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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Summer 1990

Why Burn the Stars and Stripes?

by Sgt. Bruce Forbes • Submitted by Jack Ilfrey

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Why burn me? What have I done to be put to death?

Yes, I have led people into battle. I did not order them there, but I went to guide, support, and represent them. I have been held by one of my children who marched into the fire, the destruction, and the very hell of war. Above the death and smoke, I have stood tall, flying as an ensign for those who fought against tyranny and hatred.

I flew when the British attacked — all night I flew, marking where those who fought for freedom stood. And when the morning came, I was still there.

I was at Gettysburg, where my sons fought each other hand-to-hand; senseless hatred fueling them on. I still fly there, marking the site as a shrine and reminding the living that their death was not in vain.

I still fly at Pearl Harbor, and not at half-mast. There, an enemy thought my children would falter. But they were wrong. Today, the children of the dead come to look and be reminded that these heroes died that freedom might live on.

My sister with the torch has held her vigil, watching over the ocean for our children to return from war. I was there, flying from the highest mast, telling her, "Here are our children, here are those who fought for the freedom of mankind."

I stood erect and proud, representing all who love freedom, as my children who were prisoners of war were returned to their loved ones.

I have covered the bodies of those who gave their lives that we might be free. As they were returned to grieving families, I was a reminder of the freedom and truths which their children died to uphold.

But I have also led in peace. My stripes are a reminder to the world that they can in fact live in peace as separate, yet United States. My stars are a new constellation in the sky, guiding all who yearn for freedom and equality to these shores.

Missionaries, peace workers, and other ambassadors carry me around the world, and wherever I go, people follow; they know those who bear me also bear that which I stand for.



What do I stand for? How can you ask, you who have lived so long under my stars?

I am a declaration of Independence. I am independence from fear, from tyranny, from slavery. I am a visual reminder that "...all men are created equal..."

I represent a constitution; a most unique document. It is a contract — a covenant — wherein the people allow a few to govern the many.

I stand for the Bill of Rights that gave those people a margin of civil liberty still

unknown to the rest of the world. I stand for the very liberty that allows you to burn me.

I stand for a government that is, in turn, governed by the people; a government that is of the people, by the people, and for the people. It is a government that must listen to and obey the people.

I stand for the people, and in so doing I stand with the people. I stand over the parks and playgrounds — sites where children can play free from Cossacks on programs or slavedrivers searching for new stock.

I fly above the offices, factories, farms, and shops of the nation, reminding the world that here mankind is free to buy or sell, to spend or save, and to become all they can achieve by the sweat of their own brow.

And, I fly at our ports. Those who lived with war, with hatred, with oppression, see me as a sign of a better life and flock with their children to the light of my shadow. They join my family and the circle of freedom grows larger.

In every American heart beats the song of freedom. But sometimes the child does not understand the words. The American parent then points to the sky, where I unfold in the breeze, and tells the child that I will always lead them — that where I go they will find freedom and dignity.

I am freedom. I am the heart of every American. I am the heart and soul of America.

When tyrants see my children burning me they smile, for they see the heart and soul of America dying.

Why burn me?

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President's Message

by Frank DiMola

It has been a most exciting, although short, term of office, serving you as President of the Association. I have noticed how wonderful it was to see how everyone works, so concerned, and so diligent, to keep the high status of the Second Air Division Association as one of the outstanding veterans' associations.

It was exciting to see and get to know all the Group Vice Presidents who are looking for the "lost souls." Even now, after so many years since our Association was first founded, our membership is constantly growing. As a past Group Vice President, I know how exciting it was to bring together again so many men who hadn't seen each other since the war.

We are approaching the 50th anniversary of the nation's entry into World War II. There will be a great many tributes, speeches, parades and displays of gratitude to the men and women who fought for freedom over tyranny around the globe in the years between 1939 and 1945. World War II claimed the lives of over 400,000 Americans and profoundly affected the way we live today.

In Washington, D.C. there is a very moving tribute in the Iwo Jima Memorial to the Marine Corps of WWII. Several branches are also honored with individual monuments, along Memorial Drive to Arlington National Cemetery. There are U.S. National Cemeteries and Memorials in such faraway places as England, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and so on. Yet there exists no one place in the nation's capital, where all WWII veterans can bring their children and grandchildren and say, "Here is the WWII Veterans Memorial. These are the reasons for which that war was fought."

After reading the article about this matter, written by Rep. Marcy Kaptur, a bill is being proposed in Congress, HR 2807, to establish a national WWII memorial which would pay tribute to the sacrifice of WWII veterans. I suggest that those in favor of this tribute, write your local congressperson and voice your approval on HR 2807.

The Library Memorial Drive is still in search of additional funds. Our objective is, of course, \$500,000 and we have a bit to go. I know that the Group Vice Presidents have done an outstanding job appealing to all their members. So, do not let them down. Please make your contribution now. The latest figure was reported to me and it is far short of what we expected at this time.

This will be my last report as your President. I wish to thank all of you who have made my term of office a pleasant one. No matter who I have called for assistance or for information on the Association, none of you have failed me. It is a wonderful veterans' organization and the best in the land. We have a beautiful living Memorial in Norwich which all of you have helped to build and maintain for a lifetime. Once again, Elizabeth and I want to thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts, and God bless all of you. See you in Norwich.



Folded Wings

44th

Clement J. Bartash
Julio G. Castellotti
Virgil O. Hinton
John M. Scholl

93rd

Anthony DeMato
Charles Forth
William P. Hanley
Donald Powers
Robert T. Wilkinson

389th

Wesson O. Batchelor
Lloyd B. Harris
Harry Hassman
Orlando W. Miller

392nd

T. Norris Nilson
Robert L. Quegold
Eldon B. York

445th

Lt. Charles W. Buntong, Ret.
William L. Miller

446th

James J. Klein
George B. Oonk
David F. Sweeney

448th

Allen D. Cassidy
Roy A. Fischer
Bruce B. McCleary
Bernard C. McGurr
Robert H. Piccolo
Richard G. Thalhamer
Lawrence H. Vogtmann

453rd

Mike Benarcik
James J. Dailey
John T. Davidson
Raymond C. Gibbons
Gustav R. Johnson
Carl Powell

458th

Guilford L. Breedlove
Joseph L. Flach
Arthur R. Hendrickson

466th

William J. Gallagher
Thomas P. Lynott
Daniel McDermott

467th

Bernard C. Logsdon

489th

Robert L. Angle
Douglas C. Brownell
Richard O. Butler
Warren D. Wackford

491st

Daniel J. Connolly

HDQ

Rose Halloran Berwaldt
Paul M. Keary
Col. Roy E. Sine, Ret.

SM

John T. Katz, Jr.

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by H.C. 'Pete' Henry

I received a note recently from Bill Robertie asking me and all the other Group VPs to get on the ball and send in our columns for the Summer edition because he's going to have surgery. Well, this one will be in the mail to him in a couple of days, and I'm sure you all join me in wishing him well.

While on the subject of surgery, etc., Bob Dubowsky and Mike Fusano both had bypass surgery since we were in Hilton Head last November, and all is well with them according to the latest reports. My own B.W. (beloved wife) is getting around the house OK without her crutches and we are looking forward to attending the 44th HMG Reunion in Norfolk, VA, May 23-27.

In January, Donald A. Johnson of Endwell, NY sent a note along with some photos (xerox copies) of 44th BG plane crashes from Harvell's book, "History of 44th Bomb Group 'Flying Eight Balls' Liberators Over Europe." When all four engines quit on their first mission, Johnson's crew crash landed at Shipdham 5 Sept. 44. Don believes his plane had the same markings as 'HENRY' (see Winter 1989 Journal, page 24). I doubt that it was 'HENRY' because it returned to the States 22 May 45 having completed 62 missions.

Earl J. Guy inquired, "Are you the Pete Henry of the 44th BG, 66th BS?" He was in

our barracks and shared an interest in photography. Will Lundy said that he was Equipment Officer for the 66th BS.

Just as this column was ready to be mailed, Earl called from Boggsstown, IN and Evelyn Cohen sent the notice that he is now a member of the 2ADA. He inquired about Bill Vahrenkamp who was the 66th Squadron Adjutant and is now a member of the Association, living in Fort Worth, TX. Others he asked about were John Saladiak, navig., a member, from Glenshaw, PA; and Mason Johnson, 67th Engineering Officer. (Will Lundy advised me some time back that Mason is deceased). Earl said that Saladiak flew a tour with the RCAF, the RAF, and the USAF and was on the Ploesti mission 1 August 43. Earl said that Mort R. Taylor was also with us in Shipdham and is deceased, as is Sandy Fineman, pilot. Sandy finished his tour, came home and was killed training other pilots for combat. Earl flew five or six combat missions but there is no record of it, and he didn't get credit for them because he wasn't authorized to fly in combat.

John Kirby also called and said that he is feeling much better (inner ear problem) and may be able to join us again one of these reunions. Glad to hear that, John. We have missed you. He said that his son, Tom, is really into WWII memorabilia, building model German airplanes and doing a study on Galland, the German ace. John recently sent a big batch of photos to Joe Warth for the 44th HMG and among them was an 8 x 10 of "Myrtle the Fertile Turtle." I think that was the first ship our crew flew when we arrived at the 67th in June '44, and I'm going to write to Joe to see if I can get a copy of the picture. Mike Curtin was Crew Chief for "Myrtle" and really did a fine job of keeping her flying. John said he thinks "Myrtle" came back to the States after the war.

Christian Loop from Hamburg, West Germany, is researching "BIG WEEK" 20-25 Feb. 44. He wanted to know why the 44th mistook Helmstedt for Halberstadt but the PFF malfunctioned and we bombed, visually, two targets of opportunity, Oschersleben and Helmstedt.

A good friend and Squadron Commander of the 68th, Bob Lehnhausen, recently found one of his old crew members, William G. Morton, and sent the first year's dues to Evelyn Cohen. Another new 68th squadron member of the 2ADA is Robert G. Pierce. After finishing his 28th mission in 1944 as a member of George P. Martin's crew, he instructed gunnery at North Pickenham, England and Green Castle, No. Ireland, before returning to the States in late '44.

Leroy Newby, aka "Ted," author of "Target Ploesti," sent a letter enclosing an article, "The Liberator Is Recognized," that appeared in 'MILITARY' magazine for March 1990 written by Capt. David C. Burton, USAR. I agree with Ted that it is one of the better B-24 articles and well worth the trouble to try and find that issue of 'MILITARY' in your local library. Newby is working on a second book, "Ploesti: Graveyard of Bombers" which he expects will be published by Motorbooks International in 1991.

Since there will be no nationwide 2ADA Convention this year, how about a 44th mini-reunion at French Lick, IN, October 10-12, 1990 with the North Central Region of the 2ADA? (See page 27).

Richard Bottomley sent a card advising that he has found a source for golf hats on which he can get the 8-Ball imprinted with the correct nose color. He still has 8-Ball T-shirts available. Anyone interested in either of these items should write to him: R.E. Bottomley, 4509 Morrice Road, Owosso, MI 48867.

Executive Vice President's Message

by Richard M. Kennedy



It has been said that imitation is a most sincere form of flattery, so let's see what we can do about extending a very interesting idea. A couple of issues ago, a most able predecessor and, at the time, 2nd ADA President, Bud Chamberlain, gave us an enlightening review of Association matters covering the immediate past year. The analogy employed by Bud, the definition of a "wake" was not only appropriate, but as I read it, most effective. Spread before us in that text was a very concise and graphic description of the "wake" created by an active and viable organization — our own 2nd Air Division Association. Let's follow through then, on Bud's theme, and see where we might take it.

I don't think our nautically oriented friends will take exception if we, as Air Force types, move the more frequently referred to "uncharted waters" of their oceans to our more familiarly identified "uncharted skies." Perhaps we feel more at home there, even if it's probably far more accurate to recognize that these days most of us have at least "one foot on the ground."

Although a well established, chronological record of significant 2nd ADA events provides us with a clear view of the "wake," is it prudent to assume we can hold the course by merely observing the "wake" and hoping the future will fall neatly in place? The "wake" reveals a steady flight path through air that has been, for the most part, smooth but not altogether void of some occasional chop. The foreseeable future, therefore, may not be too difficult to visualize. It's the unforeseeable lying somewhere in our future that we must address and lay out, to the best of our creative capabilities, a course that will maintain that resolute "wake."

Out there in our uncharted skies are areas of concern we have, it appears, faced and studied over the years; those areas involve Membership, Leadership, and Finances, all of which are very important and each with its own particular characteristics. Yes, the factors are independent when looked at separately, but when we examine them by way of an overview, the independence that seemed so well defined, appears to merge into elements that are, without doubt, pretty much interdependent.

Studies by at least one of our Executive Committee members have indicated that in the area of Membership we can, in the foreseeable future, probably expect to maintain a fairly steady level of active members. This forecast appears to be well-founded, despite some losses within the membership roles. The rate of new members coming on board has, so far, exceeded the recorded losses. However, it is

incumbent on all of us, particularly the Group Vice Presidents, to press forward in our recruiting efforts. Association viability will continue to depend upon a fully and actively involved general membership.

It also seems very reasonable at this point to include in our studies and planning, the real and practical role we can expect the Heritage League and its members to fill. This young and, to date, untested organization must be given the benefit of serious consideration in the plotting of the 2nd ADA course as we look toward that unforeseeable future. Planning for that unlimited time, or as we are inclined to say "perpetuity," presents the 2nd ADA and the Heritage League with an awesome task.

Actually, the assumption of ongoing responsibilities by the Heritage League does, in reality, involve an assignment that clearly implies "counseling" of the "new generation," by those of us who had a part in the development of the history that they, the Heritage League, will be obliged to help sustain. I hope I am not overemphasizing this point. I do, however, want to define, in an introductory approach, what I believe to be monumental issues that, even at the most casual level of discussion, will present serious participants with questions that could be viewed as unfathomable with respect to reaching realistic results. Realism tells us, loud and clear, we must supply these heirs with not only the data, but also the desire to support and sustain the saga of our 2nd Air Division. Included in these responsibilities, of course, will be the inherent stewardship of our 2nd Air Division Memorial.

It would seem that the next factor — Leadership — would fit neatly, and in sequence, as we continue to formulate our flight path. Here again we can review by means of record and deed the solid accomplishments of our 2nd ADA leaders. Our pool of members possessing the necessary qualifications to assume the responsibilities of elected offices is securely stocked with willing and talented individuals. Group Vice Presidents could provide 2nd ADA officers with profiles of members within their particular group who, in the Group VP's opinion, might be considered as possible candidates for office.

We've used the word "viable" almost excessively in this theme and our fiscal factor Finances most certainly promises to impact quite heavily on the continued viability of the 2nd ADA.

Finances, realism and viability, strangely enough, in this instance are firmly locked together and, therefore, must be approached by way of a single path. Borrowing from an old "combat mission" term, may I suggest then that we take upon ourselves the role of "pathfinders."

The thought or suggestion of exploration in the area of an effective financial program brings with it potentially chilling inferences. At this point realism steps in and quietly but solidly tells us to face facts. It would be a complete lack of foresight and courage on our part if we fail to address the matter of the Association's future financial picture.

The components of our fiscal display are, and have been, shown in graphic detail in the annual publication of the Treasurer's Report. That unit of measure is all well and good, but we must add some other ingredients if we expect to view and then study the overall situation. The ingredients to be added include: current and future dues, a projected total number of members, projected age level of the membership, projected operating expenses, etc. A quick glance tells us we have a series of factors each of which can have an unsettling effect on any one or all of the others.

The challenge to our Executive Committee and to the membership is real and sharply defined. I feel the time to meet that challenge is also crystal clear — that time is now!

All of the above leaves us with the final component — viability. We, the Executive Committee and the members of the Association, are charged with the responsibility of providing the future cadre of 2nd ADA leaders with a plan solid enough to ensure a reasonable chance of succeeding. I repeat, I think we're ready, let's get to it!!!

Thank You

I wish to say "Thank You" to the many of you who learned of my recent illness and responded with cards, letters and telephone calls. Your reaction and response was most gratifying.

I wish I could thank all of you in person, but time and circumstance will not permit.

Best regards,
Bill Robertie

Chivalry in Adversity

by General Andy Low

Graduates of Service Academies have, for more than one hundred and fifty years, worn finger rings to commemorate their alma mater. In earlier years, before the advent of a gummed envelope, these commemorative rings served the useful purpose of imprinting the sealing wax on letters — even serving as an exterior identifier of the author. Many collegians of other institutions did a similar rite of passage. However, many of these collegians owed a closer allegiance to Greek-letter fraternities to which they belonged. Often their rings reflected this latter allegiance.

Since 1897, rings of West Point have reflected on the motto, "Duty, Honor, Country" and the Academy Crest, on one side of the ring, and a class-adopted crest on the other. During the third year, great activity by each class member marks the arrival of class rings.

Because of the closeness of the Academy experience — living in barracks, meals in a common mess, formations for all phases of daily life — the class ring is a ready manifestation of this closeness. Most graduates wear their rings much of the time — and certainly at activities associated with the Academy experience.

And thus, I was one who wore my class ring most of the time. In combat, in Europe, in early 1944, we were required to wear our issue name plates ("dog tags") at all times, but were discouraged from carrying other identification which might be "of aid and/or comfort to the enemy."

On 31 July 1944, there was some confusion on the assignment from our Group for the Combat Air Commander. He would command the Second Combat Wing, and the Second Air Division, which the Wing would lead. As Group Operations Officer, I had been up all night during mission preparations, and thus was most familiar with targeting, routes, communications, and the myriad of details to get over four hundred Liberator bombers to the target — Ludwigshafen, and the IG Farben Chemical Works. So, I took the assignment.

In a last minute rush, I changed into my flying gear and proceeded by jeep to Wing Headquarters, some ten miles down the road.

Briefing, take-off, form-up, coast-out, tight formation — all went well until we began our bombing run. We were at 24,000 feet, the highest I had ever flown on an attack. We encountered heavy flak at our altitude, and took random hits with no personnel injuries up to "Bomb Doors Open." Just as the bombardier announced "Bombs Away" we took a burst just under our bomb-bay which set our hydraulic lines and reservoir on fire — a raging fire.

The crew fought the fire but warned we were in serious condition, with a chance of an explosion of the gasoline tanks above the bomb-bay.

Quickly, the aircraft commander and I decided we had to leave the formation, dive

to attempt to blow out the fire — and to clear the target area. I told the Deputy to take over the formation and we dove sharply in a sweeping arc away from the target.

The Flight Engineer in the bomb-bay reported that the structure was catching fire. We knew we had to jump, and the aircraft commander sounded the "Stand-by to bail" on the alarm, and "Jump" almost immediately.

We were three on the flight deck, the Pathfinder Navigator, the Aircraft Commander, and me. The Navigator attempted to open our normal egress through the bomb-bay. The fire was just too much of a blazing inferno. I had shed my harness, and stood up as he was reclosing the door. Over my head was a hatch used on the ground during taxiing, but was not an authorized egress in the air. It was forward of the top turret, and could be blocked by guns. It was forward of the propellers — but both number two and number three engines had been feathered. There were two vertical stabilizers on the B-24J, but we found out we had already lost one in the dive.

I bent down, grabbed the Navigator around his legs, and shoved him through the hatch. I followed quickly, and the Aircraft Commander was right behind me. We cleared the aircraft, pulled our ripcords — and the plane blew up.

I was alone as I floated out of the clouds close to the ground, and could see I was headed for farm land outside a village. As I neared the ground and prepared to land, I realized I was headed right at two military figures with rifles — and the longest fixed bayonets I had ever seen.

I touched down, collapsed my chute, and the German soldiers were not twenty yards from me, rifles at ready.

"Haben sie pistole?"

I did not understand what they said, but guessed. I shook my head and raised my arms, and then realized I was really hurt. My flying suit was still smoldering. The Germans put down their guns and helped me beat out the embers. That done, they picked up their rifles, and began to search me. I was told to take off my watch by their motions. Then they emptied my pockets, found my dog tags but did not take them, and then helped me pull off my burned gloves.

And there it was — my West Point 1942 Class Ring. They motioned me to take it off, and it was dropped into a pack one soldier carried.

As they motioned me to march, I suddenly realized how scared I really was — and fearful of what was going to happen next.

We were taken to the village jail — all nine of us who made the jump. Two crewmen in the rear of the aircraft did not get out. We had all been quickly rounded up by the militia-type soldiers who had been turned out to look for downed men.

From the civilian jail, we were taken to a German Air Force airfield. We were given some medical treatment, wrapped with paper bandages, and readied for a trip to the Interrogation Center.

At the Interrogation Center, I was put in a plain, small solitary cell. I had told them my name, my rank and my serial number. I was bandaged so that I had to have someone feed me, and help with trips to the personal facilities.

My first session with the Interrogator was brief. I repeated my name, my rank, and serial number. He called me major, but said he needed to know more. As he remarked, they did not give medical treatment to spies. I hurt terribly, and was not sure what was happening under the bandages. But, I had endured West Point, and I knew they were not going to be any tougher.

The second morning was a repeat, giving only name, rank, and serial number, and back I was sent to my cell. Still hurting.

As I thought over my situation, and what was happening to the others whom I had not seen, I realized I had been riding with a 458th Bomb Group aircrew, transferred to the 389th as a lead crew. The aircraft wreckage would have 389th insignia. I deduced therefore they were not too sure who I was.

The third day session was another repeat. But the interrogator said I was foolish, as they would find me out. No medical treatment until they did. Back to my cell.

It was a warm August evening, but from my cell I could see nothing, and hear very little. Time dragged.

Suddenly, the guard was opening my cell, and in came a German flying officer. His left arm was mangled, and heavily bandaged. The guard locked him in, and went away.

In excellent English, with a British accent, he asked if I wanted a cigarette. I told him I did not smoke, so that ended that entree. I really hurt and the bandage reeked, so I was angry enough to be rude.

He asked if I would like something to read — *Life*, maybe. I replied I could not handle a book with my bandages.

He said he was sorry for me as an airplane pilot, for me the war was over. But he added he would never fly again either. We warmed to each other — a little.

He asked about my family.

I told him I had a daughter I had never seen. He told me about his family. There was more small talk, and then he arose to leave. He walked to the door, and then came back to me. His good hand was in his pocket. He pulled it out and dropped my Class Ring inside my clothes.

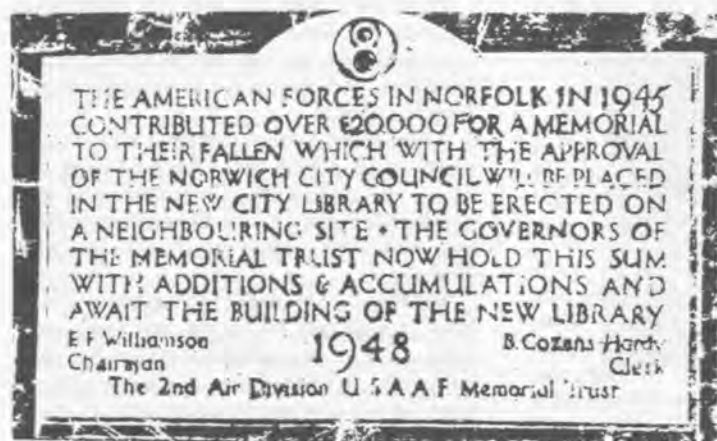
Simply he said, "I am sure this means something to you, and it means nothing to them. Hide it, and do not wear it until you are free!"

With that, he turned quickly and left me alone — with my thoughts.

Can there be such chivalry among such obvious adversity? For me, there was.

Report on Our Memorial Trust (Corrected)

by E. Bud Koorndyk



With this plaque erected in Bethel Street, Norwich, England in 1948, recording the original cash contribution from the American Forces on the Norwich bases and the intention to open a Memorial Library, began the process of the 2nd Air Division Association's goal of having a Memorial Library Room and Fountain be erected as part of the Norwich Central Library.

This facility was and is today funded by the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division Association, in memory of the 6397 comrades lost in the defense of our country during World War II.

In my first official capacity, serving as your Governor on the 2nd Air Division Association Memorial Trust, USAAF, meeting with the Executive Committee on the 20th and 21st of April in the Harvey Hotel in Dallas, Texas, I reported the following items of business.

In an attempt not to be repetitious with regards to the status of our Memorial Library Fund Drive, a more complete report will be found elsewhere in this Journal, submitted by Jordan Uttal. I would only report that as per this report our total receipts now stands at approximately \$371,000.00.

I would only reiterate my previous request that you all might continue to support this most worthy cause by sending your checks directly to Jordan Uttal, who has spearheaded this drive from the onset and has so graciously consented to serve as its chairman until we have reached our goal of \$500,000.00.

The first item of business submitted to our Executive Board was the formal acceptance of the resignation of Jordan Uttal by the Board of Governors at their meeting held on the 8th of December, 1989 in Norwich, England. At this same meeting the formal nomination of Mr. E. Bud Koorndyk was received and the appointment as a Governor then acted on and approved.

Secondly there followed the appointment of Mr. Jordan Uttal as an Honorary Life Governor in appreciation of seventeen years of invaluable service to the Trust as the Governor nominated by the Second Air Division Association.

Thirdly, Mr. E.O. Inman to be appointed as a Governor to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Commander M.E. Cheyne D.S.C. Mr. Inman is presently serving as the Director of the Duxford Air Museum, which is located south of Cambridge.

The placement of books for the Branch Libraries' sections have been ordered and in some instances are already in place, with the remainder being in place at the following branch libraries by our arrival at convention time in July. The branch libraries are located at Dereham, Long Stratton, Sprowston and Attleborough. For the benefit of the new members of the 2nd ADA, this branch library project is an outreach program into the villages surrounding Norwich, which are located near some of our former bases, with an expanded educational program originating from out of our

Memorial Library in the Norwich Central Library. There will be an interchange of books and periodicals amongst the various libraries involved. In the years ahead, computers will link up with all libraries and universities in the area.

And to further define the significant role that the Memorial Room in the Norwich Central Library has had in the life of the Second Air Division Association, I would quote from the accompanying inscription to a plaque given by the British Governors of the Memorial Trust which reads as follows:

"This Room, containing books and other material on American culture, with four Branch Library Collections in Norfolk, forms part of the 2nd Air Division Memorial. Other parts of the memorial comprise archives and historic papers for research, films, video and educational activities. This resource has been established to encourage better understanding of our friends in the United States of America and of that great country.

The idea of the Memorial was born in the hearts and minds of able, brave and intelligent Americans out of their experience of living, working and fighting in England during World War II. That experience had been shared with us, a people of another country, who spoke the same language and with whom an affinity developed through the stresses and strains of war.

This Memorial to over 6,400 Americans of the 2nd Air Division who did not return to their homeland is unique. In the words of Brigadier General Milton Arnold USAAF, a Founder Governor of the Trust, 'It is a tangible and permanent expression of the lasting friendship between our two nations and between ourselves as individual Americans and the individual English men and women in this community.'"

My final report to the Executive Committee had to do with the "Policies for the 90's" as submitted by the Board of Governors and which I will be addressing with them more fully during my visit in Norwich in the middle of May. The depth of thinking and research that was shown by our Governors in the preparation of this paper was truly appreciated, as our Memorial Library moves into a period of history when we will all have "folded our wings;" and ensuring that it will always remain a living memorial to the 2nd Air Division and its gallant members, is an awesome task.

And in conclusion, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Jordan Uttal for continuing to be supportive to me in my task as Governor on the Board of Governors. His 17 years as a Governor and also as a founding father of our organization, provides us with a historical reference library that could not be duplicated. So I say, "Thank you, old chum."



Mrs. Anne Barne, original member of the Board of Governors, fights on at the controls of her B-24.

2ADA American Librarian Fund Progress Report

by Jordan Uttal



2ADA American Librarian Fund Progress Report

by Jordan Uttal

We are pleased to be able to report additional progress since last we wrote in mid January for the Spring issue. 119 more donors have come in with 219 more checks, raising our total by another \$20,000.00 to \$360,000.00! It actually is a bit higher due to interest for this quarter, the amount of which I failed to obtain from our Treasurer before writing this report.

Our membership now stands at over 7,700. With 1,687 donors, we reflect participation by close to 22% of the membership. We are at 72% of our Last Mission Target of \$500,000.00. How easy it would be if we could get all of you who can afford to donate to sit right down and send in your support for the perpetuation of the memory of those we lost, and of what all of you accomplished.

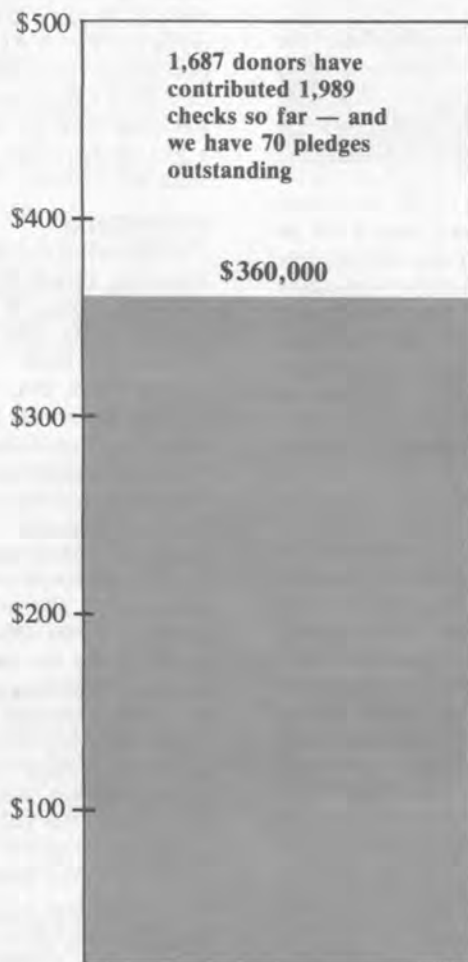
It would be great to show up in Norwich in July with the news that we have hit the target with the help of those of you who have delayed sending in your badly needed assistance.

For those new members who have joined since June 1988, if there is any doubt as to the purpose of this drive, please don't hesitate to write or phone me or your Group Vice President and we will get the details to you. We have not heard from many of you and we are concerned.

All good wishes to all of you, as always.



HOW WE STAND AS OF 12 APRIL 1990



HOW DOES YOUR GROUP STAND?

Unit	Number of Donors	Number of Checks	Number of Pledges
458th	254	297	9
93rd	158	183	7
467th	137	157	6
448th	131	143	1
389th	127	165	12
453rd	125	154	2
44th	121	138	2
445th	110	137	7
491st	88	123	6
466th	88	99	3
489th	86	101	4
446th	80	87	1
392nd	77	94	3
HDQ	66	78	5
492nd	28	30	2

In addition, we have had 12 checks from 11 donors from various sources.

PLEDGE COMMITMENT

- ☐ I pledge \$1,000
- ☐ I pledge \$500
- ☐ I pledge \$ _____

- ☐ To be given at once
- ☐ To be given by end of 1990

Please make all checks payable to:
2nd Air Division Association

Mail To:
Jordan R. Uttal
7824 Meadow Park Drive, Apt. 101
Dallas, Texas 75230

Name (Please Print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State - Zip _____

Signature _____

Date _____ Group _____

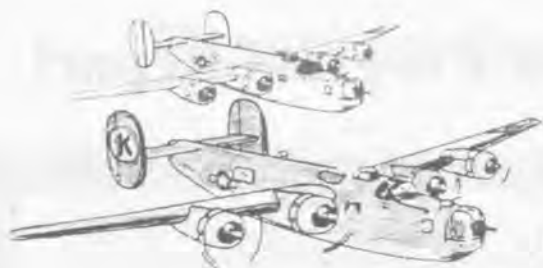
My Most Grateful Thanks

...to those of you who made my 24 days in the hospital in Baltimore more pleasant by your many cards and messages of good wishes.

My two knee joints are behaving, and the recuperation is going slowly but nicely. I continue my therapy exercises twice a day and am walking up to 40 minutes per day, still with the walker. I am going to see the surgeon in Baltimore on 26 April for my 90 day warranty inspection and I feel confident that he will move me up to the cane.

I wish that I could write each of you who phoned or wrote. Be assured that I will not forget the kindnesses once again extended by this wonderful extended family, which is the way I feel about you.

— Jordan Uttal



458th Bomb Group

by Rick Rokicki

AMERICAN LIBRARIAN FUND DRIVE

I am most happy to report that once again, the 458th leads the 2nd ADA in number of contributors (254), number of checks (297) plus 9 remaining pledges to the Library Fund Drive. Our total contributions amounted to \$24,133.00 as of April 3rd. If you recall, I mentioned in the Winter '89 Journal column that our share of the \$500,000 drive was slightly over \$26,000. We are therefore within \$1,867 of our goal! It would be fantastic if we could reach goal before our July Reunion in Norwich. Let me assure you, it can be done. As of this date, we have 656 dues paying members (we exclude those who are Associate Members and those who show their "home" Group as other than 458th first, for record keeping, only). Simple math shows that there are still 402 who have not responded with a Librarian Fund contribution, and that if each one of these gave only \$5.00, we would exceed goal. C'mon guys, let this be the last time I ask you to support this "Last Mission." In advance, I say... "GREAT JOB, WELL DONE, THE 458th STANDS PROUD!"

NORWICH REUNION, JULY 1990

The photo of the **Airport Ambassador Hotel** at Horsham St. Faith is one of several received from Graham Savill. I had sent some photos to be used in the previous Journal, but unfortunately they did not reproduce well in the testing and had to be withheld. Gary Bradford did the best he could under heavy clouded skies and rain while the building was still under construction. I composed one long view of two photos to give you some idea of the new hotel. Graham and June have had dinner there a few times and report that the food was very good. The hotel management appears extremely pleased to have us there, and we feel it will be a "first class" facility. I continue to receive correspondence from Mike Bailey and he has agreed to do another painting of a 458th aircraft to be hung in the Airport Terminal building along with other photographs, etc. Our many British friends are doing all possible to have another 458th Memorial installed in the new terminal. We shall have to wait and see what finally was decided. The new Airport Ambassador

we can complete our negotiations with all concerned parties. All we need is a good sunny and warm September day to make our Air Museum day complete. To those of you who may not be aware of it, Duke is a volunteer worker at the Air Museum and as such, manages to take "extra care" of our Memorial and Grounds. Again, do not hesitate to call or write Duke if you have any questions. Address: **1791 Utica Drive, Dayton, OH 45439**, or call 513-299-7125. Doubt that I will have any Squadron Insignia left, since the 752nd and 754th are long gone, only two 755th and six 753rd are left. Perhaps at some later date a smaller order can be placed if there is still a demand. My suggestion is that you bring yours to show others what was made available. **Duane Fair** will have his Bradley Associates A-2 leather jacket with him and we will raffle it off with ALL money going to the Library Fund. It wasn't possible to have this done at the Hilton Head Island reunion through a "signal mix-up." We definitely will "Lotto" this jacket! Received word less than a week ago that Clyde Bradley will give me a \$10.00 check for the Library Funding for every jacket ordered from his company. Write or call me for an order form, cost, etc.

TAILWINDS

Continue to find more new members. With the help of **D. Hulon Cornette, Chuck Neely, Curt Vogel, Harold Rabideau** and **Joe Kennedy**, some of the following were located and joined us. **Charles Neely, TN; George A. Griffin, NC; Joseph Driggs, WV; William F. Theis, IL; Don Shannon, WA; Henry Forbes, IL; Angelo Pucci, PA; Bernard Doyle, FL; William Bothwell, FL and Willard Rodermel, WI.** Have had several requests for information regarding availability of **Martin Bowman's** "Fields of Little America" sometimes referred to as "F.O.L.A." Some good news. Originally published in Nov. 1977 in both soft cover and case bound, it was the first (and to my knowledge the ONLY book) to cover the operations of the Second Air Division. Book sells for \$12.95 plus \$3.95 post & handling, for soft cover. Contact Zenith Books, P.O. Box #1, Osceola, WI 54020. They have a toll free number, 1-800-826-6600. **Phyllis Hunt**, Trust Librarian, wrote thanking me for providing the Maryland Black Marble sent to replace the missing piece in the Memorial Fountain. Discovered she graduated Goucher College and also was Acquisitions Librarian at Johns Hopkins. Both of course are Maryland Institutions...Small world! **Don Raney** saw **Frank Clement's** name in the Hilton Head Convention list. Requested his address and found his nose gunner. Don was in the tail, now all we need is what was "in between!" Continue to receive many photos for publication. I can't possibly use them in the limited space I have for this column. Please write your name and address on the back so that I know who to send them back to. Often a decision is made by the publishing people not to use them because of poor reproduction. If you have an in-



Hotel has expressed a willingness to be an alternate to show our wartime presence. Full report and photos, next issue!

WRIGHT-PATTERSON, DAYTON REUNION, SEPT. 1990

Duke Trivette has prepared the mailing to be sent your way in early May, no later than mid-month. By the time you receive this issue of the Journal, you will have the full particulars and costs of the Dayton Reunion. Hopefully you will respond well and early so that

interesting story to go along with that photo, why not send it to **Bill Robertie**, who will make a decision on the merit of the article. If you write for info or wish a return reply, would appreciate it if you enclose a stamp. I have envelopes. A new and up-to-date 458th roster will again be available by the time you read this. Cost is still \$3.50 and covers the Xerox cost and postage. Sorry, there is no "break-out" of which squadron, though. Next stop, **NORWICH!**



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

By Hap Chandler

MEMBERSHIP INCREASES

During the first quarter of 1990 the 491st led the Second Air Division in new members. We had a increase of SEVENTY NEW MEMBERS from January 1 through March 19, 1990. Disappointingly, despite this remarkable increase, we still are 12th among the thirteen Second Air Division Groups.

We have 44 members who came to the 491st from other groups who do not count toward our total.

This means that instead of being credited with 420 members, our membership is officially 376.

In order to reach our goal of 600, we need the help of every active member. Membership applications are available from Evelyn Cohen or your V.P.

MIKE FAGEN, researched numerous rolls of microfilm and provided a list of 288 names and addresses of former Ringmasters. However, we need help with current names and addresses of crew members, buddies, hut mates, acquaintances, etc who served in the 491st.

DAYTON REUNION

The dedication of the 491st memorial is scheduled for 1030, October 19, 1990 at the USAF Museum, Dayton, Ohio. All members of the "Ringmasters" are urged to be present on this banner day in Group history.

Our reunion will begin October 17th and conclude October 20th. Early arrivals may plan to be in the hotel on noon Wednesday October 17th. No formal activity is planned for Wednesday except for a hospitality cash bar. Registration will begin at 9 AM Thursday October 18th. The formal dedication will take place at 1030 AM, Friday, October 19, 1990. Details and registration information will be forwarded in May.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

120 of you "Lucky Bastards" have donated \$7,210 toward the cost of the Air Force Museum Memorial. What about the rest of you, all 300 of you? Donations to: 491st Bomb Group Memorial Fund, P.O.Box 88148, Dunwoody, GA 30356-8148. DALE ALEXANDER, author of the "Lucky Bastards" card called from Florida. He reported that the new one compared favorably with the original. Dales lives in Florida in winter and returns to Minnesota for the summer.

Had dinner with LOUIS BUR passing through enroute to Michigan from Florida. We were joined by Elaine, Louis' wife and son Pete who works for General Motors in the Atlanta area.

Louis recruited Father ED NORKETT, our Catholic Chaplain, now 80 years old and living in the Chicago area. In addition, Dr. A.F. "MIKE" DOUGAN, Group Flight Surgeon was recruited by NICK JABBOUR. With our chaplain, surgeon, and personnel types we are well on our way to operational capability again!



Back row: Milling, Hood, unidentified, Miller, Philip
Front row: Crockett, Dinsmore, Karczewski, Simms



Lt Col Jack Merrell (Top row, second from left) "sweats" a 491st mission return - Metfield, England 1944

MISSION 1 - JUNE 2, 1944

GEN JACK MERRELL wrote a graphic description of Mission #1, June 2, 1944.

"After bombs away, the wing lead descended four to five thousand feet. Intense and accurate flak encountered at this altitude resulted in the loss of seven aircraft by the 489th."

Then Lt Colonel Merrell, flying as 491st Air Commander, after consultation with the lead pilot, Captain 'Pres' Durley and the lead navigator, decided to stay at the briefed altitude. This fortuitous decision avoided the losses incurred by the group flying wing lead. "General Merrell reminisces furthers," That first mission really helped the 491st to make a lot of improvement, from which we went on to become one of the best in the Eighth Air Force."

"That morning I had three squadrons up on a practice mission. After we landed... I was told that the 491st was going to fly their first combat mission... I talked the C.O. into letting me lead the mission. It was quite an honor for me since I had been with the group since it was formed."

In December 1943, 27 year old Jack Merrell, was assigned as Deputy Commander of the 491st Bomb Group, a post he held until April 1945. In the post-war Air Force he served in a number of top level command and staff positions. In 1968 he was named Commander of the Air Force Logistic Command, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio, and promoted to General, four star rank.

During his tenure at Wright-Patterson the United States Air Force Museum was officially dedicated by President Nixon. General Merrell is widely recognized as one of the principal architects' of the oldest and largest military aviation museum in the world. Covering military aviation from the Wright brothers to the space age over one and a half million visitors a year tour this unique attraction.

The 491st will be assembling in Dayton for their third reunion and dedication of their own memorial October 19, 1990 at the museum.

OSCAR GERSTUNG spent the better part of two days with us in March. Oscar was assigned to the bombsight and autopilot shop at North Pickenham.

We are indebted to Oscar for his picture of some of the Autopilot organization on this page. These specialists and the other technical organizations were the backbone of our aircraft maintenance and we salute their dedication and unremitting toil to 'keep 'em flying."

Oscar left the Air Force to complete engineering studies at Washington University in St Louis. His company was involved in the space program providing mock-ups of the Mercury and Gemini Space Capsules. He retired to Colorado after 36 years in the metallurgic industry.

FRANK LEWIS, DALE ALEXANDER, and CHARLES MURPHY all called in a single morning. Frank was researching the January 5, 1945 crash of the forming ship. The forming ship "Rage In Heaven" became an icy coffin seconds after take-off, BOB SWEET's crew survived the second crash, a third plane and a fourth piloted by DEE MCKENZIE managed to become airborne and return. Frank is seeking the pilot of the third plane. Can anybody help Frank, 900 Greenwood Drive, Dublin, GA 31021.

Coincidentally, Charles was in the waist of Sweet's plane when it crashed and was trying to get in touch with him. BOB SWEET has family in the Atlanta area and had been visiting them several weeks ago, so I was able to put him in touch with Bob's son.

Ninth Annual So. Cal. Reunion Dinner

by J. Fred Thomas (392nd)

On the evening of February 24, 235 members, wives and guests gathered at the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station for another gala reunion dinner to renew old friendships and enjoy the camaraderie which is always prevalent when members of the Second Air Division get together. Due to the excellent facilities, it was the fifth successive year that the reunion has been held at El Toro MCAS. Dinner Chairman was Charles McBride, 448th BG, ably assisted by Harry Orthman, 492/44 BGs, Dick Boucher, 445th BG, Charles Walker, 445th BG, Fred Thomas, 392nd BG, and most especially, their respective wives.

Brigadier General and Mrs. D.V. Shuter, and Chaplain Gerald Cook were honored and welcomed guests from the Marine Corps. General Shuter delivered a stirring message of welcome, and Chaplain Cook delivered the invocation, which was followed by the ever impressive Color Guard rite and the emotional Pledge of Allegiance.



Southern California Committee: Harry Orthman, Steve Miller, Fred Thomas, Chuck Walker and Dick Boucher.

After a generous and well served dinner, Chairman McBride took the mike and introduced another welcome guest, Steven D. Miller, son of the famous and beloved Glenn Miller. Steve was only two years old when his dad was lost late in 1944, but he is making a full time search to obtain all possible information about his dad and his travels while serving to keep up the morale of the troops, including visits to several Second Air Division Groups. Steve would like to hear from anyone who has first person stories about meeting his dad, and/or pictures showing same. In his search, Steve has found Edward F. Polic, who has spent many years compiling a detailed account of Glenn Miller's period in Europe with his Army Air Forces Band. Published in 1989, Mr. Polic's work is contained in two bound volumes entitled: "The Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band, Sustineo Alas"...I Sustained the Wings. Being a subscribing member of the Second Air Division Association, Steve graciously donated the two volumes to the Second Air Division USAAF Museum with the specific instructions that they be on the shelves of the library where they could be used by any who wished to make a study of Glenn Miller and his unselfish service during WWII and the era of Big Band music. The two large volumes were accepted by Bud Chamberlain,

immediate past President, 2ADA, who graciously expressed the appreciation of every member of the Association. Further appreciation was shown to Steve by presenting him with a Second Air Division Association plaque.

Following, Fred Thomas took the mike to bring the members up to date on the matters regarding the coming reunion and convention in Norwich, England in July, and the progress of the Librarian Fund. It was made known that a limited number of reservations were still available for the Norwich event. It is understood that one or more parties have since made plans to attend the convention. As for the Librarian Fund, Fred gave the latest information as to the amount needed to complete our fund. He leaned heavily on those who haven't given to do so in order to prevent his having to come visit all parties for a week or two to obtain their contributions. He is hopeful that a summer of visits will not be necessary. In addition, Fred

brought to the attention of the members that the book "Mission Failure and Survival" by Chairman Charles McBride was on display and for sale after the dinner. The reader will find the book a well researched and documented account of a mission on a day when the Second Bomber Command wasn't as successful as one would wish, especially when the results were the bombing of Schaffhausen, Switzerland. The account of the mission and the survival of those involved makes for most interesting reading.

In conclusion, the writer would be remiss should he not express our deepest appreciation to Mark Hoage and Dik Shepherd for again displaying their large and most impressive collection of WWII Army Air Forces memorabilia. Their dedication and hard work for the success of our reunion is sincerely acknowledged. Also, we wish to express appreciation to others who reciprocate and attend to make our reunions successful... George Epperson, 65th Fighter Wing, and President of Gen. Curtis E. Lemay Chapter 8th AFHS; Dick Butler, 44th BG and Director March Field Museum Foundation; Col. Albert Shower; all members of the 2ADA ruling body; and others too many to enumerate.



448th Bomb Group Those Black on Yellow Fellows

by G.J. Irish

As advertised, the 448th fellows and their wives congregated in Tucson, Arizona, April 5th through April 8th, 1990.

Weather was great, accommodations superb, fellowship the best ever, with 296 people in attendance. This was the largest get-together we have had, with many "first-timers" swelling our ranks.

New stories were told. Old buddies reunited. The women looked great, as always, and we all survived the sights and sounds of banquets, shoot-outs, barbecues, bus rides, cacti, and a living desert found only in the Tucson area.

Flying machines were in abundance, from a replica of the original "Wright Flyer" to our impressive B-1 bomber. In between was a galaxy of aircraft from Trainers to Transports, "Big Boys" and "Little Friends." A B-24 with 448th "tail feathers" looked pretty familiar and graciously posed for our many camera buffs.

At our final Saturday night banquet, it was suggested that a voluntary yearly donation of \$10.00 would be appreciated to defray any unforeseen expenses which might occur in any future projects.

Leroy Engdahl was recognized for his untiring efforts in our behalf, and he has consented to remain on our staff as ex-officio recruiting and membership chairman. He will continue to coordinate our 448th and 2nd Air Division Association membership.

He has current up-to-date 448th rosters available. Costs are \$1.00 plus 50 cents postage. Any member desiring same, please contact Leroy at his home address, 1785 Wexford Drive, Vidor, Texas 77662.

International communications have resulted in a very unique and appropriately planned "Day at the Village" when we again meet with our English friends this coming July. A stalwart crew of Homan, Harper, Everett and Dupont will represent our 448th people in attendance as we join our friends in a day of remembrance and great fellowship.

Plans for a 1991 reunion are not finalized at this time. It has been suggested that a site on the Eastern Seaboard be considered. A good possibility would be the Virginia peninsula with its historic sites of Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown, Yorktown and the Hampton-Newport News area. More on this in a future Journal article.

May I wish all you 448th Fellows and wives a very happy summer. Until next time, "Adios Amigos."

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
William F. Davenport



Well, here it is, "Good Ole Summertime Again."

Probably by the time you receive this, the 446th trip to visit our old haunts, both those we remember from the ground and those that were occasionally visible from 4 to 5 miles up, will be history for our 65 or so travelers.

Some will be looking forward to another of the well-planned 2ADA affairs in Norwich and visiting with their old friends from other 2ADA Groups as well as 446ers.

Meanwhile in Tucson, Marv and Marney Anderson are busy putting together what without a doubt will be the best and biggest affair that the famous 446th Bombardment Group has ever had. It is expected to equal or exceed the number of attendees at Fort Worth for the B-24 50th Anniversary. The hotel facility lends itself to allowing a large number of small groups getting together on an informal basis. In other words, it is ideal for crew and unit reunions. So, you guys remember this is the time to have that get-together that you have planned and few of us have done. Our crew is planning to do exactly this. So, if you haven't done it, when you read this get in touch with Marv Anderson, 8411 E. Albion Place, Tucson, AZ 85715.

The October 19-22, 1990 Reunion of the 446th in Tucson is noteworthy because it all started there: On 1 April 1943, the 446th Bombardment Group (Heavy) was activated at Davis-Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona. The order of activation was General Order No. 46, HQ, 2nd Air Force, Fort George Wright, dated 1 April 1943. Units of the new Group were designated as headquarters and the 704th, 705th, 706th and 707th Bombardment Squadron (Heavy). The personnel assigned to the Group in its initial stages were drawn largely from the 39th Bomb Group (H) at Davis-Monthan Field. Additional personnel came from the AAB at Clovis and from other 2nd Air Force stations. According to the first personnel schedule prepared, the Group was to reach a strength of 25% on 1 May, 50% on 1 June, and 100% on 24 June. The leading figures in the activation of the new Group were as follows:

Group Commander	Major Arthur Y. Snell (promoted to Lt. Col.)
Deputy Group Commander	Major Frederick J. Knorre (promoted to Lt. Col.)
Group Executive	Captain Karl B. Greenlee (promoted to Major)
Group Adjutant	1/Lt. James F. Dempsey
Group S-2	Captain Milton R. Stahl (promoted to Major)
Group S-3	1/Lt. Gilbert J. Kuhn (promoted to Captain)
Group S-4	Captain Benton T. Thompson
Group Navigator	1/Lt. Ralph J. Jones
704th Squadron Commander	1/Lt. Cooper F. Hawthorne (promoted to Captain)
704th Operations Officer	1/Lt. William A. Schmidt
705th Squadron Commander	1/Lt. Solomon Cutcher (promoted to Captain)
705th Operations Officer	1/Lt. Eric H. Sherman
706th Squadron Commander	Captain Milton D. Willis
706th Operations Officer	1/Lt. Willis D. Hall (replaced by 1/Lt. Arthur A. Aull)
707th Squadron Commander	Captain Hugh C. Arnold
707th Operations Officer	1/Lt. Oscar F. Fowler

When the Group was assembled, Squadron Executives were assigned and after several replacements had been made, by 15 August, they were finally selected. They were:

704th Squadron	Major Arthur C. Quattlebaum
705th Squadron	Major Floyd B. Mitchell
706th Squadron	Major Thomas W. Spurgin
707th Squadron	Captain William B. Cozard

On 20 April 1943, initial equipment was ordered and shipped to the Group at Alamogordo, New Mexico, which at the time was expected to be the first permanent station. Between 29 April and 29 May 1943, certain key personnel of the Group, both commissioned and enlisted, together with four complete model crews, were ordered to AAFSAT at Orlando, Florida for specialized training prior to conducting the Group proper into regular 1st phase training. The greater part of the cadre reporting to AAFSAT were from Davis-Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona. Other personnel came from the 302nd Bomb Group, Clovis AAB and the 34th Bomb Group, Blythe AAB and from Second Air Force and other stations. After approximately two weeks of lectures at AAFSAT were completed, the Group moved to Montbrook Field, Florida, where the cadre lived under actual field conditions. The cadre of the 445th Bomb Group also moved at the same time to Montbrook. While at Montbrook, the Group flew five missions, every one of which was successfully completed. Every plane which took off on these missions completed the mission. A particularly successful over-water mission was flown by the Group. All available ships proceeded from Montbrook to Mobile and then went overwater to the Dry Tortugas, a small island in the Gulf. Navigation was excellent. From the Dry Tortugas the planes proceeded to the mainland and flew through the searchlight battery at Orlando. On 26 May 1943, the CO at Tucson was ordered to move the Group to Lowry Field, Denver, Colorado, by 5 June, the date on which 1st Phase Training was scheduled to start. By 8 June, the first personnel of the Group from Tucson arrived with 76 officers and 283 men.

The policies of the Group Commander were early brought to bear with particular emphasis on the air echelon and all flying personnel. The CO placed special weight during the early training period on safety factors in flying. Care was taken on every flight to see that all personnel were thoroughly familiar with oxygen equipment and with various SOPs devised for landing and takeoff. Emphasis was also placed on formation flying and early in the training program formation flying was practiced. The emphasis on safety in flight yielded excellent results so that up to that date, the Group had no accidents involving personnel on its record.

One airplane's landing gear collapsed while taxiing and incurred a damaged wing, engine and landing gear. A few airplanes had been damaged in taxiing accidents on the crowded line. Without exaggeration it can be stated that no Group in the 2nd Air Force had a better safety record.

Also, a few of you guys have not purchased your 446th Bombardment Group History. For this send \$53.00 to Bill Davenport, 13382 Wheeler Place, Santa Ana, CA 92705. With the exceptions of 2 purchasers, we have had nothing but praise for this excellent book. Incidentally, we also sell to other than 446th people, as long as our limited printing lasts.

Keep tuned to Beach Bell.

Thoughts Of An Aerial Gunner / Flight Engineer

by Paul J. Kuchinski (467th)

Chase the dread of war away
Tonight we drink and sing to play
We live this moment, no wish deny
The war is sleeping, tomorrow we fly
Pedaling back to the bombers nest
The fog above could mean a day of rest
In the early hours, still dark of night
It's destiny calling at cots flagged white
These chosen tread a somber beat
Bombers are fueled and men must eat
The Airmen's mess efficiently feeds these reluctant birds
Now fully awake to reality, each man his courage regirds
Their step increases, their voices regained
Questions of target not yet explained
The briefing room murmurs like friends at a wake
Sorry he's gone but none his place to take
The silence returns as the briefing officer appears
A pathetic performer who seldom rates cheers
Behind the curtain a course is laid down
A blood red ribbon to some German town
An eruption of sound as the curtain is drawn
Some souls here will miss the second dawn
After the briefing, each man his equipment receives
A soft heated suit of armor or his blood will freeze
A mask to give life where there is no air
Maps, money and candy on the bill of fare
And then the friend no airman denies
His silver white chute whenever he flies
The Padre is smiling in the gentle light
For each man was given his final rite
These grotesque warriors leave behind
The last quonset hut their bird to find
Squatting in wait like an aging whore
They all have a date with a B-24
The dark is aging as each silent band
Quietly gathers at their own hardstand
A check of the craft from nose to fin
Then all of the creatures vanish within
Like giant waves striking a rocky shore
The Liberator motors sputter and roar
Then they lumber in a menacing gaît
Angry because of the bothering weight
Like parts of a clock that's gone awry
The lumbering ducks queue up to fly
With motors full rev and brakes still on
They shiver and shake and then are gone
Down the runway they hurriedly flee
All praying they can outrun gravity
Motors, wings and skill of hand
Lift and hold us above the land
Now slowly rising in circling flight
Gathering together above the night
When we are gathered and in formation
Eastward we sail from this island nation
The land is ending, it's water ahead
The Channel's cold waters all airmen dread
Over the water all gunners test fire
To protect his crew is the gunner's desire
The higher we go the colder it gets
At sixty below a man still sweats
The coast of France is on the horizon
Soon spotty black death will be rising
The twisting turrets search the clock around
Approaching bandits give no warning sound

The sky is empty of enemy gun
I'm sure all pray for a quiet milk run
The nearing I.P. means soon we must turn
Steady on the line though your soul they burn
No enemy fighter dares the deadly bomb run
For flak never came from a friendly gun
It's guts and honor that holds a plane steady
For the test of flame the 8th is ready
The Hun below with his radar so clear
Steadies his aim as we draw near
Four black steps the heavens climb
Black notes without music or rhyme
Lesser men might have turned away
These hold true into the fray
A plane is spinning down like a broken toy
Let me count ten Lord as chutes deploy
Place the red, white and blue on a dark green wreath
Some boys will be missing from old Rackheath
Feel that lift? Like a kite at play
The bomb runs completed, it's bombs away
No need to fly straight, now we can turn
Mission accomplished, no need to burn
The flak is slowing as we make our turn
The words are growing. To England return
The target is burning away down below
The props steadily turning a long way to go
The hour is called, the guns point high
Jerry is coming, some mothers will cry
Remember to lead and make the bursts short
The rounds in the can are all that you've got
Each Jerry takes his aim, breaks into the curve
We hate their guts but admire their nerve
The plane off your wing has friends aboard
Fingers of fire shatter and sever the cord
Out of control, a sad wounded bird
Some unknown hunter is thinning the herd
Follow her down till she's out of sight
You're praying now, you'll be drinking tonight
As quick as they came, swiftly they're gone
So much has happened after the dawn
Some friends are gone, may never return
The next time out could be your turn
The group has been lowering at a steady pace
We finally can remove the mask from our face
Relax a little, sigh or joke
Talk a little, grab a smoke
We've crossed the channel once again
Converted from killers to gentler men
I thank the Lord for every round trip
Pray He will never desert our ship
Thanks for the ground pounders all over the base
The ground pounders lot is a harried pace
We are the riders, the favorite son
Without the walkers no task is done
We've been debriefed, relived the day
Now set loose to sleep or play
The drink I had plays havoc with me
The rhymes in my head hum tauntingly
Crazy thoughts fling sounds in my brain
Many times have I heard this refrain
"Up around the Zyder Zee
Charlie took a shot at me."
If Charlie took a shot at you
May these words your memory renew.

Notes from the 389th

by Lloyd E. West

The decade of the 1990s will bring many interesting changes for all of us in the Second Air Division Association. To all who have worked so very diligently the past 40 odd years to make the Second Air Division Association what it is today, we of the 389th "Salute You."

MEMBERSHIP: We continue to direct our time and efforts to contacting former members of the 389th who served with the Second Air Division during WWII. With the help of those who have sent us names and addresses, we have increased our Group membership to over 800. Your continued support will be greatly appreciated.

LOOKING AHEAD: Since this will appear in the Summer issue of the Journal and prior to leaving for Norwich, and for the benefit of those of the 389th who will not be attending the reunion in July, the program for "Remember the Villages" will be held at Hethel. The day will begin with a Memorial & Dedication service at the All Saints Church at Carlton Road, a tour of the Lotus car plant, a program and buffet dinner in the evening with representatives of Lotus and our English friends of the 389th as our guests. The Headquarters Group that was stationed at Ketteringham Hall near Hethel will join us for part of the day's festivities.

NEWSLETTER: The 389th Group newsletter has grown and is greatly improved since its inception almost two years ago. What it has done to bring the group together is immeasurable, since only a small number of the membership are able to attend the Association reunions. If the newsletter can be of help to others in the Association, contact Gene Hartley, 4995 Cervato Way, Santa Barbara, CA 93111, editor of the newsletter.

DUES: To all members of the 389th, your 1990 dues of \$10.00 to the Second Air Division Association are due and if you have not done so, please forward to Evelyn Cohen, 06-410 Delaire Landing Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19114. Your attention to this matter is appreciated. Thanks.

FINANCES: Your leaders give much of their time and resources to represent you in the 389th and the Second Air Division Association, but to be able to complete some projects that we have underway, some financial assistance is needed. Your donation of any amount will help immensely. Our financial statement is published in each of our newsletters. Send all donations to Allan P. Hallett, 249 Highland Avenue, Leominster, MA 01453.

ADDRESSES:

389th Group V.P. Lloyd E. West
Box 256, Rush Center, KS 67575-0256

Assistant V.P. Allan P. Hallett
249 Highland Ave., Leominster, MA 01453

389th Newsletter Gene Hartley
4995 Cervato Way, Santa Barbara, CA 93111



392nd B.G.

by
John B. Conrad

Recently received from **J. Fred Thomas** was a number of newspaper clippings concerning the experiences of **Kenneth B. Smith**, tail gunner on the Alfred Scarlata crew. This was one of the initial crews which made up the 576th BS in August, 1943. Kenneth's first mission, in the crew's plane "Hellwagon," was to Danzig. The right side of his turret was shot away on this mission, but he was not injured. Kenneth came through the second mission unscathed. On his third mission in November 1943 at high altitude and temperature 50 degrees below zero, Kenneth's heated suit malfunctioned, resulting in badly frozen hands. He insisted that he was alright, remaining in the turret fighting off repeated attacks by enemy fighters. He was awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart.

The 392nd's Assistant Group Vice President, **Cecil T. Rothrock**, has been hard at work recruiting those who served in the 392nd to sign up again for another tour with the 2nd Air Division Association. He has found more than 20, and would like to contact others you know who do not belong to the 2nd ADA. Please send any names to "Rocky" at 7334 26th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140, phone (414) 654-9014.

The following "poop sheet" was distributed to newcomers to the 392nd BG in the spring of 1944. It may sound familiar:

"You are joining the 392nd Bombardment Group (H), the formal title for a good bunch of guys who have been in operations in this theater a little more than six months.

Our Commanding Officer is Colonel Irvine A. Rendle, a former Wyoming bronc-buster, a command pilot, a former law student, graduate of Stanford University, who has flow and seen almost everything. Air Executive is Lt. Col. Lawrence G. Gilbert, our former Operations Chief, a native of Pleasant Lake, Indiana. Ground Executive is Lt. Col. Joseph (NMI) Bush of Boise, Idaho.

That's the top of the official roster. Before confusing you with any more names, here's a taste of what we've been doing. To begin with, we are hogs on factories and airfields. In the course of some 50 odd missions out of 125 alerts, Liberators from the 392nd have flown all over the European mainland, with a couple of raids out for Norway.

We began with France, and still occasionally do a tour in that occupied country. Also we have been all the way to the Baltic seaports. 'The Brains Upstairs,' however, send us over Germany for the most part, including that Germanic centerpiece, 'Big B' and occasionally we make a short one, just over the Channel.

The 392nd has led the 2nd Division in bombing, and on at least two occasions, in keeping aircraft in the air. We shared top dog position for the best Liberator bombing in the ETO on a long mission to Southern France. Since then there have been Gotha and Furth, both among the leaders.

Over a six month period, the gunners destroyed about 60 enemy aircraft. More than once a gunner has scored a double, and in one case a tail gunner claimed three destroyed on one mission.

Organizational set-up is as follows: The 392nd and 44th comprise the 14th Combat Wing under Brigadier General Leon W. Johnson, holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor, for his participation in the Ploesti Raid. The 14th CW, the 2nd CW, the 96th CW and the 20th CW make up the 2nd Division, all Libs. The 1st and 3rd Divisions are the Fortress outfits. Bomber Command having been eliminated a few weeks ago, the channel goes directly from 2nd Division to the VIII Air Force. That's the way it goes.

Regarding the Squadrons on the Base. They are the 576th, 577th, 578th, 579th. Captain Charles L. Lowell of Cedaredge, Colorado, is Commanding Officer of the 576th. Major Clinton F. Schoolmaster of Wilmington, Delaware heads the 577th. Major Warren A. Polking of Carroll, Iowa, and San Antonio, Texas, is boss of the 578th. Major Myron H. Keilman of Missoula, Montana, commands the 579th.

The Squadrons are fairly well dispersed around the Base. However, they are closely united in many things, and particularly in recognizing that this is a military unit, and that the Air Force is part of the Army. Saluting is expected from the Enlisted Men and among Officers. Military courtesy and discipline are strongly stressed.

Well, that is just an introduction to the 392nd. The Group is whatever you wish to make it. We're glad to see and become acquainted with all of you. The PX is in the Site opposite the Combat Officers' Mess and the Chaplains' hours are 24 a day."

EDITOR'S APOLOGIES

Credit was not given to he who took those great photos of the award recipients featured in the Spring 1990 issue of the Journal. The photographer was **Dick Stenger** of the 489th BG. Hats off to Dick for a great job!

I heard it said once that if you're going to make a "goof" make it a good one. I did just that when I omitted the reproduction of our **Memorial Trust Plaque** from **E. Bud Koorndyk's** report in the Spring issue. The plaque as it should have appeared can be found on page 6 of this issue.

The 466th Bomb Group

by E.W. Nothstein

At an air show last August, I happened to meet a former member of the Headquarters Squadron of the 466th Bomb Group. He was Sgt. Bill Rice of Perry, New York. He joined the Group at Alamogordo, New Mexico in the fall of 1943 and remained a member through its journey to the United Kingdom and back.

Bill's assignment was another case of malassignment. He began his food service career working in Perry at a restaurant called "The Hole in the Wall." Bill was paid three dollars a week plus room and board. Upon being drafted, he was instantly rich — room, board, fifty dollars a month plus clothing and medical benefits.

His training began with two weeks of basic at Miami Beach, Florida, followed by several weeks of waiting for assignment at Atlantic City, New Jersey (the Knickerbocker Hotel). This was a far cry from Perry, with an approximate population of 4,000. When finally assigned, he went on to Wichita Falls, Texas, for cooks and bakers school. Following that was another replacement depot at Salt Lake City, Utah. Ultimately, in the fall of 1943, he joined the 466th at Alamogordo. Some of the names he recalls are those of Raymond Alava, John McFall, Mike Kloch, Russell Latham, Henry Bamman and Gerard Dieffenbach.

While in Attlebridge, Sgt. Rice was assigned as a cook in the Enlisted Mess. He commented that it was difficult to prepare good, tasty meals with the mostly canned and dried foods he had to work with. We all remember those powdered eggs that turned green when cooked and Spam prepared in numerous and varied ways. Baked goods were fresh; this was before Mrs. Smith and Sara Lee.

One occasion Bill will never forget happened when he was working the night shift. For some unknown reason, the Combat Mess was closed and Bill was to prepare breakfast for the enlisted crew members. His menu called for maple syrup, a job for the cook to prepare. After handing out assignments to his KPs, he went to work making the maple syrup. As he recalls, it went something like this: 20 gallons of water, 25 pounds of sugar and some maple flavoring. Cook til thickened. Bill made his maple syrup, put it on the back of the stove and busied himself with other duties. The syrup remained for hours in that semi-warm environment, causing it to start to ferment. Innocent of the condition of the syrup, it was served with breakfast to those combat crews. About four hours later and well into the mission, over the target all of the recipients of the "syrup" began to experience violent gastro-intestinal distress (at high altitude). An investigation followed, but the cause was not

discovered. Sgt. Rice kept his stripes and never made that mistake again.

Bill must have had a round trip ticket, for he returned to the United States on the same ship that took him over, the Queen Mary. That was in July of 1945; by October he was discharged. As a reservist he was recalled to active duty in 1950. He then served in SAC at Biggs AFB (El Paso, TX), Carswell AFB (Ft. Worth, TX), Lockbourne AFB (Columbus, OH) and Lakenheath, England. He left the Air Force short of retirement because of family hardship. He still resides in Perry and occasionally visits the scene of his introduction to food services. "The Hole in the Wall" remains and when Bill is there the staff refer to him as "Mr." Rice.

I have just received word that John Woolnough, a long time member of the 466th Bomb Group, is seriously ill. Let us all remember him in our prayers and thoughts and wish him all the best.

The North Central Region of the Second Air Division Association (Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa) have scheduled their seventh annual reunion at French Lick Springs Resort, French Lick, Indiana. The reunion will be held October 10-11-12, 1990.

One of the principal speakers will be former 466er, Brig. Gen. Kenneth Keane, Ret. (93rd Bomb Group). I would like to encourage those of you unable to attend with us in Norwich this summer and those of you that did, to consider joining with this group in their reunion. For details, write Paul Steichen, 1659 Cloister Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46260 or call 1-317-846-4872.

The latest arrival through the U.S. Postal Service brought disturbing news. The following excerpts concerning a memorial window at All Saints Church will bring our efforts to a standstill. A full report will be given at our reunion in July. If anyone wishes more details, I will send a complete copy upon your request to me at 40 Meadow Drive, Spencerport, NY 14559.

Extract from Chairman, D.A.C. letter of 8th February 1990:
"As regards Weston Longville, I feel consternation at the suggested design. I know that there is some tradition of church buildings becoming the setting for various artifacts which are of community rather than of distinctive religious significance. I suppose many mural tablets might come under this heading. One feels, however, that the contents of windows in a church should certainly be of specifically religious significance. This has been the thinking of the Church, and as you know, some medieval theorists speak of the importance of the light which enters a church and the special matter of the glass through which it passes. I suppose this is all to do with light being a primary Christian symbol. What is suggested for the window at Weston Longville can by no stretch of the imagination be called religious, or be said to edify or inspire; still less does it proclaim any truth about God and the Christian religion."

Extract from Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Diocese, John Ellison dated 24 February 1990: "The problem of commemorating those who were stationed in England but did not return from operations has long been realised. In the case of commonwealth countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and so on it was dealt with some years ago by the great fine Commonwealth Air Forces Memorial at Englefield Green above Runnymede. Only recently have arrangements been in motion to cater for the American Servicemen. There is to be set up a like great memorial at Duxford Aerodrome. Agreement has been reached between the U.S. Air Force side and the British side, represented by Marshal of the R.A.F. Sir John Grandy. Sir John recently informed me that all is now well underway and the memorial is likely to be erected to the Americans who never came back in late 1990 or early 1991. I have no doubt that in one way or another the memorial will cover those lost from the 466th Bomb Group."



Alamogordo, NM, 1943 — Bill Rice and friends. Can you identify anyone?



Open Letter To the 93rd

by Floyd H. Mabey (93rd)

FOLDED WINGS: 93rd men not members of the 2nd ADA. Andy Miller notified me that his plane commander "Hap" Harold Kendall fell overboard in the Pacific while on a fishing trip.

INFORMATION NEEDED: I have a Brit that is looking for Sgt. Phillippe J. Hamel, who was in the 330th BS. Please send me his address if known. Also, can anyone tell me if I can acquire a complete listing of all 93rd personnel, and where?

INFORMATION STILL NEEDED: To complete list of 93rd plane names that flew or aborted, Ploesti mission 1 Aug. 43.

Pilot 1/Lt. Howard W. Freese
Plane #41-24259

Pilot 1/Lt. Alva J. Geron, Plane #42-40611

Pilot 1/Lt. Roy C. Harms
Plane #42-407781

Pilot 1/Lt. Cleveland D. Hickman

Pilot 1/Lt. William E. Meehan Jr.
Plane #42-40804

Pilot 1/Lt. Claude A. Turner
Plane #42-40608

PROPOSED INFORMATION: Our 93rd BG day, Sunday, July 29, 1990 at our old base Hardwick. I have been in contact with Dave Woodrow, owner of our base. I had suggested our day be much the same as he had prepared May 25, 1987 for the dedication of our 93rd Memorial. He has responded with a proposed schedule. 10-12 — On the Runway, it's a little difficult knowing what aircraft are available until nearer the time. 12:30 to 1:30 — Topcroft Church Service. 2:00 to 3:00 — Lunch at Village Club Field plus entertainment. 3:30 to 4:00 — Service and remarks around our Memorial. 4:00 onward — look around his Museum. Evening Barbeque and 1940s Night. Like this we would be spending more time on the old base making all feel at home. Dave would like to ask all that are going if you have any wartime photos or copies, clothing, etc. that you would like to offer the museum on the old base. I expect to have photos, a B-24 bag, a complete Class A uniform, chevrons, wings, ribbons, etc. for his museum, plus a surprise for him. Topcroft personnel will be present for the day that we may Honor the Villages. This sounds like an outstanding day for us.

MORE INFORMATION: I want to thank all who responded to my request for information. I asked about the crew for the mishap Dec. 19, 1944, one being T/Sgt. Ben Wiegand. I had a request from a Legionnaire in Peebles, Ohio for the names of crew involved in this mishap. Their county wanted to honor their war dead. For

once I received information, and most was sent to me by Joe W. Redden, Ltc. USAFR (Ret.) from the 446th BG, with a complete set of orders listing the crew that Wiegand was on, and the crew that Redden was on, temporarily detached to the 93rd. I sent a copy of these orders to the Legionnaire in Ohio and explained everything. I found that most of the crew were in our 93rd "Roll of Honor." One is shown buried at Cambridge, but not in our "Roll of Honor." Received letter from William F. Davenport, VP for the 446th BG, about this crew, and wanted to know if they were carried in the 93rd "Roll of Honor." I sent copy of orders to Bill, and explained that all but one was in our "Roll of Honor," and sent copy of orders and explained that 1st Lt. Henry D. Fulmer was not listed, but is shown buried at Cambridge, and should be shown in our "Roll of Honor" also. I sent copies to Jordan Uttal, and requested he review to have Lt. Fulmer added to our "Roll of Honor" with the rest of the crew. Also had response from T/Sgt. Barney Bernard (Ret.) from the 448th and 93rd, and Ltc. Bill Carpenter (Ret.), 93rd. Bernard told me that he had completed his missions in the 448th and volunteered to fly another tour, and so was transferred to the 93rd, 328th, where he got involved with one of those ground based Second Lt. who would awaken their barracks at 5 or 6 a.m. for weapons inspection. Also he would check their 45s while wearing a pair of white gloves, and those found that blemished his white gloves would be given a one hour's march in front of the hut area. I wrote to thank these fellows, sure wish I had this response to all my questions. It would make my job so much easier, as my unanswered letters keep piling up. I just can't answer this mail unless I have the information, and that is why I keep asking for copies of old orders.

THE STORY OF THE 93rd B.G. (H):

Have sold all 200 books, and called to order some more. They sent me a few that they had made up, still have 9 of them. They are still \$30 each, postage included. Still haven't received final payment from book dealer in England. I should have a full accounting of this at our meeting in England.

SALE OF GROUP & SQUADRON

EMBLEMS: The sale of these has slowed to a trickle. I will take some to England with me, and will only accept cash or check over there, will have enough trouble keeping my own pounds straight. I have left 30-Group, 9-328th, 30-329th, 47-330th, and 29-409th. When these are sold, they will be the most of our profit. They are still \$4.75 each, postage included.

THE AMERICAN LIBRARIAN FUND: I don't know how the 93rd stands at this time for donations and pledges, last report was 12 Jan. 90. The 93rd had dropped from 2nd place to 6th place. At that date, donations from our Group were \$14,692. This total is 7.7%, donors from Group 144, total 9.2%, these are percentage of number of our members, that now stands at 651. Number

of outstanding pledges from Group 5, value of \$908. The target for the 93rd is \$24,600. Come on fellows, this is for a just cause. Won't you please help, even with the paid up pledges we fall short.

REPORT FROM CARROLL (CAL)

STEWART: (Quote) "We're making good progress on a forthcoming book, *Ted's Travelling Circus* — approximately the half-way mark. It'll be a closeup account of the most colorful outfit of World War II. I've shed most responsibilities in order to dedicate the time and effort required. Additional first-person testimony will be welcomed. There are untold vignettes that will be given full consideration. The book will open with action over Lille; thereafter flashbacks as the story moves along. Submissions should be addressed to: Carroll (Cal) Stewart, Box 631, O'Neill, NE 68763. He can be reached at (402) 336-2144 (O'Neill), (402) 464-5219, Reprint Inc. (Yank Magazine), Lincoln or occasionally at (402) 466-8521. When submissions are expected to be returned, the information should specify." Cal was publisher of the *Liberator*; only the original 93rd would remember that. He also co-authored the most famous book "Ploesti" with James Dugan, now deceased.

NEW BOOK AVAILABLE: I have found and signed up Col. Luther C. Cox (Ret.), navigator of original crew on "Shoot Luke," my old plane. Later while on another crew of "Double Trouble" they were shot down after mission on Jan. 19, 1943, first 328th BS downed. This was the 93rd's first trip down to Africa. We saw only three chutes go down, due to the quick thinking of T/Sgt. Robert Harms, radio operator on "Jerk's Natural." He contacted Malta for rescue, they advised him to contact the Germans, they rescued Cox and Lt. Gerald G. Gray, the third crew member drowned despite the efforts of Cox to keep his head above water. Cox and Gray were POWs for the duration. Col. Cox informed me that he has published a book, "Always Fighting the Enemy." This is a remarkable and stirring story of United States Army Air Force Bomber Combat Crews aerial battles against Germany's mighty Luftwaffe and their equally devastating Anti-aircraft Artillery (AAA). Every target in both Europe and Africa was defensively boxed in by their deadly 88 mm AAA. Col. Cox vividly and accurately describes those early days of the Eighth Air Force's introduction of daylight bombing. His B-24D Bomber, "Double Trouble," was shot down on his twenty-first mission. Cox details the hardships and the uncertainties of life behind barbed wire during those years of his imprisonment by the Germans. As in the air, those dedicated flyers "never ceased fighting the enemy." His book "Always Fighting the Enemy" isn't on the stands yet. They can be purchased from Col. Luther "Doc" Cox, 4932 Oakbrook Place, Orlando, FL 32812, at \$21.95 per copy. Special rates to all Luft III Krieger, and 93rd

(continued on page 16)

Open Letter to the 93rd

(continued from page 15)

members at \$19.95. Please add \$2.00 shipping and handling costs for each book ordered. On this same mission, "Shoot Luke" was hit by fighter shortly after, wounding T/Sgt. Arvle Sirmans, engineer, and T/Sgt. William Mercer, radio, on his 19th birthday. We went in emergency to Malta, the Maltees worked frantically chopping through the wings with axes to get at the incendiaries laying on top of fuel cells. After 18 days of repair, we returned to Gambut, L.G. 139 Libya, disheartened from the loss of one of our crew mates and friends on "Double Trouble."

93rd ROSTER: Don't forget, you can purchase an up-to-date roster from Frederick A. Strombom, Box 646, Ogema, WI 54459. The cost is \$5 for roster plus geographical, or \$3 without the geographical listing. The listing is a big help when traveling, just check the state, and all 93rd men living in that state are listed. Cost just covers the making and mailing.

ADDRESS: By the time you read this report, I will be at my summer address, 28 Hillside Avenue, Dover, NJ 07801. Tel. (201) 366-5916.

Missives from the 492nd

by Bill Clarey

The other day, Mr. Joe Finneran called me from Walpole, Massachusetts to inquire if I knew of any former 8th Air Force Bombardier, living near him, that could check him out on his recently acquired Norden bomb sight. Since no written instructions came with it, he is asking for assistance. His address is: P.O. Box 123, East Walpole, MA 06032. Telephone number is (508) 668-4609. He extends his thanks to anyone who can help him.

Yesterday, Reto Renfer called from his home in Lengnau, Switzerland. He stated that he has completed a lot of his pre-schooling and is now employed as a flight attendant for Swissair. He flies to New York City once in a while, so don't be surprised if you get a call from him.

His private 8th Air Force museum is developing quite nicely and looks quite professional. He has a quite a number of items from both the 8th Air Force and also the German Air Force. Bob Stone, of Carmichael, CA, has been helping him quite a bit. Reto was fortunate in recently obtaining an A2 jacket to add to his collection.

The Western Air Aerospace Museum, at Oakland International Airport, is developing into a first class display of WWII memorabilia. Various branches of the military service have, or will have, their own display rooms.

All the members of the 492nd Bomb Group wish to extend their best wishes to Bill Robertie after his recent operation.

A Reason To Live

by David D. Finney

Numerous memoirs have been published by participants in World War II, but the majority of those were written from an officer's perspective. Thus, it is a treat to discover John Harold Robinson's story as a member of a B-24 crew. It is one of those rare works that World War II participants, buffs and scholars will enjoy reading. Robinson has a wonderful gift for describing the events and providing rich anecdotes regarding the men of the 703rd Bombardment Squadron, 445th Bombardment Group (Heavy), 2nd Combat Wing, 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force. His prose brings the stories of his comrades to life, and his accounts are outstanding as they describe even the smallest events that were peculiar to the B-24 crews of the Army Air Force.

What makes Robinson's chronological depictions so notable are the details, the variety of subjects, and especially the humanity that leaps from the text. His keen visual and narrative abilities create a memorable digest of gripping air battles, colorful character sketches and human interest stories which will delight readers. He has captured the leaders of his squadron and the rank-in-file in a way that all writers strive for, but seldom achieve. Robinson has successfully infused hundreds of anecdotes into the text with the sort of military detail that only an airman would recognize. Indeed, at times *A Reason to Live* reads like a movie script.

Robinson's story details with great accuracy his initial training at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, Keesler Army Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi and the Aircraft Gunnery School, Laredo, Texas. He continued training at Salt Lake City, Utah and Boise and Pocatello, Idaho. It was at Pocatello that he was assigned to Flight Crew No. 114. It was also here that he met his squadron commander, Jimmy Stewart. Robinson's numerous anecdotes about his old squadron commander are both charming and filled with affection. The squadron was temporarily stationed at Sioux City, Iowa and then ordered to Tibenham, England (Station 124, Village of Tivetshall) near Norwich.

A prime example of the detail contained in this book is presented in the following excerpt where the crew members are dressing for a mission. "First, the long handle underwear went over my regular shorts and undershirt. Then the blue, heated suit that looked like a quilted union suit. The cord and plug sticking out made me look like a monkey with a tail. A pair of white socks next and then the electric heated slippers. Then plug the electric shoe cords into the suit plugs on each leg at the ankle. Over the heated suit came the flight fatigues.

"In my left pocket I placed my Bible and my angel's picture. I thought of her as, somehow, a protective angel who would be flying with me. Over my flight fatigues I put on my dress uniform pants, shirt and light leather flight jacket. Next came my shoulder holster and .45 automatic. Next was my heavy, fleece-lined pants and my fleece-lined shoes. Then the fleece-lined heavy jacket.

"I put into my flight bag my flight helmet, headset, throat mike, heavy gloves,

Mae West life jacket, parachute harness, regular shoes, canteen, ammunition belt, boxes of emergency K rations, white silk gloves, heated gloves and a steel helmet."

A Reason to Live is not only an excellent memoir, but it also provides a chronological sequence of events and serves as a tribute to the officers and men of the 445th Bombardment Group. Robinson's flair for writing about air combat is terrific. This description of one of his squadron's early bombing missions provides a brief example of the numerous battle scenes related in the book: "The flak bursts puffs were everywhere, under us, over us, beside us. The cordite smell was sickening. Steel could be heard hitting the airplane. The bomb bays came open. 'Bombs away.' Again the ship leaped up when it lost its heavy load. The bomb bay doors closed. As we were passing out of the flak clouds, I looked down and saw our incendiary bombs going off like match flashes over every inch of the city. As the incendiary bombs left the bomb bays they were blowing back through the formation of trailing aircraft. Incendiary bombs passed over and under our left wing. One of the incendiary bombs stuck in our left wing man's right wing...then it came...ME 110s! ME 110s! Two ME 110s at 3 o'clock! Three o'clock... The two German fighters were coming straight for us. Tyler was shooting as hard as he could. Cross, in the ball turret, and Cook, in the top turret, both began firing. The two fighters kept coming, one behind and above the other. Straight into us.

"The first ME 110 fired two balls of fire at us. Then the ME 110 above and behind him fired two balls of fire. The four balls of fire were coming straight for us. Right in my face. Tyler stopped shooting and put his arm over his face. I did the same thing. I looked back up for a last look and I could see the four trails of white smoke behind the rockets. The two ME 110s went under us. I turned and started shooting at them. The ME 110s that went under me were so close that I could count the rivets on their wings. I could see my bullets hitting the airplane. I could see the pilot with his oxygen mask on, sitting in the cockpit. They were in slow motion as they went by. My mind has slowed the time down. The seconds were now minutes and hours."

John Robinson's book is a major contribution to the preservation and documentation of a very distinguished Army Air Force unit's participation in World War II. It certainly is one of the most colorful, sensitive, informative and significant of World War II memoirs to have been published in the 1980s. As a reviewer, I was extremely pleased with this volume and believe that general readers and military historians will find this book to be a welcome addition to their libraries.

The profits from this book are being donated to the Kassel Mission Memorial Association. The book's price is \$23.00 which includes shipping and handling. It is available from the following address:

Kassel Mission Memorial Association
P.O. Box 413
Birmingham, Michigan 48012

Bunchered Buddies of Old Buck

by Milton Stokes

It is spring here on our farm. The sun has just come out and the new grass sparkles from yet another spring shower. Our first calves, born during these past six days of rain, will soon learn the warmth of the sunshine. Their black coats will shine and we'll see them running from their mothers with their tails in the air.

My mind goes back to all those damp spring days in England — that seemed to last all summer. It was spring the last time we visited Old Buck for the reunion in 1987 and flew from the air strip just one more time. As we took off in the local flying club's Piper Cubs, I couldn't help but think of all our men who left that field and never returned. They deserve the Memorial Room we helped erect at the Old Buckenham Village Hall. You should all be glad that you made that possible. One last bit of work remains on the Memorial — the brass plaque needs to be updated, as there were additions to our original list, spelling corrections and two deletions. The executive committee of the 453rd was consulted and all have agreed to remake the plaque with the corrections and we have advised Old Buck. I don't know if this will be finished by July, but they are working on it.

I mentioned the local flying club that still flies from part of our air strip. Jim Avis, who operates this club, approached Bob Harper, of our group, to design a plaque to mark the air field as home of the 453rd and to remember those that did not go back home. Bob had input on this from some Bunchered Buddies at a mini-reunion and I believe he is working on this project. I had asked our executive committee for input and a donation, and the reply was to give support from our memorial fund — after we get a new brass plaque in the Memorial Room. I will leave this to those of you who attend the reunion and our 453rd meeting.

Lucille and I will not be able to attend this year's reunion. I would like very much to visit with all of you and our friends in England; however, I just can't make those long trips anymore. The mind is willing but the body — well, you know how it is. I have also asked Wib Clingan — who is the head of the 453rd nominating committee — not to enter my name for any office. The time has come for us to step out of the traces, and this is mine.

It has been my pleasure to be your Group VP for these last six years. The wonderful letters and your friendship means more to me than I can tell you. We have shared our lives and we will share the future of this great group.

Speaking of the future, the 453rd is now establishing its own group association in addition to the Second Air Division. All of you should have received the first newsletter and membership application sent out in

January. Wilbur Stites took on this task and is doing a great job as editor. We should thank Jean Stites too — I'm sure! To date we have over 100 members signed up. If you didn't get a copy or need one for a friend, please write to Wilbur Stites, 9334 Kahl Road, Black Earth, WI 53515. If you still have your application, please fill it out and send it to Frank Thomas.

This brings us to another point that needs to be illuminated. Some of you may have noticed in the last 2ADA Journal that Wilbur was listed as our Group VP. Don't worry if you missed it — I did too! Anyway, the Journal staff along with our 453rd executive committee knew of my resignation in February; however, there was some confusion as to the effective date, and Wilbur, as our "Public Relations Man" got penciled in. Hopefully this will be corrected in this issue, as I plan to serve officially until the end of July when the 453rd elects a new man for the job.

I had some interesting news from Bob Jordon. Bob and Betty attended the showing of the "All American" B-24 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida this past January. Our own Bill Eagleson was the key man in organizing these visits of the "All American." According to Bob everything worked out well. Bob continues, "Bill asked if I would meet and talk with a former air crew member of the 453rd Bomb Group. Bill had arranged for the man to be seated under the wing in the shaded area. It was a very sunny warm day. I met with the man and his wife and also his son. While we were talking and reminiscing he identified himself as being Ruben Brochway. Then he said "I was Santa Claus." I said sure you were and me too. With that his wife opened an envelope she was carrying. In the envelope along with crew pictures etc. was this photo of our B-24 "Liberty Run" preparing to fly from Old Buck, Christmas 1944 with toys for French children. Ruben had the original picture and indeed he was our Santa Claus in the photo.

He was not aware of the Second Air Division Association nor was he aware of the 453rd Association. I gave him application forms for both. His wife and son assured me they would apply for membership for Ruben. Perhaps Frank Thomas has received them already."

Thanks, Bob, for writing that up and sending it along. We keep finding more Bunchered Buddies but not too many Santa Clauses.

I will close now and wish you all the best. You have my thanks and appreciation for your support and friendship these past years. It has been a great job. Lucille and I look forward to seeing you at our "State-Side" reunions.

Dedication to 389th Bomb Group

by Neville 'Ack-Ack' Butler

On Hethel airfield the memories stay
where aircrews flew every day
Their valued lives they had to give
For our freedom, the way to live

Ground crews working through the night
Preparing Liberators for the flight
To invade the enemy there and back
Evading fighter planes and flak

Every morning around the dawn
Circling round and round to form
A mighty armada to cross the sea
To fight the enemy to keep us free

Formations steadily gaining height
Sending out mighty streams of white
Oft in danger, oft in woe
Into action away they'd go

Ground crews watching planes out of sight
Praying to God they'd survive the flight
Then the anxious waiting came
To see their planes return again

Every member of the crew
Watched our coast fade out of view
Then as the pilot had often said
There's the enemy coast ahead

Then all the guns were fired for testing
Gunners — no more time for jesting
All the gun crew so alert
Concentration really hurt
Navigator plotting his chart
Every member playing his part

Flying further and further into flak
Engines roaring throttles back
Waiting for fighters to appear
Crewmen swearing hiding their fear

It Has Been Said...

"You can't kill a frog
by dropping him in boiling water.
He reacts so quickly to the sudden heat
that he jumps out before he's hurt.
But if you put him in cold water —
warm it up gradually — he won't
jump 'til it's too late."

BY THEN HE'S COOKED.

Men are just as foolish.
Take away freedom overnight —
you've got a revolution.
But steal it from them gradually —
you paralyze a generation.
Look at the income tax. It started
out at a harmless 1%.
It would have been easy to jump
out of water as tepid as this.
Like the frog, we waited.
Today it is 14 to 35%.

TRY JUMPING NOW!

And There I Was at 20

by Ed Wanner (44)

If you've lived in one place fairly long, you know how it is to try to clean junk out of your garage after 20 or so years. Our kids are grown and are on their own now, but somehow our garage has remained their storage depot. So after the last holidays, my wife insisted that we try to clear some things out, or at least label some boxes so we will know what we have in them. It may sound simple, but when an ole WWII War Bird uncovers some memorabilia — well, you just can't hurry through those things.

There were my first pair of silver wings, some gold bars, some US and wing & prop insignia, a brittle A-2 jacket with a slightly moth-eaten squadron patch, an 8th AF shoulder patch and much more. Also a few pictures that had turned a little brown. I had never managed to put them all in our WWII picture album. There was a picture of that beautiful but ugly B-24 in formation. It reminded me of the expression, "There I was at 20,000 feet."

Opening that box out in the garage certainly started lots of memories flooding back, and a week later I still hadn't finished going through all those little items. Doing something like this sometimes makes your old military buddies sort of pass in review in your mind's eye. You know you wouldn't recognize 99% of those GIs that you once knew so well, even if you passed them on the street tomorrow. You sort of choke up when you think of the guys that were lost or have died since the war — it seems so unfair that they missed out on so many things. But we are lucky to be here to recall a lot of pleasant and funny situations. And a lot of great people that were brought together during the war.

A somewhat yellowed paper turned out to be a "flimsy" with the mission's Group assembly altitudes and the secret codes for the day. I started thinking about our crew's arrival in Britain. We traveled from New York to North Ireland on the Queen Elizabeth. Imagine the surprise when an announcement said that we had Glenn Miller's band on board. Drummer Ray McKinley temporarily led them since Miller had flown ahead to make arrangements in England. Every afternoon they would serenade us with Moonlight Serenade and other favorites while we stood enraptured and cheering on the forward deck. I knew all of their arrangements by heart. If they had changed one note I would have known. I think the vocalist was Johnny Desmond. After evening mess about four band members came down to one of the officers' staterooms which was crowded with all of us packed in among the extra bunks. We were awed listening to those musicians. I am sure they were tired, but they put on a little jam session for us, anyway.

The Queen Elizabeth was so fast she was not escorted by the Navy. It was hoped the German submarine packs couldn't catch her and we hoped they were right. Even with all the zig-zagging she did we made it to Ireland in five days, and after landing we were shipped to a nearby Army Air Corps "pool" to

await transfer to the individual air bases. This is where the replacements came from for those being rotated home from combat and to fill in for the high losses that the 8th AF sustained. We were fortunate that we didn't arrive two days earlier because many 8th Air Force arrivals had suffered from severe food poisoning. What a reception that must have been for those poor guys! We at least had time to get our land legs back and relax a little before moving out.

There was time on our hands in Ireland, so we walked into town to watch an Irish Theater play. It had to do with the Irish Rebellion and the "hated English" which they were at war with several centuries ago (and maybe still are). On the way back to the base at dusk, the MPs in jeeps were busy shooting GIs and their girlfriends out of hay stacks along the road. Here we were in a foreign land where they drove on the wrong side of the road, where "knocked up" meant they were busy that night, and where the great Normandy Invasion Landing was happening right about then. It was early June of 1944!

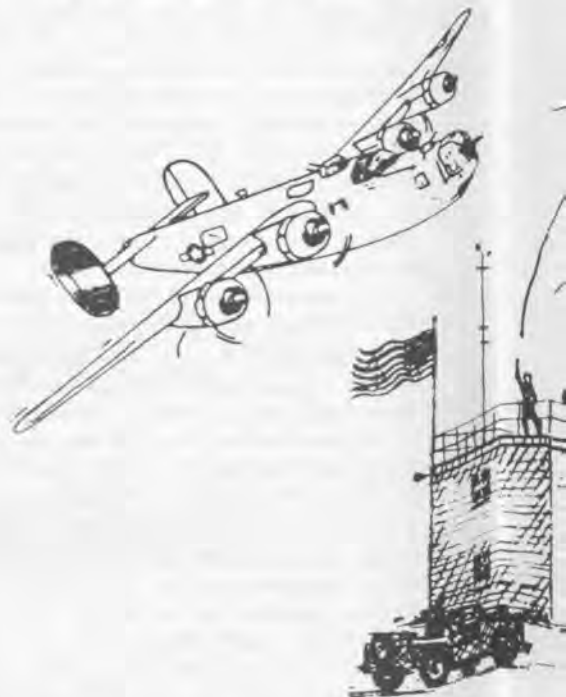
Eventually we were transported to our base in a war-weary old B-24. I'm sure someone called out, "You'll be sorry" as we climbed aboard — remember that favorite expression? We watched the scenery unfold as we approached East Anglia at an altitude of about 3000 feet. The farm fields in June were green and seemed very irregular to those of us who were used to seeing perfectly rectangular farm fields in the States. Once we were on the ground at the 445th Bomb Group, officers and enlisted men were split up to go through the Supply Sergeant's lines and to be issued blankets, gas masks, 45 caliber pistols, "hack watches," etc., then trucked to our Nissen Huts that became our home for about nine months. Somebody wondered why they had issued us mosquito netting before we boarded the Queen Elizabeth. Probably to fool the Nazi spies, and us in case we had big mouths.

I'll never forget that first orientation ride in a B-24. The idea was to show us how the terrain looked around Tibenham so we could tell our base from the 453rd Bomb Group just northwest of us, the 93rd to the northeast and the 446th to the southeast. The instructor pilot told me to let him have the controls as we approached our field. He pushed the mike button and asked permission to buzz the tower. He had to be crazy — but so was the tower operator who came back with a "Roger!" Down we came, swooping below the level of the tower and just as we pulled up to skim over its top there were red, green and blue rocket flares through the air from the tower. WOW! It looked like the Fourth of July! The Air Corps certainly does things differently in the ETO and I couldn't wait to try my hand at buzzing the tower. Unfortunately, some junior birdman pilot buzzed it too close and clipped off some antennas before I ever had my chance. The CO, Col. Jones, put an end to such pilot recreation.

We had been preoccupied getting our

bunks and hut fixed up as comfortably as possible, so out of boredom I wandered over to the Officers Club to see what it looked like. It had just been roughly remodeled and the friendly Captain, the Club Officer, took me on a tour of the building. He asked if I had any duty assignments yet and when I told him "no," that I had only been on base about three days, he smiled and said, "You have a duty now."

All of a sudden I am a Truck Convoy Officer with three other canvas covered GI trucks following. My orders were to bring some girls back from Norwich for a base dance that night. It seems like I was more nervous when I got close to the town than I was on my first mission (but I doubt it, now). My driver kept saying, "Lieutenant, don't worry, I'll show you how." And he did. We'd see some girls walking on the



street and he would tell them about the dance. About three out of four times they would climb in the back and we would cruise some more. We still had one more truck to fill and the driver stopped at a USO building. That took care of finding guests and we were on our way back to Tibenham. At least I hadn't failed my first duty assignment — thanks to that GI driver.

Fortunately for me, someone else was selected to escort the convoy back to Norwich late that night. I was tired so I sort of disappeared before the "friendly" Captain found me again. The next day the MPs were still rounding up a few guests that had missed the convoy back to Norwich. "C'est la guerre!"

Our first mission was Ludwigshafen. We managed to find our squadron and get in proper formation position. The Group passed over the English radio buncher in time and continued over the North Sea. The sky near the target area was blackened by puffs

at 20,000 Feet, Again

Wanner (445th)

of smoke from anti-aircraft shells exploding. As we got closer I thought to myself, I don't see how we can fly through that stuff and come out the other side. But we did, and we did drop our bombs on a synthetic oil and rubber plant. Our ship had no holes from that flak barrage. July 31, 1944, that was our baptism to fire!

Once, my bombardier and I got an overnight pass and took a train to a little town about a half hour away from the Diss Railroad Station. Our idea was to buy a used bicycle or two. We were getting tired of going all over the Base on foot. After all, we were in the Air Corps. However, we didn't have any luck in finding bikes, so we headed for the station. The last straw was that the only other train for the day pulled out just as we got there. How did we ever win a war with that kind of timing?



We slung our Mussette Bags over our shoulders and checked with the innkeepers but we couldn't find one with an empty room. We needed to figure out a strategy for finding a place to sleep, so we went to the Red Cross for coffee and doughnuts. The ladies there suggested one place that might be able to put us up for the night. But no success. Joe and I could always think better when we weren't hungry, so we went back for another doughnut. Finally, it was getting rather late and the two very kind English ladies that worked there took pity on us, and each took one of us home. They both had sons in the military and it was pleasant having a home cooked meal with a British family.

The next morning when I got dressed to meet Joe at the station, they insisted that I have breakfast — and there on my plate were two fried eggs. We all can remember having powdered eggs for months and months, so you know this was sheer luxury. Knowing

that I would offend them if I offered money, I slipped back into the water closet (bathroom, in case you forgot) and left a full bar of soap in the dish. During the austere war years soap was scarce. Anyway I bid my farewells and thanks and hurried toward the station to meet Joe. About a block from the station I heard a voice calling "Lieutenant" and turning around, I saw my hostess pedaling after me on her bike to return my soap. What a dear lady. My mother corresponded with her and sent some things in appreciation after the war.

Combat flying became commonplace. Flak holes in our planes were no novelty anymore, so our off-duty time was spent in thinking of how to get luxuries, passes to London, or writing V-Mails. There were a lot of things we missed, including ice cream. Our eyes lit up when anyone even mentioned it. Several huts were working on the Mess Sergeant to get some ice cream for the base but it wasn't available. No one could remember who did the lion's share of promoting this great idea, but I think Mac, my co-pilot, and I ended up on the "training flight" to fly the ice cream ingredients to high altitude (20,000 ft, of course) for about an hour and a half to freeze it. Can you imagine our U.S. civilians' reaction if it were known that we used a B-24 and over 400 gallons of aviation gasoline to make some ice cream? It is hard to remember but it must have tasted delicious.

By now we were beginning to feel like seasoned combat veterans and just wanted to get our tour of duty over with. One of our obsessions was in keeping warm. The winters in East Anglia weren't terribly cold compared to the Midwest and the East Coast of the U.S., but in an uninsulated "tin can" (Nissen Hut) we shivered in the damp wet cold. Compared to the Infantry in France and Germany we lived like kings, but we went to great lengths to keep warm after the bone chilling high altitude flights. A meager ration of a small bucket of coal was swallowed up by our oil drum stove in about an hour. We lengthened our hut's thawing-out period by having "midnight requisitions" of coal, but it was possible that we might get ourselves shot by an MP, so we quit the coal raids. Later we improved our heating system immeasurably by using a mix of 100 octane gas and used engine oil that we "liberated" from the flight line. It made the hut toasty warm — the barrel stove glowed. An inspection by the Deputy CO revealed our heating system, so the threat of a Court Martial loomed too great for us to continue with it.

Now and then there were some bright spots between missions. One day some good news came down and it was straight "Poop from Group." Glenn Miller's band was coming to our base. Operations were sending five B-24s to bring them to us from a B-17 base. I volunteered to fly one of them, but higher ranks won out. One of our hot pilots couldn't resist showing off how fast a B-24 with a tricycle landing gear could taxi (compared to a B-17) when he got to the other base. His wing tip clipped their control

tower. That must have given those tower operators a thrill. It seems that the wingspan of a B-24 was a bit wider than a 17, so the tower was a little closer to the taxi strip — at least that is what the embarrassed pilot said. The sad part was that they had to leave the violin players at the B-17 base since there weren't enough flyable B-24s to carry the whole band. We missed that part of the performance, but anyway, it was GREAT hearing that band! And I'm still listening to some of those arrangements.

When someone decided the crew was getting a little "flak happy" from combat fatigue, they would give us a pass. Once they sent us to Edinburgh for a week. That was great sleeping between clean sheets in a warm room and visiting a beautiful castle. Another time we were on a three day pass to London, when a German V-2 rocket hit about two blocks from the Piccadilly Circus hotel that we were standing in front of. WHAM! No warning, no sirens — a flash, then it just lifted our feet off the sidewalk a few inches. Some British seemed to think the Americans would panic when the sirens sounded or a V-2 hit. Either we were optimists or just stupid, but we were as blase as they were. Back on the base we used to rush outside when V-1 buzz bombs were put-putting overhead and watch the things go by. We were always ready to dive into a ditch if we heard the ram-engine quit since we had figured we would have about four seconds to duck before it hit. I think it was Glena, one of our gunners, who said that one V-1 moved their hut over about a foot one night. It was the same buzz bomb that knocked my radio off the shelf in our hut and broke the case — but it played on, and the explosion didn't even wake me up!

The Air Corps probably had more than its share of characters — but some really stood out. Next to our hut was a hut that had a real "Hot Pilot" type. Sort of a "God's gift to the Air Corps." The kind with a big cigar usually in his face and a "200 mission crush" in his hat. He was an interesting guy to hear but we never knew how much of his gab to believe. It seemed that he was in cadet class 43J and claimed that he and his pilot buddies were the wildest and toughest ever produced. He told us that they had destroyed two trucks, one bridge, one train, three bordellos, and one hotel in just two days — then they went overseas! If you have doubts about that story, then please don't doubt that he bailed out of his B-24 about fifteen miles from our base on the return from his last mission. And just for the hell of it! He told the parachute packer he fell out of the bomb bay when he went back to relieve himself.

My mother would have been shocked had she known that I sometimes skipped a day or two without a bath. Frequent baths or showers are usually a necessity to Americans even though this habit is not always shared by all people in all places. On our base the wood used to heat the water for showers was limited, so that if you didn't get there on the

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And There I Was At 20,000 Feet (continued from page 19)

right day and at the right time, you had plenty of nothing but cold water. Often the water was barely luke warm if you were very far back in the shower line. That shack was a bit drafty, so those of us that were cold-water cowards sometimes would put off a shower until we couldn't stand it anymore. One time, on a cold miserable windy day, after spending about thirty seconds in an icy spray, we decided to bribe the "Limey" shower-caretaker. We made arrangements to have him fire up the boiler with some smuggled wood at an unscheduled time so we could have the benefits of some hot water all to ourselves. Well, it was really great. The water was at least warm and we luxuriated in it. There was a rumor that field grade officers had their own private shower with hot water — which would have been a helluva incentive to buck for a promotion.

The missions went on. Sometimes we didn't lose planes and sometimes we did. Once almost the whole Group of about 34 were shot down. Another time we were almost back to the coast of England from our mission and the weather was bad. The ceiling was near zero in some places, and we hoped our altimeter was nearly accurate.

Division Headquarters

by Ray Strong

Some of you may have forgotten that the Second Air Division in its short life of just under three years began as the Second Bombardment Wing and, as the number of groups assigned to it grew, its name was changed to the Second Bombardment Division. As a Division, it could have more control over its assigned organizations and could move units around, etc. that a Wing was not authorized to do. It also had a larger table of organization with more rank for both officers and NCOs. It was when Eighth Air Force decided to assign a Fighter Wing to each of the three Bombardment Divisions that the name was changed to the Second Air Division and the 65th Fighter Wing was assigned. At about this time, the Combat Bombardment Wings were formed. We had five of them in the Second Air Division and each of them had three Bombardment Groups assigned to them for tactical purposes — although I believe that one of them only had two Groups. This was strictly a combat organization. Operations orders went from the Division to Combat Wings to the Groups. All administrative matters were channeled from Division Headquarters direct to the groups.

Getting back to Headquarters, Second Bombardment Wing, it was activated at Dietrick Field, Frederick, Maryland and sent to Ft. Dix, NJ for shipment to England. The Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron arrived in Norwich in September 1942 and were sent to Old Catton, the first HQ location. Old Catton had been a barrage balloon headquarters. After a few weeks, it was moved to Horsham St. Faith which was being vacated by the British. While most of the original 85

We had done an instrument let-down through heavy dark clouds very slowly and could just see the whitecaps of the North Sea when we broke out of the clouds at about 200 ft. altitude. We had sweated out that too-low instrument let-down. Now, it was hard to judge how high above the water we really were. Weiman in the nose turret, along with the rest of us, strained to see the coastal cliffs before we got there. And there they were! We pulled up another hundred feet to clear them and flew south. The plane was just barely under the cloud base most of the time. We couldn't go up or we would lose contact with the ground, and yet we were just skimming over farms and buildings. In moments we were flying through Norwich. Our bombardier told us later that he looked up at a clock tower. Even I got a quick look at faces in a building's windows. Once through the city we got on the "Iron Beam" (railroad tracks) and followed it till we could read the sign on the Diss railroad station. That was the place to make a turn due north and fly about 3 minutes. Presto — before us was Tibenham's runway and our wheels and flaps were down, and so was "Asbestos Alice."

members of the cadre joined Second Bombardment Wing at Dietrick Field, a few, like Howard Baum, joined at Ft. Dix just prior to sailing for England. This original group, at some point, became known as the "Pickhandlers."

A few weeks ago, Hathy Veynar sent me a list of what I believe to be a list of the original 85. The list was headed up "Pickhandlers and Homing Stations." I do not know how Hathy came to have this list nor do I know who compiled it. It has home addresses which were obviously of WWII vintage since they had no zip codes. I checked the list against our active membership roster and found that eleven of them are currently active members of the 2AD Association. They are: Anthony T. Shtogren, Lewis C. Oldham, Richard T. Westenbarger, Richard Wessel, William M. Blanton, Howard H. Baum, William R. Ownbey, Thomas F. Messenger, G. Rile Blackwood, Warren L. Burman, and Raymond A. Hess.

Just where the name "Pickhandlers" came from is somewhat vague. However, I had a letter from Tom Messenger and I suspect that he has come pretty close. He says: "As to 'Pickhandlers' I think that was someone's Ketteringham concept of the original Dietrick Field crowd. It probably originated with Gus Karoly and some other Pennsylvanians and West Virginians who had worked in the mines. I never considered myself a Pickhandler — maybe a rake handler or a hoe handler!" Tom goes on to say, "Now that I think about Pickhandlers, maybe that is the one weapon it would be safe to have that motley crew armed with. I recall having an old Springfield that would fall apart at the most unpredictable times. And, there was one fellow who had a machine gun stored underneath his bunk that had whiskers like Rip Van Winkle's! Even a Revolutionary War Militia would

Oh, what a feeling when the wheels of our Liberator touched down on the runway on our last mission. The target, a Rhein railyard, and we made it! We would be leaving Tibenham soon! Did I fully appreciate the talent that our crew had at every position? Probably not. We knew we were good, we respected each other, we were friends and comrades thrown together by a war, and fate had been kind. We had lived through a combat tour and we wanted to think about other things. Now I know we were the right combination, and it was just as well that we never knew the grim statistics of combat flying until many years later. I briefly considered volunteering to fly a P-51 Weather Ship, but due to an illness in the family my aim was to get home fast and relax before being rotated to the Pacific.

In about a week we were loading into the back of a truck with all of our bags and gear. The truck pulled away from our base as we all looked out the back, watching the thatched-roof houses growing smaller behind us. Well, I was no Truck Convoy Officer this time. Just another GI Airman going home. But for now I've got to get started putting away those WWII boxes in the garage.

have been more effective in 'defense' than we were!"

If any of you know any more about the "Pickhandlers," I wish you would let me know. In any case, even I, who was not eligible to be a "Pickhandler" since I came to 2AD as a casual filler in October 1942, remember Gus Karoly and others talking about them many years after we returned to the USA and started having reunions.

Heritage League

by Vicki Brooks Warning

This will be my last article for the Journal as President of the Heritage League. It has been a very active two years and I appreciate all the excellent support and assistance I have received from the Heritage League officers and Second Air Division members.

We are all looking forward to the reunion in Norwich in July 1990, and the Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial are making plans for a joint function with the Heritage League members in Norwich. When you mailed in your 1990 membership dues in January, we asked that you indicate if you would be attending the reunion in Norwich and what your age group was.

At the time we received responses from approximately 30 people saying they would be in Norwich. We realize that many members have had a change in plans, and so we are now asking that each Heritage League member who will be in Norwich again drop me a letter or postcard giving me your name, group number and age group (over 25 years or under 25 years). This will assist our English friends in planning an activity for us. We hope to have something more definite to tell you in the June Heritage League Newsletter. Please write and let me know if you are going.

It has been a great two years, and I look forward to being involved as a member of the Heritage League Board of Directors.

A B-24 at Edinburg, N.Y.?

by Edward Chu (448th)

Edinburg, NY is a rural community about six miles northeast of the village of Northville, located within the Adirondack State Forest Preserve in upstate New York. Northville has a winter population numbering about 1200 people, with the whole township of Edinburg much less.

What Edinburg did have in 1947 was an airport with a paved runway, apparently long enough to accommodate a B-24. To this day, it is still hard to believe. The following story I'm about to relate was told to me in 1947. The airport at that time was owned by an affluent businessman, Walker LaRowe from Northville, NY. How and why this B-24 came to this rural community and stayed, was that LaRowe purchased it surplus for \$800, and two Army Air Force pilots flew it into the "Skytop" airport at Edinburg. LaRowe's intent, as I understood it at the time, was to use it for educational purposes. It remained at the airport for a long time, and over a number of years, reached such a state of deterioration that it was eventually cut up for scrap.

In 1947, I was living in Gloversville, NY, about 26 miles south of Edinburg, and upon hearing that there was a B-24 parked at the Edinburg airport, proceeded there with two friends of mine, Bruce Michalet, who took photographs, and Herman Lanphere. I just recently reproduced the photographs from the original color slides, which have long since faded. Upon retiring in 1989, I moved to and presently live in Edinburg, and while there, I read in the Second Air Division Association Journal about the only completely restored, flyable, authentic B-24, the "All American," which has recently been at various air shows. I have also read about the dedication and effort of the many individuals and organizations, and the considerable expense and years in the making to produce this B-24. It made me think about the flyable B-24 in 1947 that was purchased for \$800.

Does anyone out there recognize this B-24 "S.S. Baby" out of the 15,000 or so that were made for the USAAF?



Veterans Day 1989

by David G. Gray

I remember:

The heaviness
Of eight
One thousand pound
General purpose bombs
Sagged
The tires.

We started;
Four engines —
Whinned,
Coughed oily exhaust,
Then ran
With a comforting
Smoothness.
We chased gravity
Down the runway —
Then lifted
And climbed through massive
Layers of English overcast.

We flew;
Higher,
We breathed
Artificial air.
Hundreds of us
Packed together,
Jostled to
"Keep it tight":
Royal Flush,
Tinker Toy,
Blue Dreams,
Double Trouble,
Chowhound,
Shoot Luke.

We fought;
Above the clouds —
The terrifying cold,
The dazzling glare,
The hornet fighters,
And the charcoal fists of flak.

Flames.
Parachutes.
No time for goodbyes.

We arrived;
Over the city
Of Bach
And disgorged our loads,
And obliterated a factory,
And a marshalling yard,
And lives.

We returned;
Traumatized nerves,
Our co-pilot dead
Approached
The concrete strip,
We bounced —
One wheel collapsed.
We pirouetted on our belly —
A metallic shriek!
We stopped:
With
Ragged gashes
In our olive drab wings,
And the
Once frozen blood
Spattered on the plexiglass,
Was thawing,
And dripped
Onto the cockpit floor.

Today:
Near
The Brandenburg Gate,
The Wall
Began to crumble.



by Jack Stevens

Voices Out of the Past. Sometimes they speak and sometimes we hear them. Nine of our crew completed our missions; one, Marcarelli, our engineer, was killed 22 July '44 on a Ploesti mission. Six of us (Bohnenstiehl, Good, Rapp, Vaughn, Voss, and I) stayed in touch but three disappeared in a flood of transfers and discharges back here in the States. In '76, after a heart attack, Bohnenstiehl's letters stopped; we were down to five. But two weeks ago, Benjamin Bertalot checked in from Princeton, IL, and we're back up to six again. We're still looking for Ray Smith and Oscar Cushing. And in that connection, Fred Holdredge is also looking for lost 467th members — particularly those from the 791st Squadron. Can anyone help?

Time is getting short for the July 25-31 2nd ADA reunion in Norwich. For those who made advance reservations with Evelyn, actual reservations and passport should have been requested by now. For those who haven't already made reservations and want to attend the 1990 reunion, call Evelyn at (215) 632-3992 or run (do not walk) to 06-410 Delaire Landing, Philadelphia, PA to see if you can get on the "to go" list.

When we go to the site of Rackheath Air Base on Sunday, 29 July, we'll participate in another spectacular event in our Group's history. Jeff Gregory has been working on a project suggested by Honorary Member Dave Hastings' son, Roger, to install a 467th historical marker on the site of our old base. Jeff went through the agony of selecting a design for the marker, locating a qualified stonecutter, getting an OK to proceed from the Board of Governors, and he thought things were moving along pretty well. But then, something happened and he's in an ecstatic mood about the project. Mr. Robert S. Lomax, Managing Director of H.G. Lomax Developers, Ltd., has offered to have our historical marker installed near his company headquarters which is being built on the air base site. In addition, Mr. Lomax offered to erect a flagpole next to the marker, for the American flag to be flown above it, and a wall to shield and set off the marker and flagpole.

Jeff thought something was missing in the concept and has recommended that we erect another flagpole for the Union Jack to be flown alongside the stars and stripes to reflect the association our nations enjoy.

I recently received my copy of "The Story of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room," starring Jordan Uttal, directed and produced by our own Joe Dzenowagis. As he was able to do in his previous videos, Joe reflects a man's feelings of pride for our wartime accomplishments and regret and respect for those who died. Of all of us, Jordan is best qualified to speak about the Memorial, its conception, development, and impact. And he does — very well.

Revoredo Trophy Donated

BARKSDALE AFB, LA — A trophy that belonged to the late Gen. Ira C. Eaker was presented to Barksdale's Eighth Air Force Museum on February 26, 1990 by Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr., Eighth Air Force Commander.

The Revoredo Award Trophy was presented to General Eaker in 1984 by the International Flight Research Corporation of Orlando, FL, in recognition of his distinguished aviation career. Last year, Mrs. Ruth Eaker requested Lt. Gen. Edgar S. Harris, Jr. (USAF Ret.), a former Eighth Air Force commander, give the award to General Shuler for appropriate display. The general decided, since the award paid tribute to the first commander of the "Mighty Eighth," it should be displayed for present-day airmen to see.

"In this year of reviewing fundamentals," said General Shuler, "and especially with the February theme of professionalism, it seems appropriate to call special attention to one of our first professional airmen, General Ira C. Eaker. I'm hard pressed to think of a more appropriate example of professionalism."

The Reverodo Award is named in honor of General Armando Revoredo Iglesias, and commemorates his solo flight between Lima, Peru and Buenos Aires, Argentina, March 27, 1937. General Reverodo flew a single engine plane, making the trip in 13 hours, 38 minutes. He was also an explorer, medical doctor, air force commander, and ambassador, known as the "Lindbergh of South America."

In January of 1942, he went to England to organize the VIII Bomber Command,

predecessor to today's Eighth Air Force, which he also commanded. The New York Times quoted General Eaker's first speech upon arrival in Britain, "We won't do much talking until we've done more fighting. We hope that when we leave you'll be glad we came."

General Eaker's subsequent WWII service included assignments as Commanding General of all U.S. Army Air Forces in the United Kingdom and Air Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces. On April 30, 1945, he was

appointed Deputy Commander of Army Air Forces and Chief of the Air Staff.

Retired Air Force General Bruce K. Holloway described him as a pioneer in instrument flying and organizer for the airmail, as well as the man who "...ran the Hughes Aircraft Company and made a howling success of it" after retiring from the Air Force. In his later years, the general was a well-known columnist. His biography, "Air Force Spoken Here," was written by James Parton. General Eaker passed away August 6, 1987.



(l-r): Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Eighth Air Force Commander; and Mr. Buck Rigg, Eighth Air Force Museum Curator. USAF photo by S/Sgt. Michael Farris.

The 445th Reporting

by Charles L. Walker

So here we go preparing for the July 1990 return to Norwich and Tibenham. I'll let you in on a preview of plans being made for a very special "Honor the Villages" day in Tibenham on 29 July:

11:00 — We have been invited to attend regular Tibenham church services to be followed immediately by a brief memorial service honoring the 568 airmen of the 445th who lost their lives during World War II. We will dedicate a bronze plaque to their memory. This plaque is to be permanently mounted on an interior wall of this old church. Quoting historian Paul Catermole, "there has probably been a church on this site for over 1000 years — we know when a new tower was almost complete 550 years ago for in 1437 Thomas Tibenham — left 6s. 8d. towards the new bells for Tibenham." This quotation is taken from Mr. Catermole's talk in the Tibenham church on July 7, 1989 titled "Tibenham Bells." If you would like a copy of this fascinating talk, just send me a self-addressed stamped envelope. Mrs. Evelyn Baynes is our Tibenham friend who is handling arrangements with the church.

12:30 — Lunch will be served at the Norfolk Gliding Club facilities at the airbase. Mr. Evan Harris of the Gliding Club is heading the committee in charge of these arrangements. As you may already know, we have invited approximately 100 villagers to be our guests at this lunch.

14:30 — We have been invited by the villagers to visit and tour around the area until approximately 17:00.

18:00 — A social evening is planned with music, dancing and food.

Now doesn't this sound like a great event? I just wish every one of you could be there to join in the festivities.

Now, a hearty welcome to these former 445thers who have come aboard since Hilton Head: Mary M. Lowe, who is carrying on for her late husband Edgar who passed away last fall; Curt Brown, Holland, MI; William Dark, Voorhees, NJ; Don Griffith, Cozad, NB; Saverio Bruni, Philadelphia, PA; Robert Meyers, Rock River, OH; John Knox, Deerfield Beach, FL; Don Nelson, Westchester, IL; Everette Barefoot, Four Oaks, NC; David Gaskins, Wewahatchka, FL; Willis Meiers, St. Louis, MO; Jack Pelton, Rolling Hills Est., CA; John Marks, Ft. Wayne, IN; Raphael Carrow, Miami, FL; Jim Withey, Kittery, ME; F.C. Wilsdorf, Linden, TN; and Hal Turell, San Diego, CA.

Lee Calvano and his wife from San Jose, CA, have called several times about membership in the 2nd ADA and information on the Norwich Reunion. They hope to attend and bring their daughter along too.

A mid-February call from Eldon Gray, Fritch, TX, was sad in that Eldon has had a whole bunch of health problems and operations, but the good news is that he is now on the mend and that he and Martha still can't agree on who should get the dog if they split up, so they are still together.



John Goan, Tail Gunner, at Scribner, Nebraska Training Base

Charlie Platz, Raytown, MO (701st) sent several V-Mail letters he had sent to his sister during the war, money from escape kits, copy of his discharge papers, and several photos but no application for membership. The picture he included of John Goan proved to be most interesting: I showed it to my golfing buddy Dick Boucher, who was on the same crew with Platz (Clifford Awalt's crew) and he told of loaning his back-pack chute to Goan for a mission he was flying with another crew. Goan was shot down on that mission, and credits Boucher's chute with saving his life as he never would have been able to use his customary chestpack.

Robert Tims and I made a trip to Paris in early 1945 with three other crew members to fly back a B-24 which had gone down and subsequently been repaired. Bob's letter is the first I have heard from him since we returned to Tibenham from Paris. Believe me, he has a vivid memory of some of our escapades on that trip that nearly landed us in the clutches of the Paris MPs. I can't wait to see Bob in Norwich in July!

Belated responses to my questionnaire are still dribbling in and are most welcome. Henry Lively, Robert Libby, Earl Kinder, Bill Tumelavich and Donald Croft replies were especially informative and provided info that will lead to new contacts and hopefully new members. Keep up the good work, and to those of you who have not yet sent me your replies, get on the stick and do it now — it's never too late.

Our "Last Mission" Memorial Librarian project is not yet fully subscribed. If you haven't sent in your contribution, regardless of how small it may have to be, please do it now. Let's put this thing to bed!

Because there will not be a national 2nd ADA reunion in the continental USA this year, Paul Steichen (93rd BG) invites all those interested to join the North Central Regional Reunion to be held at French Lick Springs Resort, French Lick, Indiana, 10-11-12, 1990. Contact Paul at 1659 Cloister Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46260.

Of the 230 some attendees at the Ninth Annual Southern California 2nd ADA Din-

ner held 24 Feb. 1990, the 445th had the largest turnout. It was perhaps the best dinner that has been held to date. Ford Tracey and Carol Rambo came down from the San Francisco Bay area; Keith & Betty Jones and Terrie & Mattie Sather were there from San Diego, and George & Mary Anderson from Tucson, AZ. Again this year Al & Dorothy Querbach took the prize for having come the longest distance — from Hanston, KS. I say again this year because this is about the fifth Southern California dinner Al & Dorothy have attended. Everyone enjoyed meeting Glen Miller's son Steve, and Mark Hoage and Dik Shepard outdid themselves with their ever-expanding display of memorabilia. Remember, this dinner is held on the last Saturday in February each year, and all of you are welcome to join us.

For those of you who will be unable to attend the reunion in Norwich this summer, try to attend one of the numerous regional get-togethers. I'm sure you will enjoy yourself, and who knows, perhaps you will meet one of your long lost buddies. For those going to Norwich, I'll see you there.

Help Wanted

Dear 2ADA Friends:

I am very proud of the name "Mother Shapiro" given me by Jordan Uttal, but I must ask for your assistance in helping me to cut down on some of the paperwork.

If you need information regarding one of the Groups, addresses, phone numbers, who to contact at your old base in England, etc., please write to your Group V.P.

If you need information regarding our 2AD Memorial Library, write to Bud Koorndyk. Regarding donations to the 2ADA Memorial Librarian Fund, write to Jordan Uttal.

Send all material for the Journal to our editor Bill Robertie.

If you need general information, write to our secretary David Patterson.

All addresses are published on page 2 of every Journal.

Now, with regard to dues. Dues statements are mailed October-November and are due by January 1st. If you do not receive a dues statement, you do not owe dues. Some of you have paid for several years, some have paid twice in one year, etc. If you do not pay by January 1, you will receive a Second Notice. Please, please pay up before January 1, so I do not have to follow up. It is an extra expense to the 2ADA and extra work for me.

Cheers,
Evelyn Cohen

Sky Scorpions

by Gene Hartley

It's about 22 inches by 13 inches. It's a xerox or photocopy of a map. It's not a good copy. But then, I'm pretty sure the original from which this copy was made was not real good. The key in the upper right hand corner is for the most part unreadable. In the lower left is the most legible statement. It is printed in capital letters, quote, "THIS IS A SECRET DRAWING. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE MUST IT BE REPRODUCED. IT IS NOT TO BE SEEN BY UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS. MUST BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY WHEN NOT IN USE AND ITS SAFE CUSTODY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PERSON TO WHOM IT IS ISSUED." "RESTRICTED," now with a line drawn through it, had been stamped in large letters beneath the statement. In the lower right corner, one sees, HETHEL AERODROME, PARENT STATION BOMBER COMMAND.

You can't tell as much as you might like from this map. I'm sure it was a British drawing, made before the base was turned over to the 389th BG. The runways are numbered 1, 2 and 3 instead of by compass heading as we knew them. The tower area is called the Technical Site; directly across the field from the tower is an area titled Bomb Stores; there are several sites identified only with a number, no other identification, which we knew as secos, or squadrons, or huts, or nissens, etc.; there are two WAAF sites, two Defence sites, and two Communal sites, and who knows what that meant in the days of the English.

The runways are surrounded by unidentified dispersal hardstands, at one of which you may have worked, or your aircraft may have been. Hethel Church, the old Burma Road, the edge of Wymondham, the main gate, the tower, these can be determined. I've figured out where I lived, but that's about all. I'm not sure about the Aero Club, the Chapel, the Officers Club, sick bay, even the mess hall(s), and who would have thought that could ever be forgotten! (Insert here the reason of your choice for never forgetting the mess halls).

Nevertheless, it is a recognizable map of Hethel. Stuart Main sent it along. And sitting in California on a sunny afternoon, gazing at the map, memories from nearly fifty years ago materialize for me just as they would for you.

Combat of course, whether in the air hoping to get home, or on the ground, waiting for the guys to return. But so many other memories. Breakfast, real eggs if you were flying, powdered if you were not; coke stoves that had not mastered the principle of radiating heat; basketball in the chapel; card games everywhere; writing a letter at the Aero Club; liberty run to Norwich; looking for the castle so you could catch the truck back to Hethel; watching Pappy Beck roll the dice with pounds (for his favorite charity) on the line; mail call, or lack of it; rain; changing bomb loads from 100 pound incendiaries to 500 pounders on a last minute load switch from upstairs; crews to the airplanes for a three hour wait before being scrubbed; up through 10,000 feet of cloud cover on instruments, then looking for a formation; getting in the wrong truck at the castle; a drink at the officers club; 48 hour pass to London; always working on your short snorter; snow; thinking of home; making up the escape kits; shooting skeet; passing time while the mission is out; the feeling when you see you are alerted tomorrow; changing an engine; fueling the aircraft; the memories go on and on. My guess is I haven't come close to that which comes first to your mind.

All of this plus much more crossing my conscious, even my subconscious, because I'm sitting here looking at an old map of Hethel. As you read, what are you remembering? Here's what I want you to do. Get a postcard, write down one or two of your memories, and send the card to HETHEL MEMORIES, 4995 Cervato Way, Santa Barbara, CA 93111. I'll put them together, and they'll be the basis of another Sky Scorpions entry in the Journal.

My Friend

by Robert R. Starr

How would I ever know, when
off to work I would go?
San Diego, Consolidated was the place
and 1942 was the year of date.
Lunch box in hand, I was never late.

Eight hours a day I did labor,
My best of skill, I did give,
Not knowing you would be called
our great Liberator.

I loved this plane so much and
now care to fly her.
Enlisted in the Air Force, to Biloxi,
I was sent. Fixed you for your flap was bent.

I learned about your engines, and
how you do work.
In all of my schooling, I ne'er would shirk
While at school, I still did my work.

So now a Private First Class is what I am.
Sent way down to Texas to learn of how your
guns work, and go bam.
The first sound of your gun, I almost ran.

I still wanted to be your Pilot — a plane
so anew, Passed my Cadet exam.
And studied so much without rest.
But my Army said we shall place you at your best.

Went on a troop ship, destination unknown
My ship was going to and fro.
Well, says I, where am I to go?
The secrets were kept, I did not know.

Docking at Liverpool in the early dawn,
So need of sleep, Oh yes! I did yawn,
A few days later to Hethel, I arrived.
So now dear friend we both shall strive
To keep our nation free and quite alive.

Hello big guy, I'm your Flt. Engineer.
By now you should know, I love you dear.
You take care of me, I'll take care of you.
One early morn, we went in skies of blue.

Twenty-nine times, we did go, over all
of Europe to be rid of our foe.
Dropping our bombs, thru all the flak,
Thanks, dear friend, you brought me back.

"Retardment" through the eyes of a child

After Xmas vacation, the teacher asked her small pupils how they spent their holidays. Here is one small boy's reply.

"We always spend Xmas with grandma and grandpa. They used to live in a big yellow house, but grandpa got retarded and they moved to Leisure World. They live in a place with a lot of retarded people. They ride big three-wheeled tricycles, they go to a big building they call their clubbed house where they play games and do some exercises. They go to a swimming pool, and stand in the water with their hats on. I guess they don't know how to swim.

"My grandma used to bake cookies and stuff but now she doesn't cook. They all go to food places and eat early birds.

"As you come in to visit there is a little house with a man standing nearby. He watches all day so they can't get out without seeing them. They all carry cards with their names on them so they will know who they are.

"My grandma says that my grandpa worked hard all his life, and earned retardment. I wish they would move back home, but I guess the man in the little house won't let them out."

Memories

by Lloyd Prang (453rd)



It's 6:30 in the evening. The B-24 "All American" has been gone for ten hours but the memories of its visit will linger for a long, long time.

I guess it's safe to say that most of us who flew in these machines didn't give much thought to our final mission. For some it was a combat mission; for others, like myself, it was a mission to carry a bunch of guys back home. When we left the aircraft at an airbase in the United States — not too much thought was given to our parting. We had had enough of cold Nissen Huts, 3 a.m. awakenings, 5 a.m. briefings which showed long lines on the map going to places like Hamburg, Berlin or Magdeburg; enough of fighters and flak, and enough of seeing planes explode or fall slowly out of the sky, and enough of counting the chutes of those who were able to get out. But after a time lapse of 44 years, the memory of all this is altered. All the uneasiness that combat brought to some — the terror that it brought others — all this begins to fade and all that remains is the fond memory of being about 20 years old and flying a big airplane like the B-24. You can tell people about how it was — also they are able to see a B-24 in a museum — but it's like looking at a dead animal that has been stuffed.

On Wednesday morning it was no longer just a memory. There it was, far away in a hazy sky, little more than a big speck — but it was our B-24, the one we left behind 44

years ago. It was coming back to us. It was like watching a mission return. It wasn't important that it was only one plane, this plane was bringing back our youth to us, and we were 20 years old again. It leveled off at about 50 feet off the runway and made a low level pass before making its turn to the downwind leg, then, mixture full rich, props-high rpm, gear down, turn to base leg — turn to final approach, flaps about 30 degrees, runway coming up, full flaps, flare out, chop your throttles, wheel held all the way back into your gut, touchdown! — nose wheel down — and landing complete.

There were only a few people in attendance at 9:15 on this Wednesday morning so it was no problem for another pilot and myself to take our old positions in the cockpit and talk about times gone by. In the ensuing four days, thousands of people came to view the "All American." I talked with many ex-crewmembers, and if you closed your eyes to the grey hair and other signs of age, and just listened to the excitement and enthusiasm in their voices, you knew that they, like the beautiful B-24 on ramp, had also been restored to their original youthful condition.

Sunday morning came as scheduled, much too soon, but it was time to say farewell. Once again I managed to spend a few moments in the cockpit — then it was time to start the engines. They were reluc-

tant to awaken from their four day sleep, but after a little coaxing, one by one, they belched a cloud of smoke and settled down to an even rumble. The top hatch opened, the flight engineer appeared, and the brakes began to squeal as she taxied to the runway.

While there were only a handful of people present when the aircraft arrived — on this Sunday morning there were more than two hundred. Many of them rushed all the way out to the runway, and had to be persuaded to return to the taxi strip. This beautiful B-24 then proceeded to take off. It made a turn to the right, then slowly turned left for a pass over the runway. Upon completion it turned and made another low level pass in farewell.

Yes, 44 years ago we left her at an eastern airbase. She was old and war-weary. Later, she was flown to a big field out west — to be dismantled and destroyed. We went forward, full of youthful vigor, ready to conquer the world — and found that the best we could accomplish was to earn our daily bread and lead a decent life. Looking back I guess that wasn't too far off our original target — still, it does seem that we could have made a somewhat larger hole in the target!

Now on this Sunday morning, she has left us, her mighty engines roaring in youthful exuberance — going out to conquer her world, leaving us with unforgettable memories of how it was so long ago.

A Gressenhall Wartime Tragedy

by Cyril Jolly

During World War II Wendling was one of the most active bomber bases in East Anglia for the U.S. Eighth Air Force. The 392nd Group was in action from September 1943 to April 1945, flying 285 missions, losing 184 aircraft and 1,553 airmen, killed, wounded or missing. Many Liberator B-24 bombers taking part in raids over Europe crashed in mid-Norfolk. At least three such tragedies occurred in Gressenhall. A machine which came down in a 15-acre field of Park Farm still yields evidence of the incident, for the plough and cultivator turn up shells and jagged metal.

On Saturday, 5th August, 1944, David Eke, George Cooper and Arthur Lake were working in the 17-acre "Rail" field of Hall Farm (running from the Belts to Bluebell Wood), when a Liberator was seen circling over Dillington. The sound of the four great engines was constant, but the 30 ton plane was in trouble. It lost height rapidly and seemed certain to crash. As it roared towards them, George Cooper yelled, "It's got bombs on board!" and dashed for a nearby ditch followed by Arthur Lake. David Eke was too far from the ditch and stood transfixed as the aircraft, now so low it passed through a gap in the row of oaks bordering the field. Then, as if the pilot was

struggling to return to Wendling 'drome, it banked steeply. In so doing, however, a wing-tip clipped a hedge of the 15-acre field of Park Farm and struck the ground with a terrible crash. Throwing off great pieces of metal the plane ploughed through the crop and came to rest. It then erupted in flames. David Eke, seeing the ball of fire envelop the machine, ran through a gateway and scrambled over a ditch and bank, into the field. So intense was the heat, however, he could not get close and also feared that bombs might explode. One bomb was thought to be flung 200 yards. Although wreckage was still smouldering the acrid smoke and pieces of charred material filled the air. Soon, U.S. fire tenders and ambulances arrived from Wendling. Getting as closed as he dared, Mr. Eke saw the pilot and co-pilot still in their seats, blackened and slumped forward against their seatbelts. He knew there could be no survivor and so it proved as the grisly task of removing the bodies began. The plane had been too low for the crew to eject.

The Liberator, No. 222, piloted by F/Lt. Filkel, was part of 27 aircraft setting out from Wendling to bomb Brunswick. There was still a heavy mist at 9 a.m. when the plane took off. It got into trouble as soon

as airborne and, circling over Gressenhall, tried to return to base. Being the lead plane those following saw the crash and must have felt sick at heart as they had to fly on with the funeral pyre of their colleagues below.

Alfred Barnard, cycling to Park Farm on threshing business, seeing the machine about to crash, flung himself into a ditch. He heard the cracking of exploding ammunition and what he thought must be a bomb flung towards the hedge where he was. One piece of flaming wreckage set fire to a telegraph pole near him. The charred pole is still there. As he got out of the ditch, Mr. Harold Riches came running from the farm towards him.

For a long time a large patch of scorched earth marked the spot where the ten airmen died, but later a memorial was erected at the Beeston entrance to the 'drome and the great cemetery at Maddingly, near Cambridge, may show with white marble headstones the resting place of the crew. Here in Gressenhall, as the cycle of the seasons brings corn and roots to cover the once blackened earth, a passer-by can only pay "the tribute of a sigh" for the ten gallant young men who left the security of the New World to aid the embattled Old in the hour of need.

June 20, 1944. Target: Politz

by Carl W. Hall (93rd)

Probably our roughest, most eventful, and most successful mission was to Politz. I was lead pilot of visual bombing plane with an H2X radar equipped plane as Deputy lead. My co-pilot was a new pilot on his first mission. Lead Navigator was Captain Robert C. Roten; lead bombardier, Captain Roy E. Prusz; First engineer, T/Sgt. William H. Liles; tail gunner, S/Sgt. Robert Phillips; ball turret gunner, S/Sgt. Myron McReynolds; waist gunner S/Sgt. Donald Dayton; and S/Sgt. Selwin McAfee, radio operator temporarily assigned. Alerted to fly early the day before, I went to bed early. Radio Berlin announced that I would be leading the 93rd on a mission and that they would get me. When told of this the next morning, Colonel L.G. Fiegel asked me if I would like to be replaced or if I was up to going. When asked if I was scared, of course I was, but if I were replaced and he was shot down, I couldn't stay around.

After some difficulty due to clouds, we managed a good formation. Politz was some distance East of Berlin by Southeast. Flak was very heavy on the bomb run and we lost one engine. We held our course for 25 seconds in order to get good pictures of results. The men in back were very excited

about the fire and smoke. When I turned to left and looked back, it was unbelievable. Fire and smoke appeared to be as high as we were. It had a mushroom-like shape. The target was a synthetic oil refinery just east of Politz. There must have been millions of barrels of oil stored there to create such an explosion. As soon as we were out of the flak, fighters hit us and knocked out another engine. When the bombardier came up from the nose section, he saw blood on the floor of the flight deck and helped Bill Liles out of the top turret. A piece of shrapnel had torn the calf of his leg off. Prusz put a tourniquet on his leg and gave him a shot of morphine. I was trying to keep the plane as level as possible but was losing altitude. As we tried to transfer fuel from right side to the two good engines on left side, gasoline poured into the flight deck behind the top turret. The main transfer line was severed with a half moon cut. While talking about how to get Liles out and clear of aircraft before his parachute opened, he declared that no one was rolling him out. I knew that I could not continue to maintain altitude as we would run out of fuel on left side. S/Sgt. Liles, with someone holding him up, managed to splice the line with some electric tape and

some safety wire that he usually carried. After wrapping and wiring three or more times, he had me try the transfer pump. It worked, and I moved all gas from right side to left. Though we lost about 50 feet each minute, I was able to bring the plane back. Our group, the 93rd, had to leave us. About 30 other crippled planes joined us. They were lost or could not keep up with their formations. We lost five or six thousand feet before getting straightened out in a few minutes. We were at about fifteen thousand by this time and eight to ten hundred miles to go. We threw out all we did not need to reduce the load. We kept ammunition as German fighters were still around. S/Sgt. Liles received the Silver Star for his work and also the Purple Heart. He could have come home after release from the hospital, but he elected to finish his tour. When he returned to duty, he flew with other crews until he caught up with me and the rest of the crew, and we finished up together.

Our group was credited with putting 96% of our bombs within a 2000 ft. radius of the center of target, which was a record. I was lead crew class A at this time. I was later operations officer of the 330th, and then went on to France in charge of Bracy Airfield where we flew in supplies.

A Big Man on Campus

by Susan T. Rivers

Evelyn Cohen and Pete Henry attended a cocktail party and luncheon given by the Princeton University Alumni Association on Saturday, February 24, 1990 and visited briefly with Gloria and Jimmy Stewart.

Permission was granted by the Trenton Times to reprint this article.

PRINCETON BOROUGH — Visiting Princeton University to accept the Woodrow Wilson Award, its highest honor to an undergraduate alumnus, actor Jimmy Stewart gave high marks to borough officials for keeping high rises off Nassau Street.

"Over the years, Princeton people have told me how Princeton's kept its quality as a town. I have nothing but admiration for the people responsible for that," he said.

Stewart, who formally accepted the honor at the 75th annual midwinter meeting and luncheon of the Alumni Association, made his comments during a campus news conference at MacLean House.

Remembering how he "had a tough time freshman year," Stewart, a 1932 graduate of Princeton, said that receiving the prestigious award "is one of the greatest events in my life."

The 82-year-old Stewart reminisced about his Princeton days and recalled that he broke into show business playing his accordion in Triangle Club productions.

Stewart said he was not a good student. Asked for his favorite memory of Princeton, he said it was "when I realized that I'd make the grade in architecture."

But there have been other great events, judging from Stewart's long list of accomplishments and awards.

Stewart, a decorated pilot in World War II, has also received the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest award to a civilian, two Academy Awards, and several achievement awards for his lifetime contribution to films and acting.

"It's a Wonderful Life" is his favorite film, Stewart said, while admitting it is sentimental. He is also known for his work in "Rear Window" and "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington."

But a question about colorization of old black-and-white movies erased Stewart's gentle smile.

"The whole idea of colorization is a disgrace, insulting to the film industry and to audiences, and I hope Ted Turner is listening," he said.

The versatile actor's recent projects include television commercials for Campbell's Soup — "It was fun," he said — and a best-selling volume of poetry that the sometime poet admits took 25 years to write.

"I've never been so surprised in my life of the attention to my poetry," Stewart smiled.

Surveying the forest of news reporters' cameras and microphones at the news con-

ference, Stewart quipped, "What wonderful coverage, had I known I would have brought my little book."

Stewart brought out another wry smile when asked about the addition of women since his days at Princeton.

"I like the addition of women any place," he said.

Stewart received the Woodrow Wilson Award at a closed luncheon. The Wilson Award is given to an undergraduate for work "in the nation's service," according to a university news release.



Jimmy Stewart, on hand to accept the Woodrow Wilson Award from Princeton University, fields questions from the press. Photo by Frank Jacobs III.

North Central Region Reunion

Program details are being finalized for the North Central Region Reunion of the Second Air Division, Eighth Air Force. This 7th Annual Reunion is to be held at French Lick Springs Resort, French Lick, Indiana, October 10-11-12, 1990.

Wednesday events include a golf outing, "Hoosier Welcome Reception," reports from the Heritage League, 2nd A.D. Memorial Library and presentation of "Bomb Group of the Year Award." Brig. Gen. Kenneth Keene, Ret., 93rd BG of Indianapolis will give words of welcome to out-of-state visitors.

Thursday morning activities include the Annual Business Meeting, Site Selection Committee Session and a "Bingo Bonanza," prizes imported from Norwich area. The "Video Theatre" will be open all afternoon with a printed schedule of attractions. Also, "Span Out French Lick" will be listed including "Larry Bird Boulevard" in downtown French Lick, named in honor of the Boston Celtics star who still lives off season there. Also, West Baden Springs Hotel in process of reconstruction after years of vacant neglect. The massive domed structure sheltered the rich and powerful during the 1920s.

Climax of the day's activities will be the Gala Banquet. Speaker will be Col. Philip Ardery, Ret. 389th Bomb Group, author of "Bomber Pilot." Col. Ardery, an attorney from nearby Louisville, Kentucky, told his story of "How It Was" during his 1940-45 stint as a civilian turned soldier in a fashion seldom equaled before or since the book's publication in 1978.

The North Central Region consists of the states of Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Since there will not be a nationwide 2nd A.D. Reunion in the continental USA this year, the committee extends an invitation to members from states outside our region to attend the French Lick meeting. Those interested should write to the address below to receive further details.

Paul Steichen
1659 Cloister Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46260

TAPS: WORDS AND MUSIC



Although Daniel Butterfield composed Taps in 1862 and it was used by the military almost immediately, the tune was never actually published until 1874 — 12 years later. It first appeared in print in a book by Emory Upton, *Infantry Tactics*. Although it was commonly known as Taps, it was published under the title "Extinguish Lights." There are lyrics to the tune also, but the author of the lyrics is unknown. Furthermore, experts aren't able to determine with any certainty when the words were first put to the music. Although Taps is traditionally played at military funerals and at day's end, it is usually just the bugle call that is heard, not the words.

Four Engine Ace

by E. Warren Bruce

Smoke swirls drift upward from beneath my bunk, rising to the dull gray ceiling above my head and spreading out like fluffy clouds caught in a summer storm. These gentle swirling clouds of smoke bring a sense of peace into an apprehensive night that will stretch on into early morning when we will be called to duty. Sleep is impossible and the best we can do, each in his own way, is to keep the tension in tow until the spring is released come early morn.

Finally, I hear the familiar sound of fleece lined boots shuffling down the walk between our Nissen huts. The duty officer is coming to summon us. The agony of the long night's wait is over. We can get dressed, get breakfast, get briefed, and get going.

I roll out of my upper bunk and admonish Pretty, the bombardier, to quit smoking. "Those things will kill you before Jerry does."

I give Grish, the co-pilot, a hard shake and his morning greeting, "You will never get transferred to fighters if you don't learn how to get out of bed."

Wheelis, the navigator, slowly rolls out of bed with a sad faraway look. He looks at me and says, "I'm not going to get home today." I look him straight in the eye and sternly ask, "Who are you going to fly with?" A big smile eases the strain on his face, he laces his shoes and we all leave for the mess.

A charcoal sky, pierced through with specks of silver, vaults above us as we stride to the war room. It has been eight days since our battle christening and we are eager for another strike at the Third Reich.

A hush falls over the crews as the intelligence officer raises the screen covering the battle map. The red ribbon thrusts deep into Germany to Frankfurt Am Main. It will be a long one and a tough one. Today's mission is a maximum effort. Everything and everyone that can fly is going to fly. We will send a thousand bombers and a thousand fighters to strike at a single target.

When formation positions are assigned, I draw the tail end Charlie slot. The Colonel admonishes me to "hold it up in there." "Don't worry," I think, "the flight leader's tail gunner and my bombardier will be able to play tic-tac-toe with each other on their turret windows."

The continent will be covered with clouds to an altitude of five thousand feet and the bombardiers will locate and bomb the target with radar. This gives us some small sense of security. Maybe it will keep Jerry on the ground.

After briefing we gather up our gear and board a truck to take us to our ship. She waits patiently on her hard pan for us to transform her from a static monster into a living, soaring beauty. We make our pre-flight inspection very slowly, board our lady and wait for the go signal.

Mission is on. We start our engines one by one. They respond beautifully and soon we are rolling down the taxiway to takeoff position.

The next to last ship rolls down the runway. I release my brakes and begin inching toward the runway. I watch thirty seconds sweep by on the clock. With a triumphant roar we roll into our takeoff and the slow agony of earthbound lethargy is transformed into the grace of flight.

As we cross the North Sea and reach into Germany, both the weather and the Air Force reach as far as I can see. Our group is at the end of this striking force and I am at the end of our group. We will be the last crew to cross the target today.

I alert the crew that we are over enemy territory and the lonesomeness of flying tail end Charlie sets in. I chat a bit with the tail gunner and ask him how it feels to be on the end of the line. "Very alone," he answers. He has nothing to look at but the emptiness of where we have been.

All is peaceful and the soft white blanket of clouds stretch on and on as far as I can see. Amidst this tranquility I reflect a moment on the history of man. Regardless of the social structure or political structure of nations, the size, wealth or power of empires, one thing is constant — war. A practical substitute must be found for this grossest of insanities.

Somewhere up front someone must be paying a dear price for this peace of ours. Surely the G.A.F. isn't going to allow an onslaught such as this to go unopposed. They still have the capability of hitting hard and there is no lack of determination on their part. They can inflict severe damage at points of their choosing, and some of our crews will suffer all the hell that is war and others of us will have nothing but the dirty brown flak to contend with.

Our fighter cover is probably up front protecting those under attack. If we see them at all, it will be on their run for home to refuel and return to escort us to the coast.

Our peaceful entry into enemy territory almost seems unreal. Our first mission had been relatively calm but we had been skillfully and continually bracketed with well placed anti-aircraft barrages. We knew we had, at last, entered the air war we had so long trained for. Today we could just as well be on a training flight from Denver to Fort Worth.

Then my peace is shattered.

The group ahead of us is bracketed with an ugly flak barrage and two bombers disappeared into blinding explosions that scattered fire balls all over the sky.

My body melts. It slithers across the flight deck and starts to ooze out of the bomb bay. I inhale a gigantic breath to reinflate myself, plunge into the dirty sky and the world grows silent. We move soundlessly through the suspended smoke of spent explosions. Everything occurs in slow motion. My biological clock stops. Slug-gishly we plod along. I know we are moving for the smoke goes whispering by. We are in the center of a place of death. It seems like an endless place. Perhaps we have exploded and are soaring to Flyer's Heaven. We creep on through the muck and inch out into clear, clean air. Then reality taps me on the shoulder, I snap back to life and realize that we slipped through while they were reloading.

"Navigator to pilot."

"Yes," I answer.

"I.P. dead ahead," he replies.

This is the initial point. The point from which we cease all evasive action and fly straight and level to "bombs away." From here to the target the lead ships go on auto pilot and the bombardiers fly the ships with their bomb sights. That uncanny device that determines exactly when the payload is to be released.

Except for takeoff, landing, and bomb run, which I handle, the co-pilot and I fly in half hour shifts. He is flying now so I take control and he assumes the role of fire control officer.

The group has been increasing air speed and it has become very difficult for us to "hold it up in there." I have no intention of becoming a straggler. We have increased our power considerably above cruising as we move on towards our target.

Frankfurt has taken a beating this morning. Huge black belching clouds are broiling up through the white cloud cover. The blue sky is full of flak and bombers and the morning's tranquility has ended.

"Open bomb bay doors," the bombardier calls. The co-pilot opens the bomb bay doors and we expose our belly to the German gunners. I continue to inch up my power and it seems as though the group is determined to run away from us. Then this crew's war begins in earnest.

Number two cylinder head pressure needle makes an agonizing sweep to the left. Supercharger out! Which equates to engine power nil. I advance my pressure on the remaining three. The co-pilot advances engine r.p.m. These two must be in balance or the engines won't perform properly.

We begin to trail and lose altitude.

There is no need to feather the prop, there is enough manifold pressure to equalize the propeller drag. Besides, I have already decided on a plan of action and I will need that engine again. I alert the crew of our problem. "Be alert," I order. "We are becoming more alone every second."

Number three needle sweeps left and we have one half the power we need to maintain altitude, but I am determined to make this bomb run with or without engines. At least we are well balanced. Two and three are inboard. Both losses might have been on the same side, which is murder in a B-24.

Simultaneously the co-pilot and I advance to full rated power, a condition we can maintain for only a few precious minutes. The engines work valiantly as though they can sense the desperateness of the situation. Our security is thinning rapidly. We will make a lone assault on the target.

"Bombs away," the bombardier calls. "Close bomb bay doors."

"Bomb bay doors closed," I answer.

"We made it," I sigh.

In rapid succession, number one and number four turbo give out. Four manifold pressure needles all in a row — on the wrong side of the dials.

"Pilot to crew," I call, "stand by for a fast, steep dive. We're dropping for the clouds. I've got to get these horses down where they can breathe again. Watch for bandits and hang on tight."

Ten men and twenty-five tons of airplane hurtling towards earth at three hundred miles an hour. "Hold it there," I admonish myself, "this is no time to tear yourself apart. Keep enough power on to protect those precious plugs."

I'm scanning the sky for bandits and I spot two. "Pilot to crew. Bandits at two o'clock high — bearing down fast — ready for action."

I check my air speed and coax a little more out of the ship. There is another ten thousand feet to go before we can nestle into the gentle protective folds of those gorgeous clouds.

The bandits close in fast. Co-pilot is calling our "little friends" for help. I risk three hundred twenty five and ask co-pilot to call air speed.

Two silver JU 88's, in tight formation, drop down to within a hundred feet of our upturned tail, swing in at three o'clock and point their gun loaded noses forty-five degrees to our longitudinal axis, and for an eerie, unbelievable moment this situation stands transfixed in space and time...It can't be true. I know two of my gun positions can be brought to bear on these bandits, but there they sit full broadside and nothing is happening. Then before I can command my men to fire, the right waist gunner opens up, reality returns, and I watch those murderous half inch bullets tear up the right engine, crawl up the wing and creep into the cockpit of the near ship. He rolls over and spins in on fire. My belly gunner reports his uncontrolled descent into the clouds. The wing man disappears with a P-38 on his tail. They must have thought we were empty and just stopped by to have a look. At this air speed and flight altitude they could have finished us.

Five thousand more feet and we will be safely bundled and homeward bound. I begin to break my angle of descent. I want to enter this cloud bank almost straight and level. Europe is fairly flat and low but five thousand feet isn't the greatest altitude for instrument flying.

Off to the left something is bobbing across the clouds. It's our shadow racing us for the point of entry. This is a race no one can win. Soon we'll meet in a tie and all will be well.

As I ease into the nowhereness of instrument flight my world recedes into the confines of the flight deck. I set the throttles for cruising, trim the ship, throw a kiss to the gray mist outside, and relax.

"Pilot to navigator, I need a heading to the nearest English coast."

"Have it in a second."

"Pilot to crew — check in."

From nose to tail, all is well.

"Navigator to pilot, hold two nine zero."

"Roger — two nine zero."

I bank gently to the left and roll out on course. All is silent except our racing engines.

The crew is silent. Ten men in ten separate worlds with ten different reactions to an unreal situation. I wonder of their thoughts.

Lt. Pretty — bombardier — nose gunner. Quiet, likeable, an only child; just wants to get back to the telephone company and have six kids.

Lt. Wheelis — navigator — short, cocky, everyone's friend, whether you like it or not. A good navigator.

Lt. Grisham — the other pilot — handsome, temperamental, deeply hurt at being assigned as co-pilot having graduated from fighter school. The first time I took him up on an orientation flight, he looked at me and shouted, "Hell, this is like sitting on your front porch and flying your house."

Sgt. Fleming — radio operator — tall, blonde, good natured, addicted to poker — always broke.

Sgt. McGuire — engineer and top gunner — quiet, withdrawn, efficient. A comfort to have along.

Sgt. Renfro — belly gunner — youngest member of the crew. When things are quiet he's always asking for permission to shoot at something on the ground. I always answer, "Fine if you can figure the ballistics for twenty thousand feet and one hundred sixty miles per hour."

Sgt. Jones — left waist gunner — tallest man on the crew, and oldest. The eternal good natured gripe. He thoroughly detests the army and the war.

Sgt. McLaughlin — right waist gunner — shortest man on the crew, full of fun, always smiling, addicted to poker, wins all of Fleming's money.

Sgt. Phaffenberger — tail gunner — no matter what we do, he's always last to do it, but he is first rate. Doesn't play poker — loans his money to Fleming.

My own silence is broken with a chilling thought. We are not alone and we are not so safe. I wonder how many radar scanners are plotting our course and reporting our position to fighters along the way. If this weather burns off, they will be waiting for us.

I glimpse a patch of green below, a patch of blue above, spotty puffs of clouds flash by, disappear and we burst out into a clear and sunny afternoon. "Pilot to crew, weather is gone, we're going to

make the rest of the trip on the deck. Hold tight again, I'm going down as fast as I can." Again I drop as steep and fast as I dare. The tiny make believe world below looms into reality. At one thousand feet I begin to break our glide and ease gently back on the stick, inch the throttles forward, level off at treetop, set the throttles for cruising, trip the ship. But don't relax.

"Pilot to crew, check in." Everyone is okay.

"Pilot to belly — Renfro, get out of that thing, you're too close to the ground for comfort."

We shoot out across beautiful variegated Europe and for a short while it is very peaceful. The co-pilot shouts, "Hey! There's a little old man in a donkey cart." I catch a glimpse of him as we whiz by. He doesn't even turn to look.

"Bandits at eight o'clock," shouts the left waist. There is a fierce battle going on back there. It is a strange feeling not seeing my attackers and having someone else do my fighting for me. For the moment all I can do is fly a little lower and watch the trees and rooftops. The closer I can hug the ground, the tougher for the fighters to attack and the easier for my gunners to shoot.

Directly behind me there is a dull explosion and a sickening thud. McGuire, slumped on the flight deck, writhes in bloody pain. His arm and neck badly torn. Fleming leaps to his aid — I order Fleming to the turret.

"Pilot to navigator, need you on the flight deck — engineer wounded."

"Belly to pilot, Jones badly wounded and his gun knocked out."

Wheelis swings onto the flight deck to care for McGuire — Fleming drops out of the top turret. "Turret is blown up, sir, and won't function." I turn McGuire back over to Fleming and send Wheelis to the waist to verify its condition.

It's quiet again. Whether or not we inflicted any damage on our attackers is not known at the moment. The bandits must have taken a beating or they would still be with us.

They are still with us!

"Jerry at 4:30 level."

Damn, I don't like this blind fighting.

The right waist gunner and his gun are eliminated.

"Navigator to pilot, waist gunners are in bad shape, but alive. We've given them morphine and bandaged their wounds. It must have been 20mm cannon that they hit us with, I can see daylight everywhere I look back here, be gentle with this tub."

"Don't worry, I will," I answer, "see that Jones and McLaughlin are warm and comfortable and get back to your maps, we don't want to stray off course."

"Pilot to radio, call for help. We could use an escort to shepherd us home."

After a brief silence — "Radio to pilot, my transmitter is knocked out, sir, try command radio." I call and call and call and get no answer. All of our transmitters have been shot out.

"Pilot to crew, all radios are out, there won't be anyone coming in to help us. It's up to us to make it alone."

My stomach does a double somersault. Dead ahead lies a huge city which seems to fill the entire horizon and its bound to be full of guns.

"Pilot to navigator, we're approaching a large city at twelve o'clock. I'm going to swing to the left and try to sneak by. Do you know where we are? We have been indicating two hundred."

"Navigator to pilot, it's Liege."

Our luck holds and we sweep by uneventfully. It must be wash day. Everywhere I look, as we pass through the suburbs, clean white laundry is waving in the afternoon breeze. A silent cheering section. I smile as we cross the Meuse. A lone dock worker waves affectionately and we bore into the open countryside again.

I suddenly realize that I have flown every inch of the way since taking over at the I.P. I shout to the co-pilot. "You want to take it for awhile?" He stretches his arms, reaches for the control column and it slips all the way out of the instrument panel and into his lap. His cables have been shot out!!! I immediately try to a few gentle maneuvers with my own. My cables are firm and working. With the shock still registered on his face, Grish looks at me and pleads, "Let's put this thing down somewhere and get out of it."

"Not as long as all four engines are turning," I answer with a smile. (He must have forgotten the wounded.)

I receive a very calm call from the tail, "Bandit pulling up at six o'clock level, sir, my hydraulic system is out and one gun won't function. When I fire, the other gun sweeps out of control. What shall I do?"

"Crank it over manually, make a sweep, crank it over manually, make a sweep — keep him occupied," I answer.

"Yes sir, I'll do my best."

Before I can decide which way to turn to throw off our attacker, we are flying in an inferno. All around us, cherry red balls of fire as

(continued on page 30)

Four Engine Ace (continued from page 29)

big as grapefruit are flashing by in an endless stream. It seems to go on forever. Once again that eerie feeling of being transfixed in time grips me. We float along in a sea of fiery roman candles...

"We're going to explode," I think to myself. All fear leaves me. I am calm and ready. Then dead ahead of us looms a thatched half timber farm house. I am dead center the upstairs bedroom. Beyond the house is a fenced yard filled with chickens — hundreds of white chickens glistening in the sun. The cherry red balls crawl across the thatched roof and into the chicken yard. Chickens and chicken feathers fill the air. The inferno ceases. I do a vertical bank within inches of the house. We churn through a mass of white feathers and frantic chickens who want to fly, but can't.

We've made it again! He didn't get us. I could laugh if it weren't so sad. There had to be people in that house (we could have blown their roof off) and those chickens will be laying curdled eggs for the rest of their lives, if our prop wash hasn't killed them all. I take a silent vow never to eat chicken again.

"Pilot to crew, check in." No more casualties. When the tail checks in I'm too awestruck to ask him what it was (a plane or a thundering medieval dragon). "How could a pilot sit there that long, fire that many incendiaries and not bring this monster down?" I ask myself.

"Belly gunner to pilot, he left us with a hole behind number three engine big enough to drive a jeep into."

"That's lovely," I answer.

I quickly assess our condition. Three men wounded, a gaping hole in our wing, the waist is seived, radios are inoperative, we are left with a nose turret, one erratic tail gun, and a co-pilot without controls. All four engines are still performing and that's a very good feeling.

I'm not given much time to worry about my lack of equipment. As I scan the horizon, I spot him at nine o'clock level. One lone FW 190. He is checking our speed. We fly abreast for what seems forever. "Wouldn't it be lovely if he would turn up his wing's silhouette and be a P-47?" I think.

"Pilot to bombardier, I think you're going to get a chance at an FW 190. As soon as he rolls into his attack, I'm going to go after him. The rest is up to you."

"Roger, I'm ready," he answers.

This is more like it. The odds are one to one now, pilot to pilot. His fire power is ten times that of ours, but I'm through sitting and taking it.

He makes a decision and rolls into his attack. When he reaches forty five degrees and is in full top silhouette, I roll into attack. He doesn't like this. He wings over and flies away parallel again. I roll back to our precious two nine zero heading.

He tries again. I turn steeply into another attack. He rolls out and we fly parallel once more. I think, "He and I could probably be pals at an air show if it weren't for this damn war."

This time I attack first. He doesn't like this. He pulls away forward. He begins a wide, slow sweep to the right, through eleven o'clock, through twelve o'clock, one o'clock, two o'clock.

"Pilot to bombardier, it looks as though he's going to try our other side. This time I'm going to wait until he rolls out level and is totally committed to his attack, then we'll go after him — okay?"

"Roger, I read you loud and clear."

At three o'clock he makes his decision, rolls into his attack, rolls out and bores in. I wait a few agonizing seconds. I want him to think we are going to sit and take it bomber fashion again. Then I bank over steep and roll out fast. It all becomes very personal now, he's after me, I'm after him. At tree tops. Bomber and fighter crashing headlong toward one another, four engines against one, two guns against six. Somebody's got to go, whoever shoots best lives. One of us is about to die.

My biological clock ceases again and we two are suspended from heaven on silver threads or dangling in a toy shop window for future air combat buffs to enjoy.

Space diminishes, no one budges. We're both welded to our course by purpose and determination.

That gorgeous radial nacelle gets larger and larger... "He's close enough to tear us to bits."

"He's not shooting."

"Good God, he's going to ram us!"

"Now, Pretty!!!" I shout, and once again those brutal half inch slugs tear up an engine nacelle, crawl down the fuselage and enter the cockpit.

His reflexes pull him up over our right wing, he flips over and rolls in. "Tail to pilot, he's done for, scattered all over the countryside."

"We got him," I shout with glee. We've killed a man and we are

ecstatic. Well not exactly a man...a bandit, a Jerry, a bosch, a kraut — that makes it easier.

I swing back to our escape heading, peer into the distance and there at last...the coast.

The co-pilot taps me on the shoulder and points toward two o'clock.

"Good gaud," I shudder. It's a B-17 under attack by four ME 109s about a mile away.

"Pilot to crew, I thought I had some good news for you. The coast is in sight but Grish just sighted a Fortress under attack — we're going over to help. Renfro, get back into your turret, I'll find a way to use you this time. Paff, see if you can crank some life into your one gun. Pretty, shoot well again. Go easy on the ammunition, this could be rough."

Each one of the bandits is working in and out of one of the quadrants described by the B-17's longitudinal and transverse axes. In and out. In and out, relentlessly...

"How do I work myself into that four leaf clover without taking my final bow," I wonder. I've got to count on surprise and the incredibility of this crazy act to pull us through. It's a decision we would just as soon not have to make, but it must be done. We could have used their help several times today.

"Pilot to crew, ready to go. Jerry is hitting the Fort in and out of her four quads. I'm going to attack diagonal at 45 degrees and establish a figure eight about her center of gravity. Fleming, into the top turret and call their positions for us. Remember short bursts — good shooting."

I inhale a gulp of air to keep my body from collapsing, swallow a ball of red hot barbed wire, inch the throttles forward for maximum power, and in we go...

"I think we're going to surprise them," I whisper into the intercom.

"I hope so," Fleming answers, "I feel somewhat useless up here in this bubble with no guns."

"How would you like to be a pilot with no controls?" Grish retorts.

"Pilot to crew, we're into it."

As we slice into the southwest quadrant our near opponent turns left and up full broadside. I swing into him and Pretty plants a dozen slugs right where they belong. He's done in. I don't think he knew what hit him.

"Bombardier to pilot, one ME 109 down."

"Congratulations," I answer. I cross over the Fort and into the northeast quad and with unbelievable luck our second kill is set up for us. Pulling away from his last attack, directly in line in front of us sits number two. I pull up slightly to have a height advantage.

"Jerry at twelve o'clock low, nose and belly let him have it," I shout.

He somersaults into a hellish explosion.

I start a tight turn to the right to put the first loop on my figure eight.

"Tail to pilot, the remaining two are pairing up to come after us. They're swinging wide to the north."

Halfway around my turn, number three engine attempts to leave us. It coughs and tears at its mounting as though it has had it and wants out. Just as Grish is reaching for the feathering button, McGuire comes to life and jumps to his fuel pumps.

I grab Grish's hand before he can put the ailing one to rest, McGuire gets the fuel tanks balanced, number three begins to purr again and our hope for survival returns.

"Bandits coming in fast at one thirty," Fleming calls.

I drop the nose to gain speed and to lose what little altitude we have.

The nose is punctured with a million holes and the winged cannon roar past us to the west. I turn to follow.

"Pilot to nose, check in."

"Bombardier — okay."

"Navigator — okay. Except one of those slugs went through my flight jacket's left arm and tore up everything but me."

"That means we're going to make it," Paff states from the tail.

"They are making a wide turn to come in again," I report. "The wing man is swinging wide. When we close in I'll try to make a tight turn to the left between them. Got to split them up for good. Pretty — you occupy the leader — Renfro, you can have the wing man. Try to get him broadside as we swing through."

"They're coming back," Pretty reports.

I note that the wing man will never close in to his leader before we meet again. My plan should work, all we need is luck.

Pretty opens up on the lead with magnificent accuracy. He veers away to the south, I start my bank to the south. The wing man closes in.

Two deadly bursts riddle our bomb bay. I bank steep to the left.

"Get him, Renfro," I squeeze the words through my gritted teeth.

"Belly to pilot, I got him, sir."

"Everybody check in," I order. All is well — we're hanging on with no more wounded. I continue my circle to the left, back towards the north and the Fort. My heart is pounding furiously. I'm sure it will burst through my rib cage any second and I am drenched in my own sweat.

"Belly to pilot, bandit is making a wide turn to the left ahead of the Fort."

"He's no quitter," I think, "he's going to see this through to the end. What a sickening phrase. The End."

I come in close to the Fort and, for the first time, notice both his inboards are feathered. He has no choice but to fly straight and level and coax his baby home. Everyone in both bombers is waving frantically. A surge of pride swells through my weary body.

"Top turret to pilot, Jerry has finished his turn."

He levels out, flies straight opposite our heading for a few short seconds, then breaks into his attack. I bank hard to the left and roll out on a collision course.

"You ready, Pretty?"

"Ready."

"Renfro, you get him if he squeezes through."

"Roger."

We hang in space for eternity. Then a few white puffs of smoke roll off the leading edge of Jerry's wing. A few short bursts from Pretty's guns hit a soft spot. We shudder through an orange ball of flame. The funeral bier of a proud airman and his ship.

Grish pounds me on the shoulder shouting. "Man oh man, five of them. That makes you an ace."

I smile a smile of deep relief. The universe has just been lifted from my shoulders. I fly diagonally over the Fort and back. They are throwing kisses and waving madly.

The coast is yards away and we have slipped in under the weather again. They, in the Fort, know we can't limp along with them, so I pull away and start a climb for the clouds. "Pilot to crew, this weather can't be very thick so I'm going to the top. Renfro, out of your turret. Tell Jones and Mac we're going home."

"Wheelis, what's E.T.A. England?"

"14:40," he answers.

Fifteen minutes to go. We break out into the magnificence of earth's brilliant white mantle, level off just above the clouds and our shadow does a gleeful dance behind us. Oh! What joy. I squeeze the control wheel with deep affection. My much maligned lady has shown them a thing or two today.

"Six Spitfires on collision course at six o'clock," Pretty calls. I dive — they climb — two lucky decisions. Grish and I wave to their leader as they cross over us and we are on instruments again.

"Navigator to pilot, E.T.A. 14:40 arrived."

"Pilot to crew, we are going to let down. I want to get the wounded to the nearest hospital. It's forty five minutes or so to base and the weather might be worse up there."

We break out with about a fifty foot ceiling, visibility one quarter mile. We've got to land somewhere fast. I call on the intercom, "Somebody find an airfield."

"Bombardier to pilot, fighter at ten o'clock. Going away with his gear down, follow him."

I turn gently to the left and he takes me right down the center of an English fighter strip. I make a pass to have a look. I swing around and make one more pass to get the feel of the runway. We fire red flares to ask for an ambulance.

McGuire squeezes my shoulder. "Gas is very low, let's not go around again."

I call for landing check list. All goes well until we reach "gear down." Gear won't come down. Emergency procedures won't work. I rock the ship in a desperate attempt to shake those rubber donuts loose. They refuse to leave their wells.

"Pilot to crew, prepare for belly landing, gear won't come down, we are low on gas, we have to go in." I roll out on the final approach. "Pilot to crew, everybody set?"

The waist answers, "Everybody set."

I call for full flaps and reduce air speed. "Co-pilot, call air speed." "One thirty — one twenty..."

The tower fires red flares. Telling us our "gear is up, don't land." We fire red flares asking for an ambulance. The sky is full of red flares. "Sorry, we can't talk to you but we're coming in."

"One ten — one hundred."

"Ninety." We touch gently.

"Switches off," I shout.

Props come to rest and this magnificent creature crunches down into perfect flying attitude, stops sliding and will never fly again. Six hours, fifty minutes after take off, "Tail End Charlie" is home.

"Now we can get out of this thing," I chide Grish.

Grish is halfway out of the escape hatch. I can't get my parachute unbuckled. "Grish, come get out of this damn thing."

He drops back onto the flight deck and works me loose. As he helps me out of the upper escape hatch, he shouts, "Man, you didn't touch a prop!" I smile, scamper across the wing, slide off the flaps, jump into the ambulance as it pulls away with the wounded. I shout back to Grish, "Call base and tell them we made it."

Later in the evening, while relaxing in the lounge, a distinguished, elderly English pilot dashes in and excitedly asks, "Where's the skipper of the Liberator?" I return from a half doze, not knowing what to expect, jump to my feet and introduce myself with a salute.

"Lieutenant," he says, "I've been flying ever since airplanes were invented, and never have I seen a landing as beautiful as the one you made today."

I thank him gratefully and smile a farway smile, for I know he would understand the Miracle of the Meld...A love affair between a man and a machine. It wasn't I who did it, it was we...My plane and me.

After we retired that evening the G.A.F. decided to have a retaliatory raid on London and southern England, and our host fighter base is given a thorough workover by the Luftwaffe. The combination of straffing fighter bombers and anti-aircraft ground fire is enough to shatter one's mind.

Grish and I are sharing a room. He softly remarks, "Boy oh boy, what a show."

"Yeah, what a show," I answer, then think to myself, "what irony it would be, after all we have been through today, to get it in bed."

I slip into a troubled sleep and the war goes on without me.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The title "Four Engine Ace" and the fictional sequence of saving the Fort (italics above) are the result of something happening that troubled me for years.

After returning to Depling from a nearby hospital where my wounded crewmen were, I was approached by another American airman who asked, "Is that your Liberator out there on its belly?"

"Yes," I replied.

"I was flying out near you, under attack by four M.E. 109s. We called and called you for help, why didn't you respond?"

I said, "We didn't see you and all of our radios were destroyed by bandits attacking us."

"I had to crash in a pasture near here and my belly gunner was killed," he said.

Again I said, "I'm terribly sorry, but we didn't see you."

I got a long cold stare, then he turned and walked away.

He didn't believe me and I was haunted by that scene for years until one day I found a way to cope with it. I decided to write the story of that mission and rescue the Fort. It was good therapy and I was no longer troubled by his disbelief.

Change of Address

When you move, please send your change of address to:

Evelyn Cohen

06-410 Delaire Landing Road
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.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State & Zip Code _____

Group _____

Letters



Dear Bill:

Enclosed is a book review of J. Harold Robinson's "A Reason to Live," which is in its third printing. (See page 16.) As you know, the Kassel Mission Memorial Association has used the proceeds from the sale of this book to help finance the Kassel Mission Memorial Monument which has been erected near Bad Hersfeld, West Germany, where Captain Chilton's lead plane crashed on September 27, 1944.

At this writing, thirty-four 2nd Air Division veterans and their wives and families plan to dedicate the memorial on August 1st, 1990, together with five surviving German pilots who flew against us that day. We will be honoring the 118 gallant 445th BG crewmen, one P-51 pilot from 361st FG, and 18 Germans who died that bloody day. The Germans have provided a beautiful 400 square meter site in a State of Hesse Forest Preserve, which will be maintained by that government.

Although we have raised \$4,500 from donations and book sales, we are short \$2,500 of the needed amount to pay for the bronze plates which will list the casualties. Tax-free donations from any and all 2nd Air Division Association members will be most appreciated. Even when we fund the Kassel Mission Memorial Monument, we will need more money to publish a book about the Kassel Mission we hope to have out by 1994, the 50th anniversary of that tragic raid.

The book is hard bound, 445 pages (interesting number for the author of a chronicle about the 445th!), 30 pictures. Order copies from Kassel Mission Memorial Association, Inc., P.O. Box 413, Birmingham, MI 48012. Cost is \$20 plus \$3 shipping and handling. \$8 is tax deductible as a donation to KMMA.

Keep up the good work. An editor's job is never done, I know. I've had to put out a newsletter myself, without all the complications you face each quarter!

William R. Dewey
Kassel Mission Memorial
Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 413
Birmingham, MI 48012

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I have been trying for years to locate a crew member originally from Athens, Alabama. I have, over the years, seen all of my crew members except James A. Davis. He was a gunner on Alfred II, a B-24 that flew out of England from Sept. 1943 to August 1944. If anyone has any kind of a clue, please contact me.

Earl A. Hall
Box 187
Augusta, Wisc. 54722

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I met Ed Sundberg two years ago at a high school reunion. Omaha (Neb.) Tech, my wife's alma mater, held its first reunion in 47 years. Like many of the classes of '41, the graduates, if they survived WWII, scattered throughout the world.

Ironically, we reside a 1½ hour drive from Ed and Gerda's home on beautiful Monterey Bay. Recently we visited La Selva Beach, and shared high school days and our World War II experiences. Ed was stationed at Tonopah where our crew was assembled and trained.

On returning to Oakland, I sent Ed a B-24 Commemorative poster from the Ft. Worth Anniversary celebration in '89. Ed, in turn, sent me a B-17 printing which I had coveted. He closed his letter with the enclosed poem. It is from a collection entitled "Since I was a child there's been a war."

Ed is a retired teacher, Cabrillo College, Santa Cruz. He is very modest. He stated, "I was a nobody in World War II. I enlisted, I went to a bunch of schools that I didn't ask for but somebody sent me to them. I ended up at the Central Instructors School in Ft. Myers, Florida, and spent the rest of the time at Tonopah Air Base teaching Sighting and Aiming (MOS 938). I tried to do my best. As you can see, that is not very exciting."

Well, if it hadn't been for the Ed Sundbergs, a lot of gunners and bombardiers would have been in deep trouble.

Don Beck
3087 Guido Street
Oakland, CA 94602

"Flight 585 to Los Angeles, seats 11 through 22 now boarding!
Have your passes ready!"

I walk from the lighted room to the darkness of the night —
and the nightmares of over forty years ago came back —

Another midnight awakening — in darkness, in silence —
We dress — stripping our individuality to dogtags
namerankandserialnumber religion...
and blood type, of course!
— quietly reminding buddies not to forget the
letters if we don't return.

We chow down — in silence...
Then on the flight line we check everything — our clothes,
parachutes, bombs, turrets, machine guns, ammo, in silence.
The ground chief yells something
and the silent engines — one by one — grind themselves to
a rough stuttering
a hesitant smoothness
a vibration of death

We think silent prayers and start the day's work...

"I hope you enjoyed your flight." a young voice greets me.
I have no words to give her. I am lost somewhere in time.
Another voice says "Here's your bag, sir. Fly again soon."
"I have my parachute," I mutter.
I sit down — tears, tears soar in my heart with old, strange
memories,

and I write this...

Edward F. Sundberg

Dear Bill:

Many of us in the 453rd are upset over the inaccurate reporting concerning the passing of Lt. Bob "Gus" Johnson. As Gus Johnson's engineer from Boise to Old Buck he was the pilot, not Lt. Catlin's co-pilot.

I have too much respect for Gus to accept this report without a protest, and I know all of Johnson's crew and his many friends would appreciate a more factual report.

I realize your reporters are not professionals and spend time and effort doing their job, so please accept this letter in that spirit. This is how we remember Gus:

crew. He wasn't a "buddy" to us enlisted men but he always treated us with respect. I don't remember much saluting or military procedures — but we always knew who was in charge. As a pilot I don't know if he was the best, but we thought he was. I do know he always brought us home. This included a lot of shot up planes and systems — sometimes crippled and alone. Sometimes low on fuel or "socked in" weather. I don't remember Gus getting a lot of publicity or citations, but he did his job and did it well. Men like Gus Johnson made the 8th AF work. We salute you, Gus.

Peter S. Becker
Rt. 1, Box 99
Leavenworth, IN 47137

+ + + +

A Tribute to a Man

Gus Johnson was our leader. He made a bunch of assorted civilian soldiers a combat

Dear Bill:

In the "Did You Know" column on page 8 of the Winter 1989 Journal, there is reference to "This division had a ship that never aborted in 53 missions..."

I am enclosing documentation that as a crew chief of the 409th Squadron, 93rd Group, I "topped" the above.

I crewed two aircraft for a total of 135 missions without a turnback. The first ship was #991, "The Flying Fool," 63 missions without aborting. The second ship, #578R "The Flying Moose" had 72 missions without aborting — which by the way I flew back to the States after VE Day. I would also like to mention that for the above record, I received two Bronze Stars.

I recently found out by obtaining a copy of the book "One Last Look" that they show a listing of total decorations awarded to the 8th Air Force from 17 August 1942 to 15 May 1945. There were only 12 Oak Leaf Clusters to the Bronze Star awarded, and I have one of them.

Art Ferwerda

Ed. Note: It is time that the ground personnel were given the credit they so rightly deserve. Put your stories in your own words, and send them in!

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦



Dear Bill:

I was a member of the 491st BG, 855th Squadron. An interesting item is the fact that me, my brother, and twins were on the same crew. My brother, Harry (Buzz) Chapman was the pilot, I was the bombardier, and the twins were waist gunners. We flew 30 missions in the "Merchant of Menace."

Enclosed is a recent photo of me with my 8th AF bumper sticker and license plate.

Jackson F. Chapman

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Evelyn:

Can you tell me if there have been any mini Second Air Division New England Regional conventions or meetings? If not, I would like to see if it is possible to organize one. I would need an up-to-date list of all members in the New England area. Can you or someone else furnish me with same?

John M. Knizeski, Jr.
44 Lambert Road
Freeport, ME 04032

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦



Standing (l-r): Bryant Wilson, bombardier; Richard Pelson, co-pilot; George Booth, pilot; Richard Davies, navigator. Kneeling,

third from left, Cohen; fourth from left, George Hansen.

Dear Bill:

Through moving, flooded basement and probably carelessness, I have lost most of the pictures and records of 32 missions with the 448th, 712th Squadron. I do have this picture taken of the crew prior to leaving Topeka and flying overseas via Iceland. We arrived at the 448th in May of 1944 and

finished 32 missions in October of '44. George Booth, pilot, was succeeded by Joseph Remitz after five missions.

My doctor says I have the C.R.S. syndrome. I cannot identify many of the crew. Maybe someone would if the picture were published in the Journal.

Bryant Wilson

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

Our crew was ordered to Old Buckenham in April 1944, and was assigned to the 733rd Bomb Squadron, 453rd Bomb Group. On our third mission on 27 May 1944 to Saarbrücken, I received a small wound from flak. At the hospital, which serviced all bases in that area, I was given a tetanus shot to which I had a severe reaction and spent 20 days in the hospital. I missed out on the fast missions during D-Day and after. The crew completed their tour of 32 missions in 65 days if my memory is correct and returned to the States. I had to stay on and complete my tour of duty.

I flew with several crews as a spare when needed. On 19 October 1944 on my 32nd mission to the Frankfurt area, we received direct flak hits. The aircraft was what we at the time called Mickey Ships with the Radar Dome which was supposed to confuse the German radar but seemed to suck it in. All the crew bailed out, and the only name I can recall was the Engineer by the name of Crandall. I spent the rest of the war as a POW in Stalag Luft IV and made the infamous march across Germany in the winter of 1944-1945.

The crew I originally belonged to was comprised of the following: Robert M. Miller, pilot; Robert B. Candler, co-pilot; Johnny H. Peebles, navigator; Good, bombardier; Thomas E. Bent, flight engineer; Don Padgett, radio operator; Demlow, nose gunner; P.C. Petty, upper waist gunner;

Warren Link, right waist; Sam McAllister, tail gunner.

Enclosed is a photo of the "Strawberry Bitch" B-24 being removed from the storage area at Davis Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ. With my prior B-24 experience, I was the supervisor assigned to prepare the aircraft for flight to the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson, Dayton, Ohio. Colonel Al Shower from the Ploesti Mission was the C.O. of the Storage Depot at that time and flew the B-24 to Dayton, Ohio.

Thomas E. Bent



B-24 "Strawberry Bitch" at Davis Monthan AFB, Arizona. Aircraft being prepared for flight to Air Force Museum, Dayton, Ohio.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦



(l-r): Aldo Perfetti, Don Pearson, Abe Becker, Cleveland Bynom, Roy Grimes,

Dixie Purcell, John Knapke.

Dear Bill:

Enclosed is a photo of our ground crew of the 564th Squadron, 389th Bomb Group. We were stationed near the village of Wyndham and the city of Norwich wasn't too far away. I should have sent this picture

to you years ago, but I always seemed to lay it aside and forget about it.

I enjoy the Journal very much.

John R. Knapke
1102 Fairmont Avenue
Natrona Heights, PA

+ + + +



5th Emergency Rescue Sqdn., January '45 at Halesworth. (l-r): John Neet, navigator; Norman Baker, co-pilot; Wm. Thatcher,

pilot; Wm. York, engineer; F. (Gene) Glasser, radar; Hamilton Lofkin, radio.

Dear Bill:

Enclosed is a picture of our crew that was taken at Halesworth in late January 1945.

This 'CAT' was shot out of the water off the Dutch coast by two ME-262s while attempting to save a Fighter Pilot on Good Friday in '45.

Fortunately for us another crew was using our plane on this day. They spent several days on a rough north sea in a boat that was

dropped to them by a Fort. All suffered frostbite but thankfully all recovered. We also, on this same day, lost another of our six original 'CATs' attempting to save a '24 crew that was shot up badly and ditched in the rough sea. Unfortunately the B-24 crew didn't fare too well.

Francis Glasser
209 High Street
Derry, PA 15627

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I am a college student and Confederate Air Force member working on a research project involving a B-24 Liberator. The aircraft is a B-24D-CO-20, Serial Number 41-24143. This particular aircraft had a piece of nose art that read "Dippy Dave and his 8

Dippy Diddlers." If anyone in your organization knows anything about this aircraft, please write to me.

Jason Kritikis
1314 Barkley Road
Port Vue, PA 15133

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Attached are copies of letters concerning D-Day ETO 6 June '44 between Phil Ardery and myself that "unravels" the crew he flew with on the First Mission (D-Day). When he wrote his book "Bomber Pilot" some years ago, he inadvertently listed another crew as the Lead Crew (Mickey) he flew with out of the 389th BG.

Sent same for your file. May come in handy when the 50th Anniversary of that event comes around.

Have enclosed also a check to assist in the Journal expenses.

Temple Cumiskey

Many thanks for the donation to the Journal as it is greatly appreciated. These donations go a long way towards getting the job done. Now if everybody donated \$1.00 I think I could take a long vacation! — Ed.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Could you please send me a copy of the Sept. 1986 issue of the 2nd Air Division Journal? Let me know the cost and I will send a check.

Thanks so much for the great job you and all the others are doing. I thoroughly enjoy the Journal.

Robert Sykes

Here's your copy, Bob, and no charge unless you wish to make a donation. In that case any donation will be greatly appreciated — Ed.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I am looking for help in locating someone who might be able to give me information on a certain B-24 aircraft. In 1944 my crew and I picked up a brand spanking new B-24 at Hamilton Field Cal. We assumed this was to be our plane for the duration. The crew gathered up paints and ladders and went to work on a logo. "Ma's Little Angel" in bright colors went on our nose art. We then flew this plane cross country to New Hampshire, Goose Bay, Iceland and then to Belfast, Ireland where we were relieved of plane and all equipment. I never heard of it again until recently I received a letter from Tony North at Norwich Memorial Library who tells me that this plane crashed on takeoff at Attlebridge in January 1945.

I would like to get more information on the plane and the story of the accident. If you can give me the name of the pilot, any members of the crew or anyone else that might have information, I would be most grateful.

I flew as lead pilot for the 491st Bomb Group and have located a list of missing and crashed bombers from that base. I assume there must be such a list for the 466th and perhaps that would give me information. Anything would be appreciated. Thank you.

Gene Scamahorn
P.O. Box 226
Colville, WA 99114

+ + + +

Dear Evelyn:

Thank you so much for the note from our friend in West Virginia, who bemoans the fact that he was an enlisted man and seems discriminated against by the "brass" of the organization.

In as much as I was an enlisted man all the way through, I really would like to respond to whoever wrote that letter. I guess I am somewhat irritated by the remarks because I served under Myron Keilman, who was one of the finest gentlemen and best flight commanders that I have ever had the privilege of knowing. What's more, I knew that in 1943 and 1944.

Our crew was an original crew with the 392nd, and those three years have meant more to me as time has passed than probably any other period of my life, including naval service, college and law school.

I know you were an enlisted person, and certainly your dedication to a life's work in the 2nd Air Division verifies that there is a great deal of reward in being a member of this Association.

Cecil T. Rothrock
P.O. Box 40
Bristol, Wis. 53104

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

It has been with extreme interest that I read the pieces sent in for the Journal about "Families in the Service." I would like to submit the following for one of my combat crew members, Russell Bond. We were assigned to the 788th Bomb Squadron of the "Rackheath Aggies" and the 788th/859th Bomb Squadron of the Harrington "Carpetbaggers."

The Bond brothers were: Harold, Lawrence, John, Donald, Russell, Earl, Hiram Jr., Allan and Howard. With eight of the nine serving overseas, Hiram was the only one injured and became a prisoner of the Germans.

There were two daughters, Dorothy and Cleora before the nine sons.

It is unknown as to whether this record has been beaten, but it is my pleasure to have been associated with one of this fine family.

William F. Dillon
1115 Buena Vista
Amarillo, TX 79106

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I was pilot of a crew that flew 16 combat missions with the 489th BG, 846th Squadron from 9-21-44 through 11-9-44. I am in contact with two crew members, two I know are deceased. I would like help in locating, or knowing the fate of, the following, with last known address.

David Altenhoff, Chicago area; Bernard J. Smolka, Ohio; James F. Crawley, NC; Jack B. Keeth, Sherman, TX; David C. Kennemer, Paris, TX.

Thanks for any help you can provide.

John O. Stavenger
P.O. Box 386
Morris, MN 56267

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Dear Bill:

Yes, there is a BAD 2 Association and we are going as strong as when the Association was formed during the 8th AFHS reunion in St. Louis. At this moment there are 877 members. Our friendship started at the 1978 reunion held in Washington, DC when you so gracefully provided your hospitality room to the BAD 2 Group. Dave Mayor and I will never forget that gesture.

The enclosed photos will certainly renew memories for you, as the moment you glance at them you will realize what they show. The background of these photos is a B-24J which was restored at Kissimmee, Florida and flew last June for the first time in many years.

Dick McClune
BAD 2 Association
527 Quarterfield Road
Newport News, VA 23602

+ + + +

Dear Evelyn:

I would like to note my new address in the Journal, as it would cost so much to write to all of my friends of the Second Air Division Association. I am looking forward to meeting you all again in July.

Sid Cullington
23 Alnwick Court
Chapel Break
Bowthorpe
Norwich NR5 9LD
England

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Dear Bill:

I am writing regarding the article "The First Time I Saw Paris, June 2, 1944" which appeared in the Fall '89 Journal. I too was on this foul up. I was tail gunner on Charles C. Griffin's crew, and this article sure brought back memories. We also saw Evans' plane get hit and the bail outs. I saw two of his chutes going down in Paris, one on each side of the Eiffel Tower.

Our plane, "Strictly Business," was the one that got major damage. Our bombardier and navigator were both wounded (flesh wounds). The 88 shell doing the most damage hit the armored glass on the nose turret and shoved the glass back about 3 inches and guns were bent up like pretzels.

The hit stalled the aircraft and we dropped out of formation for awhile, but caught up and finished the mission in formation. Memories!

Louis H. Stormer

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Dear Bill:

Through the far-reaching Journal I'd like to express my thanks to the many readers of my book "Those Brave Crews" who have taken the time to write to me and express appreciation for my efforts as an author. There's a great, big warm feeling that envelops a man in reading their reactions. It tells me that "Those Brave Crews" was worth the years of toil and dedication, and rounds out my life.

Bill, and to all you guys out there, with grateful tears I express thanks. I do have a few copies, a few labels and can autograph such if you send me your BG/BS ID. Check to Ray Ward in the amount of \$18.45 covers book and U.S. postage.

Ray Ward
432 Pennsylvania Ave.
Waverly, NY 14892

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Dear Bill:

I feel sure word of Charlie Anderson's death last October will be news to you. He was 80 years old. Many in the 389th will remember Charlie. He joined our Group during our plane's stay in the African desert when they were there during the summer of 1943 for the Ploesti oil field raid. From the pool in Cairo, he was assigned as the Group's Special Service Officer. Charlie was liked so much that he was flown back to Hethel when the planes returned.

Since I was serving as the Group's Special Service there was no slot for him. Charlie was named PX and Officers' Club Officer. I knew Charlie when we both attended Washington and Lee University upon our graduation from O.C.S., as students in the school for Special Service Officers.

Charlie's civilian background was a radio announcer in Denver and LA. During the summer of 1944 he was transferred to Armed Forced radio and served London and Paris.

Frank E. Rutledge

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Dear Bill:

In the Fall 1989 Journal you had "I Remember," by Rosten R. DeFrates. I too remember that day, Sept. 18, 1944. Our crew flew that mission, I as a member of the 93rd BG, 409th BS. Our plane "Baggie Maggie" was hit by ground fire over Holland and we crash landed in Belgium. We had been flying at tree top level. We were taken prisoners. Our radio operator Bill Kirlen was killed in the crash. Several members of our crew were injured.

Thirty years after I had contact with my tail gunner Ozzie Malone and last fall with my co-pilot Richard Scott.

Some of the questions that R.R. DeFrates wondered about also had me wondering. After reading many books in the Duluth

Public Library, I found my answers in "Ridgeway's Paratroopers" by Clay Blair. I am enclosing photocopies from the book about the mission called "Market Garden." And I quote:

"Some 125 B-24 Liberator bombers flew about 250 tons of supplies to Gavin's sector; a like number flew similar tonnage to Taylor. These drops by completely inexperienced bomber crews who had only the sketchiest of briefings were also wildly inaccurate. Most of Gavin's bundles fell into no-man's land, but after dark his men resourcefully recovered about 80 percent. Taylor's men succeeded in recovering only about 20 percent of the 250 tons earmarked for them, and the division soon felt the pinch. In these missions eight B-24 bombers

were shot down; four others, riddled to shred by enemy flak, crash landed in England."

Gavin's 82nd airborne dropped at Nijmegen and Taylor's 101st at Eindhoven.

I enjoy reading the Journal and would like to have contact with anyone that was on that mission. One thing I remember, I talked to a man that day of the mission, that was repatriated from the Ploesti low level raid. I will never forget the officer that looked at our plane and said, "If the Germans get this, they won't get much."

Eugene Shabatura
2833 Lake Ave. S.
Duluth, MN 55802

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Report on Visit to Memorial Library

by E. Bud Koorndyk

After a most enlightening and rewarding visit to Norwich and our Memorial Library the last week in May, I wish to offer you my observations and dreams for what role our 2nd Air Division Association Memorial Library can have in the future, for as Thomas Jefferson once said, "I like the dreams of the future, rather than history of the past."

My first observation was that it is almost impossible to put into words the impact our Memorial Library continues to have on the life of the citizenry in Norwich today. The past four years have seen an explosion in interest in the 2nd Air Division Association Memorial Library, both on the local level and also on the University level. The branch libraries are eagerly awaiting their supply of books, and I will be explaining in more detail at our Executive Committee meeting in Norwich. Many interesting things are also happening with the probable closing of some of our Air Bases in the coming months, and the impact this could have on our library will be shared in more detail in July.

And then to report on what I have considered my first and foremost task and then to put to rest this past burr in the saddle of our relationships with our Board of Gover-

nors, I refer to the issue of the American Room Saga. In my humble opinion after meeting with various Governors such as Tom Eaton, Hillary Hammond, Ronald Clifton, Ted Inman, Colin Sleath and our Library Staff themselves and facing head on the issue of American Room terminology, I would recommend that we put this issue to rest and get on with future planning.

The Governors have assured me, and it was evident in all our conversations both formally in meetings and in informal gatherings at dinner, that we always will be known as the *2nd Air Division Association Memorial Library* and Trust that supports it. Where this controversy had its birth after all the years of smooth seas is almost impossible to decipher.

And to further substantiate my feelings on this matter, there will be a new plaque on the wall of the library when we arrive made up by Tom Eaton which begins as follows. This Room, containing books and other material on American culture, with four Branch Library Collections in Norwich, forms part of the 2nd Air Division Memorial. Known locally as the American Room was graciously removed from the inscription. Again positive proof of the

continued cooperation given me to resolve this issue.

However, in all honesty it is my personal belief after spending time talking with locals at the library and the average man on the street, university students and the like, the term American Room truly reflects the feelings of all parties concerned and so it always shall be. This fact should not diminish our picture for the future at all because when they step into the portals of our room, it immediately becomes the 2nd Air Division Association Memorial Library. I can only again assure that I received full support in attempting to resolve this issue.

As you all already know my feelings about long three and four page memorandums, I will be sharing with you all in more detail about the extensive thoughts for the future of our library in Norwich. These ideas should first be presented to our Executive Committee and then to our membership at large at our Business Meeting and via the Journal.

My main purpose of this memorandum was to resolve and put to rest the one issue that has been so divisive. If anyone wishes to call me prior to our meeting in July, feel free to give me a ring.

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

BILL ROBERTIE

P. O. BOX 627

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