgive me if I omitted anyone.

And last but far from least, accolades to Paul Crowley and the WXIA-TV crew in Atlanta, GA for the superb 30 minutes of tape taken at the Convention, aired back here in the States on many stations around the country and used as the basis for the final story now available to all 2ADA members.

H.C. 'Pete' Henry
164B Portland Lane
Jamesburg, NJ 08831

+ + + +

Dear Mr. (Pete) Henry:

I want to thank you very much for sending the "Last Mission" videotape, which I received today. My mother and I previewed the tape (a birthday gift for my dad, as you may recall) and were quite pleased with it. We're sure my father (Frank Bachman, 491st BG) will enjoy it as well, as a memento of their trip to Norwich. While I didn't attend the reunion, I met my parents afterwards to escort them on a 2-week tour of England, so it was nice to actually view some of the events they speak about so often. Perhaps on my next trip "across the pond," I'll get to Norwich myself ("like father, like daughter!")

Maria Bachman
79-66 77th Road
Glendale, NY 11385

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Dear Pete (Henry):

Received the VCR copy of the tape "The Last Mission" taken during the 40th Reunion of the 2ADA at Norwich this past summer. I noted your request for comments and that is the reason for this note.

I have looked at the tape twice, and I think it is a wonderful depiction of the reunion which is very nicely tied together by old "still shots" as well as combat films, some of which I had not previously seen and all of which were of B-24s. Added to this, I found the background music to be appropriate and nicely done. All in all, I think this is an excellent presentation and one I am proud to own. Since we left from Philadelphia and saw the WCAU-TV Crew there, I was pleasantly surprised to find that also woven into the story.

I also bought from Bill Davenport a VCR tape of the 446th BG Reunion at Bungay. Between the two tapes I have the best record of a visit I've ever made anywhere. Although this latter tape does not have the same professional touch supplied by the NBC-TV tape, it covered all aspects of our Group Reunion and also picks up many of the conversations that were not necessarily intended to be part of the film. It, too, is an excellent presentation and the person who filmed it (I don't remember his name) should be commended for the fine job he did. I am sending a copy of this letter to Bill Davenport so that he might pass this information along to the person who is responsible for the tape.

Thank you, Pete, for your efforts in bringing this 2ADA tape to fruition. I have gotten together with several of my crewmen and when we next meet I plan to show them these tapes. I had shown them the photos I took there, but the motion pictures go that extra step in telling the story.

Joseph H. Soder
74 Cherokee Road
New Britain, PA 18901

+ + + +

Dear Pete (Henry):

The 2nd AD tape "Last Mission" arrived this morning and I have just finished viewing it. The tears started flowing and fond and sad memories were rekindled. How I wish I had known of this reunion. I will be in Norwich this summer and perhaps this tired old heart may not take the strain, but we shall try.

I am very new to the Association (about a month) and I thought I had buried all my thoughts of the war years. I guess I haven't.

I have just read my flight diary and, as luck would have it, our crew only fought the last 4 months of the war. Fifteen missions which was more than enough for me. I haven't seen or heard from my crew since we returned from England, and through the Association, I have found and written to the Sperry Ball Turret Gunner, Art Izzo and Nose Gunner Bob Walters. The rest of the crew cannot be found. I have tried so many times to find them.

My thoughts drifted to missions in "Son of Kong," "Lonesome Lair," "P-Peter," "Miss Marian" and our last mission and the 445th in our own B-24 "The Bootie" which the crew named in honor of my first

born. I was almost 21 then and the crew called me "Pappy."

The reunion in Colorado Springs is sold out according to Ms. Cohen, but I have reservations at the Sheraton and, Good Lord willing, I will be in attendance.

About the film, it tore my heart out and I cried for the first time in many years. I didn't care much for the British flying team. I yearned for more time in Norwich and more of the combat footage. But, in all, the film was well done and I shall be moved every time I view it.

Dick Vincent
43 Overlook Rd.
Arlington, MA 02174

+ + + +

Dear Pete (Henry):

After watching the tape for the second time, the emotional impact one gets brings tears to my eyes. It really brings across reality to Second Air Division people. Although I was squadron inspector on the ground crew, the impact was very emotional. The tape is very good and presented well. Although some may say it is fuzzy in some areas, for the people of the Second Air Division it is priceless because it brings back so many memories.

I enjoyed the tape very much, especially when I saw people on the tape that I recognize. Thank you for a job well done.

Thomas Steranko
4533 Whitaker Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19120

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I don't know how many responses Bill Griffith got as a result of his article in the Winter 1987-88 edition of our Journal. We also were on the mission that Bill refers to and would like to assure him that it was not anti-aircraft but enemy planes that followed us back (with IFF off) from Germany and shot down several planes on final approach at Horsham that night. The delayed takeoff was at 1645 and we were over the target and dropped our bombs at 2010. Naturally because of the late start we did not return to Horsham St. Faith until close to midnight (April 22, 1944). Red was attacked by German planes and crashed in a nearby field. I saw the broken-up parts of the B-24 the next day. I was sure that the new cocoon type armor plate seats bolted to the floor saved the pilot and co-pilot from certain death. I ran into Red again when I saw him at Victorville, California where we both were stationed. He gave me an instrument check. By the way, requests for the same type of seats on our plane "Final Approach" were to no avail.

If you get to see our ground chief "Taffy" Hill, tell him to come to the Colorado convention. At least six of us who brought over "Final Approach" will be there. In any event, say hello for me.

Joseph Linsk
9 Lake Drive
Boonton, NJ 07005

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Dear Bill:

About 10 years ago, when I went to Wendling, in one of the buildings was a Double Wall. About 3 years ago, the wall was taken down, and revealed was a wall full of planes, etc. Please will you put an item in the Journal asking if any of your members know anything about these paintings: who did them? Why? etc.; also, if any of your members would like a picture of them, if they write to me, I will send them. Also, I am a guide to the old bases, and if any of your members are coming back, if they get in touch with me I will arrange accommodations at a hotel. I could not only take them back to the old bases, but could also show them round Norfolk, like the Queen's winter home that is open to the public in the summer. I will be pleased to write to anyone who would like to know about the old bases or would like pictures taken. I hope you will put some of this in your Journal and a picture of the paintings.

Sid Cullington
8th Air Force
Fellowship Club
42 Sun Lane-Millers Lane
Norwich, Norfolk
NR3 3NF
England
Tel. 0603 404840

+ + + +

Dear Bill,

Anyone having information on the following men, please contact me. I need current address and alive or dead status. All were interned in Sweden.

1) S/Sgt. Lee Walter Bryant, ASN 34388723; 2) 2/Lt. Lawrence Calvert, ASN 0-752605; 3) T/Sgt. Chester Modzelewski, ASN 12024608; 4) S/Sgt. George E. Quigley, ASN 33297609.

James H. McMahon
P.O. Box 4954
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

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Dear Sirs:

Thank you so much for your very fine support and assistance, helping me in numerous projects to include my pet project: the 93rd's restoration of a B-24. I am sending a copy of this letter to numerous veterans, some of whom I'll mention specifically, because I have orders to go to RAF Mildenhall, England in June 1988. The 329th Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Robert McEneaney is personally taking charge of the B-24 restoration project and will be the future point of contact for all questions. Mail your letters to: Lt. Col. Robert McEneaney, 329 CCTS/CC, Castle AFB, CA 95342-5000.

I enjoyed meeting Joe Beach and Henry Betz on their recent visit. Thanks for the articles, souvenir articles, the model airplane, and especially the tape. I sent it to our DO and his staff and their response was "super."

Our plans still include a memorial dedication when the B-24 is fully restored; Lt. Col. McEneaney is sending out a letter in the next week which will address this further. The veterans will certainly be the focal point for the ceremonies and the base events to coincide. Depending on the turnout, there will be tours of facilities and aircraft and possibly more. Floyd Mabee has done a great job of asking the right questions to insure we accommodate as many people as possible. Please address further questions to Floyd or Lt. Col. McEneaney directly so we can work them early. We want maximum participation and help to bring the 93rd home again!

Again, thanks for all the help — without it, this could have never gotten off the ground. I hope with your efforts the project will continue and be a success for all. Keep up the enthusiasm until the B-24 proudly displays the colors of the 93rd.

David R. Kenerley
Capt., USAF
93 BMW/DOVT
Castle AFB, CA 95342

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Dear Bill:

Just a short note to request that you change my zip to 06831. For some reason the post office decided to draw another line, and we are it. Thanks.

It was interesting reading Wayne DeCou's item about the B-24N and the PB4Y-2; I have just been given a copy of "U.S. Bombers — B-1—B-70" by a friend who thinks that I still fly, and they have an excellent write-up about the two aircraft, but I think they do tend to exaggerate the speed and range a bit.

I seem to recall, when we flew our Bonanza into Flagstaff, Arizona to go down the Grand Canyon on their 7-day raft trip, that there was a B-24 on the field at that time (1978?), but I can't recall whether it had one tail or two, so I guess it doesn't help much. It was nice to see the old beast again — it sure looks small compared to my Lockheed L-1011, eh, wot?

Wallace J. Balla
189 Taconic Road
Greenwich, CT 06831

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Dear Bill,

I just recently became a member of the 2ADA and I am in need of a current roster. Could you let me know how, and at what cost I might obtain one? Also, would you have any advice on how I might be able to find a copy of our squadron insignia? I was with the 453rd BG, 734th BS. I appreciate any help you may give me on these two requests.

Ben F. Lewallen
2003 Arden Place
High Point, NC 27260
919-882-9940

Ed. Note: For copies of rosters, contact your Group VP. He can provide one for your group.

+ + + +



Front row (l-r): Lt. John Holodak, 1/Lt. Kendrick Ferriell, 1/Lt. Dario De Julio, S/Sgt. Arthur Sjolund. Back row (l-r): T/Sgt. Leslle Stuckey, S/Sgt. Robert Sinsabaugh, S/Sgt. Frank Beck, T/Sgt. Harvey Poff, S/Sgt. Fred Hopp.

Dear Bill:

I read a very interesting letter in the Second Air Division Journal by John Barillaro and his experiences on "Final Approach" the day it was shot down. The fact that this was the first a/c in the 458th BG to fly 100 missions made it a well-known plane — and our crew flew "Final Approach" on its 100th mission, 9 March 1945.

The picture I have enclosed was taken after the mission and the navigator in the front row clutching his charts was Lt. John Holodak, who was also the navigator when it was shot down.

Through the 2nd AD I have been able to contact Bill Cunningham, one of the original crew members and exchange information, literature and pictures of "Final Approach."

Strange as it may seem, John Barillaro and I live only a couple of miles apart and have gotten together for additional information and photos about "Final Approach." We also attended together the recent 2nd AD Reunion at El Toro Marine Base — John's first reunion.

All the best for doing a wonderful job.
Lt/Col. Dario A. De Julio
(Ret.)
458th BG/752nd BS
14045 Lake Crest Drive
La Mirada, CA 90638

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

One of the gallant young men from the Big One, WWII, mentioned in one of your recent Journal articles that a requirement for a "happy day" is to make one landing for every take-off.

This amused me. Some whimsical and mythical General Orders were created in regard to bailouts from military aircraft.

To make no sense out of nonsense, the question is how would major air commands deal with this problem in the U.S. Army Air Force, the Royal Air Force and the Luftwaffe?

Examples are as follows.

Kenneth D. Jones
1013 Thomas Street
Janesville, WI 53545

U.S. Army Air Force
General Orders 129

Attention: Division, Wing, Group and Squadron

Some fliers are not returning to base after aviating in the wild blue yonder. Junior grade Birdment and GI Fly boys are hitting the silk, from government aircraft, over enemy real estate without prior authorization. This is no laughing matter. This practice will stop at once.

The army can always draft more manpower but the aircraft are difficult to replace and ferrying costs are going up. Additional bomber replacements means more overtime for Rosie the Riveter on the assembly line. Effective immediately, all combat personnel are required to make one landing for every take-off from the group base.

Failure to comply with this order will result in loss of PX privileges, no Red Dot cigars and no weekend passes for the duration plus six months.

We will have you home by Christmas, boys!

God Bless America. Buy Bonds and Keep'em Flying.

by order of Commanding
General, USAAF ETO
(signed)
1st Lt. Billie Carmel

Royal Air Force
Signal 129

Attention: Air Commands, Wings,
Groups and Squadrons

One of our aircraft is missing according to a communique released to the BBC today. The King's aeroplanes are bought too dearly to dispose of this news with casual indifference.

It has been brought to the attention of

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Bomber Command that certain brave lads are descending via their "brollys" to arbitrary locations which have been classified as enemy territory by the Crown. There is no humor in this situation. This practice will cease henceforth in a fortnight.

In future events, all of His Majesty's combat service ratings will "pop to" for the Sergeant Major's roll at posted stations. This will be accomplished by making one landing for every launching from group aerodromes. Noncompliance with this edict forecasts cancellation of afternoon tea for a month, and that's a sticky wicket, by jove.

God Save the King. Carry on, lads.
by order of Royal Bomber
Command
Sir Reginald Blakely
Air Marshall
DDS, DSO and VC

Deutsch High Kommand
Der General Befehl — Eins Zwei Ninezig
Achtung: Luftflotte Flieger Korps,
Geschwader, Gruppen und Staffel

Es hast kein observandt der vaterland
das Boomergergeschwader flieger hast kein
taken off einself mit "bumber shoot"
on vay downer und obersailen der coun-
trysiden.

Nicht, das ist verboten! Vil stoppen
zee at vunce mit grossbarrel gigglin
halten macht schnell or zooner.

Vas ist loos ist upsetten der plannen
undt fabrikation die flieger machines.
Ach, du lieber! Der Fuhrer, nick namen
Schikelgruber, vants alles die luft
troopen to obeyen. Ja, der kombat luft-
mann vill maken eins landen mit ein
taken-off von das Gruppen platz. Das
schnickel fritzin mit-out stoppen ist
kosten gross Reichmarks und enden mit
firing squaden kommen.

Der Herrenvolk und Deutschland
uber alles in welt.

Gott mit uns. Heil Hitler.
by order of Deutsch
General Staff
Herman "Meir" Goring
Field Marshall
Katzenjammer Kinder
Outfiten
Yellow Nozen Staffel
Dunner See Luftgau

*Low German or Plattdeutsch words:
Boomergergeschwader = bombardment
unit; Bumber Shoot = umbrella or
parachute; Schnickel Fritz = a person
who giggles or snickers*



Kneeling (l-r): Bill McCormick, Jack Francis. Standing (l-r): Sam Bryan, Tom Nicolson, Jack Butler, George Hulpian, Ed Hornberger, Don Whitefield, Art Kleiderer.

Dear Bill,

Ever since we first met, Jack Francis, George Hulpian and I had been talking about getting together with the other 44th people living in Houston. The only problem was somebody had to call the rest of the guys. I got elected by default. I have heard the word "no" before; after all, I have been married 42 years and only have 3 kids. So I called the other guys from the 44th listed in the 2nd AD Roster with Houston addresses. I didn't hear the word "no." I called on a Friday and my entire sales pitch was "I'm Jack Butler. Three of us guys who were in the 44th are going to have coffee and donuts next Wednesday and tell war stories. Would you like to join us?" One guy had a prior commitment he couldn't change.

On Wednesday, January 27, nine of us showed up at Bayland Park Community Center and met in a small meeting room. Only three of us had met before so the first and only problem, as it turned out, was how these other six guys would know me. I told them that I was sort of tall, sort of fat, and sort of gray, but knowing that their eyesight probably wasn't 20-20 anymore, I also told them I would wear my baseball cap with an 8th AF patch on it. That seemed to work as we all got together in the same place and got introduced to each other. Then my carefully planned (hey, I spent the whole weekend wondering if anyone would show up) meeting turned into unorganized chaos. The basic formation seemed to be groups of three circulating around the library table in the center of the room. Never before have I seen a guy telling a war story cut it short so he could run over to another group where he had overheard part of a story more interesting than the one he was telling. It happened. More than once.

We started talking at 9:30 a.m. and I had no idea some of us would still be talking at 3:30 p.m., so I failed to take advantage of our mess sergeant's skills for lunch. Instead, I took charge and provided everybody all the coffee they could drink and 1 1/2 donuts per man for lunch. We promptly ate the donuts at 10:15 a.m. and didn't have any lunch. In spite of all this, we all agreed to do this again next month. Also, I plan to increase the rations to 2 2/3 donuts per man!

Jack Butler
5931 Reamer
Houston, TX 77074

+ + + +

To: Evelyn Cohen
William Robertie
Francis DiMola

Here's ten bucks; please enter the following candidate for membership in the 2ADA: Howard Powell, 309 W. Page St., Elkhorn, WI 53121.

Howard went overseas with the 327 Headquarters Squadron sometime in the middle of 1943. When that squadron was split up, he ended up in the 53rd Station Complement with the 445th Bomb Group assigned to a Chemical Warfare unit, located near the water tower and bombardier-practice building at Tibenham. He stayed there until the 445th moved out in June 1945, when he was transferred to Casablanca.

The main reason I am writing is to see if anyone in the 2ADA, and the rest of the 8th Air Force for that matter, remembers the music groups that played the various Officers Clubs, Sergeants Clubs, Red Cross shacks, Group and Squadron parties, and of course the various dance 'palaces' in the Norwich countryside, including the Lido in Norwich itself. Howard played the coronet in a band first called 'The G.I.ers' and later renamed the 'Jones Boys' in honor of Colonel Jones, the 445th CO.

I realize that Glen Miller is the most remembered, but I think many of the 2ADA members danced to these bands — composed of U.S. Air Force enlisted men and Officers, RAF members and even some British civilians — and I am sure that their extracurricular activity made life a hell of a lot easier on all of us while waiting for the Germans to 'attract themselves' as a threat to our way of life.

Howard remembers a lot of things about the 445th, Tibenham, Norwich, and played bases from the 'Wash' to Ipswich and is interested in locating some of the former members of the bands (he knows some didn't make it back, as they were in combat crews). Perhaps some of the 2ADA members can fill him in on what happened to those on the rhythm circuit.

See you in Colorado Springs...and hey, Francis, when and where is the 445th mini-reunion this year? I know that the area 2ADA mini-reunion in our area will be at the Experimental Aircraft Association Headquarters in Oshkosh, Wisconsin Sept. 30 to Oct. 2. This should be quite interesting to first-time visitors...it's quite an aviation outfit.

Ray Pytel
Box 484
Elkhorn, WI 53121

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Dear Bill:

This is to inform you that Russell Grant Cottrell of Salt Lake City, Utah, died February 15, 1988. He was a member of the 328th Bomb Squadron, 93rd Bomb Group.

Although he was not a member of the 2nd Air Division Association, many of his friends are members.

Rex Roberson
1829 Terrace Place
Seneca, MO

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THE HIGHEST HONOR

This letter is to pay great honor to a very special man...my father, George A. Hoffman.

Now that I'm older I have come to realize what a special man he is. My father is a part of the Second Air Division, the 392nd, The Crusaders. Throughout the years while I was growing up, I never realized how hard it must have been to be a young man of 18 going off to fight in a war, to fly in a turret of a plane ("My Prayer") not knowing if this will be your last fight.

My father once told me the hardest thing about the war was to see a crew leave on a mission, then only a day or so later to see their unoccupied beds and personal possessions being packed up, but not by them.

My father truly loves me. I know this because he now shares his feelings with me about those days. When we get together now and then (we live 500 miles apart), we always sit down and he reads the Journal to me. He's recently paid me a big honor by making me an honorary member. This filled my heart with pride!

My whole meaning for writing this letter is to express not only how much I love and respect my father, but in hopes to let everyone who served know how often he thinks about and misses them. How much he still cares after 40 long years. How he silently cries when he reads "Folded Wings."

I hope my father knows how much I love and respect him and all the other men who served America during those hard times. You all hold a special place in my heart. Never forget how very special you really are!

Melissa Hoffman-Parkovic
R.D. #7, Box 1288
Harrisburg, PA 17112
717-469-7170

+ + + +

Dear Bill,

The 392nd BG Memorial Association is trying to raise \$60,000 to improve our memorial obelisk grounds. It involves a lot of earth work, concrete work, landscaping, parking area, etc. See John Conrad's "392nd Reports."

I personally contributed \$1,000, and would like to make my stories available to enhance donations and contributions.

I am asking your permission to allow the 392nd BG Memorial Ass'n to make copies of my stories — with no compensation to me — to enhance the 392nd BGMA Fund. Due recognition will be given to the 2nd Air Division Ass'n Journal and to you as the editor.

I have not talked to nor written to Larry Gilbert, our Ass'n President, pending your okay.

A self addressed postcard is enclosed for your convenience.

Myron H. Keilman
6616 Buckhorn
Sacramento, CA 95842

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

My half-brother, Staff Sergeant Paul DeLuna, Serial No. 17168426, served in the Army Air Corps as a B-24 tail gunner during 1943 and 1944. He was killed over Germany about May 30, 1944.

His last known address was: 467 Bomb Group (H), 789th Bomb Squad, APO 550 c/o Postmaster, New York NY.

I believe his home field was Westover, Massachusetts.

My relatives have asked me to write to you to see if you could provide us with any information regarding the history of the outfit he was assigned to. If you have no information, could you please advise me who I might contact that could possibly provide us with any information?

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Enos P. Hernandez
Manhattan Plaza
Apt. 31B
400 West 43rd Street
New York, NY 10036

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Enjoy reading the Journal and wish to commend and thank you for the great job that you're doing. I know that it takes a lot of work and dedication on your part and your efforts are greatly appreciated. Keep up the good work.

I am attempting to notify the personnel of the 68th Bomb Squadron (44th BG) of the upcoming mini-reunion Sept. 9 & 10, 1988. It is to be held at the Holiday Inn, Skokie, IL. Thirty rooms are being set aside for this occasion, and of course, first come first served. If anyone is interested, they can call me at 312-674-6050. If for some reason they can't reach me, you can contact Bob Krueger at 813-768-1487.

Again, many thanks to you and your staff for their toils.

Art Fain
8218 Crawford
Skokie, IL 60076

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Dear Bill:

The excellent article by Jim Coffey in your Spring 1988 Journal, "Last Plane Home to the USA" brought back some memories.

In particular, after an overnight stay at Lagens in the Azores, a very early briefing for the flight to Gander was interrupted when the door to the briefing room opened and two heads appeared: Frank Sinatra and Phil Silvers, on their way to the ETO with a USO troop.

Silvers asked where we were going, and there was a brief embarrassed silence until we realized that the war was over in Europe and there was no secret about that day's target. Everyone laughed, and when we told Silvers that we were heading for Gander, he said, "Oh, you'll love the place! The chef in the officers' mess has this marvelous gourmet dish: something on a shingle!"

Eugene A. Garrett
446 Stratford Avenue
Elmhurst, IL 60126

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Tibenham (continued from page 16)

We started with 55 cadets at San Marcos. Only 29 of us made it to graduation on March 17, 1944. My instructor wouldn't tell me officially, but he hinted that I graduated number one. If so, I certainly earned it the hard way. My only regret was that I couldn't let that understanding SACC psychologist — the one who saved my career — know the good news. I couldn't remember his name!

I joined Chuck Walker's crew in Casper, Wyoming on March 19, 1944. Every other class got two weeks from graduation to get to their assigned base. I got two days. In addition, I had flown into Casper on one of our training missions, and I had no desire to spend any length of time in that windy, desolate, snow-covered area. On top of everything else, the other nine members of the crew had already trained together in Salt Lake City, so in the beginning I felt like an outsider. Fortunately, Chuck's crew all turned out to be great guys and we soon meshed into a real good working crew. Early in April we were designated "Crew of the Week," resulting in our being interviewed on the Casper radio station and featured in the local newspaper.

May 1944 found us in Topeka, Kansas. We had our own brand new B-24 which we were to fly to Italy, via Florida, Brazil and the Azores. The morning of our flight to Florida we had a preliminary briefing at 0730 for all crews making the trip. Somehow one of our crew members (who shall go nameless, right, Chuck?) had such a big night in Topeka that he never made it back to the base for the briefing. We covered for him as long as possible, but eventually his absence was noted. Goodbye, B-24, goodbye Italy!

A week later we received new orders. We were going to England by ship. Everyone was depressed by the loss of our plane and the change in plans. Everybody but me, that is. I was delighted! First of all, I preferred to be stationed in England and secondly, now some sailor could do the navigating

across the ocean instead of the burden falling on my shoulders.

In the back of my mind, however, I was wondering how an air-sick navigator would make out for 14 days at sea. As it turned out, not too bad, I'm glad to say. We sailed on the Athalon Castle as part of a large, slow convoy. There wasn't a lot of motion, but when I felt seasick, I'd go to sleep for a few hours and wake up feeling better.

After two weeks of training in Northern Ireland (some rain every day!) we arrived (near the end of June, 1944) at the 445th Bomb Group in Tibenham. Someday I may write another story about our experiences in England. About how Air Corps officers had to steal coal to keep from freezing to death, and the proper way to build a secret oil burner in the middle of a Nissen hut. I'd also include how our crew had the honor (?) of flying night practice missions with the RAF!

In case anyone is wondering, I'm happy to say that I never got airsick in a B-24! At 20,000 feet, with a much-needed oxygen mask on, that could have been a real problem.

One last note. To get through 35 missions safely, you have to have luck on your side. When you think of the 445th, you automatically think of the infamous Kassel raid on September 27, 1944. Only three planes out of 37 returned to Tibenham. Our crew raided Kassel on September 22 and again on September 28. In between we had a two day leave, returning to the base on September 27. Our crew was spared, and we successfully completed our 35 missions early in January, 1945.

The last mission for our crew was particularly noteworthy because it was the 100th mission for our plane, "The Bunnie." There was talk of our flying "The Bunnie" back to the U.S. and take it around the country on a bond-selling tour. Most of our crew thought it was a great idea, but it never came to pass. "The Bunnie" was turned over to another crew. It cracked up for good on its 108th mission.

Folded Wings

44th

Sheldon R. Bagen
Edgar F. Murphy

93rd

Raymond A. Felix
Edward J. Valentine

389th

George Cokinos
Lawrence E. Neely
Robert P. Halpin
Julia W. Gould - ARC

392nd

Daniel J. Baer
Albert R. McCafferty

445th

John H. Glass
Elwyn J. Hornsby

446th

Kellard C. Bostick
Loren M. Van DeVoord
William F. Simmons

448th

Harold J. Weeks
Cecil Frensko
Neil R. McCluhan
James A. Pegher
Herbert S. Chrzan
W.E. Bollschweiler

453rd

Andrew J. Fleckenstein
Dixon Griffith

458th

Angelo Calitri
Col. John J. LaRoche, Ret.

466th

Joe A. Lyne
Edward H. Gore

467th

William S. Carrico
Fred J. Jansen

489th

William E. Ramey

491st

John M. Forman

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

BILL ROBERTIE

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