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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Spring 1993

Tony North Receives 2ADA Distinguished Service Award



As many of you know, during the Second Air Division Association's 45th Annual Convention at Las Vegas, Nevada, October 4-7, 1992, **Mr. Tony North**, long-time historian, guide, Norwich contact, and invaluable aide to our Memorial Trust and Library, was awarded the prestigious 2ADA Distinguished Service Award for his many years of devotion to the veterans of the Second Air Division, 8th Air Force, and our Living Memorial in Norwich.

We had hoped that Tony could be with us at Las Vegas for this presentation, but unfortunately, with his failing eyesight, this was not possible. The photograph above shows Tony (right), receiving the plaque, which was carried to England by Hillary Hammond and presented by Tom Eaton (left), Chairman of the Memorial Trust, at a luncheon.

Tony commented on the occasion to a local newspaper, "This [award] means a very great deal to me. It will have an honoured place in my home." This Distinguished Service Plaque is among the first to be awarded by the 2ADA to a British recipient. It reads as follows:

Second Air Division Association
Distinguished Service Award
Presented To
ANTHONY "TONY" NORTH
In Grateful Appreciation Of Important
Contributions To The
Second Air Division Association
Las Vegas, Nevada
October 1992

Second Air Division Association Eighth Air Force

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President's Message

by John B. Conrad



Your Association has contracted with Turner Publishing Company, an experienced publisher of military histories, to compile and publish a book on the 2nd Air Division, its headquarters, combat wings, bomb and fighter groups, squadrons and attached units and organizations, the Memorial Library and the 2nd Air Division Association and its varied activities. Most important, the history will include the stories of the people who served in the 2nd Air Division. Your biography is needed and will be published without any obligation on your part. In this issue of the JOURNAL, on page 31, you will find an address for Turner Publishing, as well as an order form to reserve your copy of this book when published.

Having been asked a number of times about the management of our Association, a brief description of its governing body, the Executive Committee, appears to be in order. The Executive Committee is composed of thirteen voting members including the seven elected officers — President, Executive Vice President, Vice President—Membership, Vice President—JOURNAL, Treasurer, Secretary, and the 2ADA Representative on the Board of Governors — all named and identified in the column immediately to the left of this message. The other voting members include the three immediate Past Presidents, currently Frank DiMola, C.N. (Bud) Chamberlain and Richard M. Kennedy; and three Group Vice Presidents, currently Oak Mackey, 392nd BG; E.A. (Rick) Rokicki, 458th BG; and E. (Bill) Nothstein, 466th BG. These three voting positions rotate annually among the fifteen Group Vice Presidents.

In addition to the three voting Group Vice Presidents, all other Group Vice Presidents are invited to attend Executive Committee Meetings and participate in matters that come before the Committee as ex officio members (i.e., they do not have a vote). Also attending are the Honorary President, Special Projects Coordinator, Chairman of the Planning Committee, Chairman of the Awards Committee, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, and Director of Correspondence Services. There are other positions, such as Liaison Officer—2nd ADA Heritage League, Chairman of the Editorial Review Board, Chairman of the 2nd ADA—FMLA Oversight Committee, Chairman of the Delegate Committee, Director of Audio-Visual Services, Liaison Officer—2nd ADA—8AFMMF, Chairman of the Audit Committee, Director of Administrative Services, Liaison Officer to Friends of the 2nd AD Memorial, and "back-ups" who are understudies to critical Association offices. These positions are filled by present Officers, Past Presidents and Group Vice Presidents, and therefore do not add to the number of persons attending Executive Committee meetings.

The Executive Committee holds two meetings each year. One is held at the opening of the annual convention, usually for one full day and continued into a half-day meeting at the close of the convention, so the newly elected or re-elected Officers and Group Vice Presidents may organize themselves for the coming year. The other is a mid-term meeting held between conventions, usually scheduled for two full days.

Any questions that you have about the operation of the Association are welcomed and will be answered promptly.

Vice President's Message

by Floyd H. Mabey



I'm afraid this thought will be a little late, but it is imperative to stress to each member of the 2nd ADA the importance of paying your annual dues on time. If you haven't paid your 1993 dues, you are already three

months late — please do so now. By the time you read this report, each Group Vice President will probably have received a drop list from Evelyn Cohen of members who haven't paid their 1993 dues. She has already sent a second notice to those who didn't acknowledge her first letter. All of these notices from her and those that the Group Vice Presidents send demand a great amount of time and expense. Please pay your dues on time.

As a past Group VP, I assume that the following has happened to other Group VPs. Members will write a story and request the VP to submit it to the JOURNAL for them, and later complain that they haven't seen their stories yet. One reason for this is that quite often I have found it almost impossible to read their stories. I have tried to explain that if they submit their stories typewritten and double spaced, there is a much better chance that they will be included in the JOURNAL. This would be a big help and take some of the load off the Group Vice Presidents — try it, fellows, won't you?

In closing I would like to thank all who sent me "get well" cards; it sure is very gratifying to have so much support. I am doing fairly well now.

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Turner Publishing Company is pleased to announce the upcoming publication of the 2nd Air Division History Book, which will follow the 2nd Air Division from its inception through the present.

46th Annual 2ADA Convention35

Now is the time to make your reservations for Hilton Head Island, November 4-7. Here are all the details from Evelyn Cohen.

Enjoy your Journal. It's good reading!

Heritage League

by Billy Sheely Johnson

It is a pleasure to bring you greetings from the Heritage League. We sincerely hope that each of you and your families had a wonderfully joyous holiday season!

As mentioned in the last issue of the JOURNAL, the Heritage League is making progress in reference to the 1992-93 goals outlined therein:

(1) Investigation into the possibility of our honoring you veterans within the 8th Air Force Heritage Center is ongoing. Dick Kennedy advised us following his November Heritage Center Board Meeting that we, like the 2ADA, should not make a monetary commitment until it is definite that the Center will become a reality. Dick will contact us again, following another Heritage Center Board Meeting, advising us as to the status of the project and what we are to do next. We, unlike 2ADA, don't have funds waiting to be drawn upon; we shall have to raise funds for our envisioned tribute to you. We have several ideas in mind; we simply need to know if the Center is going to be built. If not, we have some other locations to explore.

(2) As promised, guidelines for the Heritage League Essay Contest were published in the January issue of the *Heritage Herald*. The contest is open to all grandchildren, great-nieces and nephews (grades 4-12) of 2ADA members — contestants don't have to be Heritage League members. The guidelines (copies available from me at the address

below) are outlined for you so that you can notify any of your relatives who wish to participate. The deadline for submitting essays for the 1993 contest is **June 1, 1993**. Essays should be sent to: **Billy Sheely Johnson, 600 Sandhurst Drive, Petersburg, VA 23805**. All essays will be forwarded to the chairperson of the judging team who will, in turn, send them to the members of the judging team. The judging team report is due **August 1, 1993**. Participants will be notified of the judging team's results, and awards will be presented at the 2ADA Reunion at Hilton Head in November 1993. Please advise all participants to follow the guidelines as outlined. We look forward to hearing from you young authors...you will surely make your veteran relative very proud!

(3) We hope to have the Heritage League promotional brochure completed and mailed to museums and other places of interest by June 1, 1993, prior to the real summer tourist season, so that visitors who don't know about the Heritage League and its purpose can become acquainted with us.

We are pleased to report the above referenced progress to the membership of the Second Air Division Association. Please feel confident in the knowledge that your Heritage League is diligently pursuing goals which promote both respect for and knowledge of the contributions to world peace that you, our special heroes, made during World War II. We salute you!

Our Unique 2nd Air Division Memorial

by Jordan R. Uttal

During the 1992 Fiftieth Anniversary of the arrival of the U.S. Air Forces in England, our Memorial in Norwich had well over 1,000 visitors. To the surprise of our library staff, many were 1st and 3rd Division veterans, and others. Generally, most of them were astounded, pleased, but envious of what we have created, nourished and maintained, thanks in large part to the efforts of our British colleagues.

A splendid description of this achievement was made in 1988 by the Cultural Attache at our American Embassy in London. Dr. Ronald Clifton, a career diplomat, was from 1987 to 1991 a member of the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF. Writing of his prior foreign service, he stated that he had visited many other American memorials abroad which did not offer the tangible dimension, the real touch, the reminder, that the books and displays of the 2nd Air Division Memorial do. He concluded, "For twenty years now, I have worked abroad with American libraries as part of our public diplomacy. *None have served the United States better than the Second Air Division Memorial in Norwich.*"

How did all this come about? The idea for the creation of a Memorial to the over 6,400 members of the 2nd Air Division killed in action, was conceived by three senior officers of the Division, Col. Fred Bryan (Hdq. 2AD), Lt. Col. Ion Walker (467th BG), and B/Gen. Milt Arnold. The concept was heartily endorsed by our Commanding General, Maj/Gen. William E. Kepner. An appeal for funds to all personnel just after V.E. Day raised the amazing sum of 20,916 pounds within three weeks. In June 1945, the Memorial Trust of 2nd Air Division USAAF was created under British law, to be supervised for all time by the British Charity Commission. The monies were handed over to the Trust with the assurance that the Charity Commission would see to it that as long as there was income, there would be materials purchased for the Memorial. Eighteen years later, the library was finally

built and the Memorial Room opened on 13 June 1963.

It contained the Roll of Honor, and a collection of books covering every facet of American life. Outside the Room, a Memorial Fountain contains the 8th Air Force insignia, and stones from each of the 50 states. At the time no plans were made for the future funding of the Memorial Trust Capital Fund, the income from which was to provide the desired perpetuity of this tribute to the service and sacrifice of 2nd Air Division personnel. However, in 1948 the 2nd Air Division Association was formed, and since the early 1970s our personnel have contributed generously.

The Board of Governors is comprised of 13 members, two of whom, according to the 1945 Declaration of Trust are to be appointees of the American Ambassador. In addition, since 1972, a representative of the 2nd Air Division Association has been on the Board.

The Governors, in close cooperation with the Norfolk County Council, continue to administer the Memorial which is located in the Norwich Central Library. Day to day work has been provided by the Central Library staff, and since 1985, by a temporary American Librarian (1985), a Fulbright Scholar Librarian (1986-1988), a Library Aide (Tony North 1986-1991), and the current Trust Librarian, American Phyllis Dubois, along with two part-time aides with American backgrounds.

Through the years, since the opening in 1963, we have benefitted greatly from the efforts of devoted British librarians Phillip Hepworth, Joan Benns Smith, Colin Sleath and their County Librarian colleagues. During this time, the objectives of the Memorial have broadened to take account of modern library practices; i.e. the provision of audio and video cassettes, and other materials in current use. Also, it has developed that the 2AD Memorial has become the repository of Group Archives and written memorabilia.

Through your generosity, and particularly, the astute and proficient management of the funds by the Board of Governors, the Capital Asset Value as of April 1992 amounted to over 350,000 pounds. Actually the total had been higher, but current recession in Britain has caused declines. The Fund is designed to generate income to pay for new books, periodicals and other current expenses.

You have further demonstrated your generosity and dedication to the memory of the 2nd Air Division and all its personnel by helping to raise the sum of \$550,000 which, in accordance with the 2AD/Fulbright Memorial Award Agreement, is invested in the United States. The income from this American Librarian Fund is designed to provide a permanent American presence at our Memorial. At present it is accumulating interest against the day when the Board of Governors and Fulbright agree to start the program for which the Fund was created.

Quoting again from Dr. Clifton, he said in 1991 when he left his post in London, "Once again the veterans of the 2nd Air Division have scored a point and placed a marker in history. The decision to establish an endowment fund for the Memorial Library Award is as far sighted as the original creation of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust at the end of World War II."

Special recognition must be given to the dedicated service of all of our British friends who have served on the Board of Governors of the Trust. Among them in 1993 is one of the original 1945 Governors, Mrs. Anne Barne; and the present Chairman (on the Board since 1957 and Chairman since 1975), Mr. T.C. Eaton.

To the best of our knowledge, there is no other similar Living Memorial of any unit of the U.S. Armed Forces. Our 2nd Air Division Memorial is truly unique! You may justifiably be proud of this permanent reminder of our existence, our achievements, and the sacrifices of so many of our wonderful young men.

More On Personal Memorials

In recent issues of the JOURNAL there have been articles about how you, as an individual, may donate money for books to be placed in the Memorial Room in memory of specific honorees. This program was started many years ago, and two hundred or more individuals have participated. The recent renewed attention to this program has resulted in roughly forty new "Special Contributions for Books."

Further information on this program, in case you have misplaced your recent copies of the JOURNAL, may be obtained from Geoff Gregory, 3110 Sheridan, Garland, Texas 75041 (phone 214-278-8537).

Now, we invite your attention to another program of memorializing a special individual in perpetuity, the **Personal Endowment**

Program, which has attracted a dozen donors since its inception in the late 1970s. Here's how it works:

(1) You may make an endowment of a minimum sum of 500 pounds (today, about \$800.00) with the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF.

(2) Your contribution is invested in England with the Official Custodian for Charities in a C.O.I.F. (Charities Official Investment Fund).

(3) Income from your endowment is turned over annually to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room for the purchase of books, in your name, in memory of the individual, or Squadron or Group you specify.

(4) A special bookplate will be used in all books purchased by your Endowment

income. The wording of the bookplate will be created with you at the time of your donation.

(5) Once a year, you (or your heirs) will be notified by the Librarian of the names of the books purchased with your Endowment income.

As noted above, there are approximately 12 Personal Endowment Programs in effect at present. Most are from individuals, but some are from our Bomb Groups. This is an excellent opportunity to remember, in perpetuity, a specific friend, loved one, or group of individuals. Please feel free to write or phone me for further information or action.

Jordan R. Uttal

7824 Meadow Park Drive, #101
Dallas, TX 75230
Tel. (214) 369-5043

Ploesti

(A 50th Anniversary)

"Wing and a Prayer: The Saga of Utah Man"

Wing and a Prayer Productions of Salt Lake City in partnership with KBYU-TV is currently involved in production of a one-hour television documentary, **Wing and a Prayer: The Saga of Utah Man**. The program is about 93rd Bomb Group B-24 pilot Walter T. Stewart of Benjamin, Utah and the crew of "Utah Man," a B-24 they flew to the German-held Ploesti oil refineries on August 1, 1943 as part of the famous low-level Tidal Wave bombing mission. Participating in the historic raid were 8th Air Force crews of the 44th, 93rd and 389th Bomb Groups, plus 9th Air Force crews of the 98th and 376th Bomb Groups.

The production is being headed by writer/director Mike Sanches and executive producer, Susie Barker. To date the production has collected a large number of original interviews and archival material, most of which will be seen publicly for the first time in this documentary. Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah is primarily responsible for the project's funding and has committed a substantial grant to its production. Much of the principal photography and post-production work is being done at L.D.S. Motion Picture Studios in Orem, Utah. Archival material, documents, artifacts, memorabilia, photos and films are coming in to the project from all over the United States and even overseas.

"This is truly an international project," says Sanches. "We have even been talking to the Rumanians, who, while considered 'non-belligerents' during World War Two, are only recently normalizing relations with the United States after nearly 50 years as a Soviet satellite. The Rumanian press attache has expressed a willingness to cooperate in obtaining any written or film records about the Ploesti mission that may still exist in Rumania's national archives, though nothing has been received yet."

Sanches has been developing this project since May 1988, when he heard Stewart speak at a club meeting. "I swore that someday I'd get that man's story and the story of the Ploesti mission into a program that had the emotional honesty and dramatic impact that Stewart's personal account conveys. He [Stewart] has told that story a thousand times and while, to some, it seems too fantastic to be true, the proof of its truth can be found in countless books and articles and in the corroborating stories of many other veterans who risked life and limb training in the desert of North Africa and flying their unescorted bombers on the 2,400 mile mission against Hitler's most heavily fortified possession."

Wing and a Prayer Productions was in Las Vegas in October 1992, where they interviewed over 20 Ploesti veterans. "They are all heroes in my book," says Sanches,

speaking of the members of the Second Air Division and the Ploesti vets. "They possess a quality of character that, today, seems to have been temporarily misplaced in our country. They knew the odds and accepted the challenge with an unflappable optimism that it would all work as they had been trained. Many remain as optimistic today as they were then, even though life has handed each of them challenges that their war experiences have undoubtedly helped to temper. We [America] can learn a lot from these men."

In addition to Stewart and other 2nd AD Ploesti vets, Sanches has located other key personnel involved in "Operation Tidal Wave," the code name for the low-level raid. John R. Tex McCrary, who directed and voiced the 45-minute briefing film, "Operation Soapsuds," shown to the crews on the eve of the mission, will tell about this unique aspect of the mission's intelligence and the landmark the film represents in modern warfare.

Perhaps the most noteworthy contact that Sanches and his production team have made so far is retired Air Force General Keith K. Compton of San Antonio, Texas. Compton commanded the leading target force comprised of planes of the Ninth Air Force's 376th Bomb Group. Many of these men and planes were from the original HALPRO group that made the first raid on Ploesti. Compton has been reticent about the August '43 Ploesti mission for the past 50 years, granting few interviews, and Sanches hopes to, at long last, settle many of the lingering questions about the ill fated lead group. Compton's 376th and the 93rd led by Col. Addison Baker turned prematurely on their low-level run to their assigned targets, and from that point forward the mission took on an entirely different and "improvisational" character from what had been planned. Sanches says, "There's been far too much speculation over the years about what happened." Compton, himself, in a telephone conversation with Sanches, expressed concern that the majority of the Ploesti accounts don't accurately reflect what happened in the lead plane and don't detail the many factors which contributed to the navigational error. After speaking with Compton's navigator, Harold Wicklund of Waco, Texas, Sanches agrees that there is more to what actually occurred in the premature turn than popular opinion holds.

"We are trying to produce the most accurate account possible with the resources and personnel available to us," says Sanches. "I'm convinced a first-rate program can be produced that accurately portrays the courage and sacrifice of the men of Operation Tidal Wave. However, it will only happen if we continue to receive the kind of generous

support we have up until now. We appreciate everyone's contributions, including the moral support. Keep those calls and letters coming."

Wing and a Prayer Productions
155 South 100 East
Bountiful, UT 84010
Tel. (801) 298-5669

The Unsung Hero's Lament or An Ode to the B-24

Anonymous
Submitted by Bud Chamberlain (489th)

For there's a sort of manic madness in the
supercharger's whine,
As you hear the ice cubes tinkling in the
turbo-balance line.

The runway strips are narrow, but the
snowbanks they are wide,
While the crash trucks say, in a mournful
way, you're on your final ride.

The nose gear rocks and trembles, for it's
held with bailing wire,
And the wings are filled with thermite, to
make a hotter fire.
The camouflage is peeling off, it lends an
added luster,
While pitot heads are filled with lead, to
help the load adjuster.

The bomb bay doors are corroded, they
close with a mighty shriek.
The plexiglass is smeared with oil from
some forgotten leak.
The oleo struts are twisted and the wheels
are not quite round.
The bulkheads are thin (Ford builds with
tin) to admit the slightest sound.

You taxi out on the runway, 'mid groans
of tortured gear,
While you feel the check-ride's teeth, a
gnawing at your rear.
The co-pilot sits on the right, in a liquor
laden coma,
Mixing his breath, the kiss of death, with
the putt-putt's foul aroma.

So, it's off to the overcast, yonder, though
number one is missing,
While the hydraulic fluid escaping, sets up
a gentle hissing.
The compass dial is spinning, now, in a
way that brooks no stopping,
And row by row, the fuses blow, with an
intermittent popping.

Though surely it was an aircraft, of a
uniquely most numerous kind,
It was given the name of "Liberator" by
a low and twisted mind.



by H.C. 'Pete' Henry

The last four 8-Ball columns started with a Shipdham Tower update, but this time a separate article was submitted to your JOURNAL Editor, and it is hoped that it will appear elsewhere in this issue. (Ed. Note: See page 12.) Word has been received from C.J. Warth, Executive Trustee of the 44th Heritage Memorial Group, that the Executive Board has decided further comment by the 44th HMG on the Tower project is not advisable or feasible, so no further mention will be made in the 44th Logbook requesting donations, etc. We will continue to report progress in the 2ADA JOURNAL and/or members may contact yours truly for more details.

Phyllis DuBois, Memorial Trust Librarian, wrote to me in December advising that the following books were purchased with the 44th Bomb Group Endowment Fund for the years 1991-1992: *Into the Guns of Ploesti*, by L.W. Newby; *Edgar Schmund And The Development Of The P-51*, by Ray Wagner; *Eighth Air Force Bomber Stories*, by Ian McLachlan; *Since You Went Away*, by Judy B. Litoff (WWII letters from American women on the home front); *On This Spot*, by Douglas F. Evelyn (pinpointing the past in Washington D.C.)

Phyllis says, "Again, many thanks for this special gift. They will be very popular with our East Anglia readers." Word was also received that Joe Warth gave 1000 pounds to the Memorial Library from the 44th HMG to provide books for the East Dereham branch. Earlier in the year, Phyllis wrote to inquire if a local bookshop or library could recommend a good book about New Jersey (with nice pictures). I sent her the names of several recommended by our local librarian and now Phyllis wonders if someone from each state could do likewise. Anyone caring to oblige, write to Phyllis DuBois, Trust Librarian, Central Library, Bethel Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 1NJ, England. DO NOT SEND BOOKS until you have corresponded with her and she approves.

Norman Linville (68 Sq.) visited Norwich and vicinity in early October (with 44th HMG?) and was met by a couple from Great Yarmouth, Mr. and Mrs. David M.

Neale, who drove him to their home and provided room and board for several days. They are members of the Friends (now numbering about 200) of the Second Air Division Memorial actively involved in preserving buildings (Shipdham Tower) and artifacts. Norman also met John Page and requested that these people get some sort of recognition. We are all very familiar with the Friends of the 2AD Memorial and all the good work they are doing in England, and John Page has been a good friend of the 44th BG and 2ADA for quite a few years.

Bert "Swede" Carlberg (67 Sq.) sent a note 26 October along with pictures taken on the Great Gorge (McAfee) NJ golf course in Sept. '85. "Swede" has experienced a few health problems in '92 but still manages to get in a game of golf now and then when not working part time at JFK airport in NY. He was unable to attend the 8th AF 50th anniversary in England last year, but plans to attend the 44th's 50th anniversary of the Ploesti raid in Dayton, Ohio, 28 July - 1 August 93.

Forrest Clark (67 Sq.) wants to know if anyone has documented evidence of Buzz Bombs landing in or near the Shipdham Base in 1944-45 and whether there was any damage to the base facilities or adjacent property. Also, does anyone know anything about the 28th and 29th January 44 when Lt. Harold Pinder's crew was shot down on the mission to Frankfurt, Germany? Forrest would like any recollections of the crew prior to the mission. His address is 703 Duffer Lane, Kissimmee, FL 34759.

Ralph Golubock (506 Sq.) advised in November that a dear friend, Robert Bauman, died of a heart attack 2 November. Bauman (506 Sq.), navigator on Guy Johnson's crew, was severely wounded on the mission to Langenhagen Airdrome, Germany 8 April 44, and the whole crew became prisoners of war except Johnson, who was killed. (See Will Lundy's book, *44th Bomb Group - Roll of Honor and Casualties*, pp. 214-216.) Ralph said that Robert suffered from his wounds all his life but never uttered a word of complaint. Word was also received from Art Hand and Emma Franklin that Al Franklin (66 Sq.) died 9 November. This was particularly sad news for your correspondent because the Franklins and Henrys met at our first (for both couples) 2ADA Convention in Wilmington, NC, 24-28 July 74. We felt like outsiders at that one, and remained more or less together for the four days and became very good friends. We extend our sincere condolences to both the Bauman and Franklin families.

466th Bomb Group

by Bill Nothstein

The 466th Bomb Group will have its first (solo) reunion in the United States, at Colorado Springs, CO, June 23-27, 1993. The Sheraton Colorado Hotel (formerly the Clarion) will be the H.Q.

At this reunion we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the formation of the 466th Bomb Group. The high point of this gathering will be the dedication of a 466 BG plaque at the Air Force Academy. This will be followed by a tour of the facilities, including the chapel and visitors' center.

We are looking for your help in reaching out to your crew members, ground crew, buddies and families to attend. And as always, there will be a hospitality room where old and new friends can meet, relax and tell war stories.

Look for more details on the reunion in the next issue of the *Attlebridge Notes*.

Here are the latest requests for information on crew members. John D. Englert, 8910 NW 79 Ct., Tamarac, FL 33321 would like to hear about Crew #656, pilot P.W. Boyle, who flew combat from 27 August 1944 to 17 May 1945. Any word about Leroy Zack will be especially appreciated.

Larry Baker, 229 Allynd Blvd., Chardon, OH 44024 would like to hear from Crew #790 member, pilot Richard E. Lester, whose tour was from 9 March 1945 to 21 April 1945.

If you cannot make it to the June reunion of the 466th in Colorado Springs, and you want to keep in touch, do consider joining us (466 BG, 2 ADA) at Hilton Head Island, SC in November. We had a great time there a few years ago and it should be just as good this year.

And now to continue with missions #6 and #7 from Charlie Herbst's diary.

BOURGES, APRIL 10, 1944

We are back on the "Jamaica?" for this trip and we all feel a lot safer in it. The trip was to an airfield in France so we saw a lot more of that country. It was a beautiful day as we crossed the coast at 15,000 ft. This altitude is just right, as it doesn't get too cold and you can take your oxygen mask off for short periods of time. Everything really went good today and we did the field up in good shape. One of the planes' bombs walked right up the middle of the main runway. There was no opposition at all, guess they couldn't be bothered on such a nice day. The trip was really nice, if this kind of work can be called NICE!

LECHFELD, APRIL 13, 1944

Back with the old girl to another airfield in southern Germany. Seems they have been the main object of our trips lately. They say it is the war against the Luftwaffe to knock it out of the skies before our invasion of the continent. They are making parts of some of their fighter planes at this place. We flew good formation the complete trip, which is something for this outfit. We made a pretty good bomb run, and from the photos they will need plenty of repairs before using that plant again. The Jerries didn't put up a fight at all, not that we complain, but it was a dull trip.

Before It Is Too Late One Member's Interest

Submitted to C.N. "Bud" Chamberlain (489th)

His heart failed at 2000 hours on February 4, 1992. We attended his final rites on February 7th. So ended the friendship which began when our B-24 crew was formed 48 years ago in 1944. With the traumatic event of his passing still fresh in our minds, we agree with many of our peers that it is time someone expressed appreciation and thanks for what has been attained by our people of the 2ADA over the past nearly 45 years. This is especially true as it pertains to those who have provided the heartbeat and lifeblood of our Association over these years. Better one word now than a thousand said over those with "Folded Wings."

What began as a small group from Headquarters has now grown to a membership of over 8,000. The words written here need not be said for a large portion of our membership...they know full well the history of our Association. However, it has been pointed out that another large portion of our membership likely has little knowledge of the evolution and year to year progress made to get the 2ADA to where it stands today. Regardless, few will dispute and fail to appreciate the thousands of hours of work, travel, meetings, convention arrangements, debates, give-and-take, you name it, given as labor of love by those who have jealously sustained the constant growth of our organization. General Kepner and his staff, back in 1945, initiated the plans for a memorial to those lost in battle and all who served with the Second Air Division, but, it is unlikely they ever envisioned the living memorial and the organization we have today. It was the endless work of our leaders, both American and British, and the financial support of our members that gave us the memorial which is recognized and saluted by bodies such as the Fulbright Commission, American and foreign cultural attaches, et al. Further, the generosity of our members who contributed to the recently concluded 2ADA/Fulbright Memorial Library Award fund, which we hope will continue to increase, promises to ensure in perpetuity an official American presence at our Memorial in Norwich, England.

When one attempts to give a word of personal thanks to those who have given so much to our Association, they will tell you that they appreciate your thoughts, but their satisfaction in what has been accomplished is thanks enough. Also, when one starts naming names and thanking individuals, it is easy to overlook one or more deserving recognition. So, our suggestion is that you review page two of the JOURNAL for as far back as possible. There, you will

find the names of those who have served us well over the years. Each of those persons — presidents, vice presidents, governors, secretaries, directors and others — have contributed in some way during their terms of office. Some have served limited terms for various reasons; however, you will note a few have given of their time since day one of our Association. Those few, unpaid, in good times and bad times, in good health and bad health, have served us untiringly. Along with the deserved praise, they have accepted suggestions and criticisms directed their way...some valid and constructive, but considerable sent their way has been by those unfamiliar with their subjects. Those who serve readily accept the fact that a member has the right and duty to speak out when it is believed something detrimental to our Association may be occurring. They long ago accepted the fact that all such input comes with the territory. These are the people we must point out by name even though a lack of space limits our ability to give them their due. They include, of course, Honorary President Jordan R. Uttal, Vice President Membership and Convention Chairman Evelyn Cohen, Treasurer Dean E. Moyer and Vice President JOURNAL William G. Robertie. Also, no mention of appreciation would be complete without prominent mention of the British members of our Memorial Trust Board. Volumes could be written about the years of service provided by its Chairman Tom Eaton and all past and present Board members as well. However, we must leave that subject to another writer. Back on this side of the Atlantic, we have numerous others who are giving increasing amounts of their time to our service. Examples are E. "Bud" Koorndyk, our current representative on the Memorial Trust Board; David G. Patterson, 2ADA Secretary and Director of Administrative Services; E.A. Rokicki, Director of Data Processing Services; and H.C. "Pete" Henry, Director of Audio-Visual Services. Others, too, have come aboard to make a great organization even greater. Further, there are plans in the works to make our Association more responsive to the input of its members.

In closing, we hope these words express the sentiment of the majority of our members toward the many 2ADA builders who contributed to the 2ADA 45 year maturation. If so, before it is too late, and before we pass the torch to the Heritage League, let's take time to think about what a remarkable organization we have and give thanks to those who made it possible and continue to do so.

Report on the Memorial Trust

by E. Bud Koorndyk

Sometimes the most routine events that occur in our daily lives are so taken for granted. As Evelyn Cohen reminded me in a phone conversation this past week, in the process of receiving all of our dues for the upcoming year, often times many of our members also send an added gift as a donation for our library in Norwich. May 1, as your American Representative on the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust and Library, express on the behalf of the Governors and the 2nd ADA our heartfelt thanks for these contributions. These donations continue to help maintain our library on a sound financial footing. And in the light of the economic conditions that exist in England at the present time, they are especially appreciated.

My report for this issue will be brief, since I have asked Jordan Uttal, our historian "par excellence" to again submit another of his terrific background articles on our library. (Please see page 4.) We have had so many new members join with us since our last report, that I felt they would appreciate some updated information on the 2nd ADA Memorial Room in the Norwich Central Library.

Tom Eaton, Chairman of the Board of Governors, has informed me that beginning this February, a new roof will be erected over the courtyard area which also encompasses our Memorial Fountain. This decision came about with expanding the Research and Records section for the Central Library itself. It was felt that a new location at the entrance of our Memorial Library would be a suitable place for a new Memorial. Plans for this Memorial will be shared with the Governors at their June meeting.

I would like to once again remind those of our membership who wish to have articles of their memorabilia be part of our living memorial in Norwich, all such articles, i.e. crew photos, mission reports, ground crew data, and anything of a written nature should be sent to:

Phyllis DuBois
Trust Librarian
Memorial Library
Norwich Central Library
Bethel Street
Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 1NJ
England

Any articles such as uniforms, navigational equipment, bombardiers' articles, ground crew hard items, and any other items to be displayed in cases should be sent to the Duxford Imperial War Museum. These items will become part of the collection that will be displayed in the new American Museum that will be built as a separate building at Duxford. The address for the sending of any articles of this nature is as follows:

Edward O. Inman
Director of Duxford Imperial War Museum
Duxford Airfield
Cambridge CB2 4QR
England

Near Miss at the 445th

by Fred Becchetti (445th)



There was a jagged hole in the roof of a Nissen hut at the Tibenham base of the 445th Bomb Group. Only one person knows how it got there — me. And I'll tell you how it happened.

First, let's get something straight. I was not brilliant about technical equipment, but I was not totally ignorant, either.

For example, the top-secret Norden bombsight with all its complicated gyroscopes, knobs and levers was a snap for me. After bombardier training, I could operate it almost blindfolded in the dark and drop a bomb in the immediate vicinity of the target. The same for the heavier Sperry bombsight with its powerful gyro.

As for the .50 caliber machine guns in my nose turret, I always had them under control. If a gun jammed, I knew which buttons to push and which levers to pull to make it operational again.

The primitive radar instrument, the British G-Box with its eerie jagged line across the screen and the bright, pointy blip was unintelligible to me at first, but I soon mastered it and navigated my ship and crew home alone several times over cloud-shrouded England, using that wonderful machine.

The mechanism of 500 lb. bombs was familiar to me. I knew how to arm them, disarm them, transport them, load them and release them manually when they got hung up in the B-24 bomb bay racks during a bomb run.

All of these tools of war were my specialization, but the .45 caliber pistol that they issued us in the Eighth just before D-Day was in another category. It remains a mystery to me even today.

Every time I held that D-Day forty-five, I remembered the frozen firing range back in Salt Lake City, where one dull grey morning six months earlier, fifteen of us officer pilots, navigators and bombardiers had been trucked to meet our .45 marksmanship requirements before going overseas.

Numbed by Utah's December cold, I had stood on the line, held the heavy blue-metalled instrument of death in one shivering hand, fired at the target and missed almost every shot.

But to my surprise, I passed. Apparently, the gunnery corporal considered it prudent and a matter of his own survival not to have

me on the range any more. Besides, the Air Corps wasn't about to deprive me of the thrill of going into combat simply because I couldn't put a hole in a cardboard target with a .45 pistol.

But I was not the only one. On that same wintry day, I watched a fellow bombardier fire all his rounds in quick succession without one single hit. Then I reeled in astonishment as he reared back in frustration and threw the gun itself, hitting the target squarely in the head and undoubtedly killing the enemy that the target represented. He, too, passed.

For a 20 year old brought up out West on Buck Jones and Ken Maynard movies, I was thrilled to have a .45 holstered on my belt. But the fact of the matter is that I had no idea why they had issued me the gun.

It couldn't have been to defend the Tibenham base against forces sent to capture the 445th Bomb Group. After all, in 1944 just before D-Day, it was unlikely that the Germans had organized a commando-style raid to take the 445th, unless they planned to capture our squadron commander, Jimmy Stewart, and hold him hostage.

It may have been to protect ourselves in case we had to bail out over Germany and make our way back. Could be, but in retrospect I would say that the .45 would be the last thing I would have thought about when trying to squeeze myself and my parachute out the camera hatch or bomb bay of a B-24 as it went down in a smoking spiral.

And at my marksmanship level, if I had bailed out with a .45 on my hip, I would probably have done more damage to livestock, friendly allies and plant life than to the Nazis, not to mention doing harm to myself.

I was in my Nissen hut at the 445th on a quiet Sunday morning. No mission was scheduled that day, so I had slept in. My Nissen hut buddy was out on the base somewhere, probably having a beer at the officers club. I knew he was not off the base, because we were restricted to base because of the D-Day alert.

And as I thought about D-Day, I thought about my own personal preparedness.

There was no problem with my preparation for air combat. My missions had already made me into a professional bombardier--

navigator-gunner. I was already a master "bombinavitrigulator."

In my inventory of preparedness I realized that I had not cleaned and oiled my .45 pistol as instructed.

Somewhere at a training base on the Texas Panhandle many months before, a sergeant had demonstrated "the care and maintenance of the .45 caliber pistol," so I began taking apart my .45 systematically with that demonstration in mind.

First, I took out the clip of shiny cartridges. Then I laid out the springs, levers and bolts of the gun until the parts of the gun lay in a small cluster on my cot.

Remaining in my hands was the bare skeleton of the gun — the barrel and the trigger.

Casualty, I squeezed the trigger in some idle test while pointing the barrel haphazardly.

An explosion rang through the hut. A bullet whistled by my right ear. There was a sharp, clanging collision of metal on metal that rattled the Nissen hut from one end to the other. A cloud of blue smoke descended over me.

My ears ringing, I looked up and saw a patch of the grey sky of England through a jagged hole in the ceiling and looked down to see that I had left a cartridge in the firing chamber, a cartridge that almost blew my hand off.

In a cold sweat, I sat still and silent for a long time, my gaze frozen on the parts of the .45 in my hand and my mind focused on the irony of such an accidental death against the background of the German Luftwaffe's desperate effort to shoot me and my crew out of the sky.

Today, somewhere near Norwich, an English farmer has an outbuilding which he bought from the Yanks when they tore down the base at Tibenham. He had to patch the ceiling before he could use it.

My Nissen hut buddy has passed away, so I am the only person in the world who can tell the farmer how that hole got there. I probably won't tell him, however. I wouldn't want to destroy the myth of the American airman as the "compleat warrior."

The Norden bombsight and the Emerson turret were a cinch. The .45 pistol was something else, and I'm glad that all of us survived it. Especially me.

The 448th Speaks

by Cater Lee

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and that 1993 will be a great year for each and every one of you.

The 448th Bomb Group Association will have its 1993 group reunion in Bellevue, Washington, just across the lake from Seattle. Our hotel will be the Hyatt Regency, centrally located with numerous shopping areas accessed by underground routes. Please note our dates are **June 30th - July 3rd**. This time we're having four days, as there is so much to see and do in the beautiful Northwestern part of our country, and by using the 4th of July we were able to get a special rate of \$62.00 single or double plus tax.

A mailing will go out around April 1st giving full details and a hotel reservation card. Please make your plans now to make this one, as it will be among our very best group reunions. The temperature is quite pleasant in this area at this time of the year.

Each Group Vice President is always seeking interesting and unusual events involving members, especially during our stay in the ETO. Well, we've certainly come upon one here, revealing to our readers of the 2ADA JOURNAL some 48 years and about 10 months after this heroic action by this young man, twenty-three year old Staff Sergeant Willard D. Cobb of the 448th Bomb Group.

On a mission March 4, 1944, the Monte de Marson, France raid, 1st Lt. John McCune (pilot), now Lt. Col. (retired), said if it had not been for his tail gunner's heroic and beyond-the-call-of-duty actions that day, none of his crew would be here today. This story is also substantiated by their navigator Maurice Hooks, and others who later wrote letters to Staff Sergeant Cobb's mother.

The original target was overcast, so the 448th pulled out of the large formation to bomb an airfield. They were immediately attacked by a large formation of FW-190s, and Lt. McCune's plane was in the "Tail End Charlie" position, making it most vulnerable for the ensuing attack. For some reason the belly turret was not down, and this made them vulnerable to be attacked from below so that only the tail gunner was able to see the attacks from underneath the plane.

The first wave of six FW-190s came at their plane filling the sky with bullets. Staff Sergeant Cobb was hit in the right leg by a 20mm shell. He ripped the communications cord and electric suit cord off and made a temporary tourniquet; then started firing both guns. *He hit both of the center planes*, one after the other as the formation passed. He applied the two cords to his wounded leg as blood was gushing out the large hole in his leg. He searched the sky for more fighters while watching the two he had hit going down out of control with no "chutes," both exploding when they hit the ground.

By this time, there were three more FW-190s coming in at the plane. *He hit the center plane* and watched it after the other two had passed. *The third plane went down out of control*, no chutes, exploding on the ground. Sgt. Cobb felt a stirring sensation in his lower wounded leg and foot about the same time that he hit his third plane. After the other two planes had passed, Sgt. Cobb



Photos courtesy of S/Sgt. Cobb's family.

says he must have panicked for a second or two as he yanked his belt off for a third tourniquet which he later realized was not necessary, as the shell had hit the armor plate and exploded, spreading pieces of shrapnel all around with some pieces embedding in his foot and leg.

Next, two other FW-190s in a staggered formation came at Lt. John McCune's plane and its severely wounded tail gunner. Sgt. Cobb test-fired his guns and realized something was wrong. He had had a similar situation during training back in the States, so he manually started aiming and firing. Apparently he missed the first plane, but as he switched to the second FW-190, he scored several hits and the plane slid sideways before diving. He watched his *kill #4* of that mission go out of control, hit the ground and *explode with no parachute in sight*.

By this time Sgt. Cobb was wondering about his ammunition, as he never had time to check. As he spotted three more FW-190s forming, he thought for another pass, they suddenly veered in a wide circle as though they were going to make a side attack. Those planes, to his joy, passed out of sight and range. More stinging and burning in his lower leg and foot revealed that he had been hit a third time by another exploding shell with more pieces of shrapnel.

Sgt. Cobb had lost all track of time, but kept searching the skies for possibly more trouble as if their plane had not had more than enough already. It had been twelve bombers of the 448th against 25 to 30 fighters of the Luftwaffe.

A fighter escort came out to meet them over the Channel, and a day of 9½ hours was nearly over. He does not recall much of anything about the landing back at the base at Seething, but says, "How pilot John McCune got the plane down safely was a miracle with all of the damage it had taken."

Staff Sgt. Willard Cobb later was released from the hospital, visited the ground crew for his plane and was told both ammunition boxes were empty and just a few rounds left in the clips.

Sgt. Cobb also mentions that raid over Gotha, Germany on February 24th only because he shot down an ME-109 on that mission, making five to his credit.

On Staff Sergeant Cobb's 17th mission, but more for his crew on April 24, 1944 on a mission to Augsburg, Germany, 1st Lt. John McCune's plane lost two engines over the target and was forced to land in Switzerland.

Most if not all of the crew managed to escape and made it back to England and Seething. Other members of the crew were co-pilot Lloyd Morse, bombardier Lt. Col. (Ret.) James Misuraca, navigator Maurice Hooks, and another gunner, Earl Kennedy, who also was credited with a kill. We are sorry we don't have the other crew names at this writing, but all certainly deserve recognition, well earned.

In February 1945, Staff Sgt. Willard Cobb was picked up at the base at Seething by two French soldiers and driven to a French mission somewhere outside London, where he was met by Gen. Charles de Gaulle in person. Among a crowd of 20-25 people he thought he was the only American and was presented the very high French honor (citation), the Croix de Guerre avec Etoile de Bronze. After the usual French greeting they saluted. Several days later, Staff Sgt. Cobb was on the U.S.S. Washington headed for the good old U.S.A.

In summary, the report from the French citizens sent to Gen. Gaulle through the underground thoroughly identified Lt. John McCune's bomber; make, insignia and serial number. They of course did not know who the tail gunner was. The General traced the plane through the 8th Army Air Corps, 2nd Air Division, 448th Bomb Group and 715th Bomb Squadron, Crew #63. Apparently the French had a super underground system and all Americans are grateful for that. Otherwise, Staff Sgt. Willard Cobb's heroic action and outstanding skills might never have been recognized by the French. The report (citation) was written in French and coded to protect against retaliation to all those other heroic persons involved in case the enemy got hold of it.

Another note: Staff Sgt. Cobb's heroic actions brought a recommendation for the Silver Star, but he was awarded the DFC instead.

The 448th and all Americans are grateful for Staff Sergeant Cobb, truly a hero.

Flame Leap

by Wilbur L. Clingan

Good Day to each of you. Diana and I hope that the holidays were merry, Santa was kind, and that the New Year has been, and continues to be, great for each of you. One way to assure that it continues to be is to make plans to be present at one or more of the scheduled reunions. As you know, the 2nd ADA is scheduled for Hilton Head, SC, November 4-7, 1993. The 453rd BG reunion is scheduled for May 31 - June 2, 1993 in Spokane, WA. Re the Hilton Head gathering, the Group dinner will be on Friday, November 5. On the morning of that day we will have our business meeting. We want and hope to have you at both. The afternoon of Friday is available for any other Group purpose. I propose to leave it unscheduled and available for shopping, sightseeing or loafing. One item for the business meeting, as always, will be election of officers. I do hope you will nominate someone other than me for the office I now hold. I am ready to step aside and not a bit reluctant to do so. Many of you are capable of doing better than I, and I ask that you make known your willingness to serve. As for the 453rd BG reunion, you have received mailings about this by now and it has been addressed in the Newsletter. If by chance you aren't aware of it, give me or Dan Reading a call or drop us a note. There are many reunions competing for our time and dollars. It is not possible to make all of them, but each has something to offer - Bombardiers, Gunners, Armament, POW, 8th AFHS. How is a body to choose?

PEN PAL WANTED: In May 1992, a 12 year old girl at Old Buck told Bob and Betty Jordan that during the 1990 reunion she had met a nice lady from the 453rd (that's all of our ladies). The lady's granddaughter wrote to the 12 year old, but unfortunately, the name and address was lost. She would like to renew letters with the "nice lady's" granddaughter. The name and address of the 12 year old: Sue Terry, 10 Oaklands, Old Buckenham, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 1SA, England. Incidentally, the 453rd received a very nice Christmas card from the children at the Old Buck school. It was sent to us, but addressed to all the 453rd people.

On 18 June 1945, at Thetford Cottage Hospital, Shirley Ann Smith was born. Her mother was an English lady and her father was an airman with the 453rd BG at Old Buck. She would like to tell her father of her love for him and of her three wonderful children. She knows that her father is aging and would like to say hello before his death. If this strikes a responsive chord with any of our readers, and if one would like further information, please contact me. I have Shirley Ann's address and telephone number. Strict confidentiality will prevail, of course.

The 2nd ADA Nominating Committee is seeking persons, qualified and willing, for the



"Liberty Run" - December 1944. The 453rd sent a plane load of Christmas goodies to the French children. Al Kauber, 734th Squadron, was involved and I think the pilot was Tom O'Dwyer.

offices of Executive Vice President and Treasurer. If you know someone who would like to be nominated, please let me know and I'll forward your suggestions to the Nominating Committee.

Pocatello Regional Airport had a commemoration of the Army Air Base last August. They are also in the process of putting up a monument to those who served there. That includes a heap of you. Drop by for a visit and/or write them a note. They would like either.

NEW MEMBERS! Welcome to: **Don Voight, Rosemary Lighty, Burton Madison, Duke Thurman, Mel Foster, Jim Pastella, Bob Van Cleave, Bob Lambert, John Carroll, John Best, Harry MacDermid, and to Katherine, Dan and Emil Benarcik** who have joined the 453rd BG. It is great to have each of you join us in the 2nd ADA and/or the 453rd BG. We certainly hope it is both. And each of us must remember to send Evelyn Cohen our \$15.00 dues for 1993. Do it now! Those of us in the 453rd BG must also send Frank Thomas our \$10.00 dues.

DECEASED: It is with regret that we report the passing of the following: **Herbert Hastings, Quentin Kroger, Glen Hodge, and John Nettleman.**

Well, it's been nice. Thank you for letting us visit with you. There is more that we could share with you, but our space is limited. I'm sure that some of the names above have been mentioned before and there are others that should be included that are not. For this I apologize. Additional evidence that you need

a new VP. Finances and health permitting and the Good Lord willing, Diana and I will be at Spokane in May and at Hilton Head in November. We expect to see y'all there. We ordered some more 453rd BG lapel pins and will have them at Spokane; Hilton Head too if any are left. They will be \$5.00 each. Cheers!

Attention Golfers

The Twelfth Annual 2ADA Golf Tournament will be held 4 November 1993 at Hilton Head, South Carolina. It is expected that we will have a shotgun start at 8:30 A.M. but details have yet to be ironed out with the club.

We will be playing the same course at Hilton Head that we played in 1989, but Palmetto Dunes Golf Assn. has increased prices almost 25% since that time. The charge this year will be \$65.00 and will include greens fee, half a golf cart, souvenir golf ball(s) and a few prizes. If sufficient funds remain, we will provide a light lunch (or box lunch) at the close of the tournament. Prizes will be awarded in the Men's Handicap Division, Men's Peoria Division and Women's Peoria Division.

Anyone interested in playing, please advise the writer enclosing a check for \$65.00 (refundable if unable to play) and advise your handicap or average score and bomb group affiliation.

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

Missing! Missing?

by Dana "Doc" Winters (458th)

It was Tuesday, January 25, 1944.

Finally, the months of training, double time and flight lines came to an abrupt halt. Bomber pilots were needed in England, and down came the decision. Only weeks after earning my wings as a fighter pilot at Luke Field, Arizona, it was decreed that from that moment on, I was a multi-engine pilot (even if I didn't know how to get into one of those things).

Yes, after more hurry-up training at Gowan Field, Boise, Idaho, and Tonopah, Nevada, it was time on that Tuesday to leave Hamilton Field north of San Francisco, and begin our extensive flight to somewhere in the British Isles.

Tearful goodbyes had been said. But the number two engine on our new B-24 didn't want to go overseas. Its cowl tore itself loose and hurled its bulk down past the Golden Gate Bridge and into the cold waters of San Francisco Bay.

Orders directed our crew to join a flight of new crews at Palm Springs, a southern California desert community. It wasn't to be today. We limped back to Hamilton Field and fidgeted for two days awaiting a new cowl. My wife, Virginia, was subjected to more goodbyes which she couldn't deal with seriously.

The route we were to take was, of course, top secret. It was so secret that the leading American picture magazine traced our projected journey with a series of large photographs. The handful of new Liberators left Palm Springs the next day, heading for Midland, Texas. We were all nervous and apprehensive of what was ahead for our flight.

Midland Airfield was devoted to training army guard dogs, thus it was a noisy dogs' night for us. Our patch of bombers took off and made for West Palm Beach, Florida, the jumping-off place for departure from this continent.

The next day's flight to Puerto Rico didn't happen. That day we were given no reason for the stand-down. It was a stand-down which stretched to four days, still without reasons. On the fifth day our knot of planes went kiting south for San Juan, Puerto Rico. In the descent to the island, the number three engine started complaining. After eyeing the gauges, we feathered number three and landed with only three engines turning.

We followed a yellow-flagged jeep to an assigned transients roost. An immediate inspection disclosed a path of oil spraying out below number three. Later, we were told we needed parts for a supercharger on the engine. We were grounded. Parts had to be sent for.

Eleven days later, the engine fully repaired, we took off alone for South America. It was on this leg heading for Guyana that I learned what pain a plugged eustachian tube can cause. A half-hour with the airport doctor provided me with new ears and a desire to continue living.

Next day we were off at dawn for Belem, a huge Brazilian city at the mouth of the Amazon. Here we caught up with a few Liberator stragglers waiting for orders to proceed.



Photo taken at Hamilton Field, San Rafael, CA, Point of Departure. Standing (l-r): John Mucksavage, navigator; Harley Gaines, pilot; Herb Crandall, bomb aimer. (Walt Case came aboard as bombardier in Boise.) Kneeling (l-r): (name forgotten); Robert Hall, waist; Joe Dilaure, engineer; George Wood, radio; (name forgotten); Swidecki, turret.

It was the fifth waiting day at Belem before we were cleared for Fortaleza, a city on the protruding point of South America, closest to the African continent. At Fortaleza we loaded with extra gas tanks and were briefed about landing at Dakar. The Germans had recently been driven out of this city which then made possible a landing on huge rolls of steel mats spread out over desert sand. This had to be a strictly heads-up maneuver. Landing off the strip could be fatal.

Twenty-six days had already been consumed on this over-the-Atlantic journey but we hadn't begun to cross it yet. I wondered where the original five planes from Palm Springs were now.

In the briefing at Fortaleza, we were advised to keep all eyes peeled for submarines surfacing and lobbing flak at our crossing planes. We had no armor plate. There were no guns or ammunition on our plane. All of us had parachutes, but the Atlantic was wide in places, and a swim could be a long one.

We battled heavy winds and rain out of Fortaleza but Mucksavage, the navigator, hit Dakar on the nose. We showed eight minutes of normal flying time left in the tanks. Landing on steel nets was a brutal experience. The resulting screeching was like the Mormon Choir all singing a different song at the same time.

We spent a tired night in Dakar only to be awakened early the next morning. The early destination was to be Casablanca, but this had apparently been changed to Marrakech, Morocco.

This leg of our trip inspired terror in me. Nearly one hundred miles out of Marrakech, we saw up ahead a surging, ever-changing black cloud. None of the crew could tell what it was. As we neared, large splotches of blood appeared on the plane's windshield.

Grasshoppers! Locusts! Cicadas or whatever. We took evasive action, diving steeply and banking hard to the left. Gaines and I had visions of those fat bugs wedging themselves into the engines' air intakes.

Marrakech was still some distance away. The billowing insects yet posed a giant fence between our plane and the landing strip

ahead. Directly below, the giant rolling sand dunes of the Sahara seemed endless.

I don't know how it happened. Either the wind shifted or the grasshoppers were on our side. The black death veered to one side, which allowed us to head straight into the pattern for the landing strip below. Swift contact with their tower was made and we landed far, far above average speed.

None of us knew that day we were to begin another of those long delays. We met crews who had started from Palm Springs more than two weeks after our departure. We learned that the last leg of flying would take us again out into the Atlantic, around Portugal and over England and Wales to Scotland. This trip was all the more dangerous because of unfriendly prevailing winds and very unfriendly German planes and surfacing German submarines!

Marrakech was an interesting city, unlike Los Angeles. After two days of watching a heat-crazed Arab trying to jump-start his camel, we kept busy for five days more shuffling cards for a low ante poker game.

Air intakes were cleared of grasshoppers (which kids picked up off sidewalks and strung on coat hangers for food), and we waited for tail winds.

Winds and weather allowed a good take-off. Long hours later, we circled Prestwick, Scotland, a destination we had headed for thirty-six days ago. The following day, in an assigned plane, we took off for Horsham St. Faith, the British airdrome redesigned for bombers of the 458th. We circled the spire of the grand cathedral of Norwich, one of the tallest in England, and rolled to a final stop at the end of the runway.

It was a strange feeling finally to be at the place where WWII was to begin for us.

Two hours later, I was put into shock. On the base operations board was a brief note flatly stating that the following crew members were listed as "missing." I cannot remember whether it said missing in action, or missing in no action. But there it was. I hoped to God they didn't write Virginia. Thirty-seven days "missing" and we hadn't even started.

What a war!

Shipdham Tower Rededicated

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

Approximately 150 people from the 44th Bomb Group and the 44th Heritage Memorial Group were present 2 October 1992 for the rededication of the Shipdham Control Tower. As reported in the Winter '92 JOURNAL, 8-Ball column, the exterior of the back of the Tower is finished and looks like a new building. Work continues but not much progress is expected until Spring.

R. Lee Aston (67th Squadron) built and donated a memorial plaque which was temporarily affixed to the outside of the Tower for the 4 October unveiling. It will be permanently installed inside the Tower upon completion.



R. Lee Aston and his wife in front of the memorial plaque which Lee built and donated for the restored Shipdham Control Tower.

The plaque includes the insignia of the Second Air Division 8th Air Force and B-24 Liberator at the top, with layout of Shipdham Airfield and the 44th Bomb Group's 8-Ball insignia near the bottom. The inscription reads as follows:

SHIPDHAM AIRFIELD U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS STATION 115 CONTROL TOWER CALL SIGN "PATHWAY"

Built in 1941-42 for the ROYAL AIR FORCE

Assigned to the United States Army Air Corps Sept. 1942
Manned by the 44th Bombardment Group (Heavy), 14th Combat Wing
2D Air Division, 8th Air Force on 10 Oct. 1942. Comprised by the
66th H.B. Squadron 67th H.B. Squadron
68th H.B. Squadron 506th H.B. Squadron

First U.S. Commanding Officer - Col. Frank H. Robinson
Total of 343 combat missions flown - last mission on 25 April 1945
153 B-24s lost - 858 men killed in action - 330 enemy fighters shot down

Restored by the 44th Tower Association Committee:

Will Lundy, R.I. Brown, U.S.

Doug Genge, Tony Cowen, Stephen Adams, David Morgan, U.K.
Rededicated 4th Oct. 1992 - at the 50th Reunion
of the 44th Heritage Memorial Group

Lee prepared an article for the December 1992 issue of the 44th Logbook and a small portion was printed therein. Regrettably, space does not permit the complete publication here, but following are a few condensed paragraphs:



Shipdham Airfield Plaque

The 50th Reunion of the 44th Bomb Group was unquestionably a grand success. A deserving vote of thanks should go to Joe Warth and committee.

However, there was an undercurrent of dissension, probably not realized by the rank and file membership present, concerning the placement of a Shipdham location for a memorial museum and the restoration of the Control Tower. Lee feels that the membership of the 44th HMG should make the decision and not its Directors. [This opinion is shared by many.] Directors' duties are to carry out the desires of the members.

A highlight of the visit to Shipdham Airfield was the rededication ceremony of the 44th Bomb Group's Control Tower which is presently under restoration by a local group of British supporters. During the combat years, the Control Tower was the focal point of attention for the entire operation. THE CONTROL TOWER WAS THE HEART OF THE 44TH BOMB GROUP'S OPERATIONS!

To be continued in the next JOURNAL.

A Salute To My Flight Engineer

by J.W. Tikey (466th)

T/Sgt. Ivan S. Roberts was my Flight Engineer on B-24 "Slick Chick," and later in 1944 on our various Pathfinder craft. My crew (those who still correspond) lost track of Ivan after we returned to the States, so we don't know if he's still living. But, I remember him well because we owe our lives to this laid back, extremely loyal, Ozark-talking fellow crewman — *even before we flew one combat mission out of England.*

In early February 1944, after phase training in Casper, Wyoming and Alamogordo, NM, we embarked to our combat base in Attlebridge, England via the southern route (Herrington, Kansas; West Palm Beach, Florida; Trinidad; Belem, Brazil; Fortaleza, Brazil; Dakar, Senegal; Marrakech, Morocco; and Prestwick, Scotland). This narrative essentially covers our leg from Fortaleza, some 2200 plus miles over the South Atlantic, to Dakar. Aboard that evening were: J.W. Tikey, pilot; Richard Smith, co-pilot; Henry Tevelin, navigator; Francis Spigelmire, bombardier; Ivan Roberts, flight engineer; Frank Simek, radio operator; Marlow Jovaag, waist gunner; Boyd Condon, ball turret; Bernard Massing, tail gunner; and Frank Bois, waist gunner.

We spent two days in Fortaleza and were confined to the base awaiting better weather conditions. We finally were told to take off around 10 PM one evening in early February, with the warning that we would hit one of those numerous, huge South Atlantic storms and that the best penetration would be at 9,000 to 11,000 feet. Not to worry, they said!

About midnight we hit it, and it was an extremely vicious one, tossing us around like a feather! We had to go straight through because we didn't have radar then and couldn't skirt around it.

My airplane had a Sperry A-5 autopilot aboard, but since the Altitude Control was "wired" off for technical reasons, I chose not to engage it and flew manually. (Probably a mistake because automatic rudder and aileron control would have helped.) (I later spent 36 years working for Sperry.)

Thunder! Lightning! Tremendous wind gusts! Up and down! Spigelmire, my bombardier, was praying like crazy. Weren't we all! This huge storm lasted two to three hours. But here's the scary part. After about an hour of this buffeting, I noticed the number three engine manifold pressure slowly, slowly dropping from 30 inches. Here's where Roberts came into the picture, and he started to frantically try to resolve the reason for this ever slow drop on number three. We could never have made it to Dakar from our position on three engines. We would have run out of gas.

The number three manifold pressure was down to 12 inches and I was thinking of



Standing (l-r): Jovaag, Condon, Simek, Bois, Massing. Kneeling (l-r): Tikey, Smith, Tevelin, Spigelmire, Roberts.

feathering, when Roberts, thank God and praise the Lord, found the trouble. He removed the #3 oil dilution fuse and the pressure started a slow rise up to normal. The shaking and super Gs on the plane caused a short in the system. With the benefit of hindsight, the malfunction probably occurred in the #3 oil dilution switch in the cockpit. It was "off" but "shorted" to "on" because of the storm.

There was no reason for Ivan to suspect this trouble, and why he pulled that fuse, God only knows. This was truly a miracle!

Gas was steadily pouring into the #3 engine oil manifold and would have caused an engine failure and/or a fire. The tremendous rains must have helped to curtail a fire.

Specifically, on the B-24 some gas was normally poured into the oil system in *small*

amounts, for cold weather starting. *Over-dilution* causes sludge and carbon to be loosened in the engine, causing oil lines to clog and oil screens to collapse. A very dangerous condition.

Lt. Pastovich's plane, another crew in the 466th Group on this Dakar leg, lost one engine, then two, and never made it. Immediately upon landing and refueling, we helped search for this plane and absolutely no trace of its disappearance was found.

So, T/Sgt. Ivan S. Roberts, wherever you are, many, many thanks for what you accomplished on that dastardly night. You saved our crew — pure and simple.

Truthfully, I can say that this midnight to 3 AM episode in early February 1944 was my most frightening WWII experience. No combat mission compared to it.

Anne Brusselmans – My Mother

At the request of many of our Air Force friends, Mother and I have finally compiled a manuscript relating her underground activities during World War II in Europe. It is dedicated to all allied airmen who risked their lives on our behalf in our quest for freedom.

The book entitled "**Anne Brusselmans — My Mother**" not only details her experiences in helping allied airmen to escape from occupied territories, but in addition it describes her involvement with the Intelligence Service operations in Belgium. It contains more than one hundred photographs taken during the German occupation, documents and illustrations. It also

narrates her numerous activities and affiliations in the aftermath of the war.

The manuscript will be available around March 10th, 1993 and can be purchased directly from the address given below at a cost of \$16.00 plus mailing charges at the time of ordering. Each copy will be personally autographed by Anne Brusselmans upon request by the purchaser. It will also be available at your next convention.

Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans
Post Office Box 74
Dunedin, Florida 34697-0074
Tel. (813) 734-9573

The 445th Reporting

by Chuck Walker

Here's hoping your 1993 is off to a very good start and that it will get even better as the year progresses.

Maxine and I are still in California at this writing but hope to be on our way to Dallas by the time you receive this humble effort.

Let's begin by welcoming new members who have joined the 2nd ADA since our last report: Associate Member T/Sgt. Christopher Jones, nephew of Harry Withers (deceased); Robert H. Murray, Dewey, AZ; Thomas A. O'Neill, Drexel Hill, PA; and Associate Members Theresa, Paul and Tod Alberghini. Theresa lives in Washington, D.C.; Paul in Cumberland Circle, Maine; and Tod in Hartford, CT. This adds up to a total of four Alberghinis, counting Roy, who are now members. Orville C. Baker, Cheyenne, WY and Norris B. Hester, Hayward, CA are also new members. All 445th members join me in offering y'all a hearty welcome aboard. (Notice how that "Texas" influence is already creeping in?)

Norris Hester writes that he was the flight engineer on Donald Baumler's crew that was cancelled from the Kassel mission. What a lucky fellow!! Norris says they had flown missions on the 25th and 26th and were in their A/C for the 27th, when a jeep pulled up to the hardstand and told them they were cancelled, but they did fly on the 28th.

James Wilson, of West Yarmouth, MA, wrote inquiring about the 2nd ADA Memorial Library Room. His brother Calvin H. Wilson (KIA) was a gunner on Tom Sear's crew that was shot down over Munster, Ger. on 3/23/45. Only Kelly, Meyer and Morgan of that crew survived and all three were POWs until liberated on 5/2/45.

William H. Crowley wrote that he had read of the Library in a recent issue of the V.F.W. magazine and would welcome further information about it. His twin brother James J. Crowley was killed in action on the Kassel mission 15 days before reaching his 21st birthday. Can anyone tell me with whose crew William's brother was flying waist gun on that fateful day?

Frank DiMola writes that he and Eliza-



Web and Helen Uebelhoefer in front of their new home in Arizona on Thanksgiving, with Chuck Walker on the left.



(l-r): Buddy and Wanda Cross, Dorothy and John Nortavage

beth have taken up residence in Sun City West, AZ for the next few months. No doubt they will get together with the Uebelhoers, who now reside there.

A random listing of reasons given by some of our members for having missed the Las Vegas reunion: Web Uebelhoefer was recovering from bypass surgery (the picture shown here taken at Thanksgiving attests to Web's recovery.) Glen Marsteller, as a result of a heart attack, was hospitalized having two blocked arteries roto-rootered. Colonel W.W. Jones reports "my neck is still a mess — an Upper Cervical Chiropractor is working on it, but it's about 50-50 that it's going to eventually require an operation." We wish you success short of an operation, Colonel. Now for the reason that staggers one's imagination. Seymour Grossman writes, "being single and having all the responsibilities that I do, my time is quite limited for personal pleasures. With 19 cats, 3 dogs, a business and a home to care for, not to mention my gal friend, you can readily see why I never got to the Las Vegas Reunion." Seymour, you are in the market for a zoo, me thinks!

Phyllis DuBois, Trust Librarian, writes that income from our 445th BG Memorial Library Endowment Fund has been used to purchase the following new books: **Soaring Eagles: McDonnell Douglas F-15** by Jerry Scutts; **Stingers: McDonnell Douglas FA-18** by Bill Gunston; **Eighth Air Force Bomber Stories** by Ian McLachlan; **Popular Art Deco** by Robert Heide.

I received a call from John Moran, whose uncle William H. Moran had been listed as KIA. According to John, the family knew very little of the circumstances surrounding

William's demise, but thought he had been on Jack Pelton's crew. John was amazed that I was able to give him Jack's address, as well as Ray Pytel's and Mary Beth Barnard's, whose father was on Pelton's original crew. He was emotionally touched that we were able to inform him that his uncle had indeed flown his first 10 missions as co-pilot with this crew, but had been flying co-pilot with Ed Speer's crew on 31 Oct. 1944 when that crew was believed to have gone in over the channel with no survivors. Anyone who knew William Moran and can provide more details, please contact me.

It's my sad task to report that Paul S. Hahn folded his wings in November. Hahn was the navigator on W.M. Hill's crew. John Cadden reports that James R. (Bob) Paul folded his wings in October. Paul was waist gunner on Krivick's crew that flew "Percy" on the Kassel mission. Paul was credited with two kills on that mission: the A/C was the only 702nd ship to return to England that day but unfortunately crashed just off the base. Our condolences to both families.

From Horace Turell: "It was a shame that the 2nd ADA Reunion took place at the same time as that of the 8th AFHS. They both also coincided with the most holy Jewish Holidays. Perhaps the planning can be better in the future." I agree completely, Horace, and I can assure you the Association staff will try harder in the future to avoid this conflict.

Now it is time to again race to the post office in order to get these great words of wisdom to our Editor Bill Robertie before the deadline. Y'all take good care of yourselves, ya hear?

U.K. Memories

by Thomas A. Nelson (453rd, 492nd, 467th)

The JOURNAL and group newsletters recount many fascinating, and too often tragic, stories of the men of the Second Air Division while on missions over enemy territory in Europe. Although the element of danger was comparatively absent on the English side of the North Sea, nevertheless incidents and encounters, both on and off the bases, add to the wartime picture. Not one to keep a diary at the time, I recently searched my personal memory bank to come up with a selection of random anecdotes of military life in England from December, 1943 to July, 1945. Perhaps a few of these vignettes will bring back to others some similar recollections.

We are on our way by troop train from the Firth of Clyde to East Anglia, having arrived in the United Kingdom via the oceanliner Queen Mary. The train stops at a station, and the inevitable question is asked, "Where are we?" "We are in Bovril," comes the reply from one of our group. Standing at the far edge of the platform is a plain, rectangular sign containing only the name "BOVRIL" in bold, black letters. Much later, another station, and an identical sign also reads "BOVRIL." "What a popular name for towns over here!" Eventually, we learn that these one-word signs advertise a bouillon beverage product in competition with its rival Oxo. Well, we did "just get off the boat."

Because of the war, the regular longer-distance trains in England do not carry restaurant cars. However, all railroad depots of at least a moderate size have a tea room. At these stops passengers en route pour off the train, swarm into the tea room, and rush back to their carriages, each carrying tea in a china cup and saucer and a biscuit (cookie). At the next station stop no one carries a teacup back into the depot! No, the trains are continually hauling used teacups back and forth across the country. It must be a logistical nightmare to redistribute this chinaware equitably each day.

The squadrons' living quarters vary from base to base, but many are Nissen (Quonset) huts. Heating is from a single, small, iron stove fed with rationed coke, never enough. Nearby in separate buildings are the unheated sanitary facilities. In a failed effort to avoid the dreaded trek from a warm bed into the frigid winter night for relief from the "G.I.'s" (diarrhea), which does occur occasionally, one suffers the misery of holding on as long as possible.

The unheated ablutions building, furnished with a row of shower heads, is quite distant from our hut. After several days while everyone becomes riper, three or four of us decide to brave the cold room to take a warm shower. On the way back to the hut, congratulating ourselves on our cleanliness, one of our party has the misfortune to slip and tumble into a mud puddle, to no little amusement of the others.

The food in the base mess hall keeps star-

vation away but makes C-rations seem pretty good. The staple items day after day and month after month are powdered eggs, shredded corned beef (referred to as sloppy corn willie) from Argentina, all the Brussels sprouts that England can produce, dark bread (really good!), and barrels of that English favorite, orange marmalade. Some of the more imaginative cooks are able to make the powdered eggs palatable. The flight crews are treated to fresh eggs when they are available. The best treat, though, is to eat in the ballroom, converted to a dining hall run by the military, inside the Grosvenor House in London.

The Armed Forces Radio broadcasts provide diversion from the business at hand. Most of us tune in during off-duty hours. A favorite is the swing band music served up by "The Duffle Bag" program with its theme, "Opus One," a rousing Tommy Dorsey Band number. Our side does not own a monopoly on the airwaves, though. The Germans have several transmitters set up across the Channel to blanket the U.K. with its English-language broadcasts. Lord Haw Haw and his cohorts spew forth their propaganda in a futile attempt to demoralize us, but the enemy also plays the popular music of the day. The plaintive ballad, "Lilli Marlene," becomes well known to us. Even the English latch on to this one, Anne Shelton giving it a slightly faster tempo.

The base air-raid sirens wail at dusk. We duck into the short, open-top revetments built on the ground surface. The drone of aircraft in formation grows louder. It is light enough to see directly above us the German markings on a motley, but deadly, group of mixed types of aircraft, the best the Luftwaffe can do at this stage of the war. Our base stays quiet, and the planes fly on. But someone at the next base in their flight path fires up a stream of tracers — a big mistake! The formation apparently decides to abort its planned target, banks around, and in the distance we see and hear a profusion of explosions erupting at the unlucky base.

For Americans new to a war zone, an air raid over London is a tourist attraction, at least the first time. The sirens are our signal to rush out onto the street to see the searchlights, anti-aircraft bursts and bomb explosions, fortunately for us, not in our immediate vicinity. A warden discovers us in the blackout and tells us to move into a shelter. The Underground (subway) stations are major shelters. They are already crowded with the residents who sleep there every night, an unforgettable sight of masses of humans forced to live below a city under siege.

On a subsequent overnight trip to London, another officer and I are quartered in a Red Cross facility. We are the only males in the building when the sirens sound. We head down from the upper level only to find that the designated shelter for the building is the stairway ascending from the ground floor. And who do we find gathering on the

steps? About a dozen young Red Cross women who have just arrived from the U.S. and are experiencing their first air raid. The poor souls look bewildered, so without hesitation we volunteer to calm and comfort them in their hour of anxiety. Is this good duty, or what? (Remember, women's lib has not happened yet.)

I have the opportunity to take an evening course at Cambridge University. The course title is "Life, People, and Government of the U.S.S.R." It seems to be an appropriate subject, because public education in the U.S. does not go much beyond western European history, and the Soviet Union is supposedly one of our allies in the war effort. What an eye opener to hear details of the bloody massacres perpetrated against friends and foe by Stalin to gain and hold power! Most shocking is the professor's justification of these atrocities as necessary to establish the new socialist state. Alarmingly, the young civilian students in the class absorb this communist propaganda without question.

King's Lynn is a popular destination for recreation on a one-day pass. But the military wants to maintain a certain decorum, so that the troops don't have too good a time and offend the local residents. The Military Police are not staffed sufficiently for adequate street patrols, so junior officers stationed at bases in the vicinity are assigned to this duty on a rotation basis. I'm sure the enlisted men are not exactly jubilant at having to salute patrolling officers, but there is retribution. The vastly outnumbered officers must engage in considerably more arm pumping to return the many salutes all day.

D-Day, June 6, 1944, finally arrives. We work all day and night preparing our aircraft for the invasion support. As dawn approaches on the 6th, the sky is filled with a myriad of aircraft forming for their missions. It is an unbelievable panorama of seemingly endless waves of planes, a sight which will probably never be repeated. Our base puts up three missions during the day. A respite between missions comes at noon, and I catch a few winks while resting on a pile of lumber near a hardstand despite the bright sun shining overhead.

The showers in the ablutions (washroom) buildings do an acceptable job, but soaking in a tub would feel nice once in a while. One way to accomplish this is to check into a hotel in Norwich for a night. Coins are inserted, and hot water is drawn from the geyser (a small, metered, water heater). Ah, luxury, submerged in a deep tub. Oh, oh! There go the air raid sirens. Get out of the tub and go to a shelter? Not after all this preparation! Sweat it out. The crude motor of the V-1 (pilotless flying bomb) gets louder as it continues to approach. Fortunately, it flies over before the motor quits and it begins a downward glide toward a potluck target.

To be continued in the next JOURNAL.

History Research Plan Needs Help

At the suggestion of the Center for Air Force History, Washington, D.C., 2ADA member E. Ralph Rundell (458th) of Chicago is hard at work in an effort to collect "combat experience" stories which have been published in the 2ADA JOURNAL during the past 46 years.

Ralph discussed his plan to collect material for the book, an anthology of the stories, with the Center's Liaison Officer, Mr. Cargill Hall, who enthusiastically supported the idea.

If your combat story has appeared in the 2ADA JOURNAL in any issue since the first edition (published in 1947), Ralph would like a copy for inclusion in the proposed book. The easiest way to submit your story would be to run the original through a copy machine and mail the copy to E. Ralph Rundell, 307 No. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601, or FAX it to 312-368-4605.

If you have photographs to go with the story, send either glossy black and white prints or negatives. They will be copied and returned. Your help will be deeply appreciated!

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Submitted by Dave Patterson (445th)

Veterans organizations serve many purposes, from representing veterans in claims for VA entitlements to performing community services. Through the years, the number of veterans organizations has grown to almost one hundred.

Of the 27 million veterans in America, close to eight million belong to veterans organizations, and this number is increasing.

According to a spokesman for the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the oldest major veterans organization in America, veterans in ever-increasing numbers are joining the organization, founded in 1899 by veterans of the Spanish-American War. This year marks the VFW's 38th consecutive year of membership growth, a record that began in the post-Korean War era.

What attracts veterans to veterans organizations? The VFW keeps close track of this and attributes membership growth to two factors. One is a social interest which brings people of similar backgrounds and common interests together. The second is a realization by veterans that the only way to protect the entitlements gained over the years is to join together to support VA programs.

Long after the parades and welcome home ceremonies are over, veterans organizations continue to care for our veterans.

2ADA Film Library — Revised 1-93

The following tapes are single copies and are available for rent for \$5.00 each. They will be mailed to you via first class mail and we ask that you return them the same way.

"Images of the 2nd Air Division"
"Faces of the 2nd Air Division"
"Eight Candles for Remembrance"

Produced by
Joe Dzenowagis

"24's Get Back"
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"Battle of Britain"
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10 Volumes

donated by
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donated by William Fili, 15th AF

The following tapes are also available for rent from your 2ADA film library:

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- | | | | |
|------|--|------------------|--------|
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| II | A Village Remembers | | |
| III | Target for Today
The Men Who Flew the Liberators
2ADA Reunion 1973 — Colorado Springs
2AD Memorial Dedication — Norwich 1963 | | \$3.00 |
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| VII | The Air Force Story — Vol. I — Chapters 9-16 | | |
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| IX | The Air Force Story — Vol. I — Chapters 25-26
The Air Force Story — Vol. II — Chapters 1-6 | | |
| X | Smashing of the Reich
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2ADA March AFB Memorial Service, 1984
The Superplane That Hitler Wasted — ME-262 | | \$3.00 |
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Preflight Inspection of the B-24
Flying the B-24
(This tape donated to 2ADA by 467 BG in memory of Adam Soccio) | | \$3.00 |
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Jamesburg, NJ 08831



by Ralph Elliott

Continuing the practice of having one stand-alone gathering each year, the 467th Bomb Group (H) Association Convention will be held May 13-17, 1993 in Kissimmee, Florida at the Hilton Inn Gateway. Festivities will begin with a patio hospitality party Thursday evening, May 13, followed by an all-day bus tour to the Kennedy Space Center on Friday. The Space Center tour is included in your convention fee in keeping with our practice of including in the basic fee activities of interest to all attendees, giving us the most "bang for the buck." This applies also to scheduled tours, meals, and entertainment. It makes planning easier and results in a lower price for everyone. Breakfast is included each morning, lunch on Sunday, and banquets Saturday and Sunday evenings.

Saturday, May 15, is open for tours of your choosing. Disney tickets are available at a discount, and Gray Line will offer tours to Cypress Gardens, Sea World, Busch Gardens, Universal Studios, and Silver Springs. With so much to see and do in the Orlando area, I can only suggest that you extend your R & R for a few days by taking advantage of the special hotel and rental car rates in effect before, during, and after the convention. You bombardiers might even want to stay over for the Bombardiers, Inc. 8th Reunion being held May 19-23 in Orlando. Phone (407) 855-8455 for details.

Saturday evening's fantastic buffet dinner will be followed by special entertainment you will miss at your peril. The Colonel is safe in Kissimmee — having recovered from his hanging in Tucson — but don't rule out anything else! The 467th Association meeting will be held following breakfast Sunday morning, and we'll adjourn for lunch (included) with a free afternoon to be followed that evening by our farewell banquet. 467th VP Mel Culross is in charge of the evening festivities, which, again, promise to be something special.

We will have a private hospitality room throughout the convention with tables for memorabilia and TV & VCR available for the showing of tapes. Bring yours along to show as well as any scrapbooks and memorabilia you have. The hospitality room is the hub of the convention, and Phil Day's mission records, along with the big picture books, have answered many a question where personal records were non-existent. The "need to know" has suddenly become important — more so than it was 45 years ago — and this convention is the place to find the answers. While there will be more people at the 2ADA convention at Hilton Head next November (we hope to see you there also), Kissimmee is the place to renew your Rackheath experience; to meet your buddies from the orderly rooms, the mess halls, the photo and support shops, the ground crews, and the flight crews. Don't forget that it took ALL of us to make Rackheath work as one of the



467th Bomb Group Reunion, Tucson, AZ, October 1992. Staff picture: Bruce Palmer, CO 789th; Capers Holmes, Group Nav.; Bob Salzarulo, CO 788th til shot down; Col. Al Shower, Group CO; Fred Holdredge, CO 790th; Bob Seiler, CO 788th.

most effective bombing outfits in the 8th Air Force — even if we didn't always agree with the Old Man's way of getting there.

I remember spending three weeks with my crew and Troy Wild's crew at another base for special GH training in January of '45, but I also remember how glad we were to get back to our home base after the undisciplined freedom (and mess) of the other base. Besides, the Colonel has mellowed over the years, and seeing Col. Shower again is always a highlight of any convention. We had four squadron commanders in Tucson too, and we hope to see them and many others in Kissimmee on May 13.

We have made arrangements for a special four day cruise to Nassau and Freeport following the convention with costs over 50% off regular prices — all cabins outside and one of the premier ships, the WESTWARD of Norwegian Cruise Lines. With prices from \$399 to \$569, I don't expect our allotment of cabins to last long. Going with the 467th will be half the fun, and I understand several crews are planning to put groups together. Contact is Joe De Pasquale of South Florida Cruises, phone (800) 927-7447, Ext. 177.

You will need to be especially cognizant of your inclusive convention dates in booking your air travel. I opted to stay out of the airline booking business since there were no special 467th deals to be had. Your best bet is to get acquainted with a good travel agent and work with them for the best fare they can find.

I look forward to a good year as your 2ADA Group Vice President and 467th President, and to meeting many of you in Kissimmee. Don't hesitate to call (602) 883-8088 or write to me at 6000 W. Rafter Circle, Tucson, AZ 85713-4365 if you have an idea or a question.

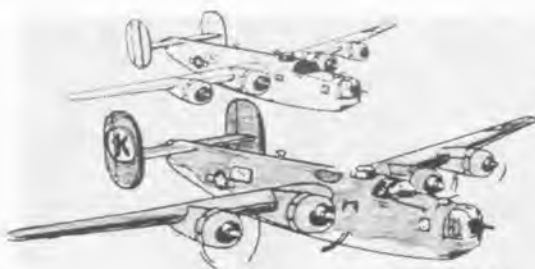
Midwest Area 2nd Air Division Reunion

A Midwest Area 2nd Air Division 8th Air Force Reunion will be held in Springfield, Illinois on May 26 and 27, 1993 at the Holiday Inn East. Reunion Committee members (shown in photo, left to right) are: Russ Valteau (492nd), Lyman Crumrin (453rd & 389th), Fred Dale (445th), Bill Kirkton (467th), James Myers (445th), Melvin Trager (44th & 92nd), and Bernie Deany (491st).

We will have tours of the Abraham Lincoln Home, the State Capitol and the 183rd Air National Guard facilities, as well as Lincoln's Tomb and the Vietnam Memorial which is very impressive. There will be a Western Type dinner on Wednesday evening of the 26th as well as a business meeting and program. Our banquet will be on Thursday the 27th with a noted speaker.

Bill Kirkton
#1 County Road
Chatham, IL 62629





458th Bomb Group

by Rick Rokicki

LAS VEGAS / HILTON HEAD

No question that the 45th Annual Reunion in Las Vegas was a huge success by any standard. What is on my mind now is the 46th one we will be holding in Hilton Head Island, SC, in early November. As of this writing, neither Duke nor I have had any great response to another Group Reunion in Dayton. However, as an alternative to that idea, why not attend in great numbers at Hilton Head? We had an excellent convention there in September 1989, and had our second highest Group attendance then also. It is planned to set aside one full day for any activity that a Group wishes to do. I will check further to see what can be planned, etc. and advise. In the meantime, I would ask that serious consideration be given to making this Convention/Group Reunion a big success.

INSIGNIA

The last order of 458th Bomb Group blazer insignia has arrived, and all orders I had have now been fulfilled. There are only 10 left to fill any future requests. If you still want one, you should not delay any longer in ordering. Cost remains at \$10.00 P.P. and checks should be made out to me. I still have two of the 752nd Squadron "patches" left. Cost is \$9.50.

TAILWINDS

We have added five new members since the last JOURNAL column: **Andrew Lubnick OH**, **Robert Ash LA**, **M. Keith McKee AZ**, **Robbie Honeycutt TX**, and **Weston Huntress ME**. At the same time, I have been advised of the passing of five of our long-time members: **Dee J. Butler**, **Richard Gibney**, **Gerard Guerrette**, **Charles Jordan** and **Robert Morford**. I have sent Group condolences to their families.

Although I still have a few **Turner Publishing** forms left, I believe they plan to send a separate mailing to all Second Air Division Association members who were on our last mailing list for the JOURNAL. So, if you don't receive word from Turner over the next few months and/or have moved recently, please write me and request an order form. I will xerox the last copy of an original and send it on to you. This publication will be as informative of the Second Air Division and our Association as we can get. I don't know the planned publishing date, but much material has been gathered — personal biographies, etc. I'm sure if you let this one slip away, there may be some regrets.

The **Mike Bailey** color poster order forms are gone. If you want this 27 x 40 inch poster, write to: **Park Sutton Publishing Ltd, Hi-Tech House, 10 Blackfriars Ct., Norwich, NR3 1SF**. If you choose to phone, 0603-667021 or Fax 0603-760284.

Bernie Newmark has a small (2½") 754th Squadron insignia available. Fits great on your golf or baseball cap. Bernie has absorbed the cost of production, but says the \$5.00 you send will go to the Memorial Library Fund. His address: 180 Clover Hills, Rochester, NY 14618.

There exists a "Mystery Stamp Mailer Person" somewhere in the Pittsburgh, PA area. I received an envelope containing various

denominations of stamps, from 29¢ down to 1¢. It is a fact that I've been using them in my replies to the Group correspondence. If you get a letter from me with 3 or 4 stamps adding up to 29¢, you will know where they came from. So, whoever you are, Mystery Man, I appreciate your cleverness! Have been through my Pittsburgh area list of 458th members and will catch up to you someday... While on this subject, I have tried to answer all mail as soon as possible; however during the Season's Holidays, I may have missed one or two.

I still continue to get requests for the last printing of our "458th BOMB GROUP HISTORY." I again say that there are no copies left and the book will not go into print again. However, according to some correspondence with **George Reynolds**, he feels a future publication is not out of the question, but more new information must be found to make such an effort worthwhile. With that in mind, those of you who have this book will note that the line drawing of "Final Approach" is on the cover. I've dug out of the archives a photo I received from **Leslie Stuckey** some time ago of the aircraft and crew who flew the 100th combat mission. My records show that this was over Osnabruck rail marshalling yards on March 9, 1945, and the 458th put up 28 aircraft that day with good results. Only **Kendrick Ferriell** and **Fred Hopp** are not or were not members of the 2ADA. **Robert Sinsabaugh** was a member some years ago but when mail sent him was returned and no renewal of dues was sent, he was dropped. I have heard that he may have passed on, but nothing official.



Front row: **John Holodak**, navigator; **Ken Ferriell**, pilot; **Dario DeJulio**, co-pilot; **Art Sjolund**, tail. Back row: **Leslie Stuckey**, engineer; **Robert Sinsabaugh**, nose; **Frank Beck**, waist; **Harvey Poff**, radio; **Fred Hopp**, waist.

Over the years, I have had several suggestions by correspondence and at various reunions to get hats, jackets, etc. made for our Group. I have no desire to get into this, but I have no restrictions or conditions on anyone who wishes to, and I will do all I can to promote it in my column. In every venture that I've entered into, once I was able to recover my costs, the profits went to the 2ADA and later, to the Memorial Library Fund. In short, there was a reason for this and over the years, it has amounted to several thousand dollars. Anyone wishing to do the same will have my full support. I have a flyer that will give you some idea of costs, volume, etc. If interested, don't hesitate to ask.

Feather Three

by Ed Wanner (445th)

There was a definite vibration all right. Damn! Mac was pointing at number three's engine instruments. He was right, that engine temperature was climbing, the oil pressure had dropped and just looking at the nacelle we could see it shaking. Our B-24 had taken a hit — and where it counted.

Pratt and Whitney engines were our pride and joy, but we were already cutting the gas off for number three, and with one last hopeful look at the engine, I told Mac to "feather three." The prop slowly stopped windmilling as I reached for the rudder trim tab, after cranking in the correction so our Liberator wouldn't be pulled to the right by the port engines. Our indicated airspeed dropped at this high altitude even though we were pushing the three good engines. We started easing out of the formation. The plane flying in the slot would pull up to take our place as deputy leader for the squadron.

After letting the crew know what was going on, we reminded them, as if we needed to, to be on the lookout for "bandits." We all knew we were vulnerable to Luftwaffe fighters when we became separated from our squadron — just our guns alone to drive them off wouldn't be as effective as the guns from eleven other Liberators. As we used to say, we felt like a sitting duck. In a non-combat flight over friendly territory, a lost engine wasn't a big deal. We would have just dropped down to eight or nine thousand feet and headed for the nearest base with hardly any loss of airspeed.

But this was different. At our assigned altitude we needed all of our superchargers and four good engines to get to our target and then out of enemy territory as quickly

as possible. It was out of the question to try and keep up with our formation, so I stuck our nose down to gather some speed — and headed for home.

We could hear the three engines labor with their extra load. Mac's and my eyes kept checking the manifold pressures, cylinder head temperatures and oil pressures. We nursed them by giving them a little richer mixture of fuel — we'd lean out the mixture later if it looked like we might run short of fuel. But for now we wanted cool running engines and a little extra power.

The ground beneath us seemed to creep by. Someplace along our route we were hearing calls from bombers expecting to be under attack, asking for fighter cover. Every eye on our plane was searching the sky for a sign of a German plane. It is an eerie feeling being someplace over Germany with no one else around. In the distance the waist gunners could make out the stream of allied bombers heading for their targets, and here we were below them and heading the other way.

We couldn't maintain our altitude with a heavy bomb load and a feathered engine, so we were slowly losing altitude. We could jettison our bombs to lighten the load but it would be a wasted mission for us. When we were lower in denser air we'd be able to hold our altitude better, and especially if we got an opportunity to drop our bombs on a German target. Unfortunately when we'd go lower we'd also be an easier target for the German 88mm anti-aircraft guns.

Someone on the crew called out the position of possible enemy fighters, so limping along with our loss of altitude and loss of airspeed, I decided to give our fighter escort

a call. After several "Hello Little Friend, this is Big Friend," we finally got a reply. Trying to keep my voice steady as a rock, I told them that we were having a bit of trouble and could use a bit of company to keep "bandits" away. A far off voice said, "Roger, we'll be right down." At this point my co-pilot was still struggling to keep as much altitude as we could — we didn't want to make things too easy for the flak guns below.

After what seemed like an unreasonably long time, there was no sign of our fighter escort and I was beginning to wonder if they were using us for bait. Or maybe they couldn't find us, and we were hoping the Germans couldn't, either. Here we were in this big "banana boat" that anyone could have seen for miles and it was hard to convince ourselves that we couldn't be seen by about everyone in the Third Reich.

Our other three Pratt & Whitneys were starting to run a little hotter than normal in spite of our efforts to nurse them along. We hadn't found any other damage from flak and some of the engine instruments were reading just a little bit out of the green. After a while I called "Little Friends" again and was assured that they would be right down. I'd heard that before. As we waited I listened to other squadrons that had spotted "bandits." Their escorts were above their groups S-ing back and forth as cover. We figured that our lone plane must have a low priority as these "ace happy" fighter jocks wanted to go where there was more action. I would gladly have traded places with pilots of any P-38, P-47 or P-51 so I wouldn't have to feel like a sitting duck. I'd have settled for anything — even a Piper Cub.

Still no friendly fighters. As I was mumbling to myself about the ancestry of our fighter pilots, the waist and tail gunners called on intercom to say that two fighters were diving from five o'clock high. Oh, hell, here we are with no escort! Green, in the tail turret, asked if he should open fire when they were in range. I replied, "Hell, yes! If they don't act like ours, start firing." The two fighters kept boring in until they were just barely out of 50 caliber range, then pulled off to the side and did a quarter roll. Now we could recognize them as P-51s. Bless their little pointed heads! Our heartbeats slowed down to a gallop. They really didn't hang around very long. Probably just long enough to reassure us that they were in the neighborhood. And it did improve our morale!

At about 12 to 14,000 feet we were flying pretty well and able to hold our altitude, but we had lost another of our electrical generators. Maybe we had more damage than we thought — but we still had two left in the other engines. Also we still had a full bomb load, so Sandy and Weiman were

(continued on page 20)



Feather Three (continued from page 19)



looking for a target of opportunity. After all, we might not get credit for the mission if we aborted without hitting something.

About five minutes in front of us was something to hit! A railroad marshalling yard. Joe was on the bomb sight and the bomb bay doors were coming open. I waited for the red light on the instrument panel to light, meaning bombs were away. In a few moments Joe called to say the target was blowing up. "Hey, how could that be? We haven't dropped yet." About that time someone discovered a squadron of B-17s way above us — they must have dropped their salvo of bombs almost through us. Wow!

We did find another target. A large farm complex or something with clusters of buildings. We had to get rid of our bombs soon and head for home in our damaged

plane. Someone reminded me that we were carrying mostly propaganda leaflets with just a few bombs. We dropped everything anyway, and someone suggested as we straggled over the North Sea to England, that with thousands of paper leaflets fluttering down, the Krauts would have enough toilet paper on that farm to last until the end of the war.

To add to our excitement, gunners Kuepker or Swede spotted an unidentified fighter plane approaching us from the right side as we crossed the North Sea. We were suspicious of him since we had been warned that Germans sometimes had our planes. It was probably a Mosquito from Britain's Air Sea Rescue with red tail — in fact it was. He was escorting us but looking down the barrels of our top turret and waist gun. I've wondered what he was thinking as he

flew a close formation with us, looking at those fifty caliber barrels pointed at him. When we got close to the English coast he wagged his wings and left. What a beautiful little plane.

Ahead was a rather large armada of U.S. Navy ships — and suddenly there were four bursts of flak up ahead. Almost in a line across our flight path — with red smoke. Whoa! This was a little too much for one day. Our Navy wasn't convinced that this lone B-24 was U.S. Army Air Corps so they were impolitely warning us away. We fired colored flares with the identification code-of-the-day, lit up our ID belly lights, then did a right turn (as prescribed) to fly parallel to the coast until we could turn back toward our base without flying over the "bloomin' Navy." Naturally we weren't very happy with them since we were coming home with flak damage — but they were a bit touchy about any plane approaching them. After all, we didn't take any chances with the Mosquito escort, either, did we?

We came over the English coast at about 4000 feet. The green fields below us were a welcome sight. Tibenham Tower cleared us to land and we did a straight-in approach — no regular landing pattern — we wanted on the ground soon.

Our co-pilot and I were both on those rudder pedals for the landing. With a cross wind blowing we "crabbed" into the wind as the wheels touched down, but that marvelous tricycle gear straightened out our B-24 perfectly for the landing roll. Eat your hearts out, B-17 jockeys. We landed "light as a feather" with one feathered. After writing up the Form 1 (aircraft's mechanical problems), we climbed down through the bomb bays and looked at the flak damaged engine and other holes. With a sentimental gesture, just like in the movies, I gave that Liberator a very friendly pat. How could such an ugly plane be so beautiful?

The American Eagle Squadrons

In the early days of World War II, 244 American pilots made their way to England and volunteered to fly for the Royal Air Force. They played significant roles in the Battle of Britain during the months of August and September 1940, and subsequent action against the Luftwaffe.

In 1940 and 1941 three fighter squadrons were created within the RAF specifically for the Americans; these units became known as the American Eagle Squadrons. A number of Eagles became aces by shooting down five or more enemy planes. The RAF awarded 40 decorations to 31 Eagles. In 18 months of operations with the RAF, the Eagle Squadron pilots shot down more than 73 enemy aircraft. Each squadron at some point led in total scoring throughout the RAF for a given month.

Then in September 1942 the three Eagle units were formally transferred to the United States Army Air Forces, where they

became part of the 4th Fighter Group of the 8th Air Force. The 4th, in turn, profiting from the combat experience of the former Eagle pilots, eventually became the highest-scoring U.S. fighter group of World War II.

The Eagles' individual and collective experiences have been chronicled in three books by Vern Haugland, a veteran Associated Press war correspondent and later AP's aviation/space editor.

The first two books, *The Eagle Squadrons: Yanks in the RAF, 1940-42* and *The Eagles' War: The Saga of the Eagle Squadron Pilots, 1940-45*, were published more than a decade ago. A third book, *Caged Eagles: Downed American Fighter Pilots, 1940-45*, was completed just before Mr. Haugland's death in 1984. It was not published until early 1992 when his widow, Tess, was successful in finding a publisher for all three books in a set.

These three paperback books are published by TAB Books, Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17294-0850. They may be purchased through many bookstores in the United States. In Canada they are available through McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 300 Water Street, Whitby, Ontario L1N 9B6.

On May 12, 1986, the Eagle Squadron Memorial was unveiled in London, England, Situated in Grosvenor Square, directly across from the statue of Franklin D. Roosevelt, this memorial is a "must" for Americans visiting London.

Further information about the American Eagle Squadrons may be obtained from:

William E. Beatty
194 Connor Drive
Henrietta, NY 14467
Tel. 716-359-1659

492nd Happy Warrior Happenings



HAPPY WARRIOR SUBSCRIPTION

A roster of the 492nd Bomb Group membership, which includes those members who belong to the 2nd ADA, the 492nd BG, and Associates/Subscribers totaling 402 names and addresses, is being sent to everyone who has contributed to the Happy Warrior. After several discussions during the Las Vegas Reunion in October, it was decided that due to the increased cost of both postage and printing, changes in the subscription policy of the Happy Warrior Newsletter were necessary.

Following in the footsteps of several other groups who have newsletters, the following policy became effective with the Winter issue of the Happy Warrior (December/January): **Only those who have made a contribution of any kind to the 492nd BG Happy Warrior will continue to receive the newsletter.**

When I started the newsletter two years ago, I did not have a set subscription fee and

by Willis H. "Bill" Beasley

have left it on a voluntary contribution basis of pay-what-you-are-able-to-pay. Realizing that there are those who may not be able to afford to pay, I did not want to work a hardship on anyone who wanted to receive the newsletter. Additionally, finding former members of the 492nd Bomb Group was not an easy task, and I did not and *do not* want to lose any member simply because of inability to contribute a dollar amount.

However, the other side of the coin is that there are many members who are extremely generous and are supportive of the newsletter both with their dollars and their articles. We seem to have an imbalance that must be corrected. So, gentlemen, if you wish to continue receiving the Happy Warrior and have never made a contribution, drop me a note. The December/January issue is the last one you will receive unless I hear from you.

Let me add — **STAMPS ARE ALWAYS VERY WELCOME.** Some of you may have noticed the old, unusual stamps on the letters I have sent you... these stamps are a contribution from Ben Cohen. Quite a few of the postal workers have never seen them and have had to do a double take.

There are several Bomb Groups which exchange their newsletters on a reciprocal

basis with the 492nd Happy Warrior. I think this has been a mutually enjoyable experience. However, unless I hear from the other groups who have a newsletter, and to whom I have been sending the Happy Warrior, your subscription has just expired.

TRAIPIINGS AND TRAVEL

Sorry we couldn't make the Florida reunion dinner; however, Norma and I are planning to attend the 2nd ADA reunion dinner at El Toro at the end of February and also the one in Dallas at the end of March. We have enjoyed the California dinner very much, and always look forward to going. The Southwestern Dinner will be a first-time for us and we look forward to seeing some of the Texas members.

The Group attendance at Las Vegas was great... let's double that number for the November 2ADA reunion at Hilton Head.

GROUND CREW AND GROUP HEADQUARTERS

Just Found — Harry Loper, former ground crew member, lives in Colorado Springs almost in my back yard. I would like to find some more ground crew members, so if you know of any, please let me have their names.



Gilbert Woods sent this picture. The only two men he could identify was himself in the back row on the left and Floyd Mock, pilot, 492nd B.G. in the second row from the front, second from the left. Help! Does anyone recognize anyone in the picture?

466th Bomb Group 50th Anniversary Reunion

The 466th Bomb Group will hold a 50th Anniversary Reunion, June 23-27, 1993, at the Sheraton Colorado Springs Hotel, Colorado Springs, CO. The highlight of the reunion will be the dedication of a 466th BG plaque (see sketch at right) at the United States Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Friday, June 25 at 10:00 AM.

The proposed wording on the plaque is as follows:

**Dedicated In Remembrance Of All Who Served In The
466TH BOMB GROUP (H)
333 Killed In Action, 171 POWs, 8 Evaded, 27 Interned
231 Combat Missions Flown From Attlebridge, England
First Mission 22 March 1944 • Last Mission 25 April 1945**

A great reunion is planned... a fun time is guaranteed. Visit our hospitality room... you may see buddies you have not seen in 48 years. Reach out to your crew members, friends, family... we want to see record attendance! The ladies will enjoy this reunion, too. For further information, please contact:

**Louis Loevsky
16 Hamilton Drive East
North Caldwell, NJ 07006
Tel. (201) 226-4624**





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

by Hap Chandler

TRIBUTE TO THE "GREAT ONE"

His name was Don Ferguson. I always called him the "Great One." Thereon hangs this tale:

On 26 November 1944, the Luftwaffe's 301 Jagdgeschwader found a gap in 8th Air Force fighter coverage, and minutes later had the 491st in their gun sights. This momentary lapse exposed the Ringmasters to their most concentrated fighter attack of the war. Within minutes, 16 of the 28 bombers were lost to enemy fighters; a 17th bomber crash landed in Belgium with dead and wounded. Don was lead navigator in the Deputy Group lead ship of the 854th Squadron.

The next day, for the first and last time in my checkered combat career, I was summoned to the 491st Group Navigator's office. My assignment was to "grade these logs from yesterday's mission." The logs were those left from the Misburg massacre.

Lo and behold but whose log should appear, on top of the pile, than that of Don Ferguson, a classmate and close friend from navigation school. If my aging memory is not playing too many tricks, this is what he wrote.

Precisely entered in the methodical way which became his trademark was: "Take-off — climb to altitude — assembly — English coast out — Dutch coast in 'four gun battery, left and out of range,' Zwolle — Dummer Lake —" all carefully noted with longitude and latitude, just as they taught us at Pan American six months before.

At the I.P. his discipline deserted him, and rightly so. *He began to write poetry*, in the midst of a ferocious fighter attack.

"MEs and FWs all around
Four B-24s going down!
OH, HELL!!!!!!"

Forty years later he wrote, "Parachutes with our buddies dangling by the dozens were observed all over the place... it was a sight to behold." I asked him once what he was thinking at the time. I don't think he had a conscious memory of writing poetic comments in his log.

Nevertheless, he made it back from Misburg, and all the other targets he led his squadron and group to. He was one of the few navigators awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his outstanding navigation and combat skills, a rarity at this period during the war.

Don died October 6th, after a long, courageous struggle against the effects of a stroke several years ago. We mourn his passing and send our heartfelt sympathies to his wife Betty, his family and many friends in the 491st. A great American who served his country with courage and distinction.

SICK CALL

Dee McKenzie reported in November that his wife Ruth was hospitalized in Sacramento. We were pleased indeed to receive a card from Ruth saying, "I have felt the benefit of many prayers and am now resting at home. A bit weak but looking forward to complete recovery!"

Dee's navigator, Bob Buck and wife Marian recently celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary at their son's home near the McKenzie's in Citrus Heights, California. Besides Dee and Ruth, Mel Tockey and his wife attended. A crew reunion. OLD CREWS NEVER DIE, THEY JUST ANNIVERSARY AWAY!!

GROUP HISTORY PROJECT

"THE RINGMASTERS" History of the 491st Bombardment Group (H) is "one of the best histories of an 8th Air Force Group... the first person accounts of aerial combat are vivid. I could not put the book down," writes Sam Sox, noted World War II historian and photographic authority. Sam is responsible for the outstanding clarity of the book's photographic collection of 800 pictures. Following is his review of "THE RINGMASTERS" and ordering information.

REVIEW OF "THE RINGMASTERS" The 492nd Bombardment Group (H) by Sam Sox

In August of 1991, I had the opportunity of meeting with "Hap" Chandler and discussing with him the possibility of working with him in the preparation of photographs for your unit history, then in the pre-publication stage. Having just completed a three-year stint with the 352nd Fighter Group in a similar project, I was more than amazed when "Hap" advised me that the history committee had set completion date of the project to be 12 months hence. Impossible, said I, instantaneously reliving the past three years, remembering all the inherent problems faced by the 352nd editorial staff.

Last October, I received a copy of the history and have just completed reading it. To say that it is probably the best history thus far assembled covering the exploits of a heavy bomber unit during World War II is at best an understatement. Most histories covering bomber units are generally a listing of the mission summaries with interspersed stories written in third person used to break up the seemingly endless listings of "aircraft on target," "bomb sighting," "aircraft lost," "mission time," "briefing," short blip relative aircraft lost, and enemy aircraft destroyed. How fortunate your



Betty Ferguson, Don Ferguson and Royce Colby, Savannah, GA, November 1989.

staff was to have had the seemingly endless array of excellent first-hand stories and accounts from which to choose. As a result, the narrative leaves one with the impression that the reader has just had the privilege of witnessing your history unfold through the eyes of many of the various participants who comprised the 491st. The stories are rich in detail and each contributor adds his own special flair to this great narrative. The photo documentation is as excellent as the script. The stories are visually brought to life as a result of the generous interspersing of excellent quality photographs throughout the text. Being an avid military aviation history buff, I was very pleased to see the large assembly of nose art that was included and appreciate the choice of the slightly larger format that was used in presenting them. The selection of the pictures depicting the "Market Garden" supply drops are significantly unique.

My sincere congratulations to the "RINGMASTERS" book committee for a job well done and very much in keeping of this fine unit's motto — "The Last and The Best." I genuinely appreciate the opportunity of having been permitted to contribute to your outstanding effort. You can be proud of not only your unit history but of your unit's performance when you answered your nation's call to duty. I unequivocally recommend this excellent unit history to all aviation buffs as a must addition to their libraries and as the hallmark for all other bomber units contemplating the preparation of their histories. "Blue Skies To All."

Copies of "THE RINGMASTERS" are available for \$65.00 each including shipping in the USA. An order form was included in the Winter 1992 JOURNAL, page 22, or you may contact John Leppert, 5479 Salem Square Drive South, Palm Harbor, Florida 34685-1139; Telephone (813) 784-1984. Make check or money order payable to RINGMASTERS HISTORY.

A Son's Search To Understand

by Dan Vukelich

Reprinted from the Albuquerque Tribune, April 15, 1992

Dush Vukelich, Dan Vukelich's father, was a gunner on a B-24J Liberator flying from England. He was shot down near Berlin in June 1944 on his 28th mission. In the years since his father's death in 1981, Dan has tracked down his father's crew to learn what he could. This week, after years of traveling to air shows hoping to see a flying B-24, Dan finally got a chance to fly in one.

As a child, whenever I asked my father about his plane and his crew I got vague answers.

"We went in different directions," he'd say, and I'd drop the subject.

From my father's time in England, there was a pocket-size diary, but the problem was that he wasn't much of a writer. Whole weeks would go by with no entries.

Occasionally, missions would be described without elaboration. "Had a rough one yesterday," one entry said.

"More bad weather over the target," another said.

An entry Dush made in May 1944 at age 20 always intrigued me. "Leave in London. Doris. What a night!"

These tantalizing bits and pieces spurred me — like sons of dead fathers everywhere — to try to answer other unresolved questions about his life, especially his time in the war.

After his death I decided to try to track down his crewmates.

I had few clues. The diary. A picture on my grandmother's wall. A few medals. Photos with no writing on the back. A German phrasebook that taught you how to say, "I am an American flier and need help."

I also knew the name of the plane. A B-24 bomber named The Jabberwock.

The search began in the spring of 1983, when I was subscribing to *Air Force Magazine*. A regular feature was a column on reunions, calls for lost squadron members and the like.

I took a shot and wrote. "My father was in a B-24 called The Jabberwock shot down over Berlin after D-Day. Are any of his crew members out there?"

My father was dead. Only nine people in the world could answer that letter.

But after a month I got a letter that began, "Dear Dan, I was in your father's crew; what do you want to know?"

Many answers followed.

Through letters, phone talks and visits, his crewmates filled in some of the blanks over the next eight years.

But I became convinced my search would not be over until I rode in a B-24.

Dush was a Serbian kid from the South Side of Pittsburgh who ran his own dice game at 13, ran numbers for the local gangsters and played water polo and basketball.

The South Side was a neighborhood where just about everyone, including most of the males in my family, worked in the steel mill.

He enlisted as soon as he turned 18, figuring the Army Air Corps offered a more glamorous life than that of a foot soldier. He was trained in the use of the single .50 caliber machine gun at the waist position, at

the window behind the wing of the B-24.

When I heard a B-24 [the Collings Foundation's "All American"] was coming to Albuquerque, I sought the help of the local 8th Air Force Association to arrange to travel to Abilene to meet it.

When the engines first coughed, then roared to life, I was caught unawares by the bone-rattling noise, the same noise Dush had heard and felt every time they took off.

What would he be thinking? Busying himself with details, the guns, the heated suit, the oxygen, the ammo belts, trying to get ready for the mission.

He had always been nearly deaf. I thought it had been the dynamite from years in deep-tunnel construction jobs, the work he did most of his life.

From his window behind the wing, the full power of the engines flowed right into his eardrums. No wonder no one could watch TV in the same room with him.

For most of the three-hour flight to Albuquerque, I stood by the window of the B-24, at the waist gunner's spot, leaning out to feel the airstream in my face.

On missions, he had stood here for hours at a time, idly watching the terrain go by or scanning the sky uneasily for fighters.

How do you pass the time wondering if this is your day to die?

Dush had talked about his final mission with bitterness.

On June 21, 1944, the day he was shot down, The Jabberwock and its crew were not scheduled to fly.

Almost from the moment they lifted off, they were in trouble. Their plane was a "war-weary" B-24, a collection of scavenged parts so patched up that it flew poorly, its engines so lacking in power that it had trouble holding formation right from England.

It was their 28th mission. They wanted to make 30 before the quota for going home was raised again, so they went.

They were short of the target, Berlin, when three JU-88s made a single head-on attack that took out the No. 4 engine. Miraculously, they all bailed out safely.

Over the years, Dush blamed the pilot, Mel Williams, for being too gung-ho, but others recalled it had been a group decision, hastily discussed over the intercom.

Still, I found during my talks with the crew, debate persisted over who had left the wounded radio operator, Charles Burton, for dead until John Pool, the ball-turret gunner, crawled forward to save him.

And, for more than 45 years, a misunderstanding allowed bad blood to linger among some crewmates over who had left the nose gunner, Lee Steingraber, momentarily trapped in his disabled turret.

All 10 men were captured on the outskirts or suburbs of Berlin. Ten months of increasingly harsh prison camp life followed, including a brutal winter march to pull the POWs west beyond the reach of the advancing Russians.

One night in late April 1945, the prison camp's guards disappeared. The next morning, a battle was heard close by. Finally, a tank approached. It was American.

The American flag was raised. Gen.

George Patton arrived on the scene, cussed the Germans and, in a theatrical voice, demanded to know why "American boys are still behind Nazi barbed wire."

Wearing those famed ivory-handled pistols, Patton hopped on top of a tank and ordered it to drive the perimeter of the camp, smashing the wooden and wire fences to the cheers of the delighted POWs.

"Your daddy and I stood less than 20 feet from Patton," Pool, who bunked in the same POW barracks as Dush, told me. "Boy, could that man cuss."

After he was freed, my father felt cheated. Cheated out of nearly a year of his life, certainly, but cheated in a bigger way.

The son of hard-working immigrants, in 1942 he had a high school diploma, a good head for math and a chance at college. He was ahead of the game.

In 1945, he was just another returning veteran, one of hundreds of thousands of men looking for work.

He could never stop looking at the world through the eyes of a prisoner.

About the only thing Dush was willing to talk about from his POW days was playing on a camp softball team.

Whenever they'd announce the umpires on a televised baseball game, and National League ump Augie Donatelli was mentioned, Dush would always say, "I played ball with him in prison camp." We doubted it but went along.

In 1980, a year before he died, he came to visit my brother George and me in Chicago. We went to a game at Wrigley Field.

My brother heard the pregame announcement that Augie Donatelli was behind the plate. The two of us nagged Dush so hard that he walked down to the box seats by the Cubs dugout.

He stood there, leaning over the low brick wall, waving at the ump until Donatelli saw him and came over.

Dush told him about the camp and the ballgames and what position he had played and, finally, Donatelli said, "I remember you now."

We were impressed. It had been 35 years.

But my father rarely spoke of his past. He had never talked it out with anyone; never faced up to what the war had done to him.

Unlike the dozens of other 8th Air Force veterans I have met, he never, ever said, "We did what had to be done."

How did he cope? How did he handle the fear, the fear of combat, the fear of being awakened at 3 in the morning and being told you're going to Germany today? The fear that comes with seeing friends blown out of the sky day after day.

Midway through my flight to Albuquerque on the B-24, I realized that no matter how many people I talked to, I would never understand what had happened.

I had stood in his place. I had talked to his crew, but I would never know the fear and degradation of war and what it does to bright young men to make them old beyond their years.

The search, I told myself, would end with this airplane ride.



Open Letter To the 93rd

by Paul Steichen

HARDWICK DUMP SITE CONTROVERSY NEARS CLIMAX

Residents Against Tip Site (RATS) have staged their final stand to prevent the use of our old airfield for waste disposal. The Inquiry Board met in Bedford on January 26 to render their decision. A full report on the outcome will be in the next issue.

RATS, as well as five or six other organizations, have worked hard in stimulating a letter-writing campaign resulting in over a thousand letters to the Inquiry Board. Over 11,500 pounds was raised to provide help with the legal costs and public relations sector. Community activities to help in the fundraising included morning coffees, drama week for children, and a fun day at the Topcroft Sports Field.

The area has for many months reminded us of the weeks before political elections in the USA. Streets, homes and public buildings are adorned with signs opposing the proposal. Also, autos are carrying stickers on bumpers and windows.

The RATS Ball was held on Halloween night at the Hempnall Village Hall. Fancy dress or evening wear supplied style to a buffet and dancing to the music of the Water Rats Jazz Band.

Following is the text of the letter I sent to the Inquiry Board in November on behalf of the 93rd Bomb Group.

I write to you on behalf of the members of the 93rd Bomb Group Association and in connection with the potential use of the Hardwick Airfield, our home in England during World War II, as a waste disposal site.

On 6 December 1942, just a day before the anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, some 4,000 American airmen and ground personnel started to "occupy" the land and buildings, then as now, referred to as the Hardwick Airfield.

To put it frankly, these were not the best of times. There existed a long path along a very narrow tunnel that still had to be traveled to assure victory to the British, Americans and their staunch allies.

The "occupants" of this British base were young men, fresh from the cities and villages of the United States. Their average age was 21 years. They had been trained in a skill that when employed against the German mainland would help bring "blue birds over the white cliffs of Dover," instead of V-1s, V-2s, Luftwaffe bombers and fighter planes.

From Hardwick they flew, when needed early in the air war, to North Africa and provided much support to ground troops engaged in that arena. Also to participate in the famous mission to Ploesti, Rumania to surprise Hitler and destroy much of his oil production.

The men of the 93rd Bomb Group are no longer 21 years old, but they still love the people of Norfolk-Suffolk who were their friends then and remain so now. They love the soft countryside and the Hardwick Airfield. They remember a lot of things about their years living there: The crews that were not accounted for as planes were eagerly counted when they touched down on the N.S. runway; rescue trucks unloading the wounded and, yes, the dead; attending services at St. Margaret parish church; a bit of poaching at Long Wood for branches to provide a little more heat from their stove in Hut 10; Bert, the innkeeper at the Swan Pub in Topcroft who painted "regulars" beer mugs with their names and was very sad when he was forced to retire a cup; Daisy, the publican at the Three Nags on Fritton Common; football matches, Hardwick against neighboring bases, Tibenham or Seething; attending a wedding on a Saturday morning at St. Peter Mancroft or St. Stephens of one of our buddies who married a charming Norwich girl...

True, the winter weather was harsh at Hardwick Airfield, and sometimes the spring was also. But summer and autumn were great, and the friendliness of our East Anglian neighbors made us forget all about such minor inconveniences.

The men who lived at Hardwick Airfield, along with the 13 surrounding bases that comprised the U.S. 2nd Air Division, lost over 6400 men while there. The men of Hardwick flew more missions than any other group in the 8th Air Force.

The airfield was vacated by the 93rd Bomb Group on June 12, 1945. We have not forgotten this lovely place so dear to us. It is HALLOWED GROUND! I have personally visited at least once in 15 of the last 17 years. The parade of visitors continues to get "one last look."

We wish to thank you in advance for reading our position on this subject of interest to the 93rd Bomb Group. We ask that arrangements be made for an alternate solution and that the waste disposal site not be located at Hardwick Airfield.

FOLDED WINGS

Charles A. Roesch, Herman Cook, J. Robert Shaffer, Charles O. Smith.

NEW MEMBERS

Hartzel C. (Skip) Slider, Carl W. Hall, David W. Robinson, Edward F. Galioto, William S. Liles, Norman Herschbein, Robert L. Loring, Jesse J. Thornton, James C. Kennon, Harry M. Hewin, Marvin A. Jonas, John J. Sarris, James F. Bellwood,

Carroll A. Berner, Richard S. Brantley, and George W. Sadler. We also have four new Associate Members: Joe E. Smelt, Jim Bullock, Lee Wildermuth, and Charles N. McKee. If you would like addresses, please call or write me.

BITS AND PIECES OF PROP-WASH

With the scheduled closing of Castle Air Force Base, Merced, California, it is reported that the neighboring city of Atwater, population 23,000, is negotiating to take over the Base Museum. The museum holds many historical treasures relating to the 93rd... Look for a commemorative stamp of Ploesti at your favorite post office, May 1993... John Sturges, Hollywood director who counts among his credits *The Great Escape* and *The Eagle Has Landed*, died in California August 1992. Many of our 93rd POWs will remember that the escape took place at Stalag Luft III in Poland. John was an AAF veteran of WWII... Speaking of POWs, Hans Scharff, subject of *The Interrogator*, a biography written in 1978 by Toliver, died in Los Angeles at age 84. Scharff himself became a POW in April 1945 as troops advanced into Germany. Moving to America after the war, he became a famous mosaics creator... George S. Brown, a 93rd pilot in the original cadre, later became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, serving under three Presidents; Nixon, Ford and Carter... Members of the 453rd Bomb Group will remember Walter Matthau. He was a parachute rigger at Old Buckenham. According to some who knew, they were not surprised that he became such a great actor... Dear Abby provided our 2nd Air Division Memorial in Norwich some great publicity in one of her recent columns. Millions of readers were given details of the library and location. Where did she get her information? From a member of a U.S. infantry division who visited the library last summer... The Annual Meeting of the 93rd will be on Friday, November 3, 1993 in connection with the 2nd Air Division Association Annual Reunion at Hilton Head, S.C. The entire day, including the evening dinner, will be reserved for group activities. Please mark your calendars!

OUR LAST GROUP COMMANDER LOOKS BACK...

Col. Therman D. Brown, Ret. now lives in Melbourne Beach, Florida. In reply to a letter I wrote him, he has provided me with some observations about his days at the 93rd after coming there from the 376th, January 1944. Here are some of his comments:

"I haven't had any news of Murry G. Fant, 409th Squadron Commander, for many years. Like me, he stayed in the service and became a full bird. We were stationed together at the Air University about '47, '48, and/or '49. I think he went to Washington, D.C. after that. He was from somewhere in the Carolinas. If you ever run

(continued on page 25)

Division Headquarters

by Ray Strong

This column for the Spring issue of the JOURNAL is due at Editor Bill Robertie's in just a few days. So I have found some not too recent notes from some of our members which add to the experiences of so many and which need to be published for the record. I hope that more of you will take pen or pencil in hand and send me your own reminiscences.

I have some old notes from Danny Bollinger, who was in the 987th MP Co. (I used some of his other experiences a couple of years ago.) I had not realized that the 987th not only patrolled around Norwich, Horsham, Ketteringham Hall and other bases, but also the seaside towns such as Great Yarmouth, Cromer, and others where our military tended to go if they had a pass but not enough money to go to London. Here are a couple of his stories:

"The City Police Inspector of Gt. Yarmouth requested to talk with me one day. It seems that there was a little widow lady who rented out rooms to GIs and she had room enough for 6 to 10. The Inspector reported that some Yanks who were rooming there had gone down to a nearby brewery and broken into the place; took a barrel of beer and rolled it all the way to this home, a distance of about 8 blocks. The Inspector was a little put out about that and, as we had a very good rapport with them, I wanted to be as helpful as I could. If all things were as they looked, there were some GIs that, in the eyes of the British, had "Broke and Entered" and stolen a barrel of beer.

"I got to checking this thing and, as I questioned the people at the house, I learned that a British Police Bobby, off duty, was also involved. In fact, he was the one who knew where the beer was stored and how to get in unnoticed. I also learned that after they got the barrel back to the house and opened it, they found it was filled with simple sugar water. As you know, sugar was tightly rationed. A barrel of about 40 gallons of sugar water was, to the British, an enormous quantity. The GIs wanted to throw the barrel away and forget the whole thing. But this Bobby insisted that they take the barrel back to where they got it. The Bobby also wanted to save his own hide.

"So these half plastered GIs started to roll the barrel back to the brewery. About a block from the brewery, which was downhill with a cobblestone street, they lost control of it and the barrel rolled down the hill, hitting a fence and breaking the barrel. All the noise made the citizens believe that an air raid was in progress. Armed with this extra information, and the involvement of the Bobby, the Inspector decided to drop the case."

And another of Danny's experiences:

"One day in downtown Yarmouth, two pretty WACs came up to me and inquired about a pet shop. But as we talked, they told me they wanted to buy a little puppy. I remembered a place that was a pet shop

before the war, so I drove them to this little store on King Street, and sure enough they had a couple of puppies. If my memory serves me correctly, they were sisters and were twins. The girls picked out a little puppy and then they had the problem of how to take him back on the base. These gals had their own ingenuity, and one of them opened her GI blouse and slid the puppy down next to her bosom. This left two unbuttoned buttons on her uniform. They then succeeded in selling me on the idea that only two buttons open on a uniform was not so bad! I still wonder if they were successful in getting that puppy on base."

Still more from Danny Bollinger:

"In your recent newsletter, Richard Westenbarger recalled the bombing at Horsham. Although we had many warnings, we had a strafing or two and one real raid while I was on base. That occurred in Spring of 1943 when a flight of German planes went over and a stick of five bombs fell on the base. The first bomb landed about 20 feet from our barracks, the second in an open field, the third near the officers' quarters, the fourth a little farther from the officers' quarters, and the fifth off the main area of the base. I watched the British bomb disposal crew dig up the one by our barracks. It was down about 18 feet. The bomb disposal Sgt. told us that there was an initial explosion and we heard that. But the main charge did not fire. As Richard stated, those bombs were sabotaged and filled with sand — lucky for all of us!

In 1943, there was a pretty large raid by German standards at that time when at least 25 bombers bombed Norwich, causing over 300 fires in the city. We Yanks worked with the British police and firemen all night, trying to keep order and fearing that another wave might come back. That was the night we tried to save the GPO telephone exchange building. The building was saved, but the area around it was destroyed. In this same raid, they dive bombed us, as we were trying to get the Yanks into air raid shelters, just outside of the Bell Hotel. All Yanks knew where that place was!"

Here is a final report on the money raised for the bookshelves at the Memorial Room. The total was \$4555.00, with \$1997.00 coming from the raffle, \$1558.00 from contributions by HQ members and on deposit with Treasurer Dean Moyer, and \$1000.00 from a contribution from the Heritage League. This money has been forwarded to the Board of Governors in Norwich. A letter from Tom Eaton tells me that it converted to 2,952.10 net (pounds sterling). The favorable exchange rate helped a lot. The bookshelves cost 1,183.23 pounds, and two chairs for the Memorial Room cost about 414.00 pounds. I will report to you in the next HQ Newsletter on what is to be done with the remainder of the money. You should have received a newsletter from me before this JOURNAL arrives in the Spring.

Open Letter to the 93rd

(continued from page 24)

into him, let me know... I haven't read *Bomber Pilot* by Phil Ardery [389th], but I will see if I can find a copy. Really should be interesting. I have lost contact with Richard R. Catterlin. You may remember him as he was the 409th's squadron navigator — perhaps just before you joined the 409th. We were stationed together in Washington for awhile. He retired in the Los Angeles area. [K.O. Dessert was at 93rd before Catterlin or myself.]... Col. Leland Fiegel was our group commander when I first joined the 93rd. You know he was killed in the Washington, D.C. area about '47 or '48. His C-45 just fell out of a fair sky one day. I never knew exactly what happened... Thank you for the pictures. The map of Hardwick Airfield is very interesting. For the year and a half that I was there, the sun, when it came up, always came up in the west. I have a very strong sense of direction. It is just as strong when I am wrong as it is when I am right. Fortunately, I always believed the compass when in the air, but sometime between the landing and the hardstand, the direction would switch on me again. I guess this problem would have been greater if the sun had shone more. When I reported in to the 93rd, there was no sun. I arrived in a staff car that wound around the country roads until I had lost track of direction... You mention a lot of names in your letter that are familiar to me but I can't put faces on most of them. I didn't know Kenneth Keene [409th] became a Brig. General... I retired at the end of '68 here in Melbourne. After that, I started a real estate company and stayed with it for about 10 years. Now I don't do anything that people will pay me money to do."

Lest We Forget

by Myron Keilman (392nd)

During the months of April, May, June, July and August 1944, the whole Eighth Air Force flew their "breeches off." During the month of June, the 392nd alone flew twenty-six bombardment missions. We flew every day from the 31st of July through the 6th of August. Combat crews flew as high as five missions in a row. J. Fred Thomas and crew of the 579th Squadron flew his entire 30 combat missions in 68 days — including a three day pass to London and seven days flak leave (R and R). This effort was noted by General "Hap" Arnold, Chief of the U.S. Army Air Forces, Washington, DC. His message to General Spaatz and forwarded by General Doolittle states:

"The continued all out effort by your heavies day after day is most gratifying. It shows to all of us that your combat and maintenance are true teams. Please convey my appreciation to all concerned for their untiring efforts and my congratulations for the splendid results."



392nd B.G.

by Oak Mackey

6406 East Presidio Street, Mesa, AZ 85205. (602) 641-3033. That is our new address and telephone number, and Maxine and I fully intend to stay here as long as the good and gracious Lord is willing. No more moving, no more address changes; this is it. After Minnesota, this warm climate feels SO good. We love it!

Falcon Field, right here in Mesa, was a Royal Air Force pilot training base from 1941 through 1945. There are twenty-three Royal Air Force pilots buried in the Mesa Cemetery. Each year in November, on a Sunday near Veterans Day, beautiful and appropriate ceremonies are sponsored at the cemetery by the Daughters of the British Empire. Last November 8, 1992, was the thirtieth of these ceremonies. The procession was by the City of Mesa Pipe Band (all 14 in kilts), and a Color Guard. At precisely 11 o'clock, there was a three airplane formation flight overhead (one plane missing) of World War II AT-6s, followed by a 21 gun salute. A lone piper played "Amazing Grace." Other hymns in the program were: "God Save The Queen," "My Country 'Tis Of Thee," "Two Countries by the Sea," and "Let There Be Peace On Earth." Guest speakers were Mesa Mayor Willie Wong, Williams Air Force Base Commander Colonel Roger A. Alexander, and Great Britain Consul General Merrick Baker-Bates. Placing of the wreaths were by Consul General Merrick Baker-Bates; for RAF Comrades - Ken Beeby; for Scottish Clans - Tim Groves; for Daughters of the British Empire - Joan Shelbourne.

A quote from Daughters of the British Empire Chairwoman Gertrude Geldarski: "It's our job to keep the memory of these boys alive. They died in a foreign country training to fight for freedom." After the Benediction by Rev. Jack Mays, the Recessional, led by the Mesa City Pipe Band, ended the ceremonies. British pilots flew more than 300,000 hours and 45 million miles before their training program at Falcon Field ended on November 6, 1945. They trained in the venerable and always popular North American AT-6.

You have read a book review in the 392nd BGMA News by Jim Goar, Editor. The book is "CREWDOG" by John Matt. He was the navigator on the Beder crew in the 579th Sq. at Wendling. This is not a story about the 392nd BG, per se; it is about bomber air crews' attitudes and lifestyles, and much more. It can be enjoyed by civilians and military personnel alike. The following quote was supplied to me by John Matt for inclusion in my report.

"A new book called CREWDOG is available which tells, in a different and personal way, the story of young men who

joined the Mighty Eighth and took the war to the Germans and Luftwaffe. There is also the story of growing up in the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression. And after the war, there are flights into the eyes of hurricanes, into nuclear bomb test clouds, and flights with SAMFOX, the "White House Squadron." It also deals, lightly, with moral dilemmas and delayed stress syndrome. CREWDOG, by John Matt, is told with respect and irreverence, some humor and a little bit of lingering terror. It is available from Waterford Books, P.O. Box 669, Hamilton, Virginia 22068 for \$24.95, plus \$4.00 postage and handling."

Martin Bowman is an English author of some note. He lives in Norwich and has written a number of books on the Eighth Air Force operations from England during World War II. Perhaps his best known book is *Fields of Little America*, about 2nd AD bases in East Anglia. His most recent book is *Spirits in the Sky*, a photographic book about restored classic aircraft of World War II. There are several photos of the B-24J All American, there are photos of the only Lancaster still flying, and many others. For 392nd BG folk there is a very special surprise on page 76 — there you will find a half-page size photo of the mural painted in the Officers Club at Wendling depicting a formation of B-24s, surmounted by a large eagle. The navigator on my crew was Brad Eaton, who, among many other things, is a book store browser. He bought a copy of *Spirits in the Sky* in a book store for me as a very special Christmas present. It is published by Smithmark Publishers, Inc., 112 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016. Phone (212) 532-6600.

The photo shown here is of a wreath which was placed at our Memorial at Wendling last June, 1992, during the Remembrance Ceremonies there. Articles on these ceremonies have appeared previously in the 2nd ADA JOURNAL and the 392nd BGMA News, so I won't elaborate here. Both photos were sent to me by Bill Beasley, 492nd Group VP, and were sent to him by Douglas J. Wickwar of Watton, Norfolk, England, who took the pictures. Apparently Bill and Mr. Wickwar correspond on a regular basis. We thank them sincerely for the photos, their kindness and their concerns for us.

Marvin H. Speidel, Editor of the New Jersey Chapter of the 8th AFHS Newsletter, sends the following announcement of an open invitation to all New Jersey residents who served in the 8th Air Force during World War II to join the New Jersey Chapter of the 8th AFHS. An active organization of some 600 members, the Chapter holds three dinner meetings a year at military installations throughout the state for the most part and publishes a quarterly. For information regarding membership, contact Edwin Cranz, 249 Concord Drive, Paramus, NJ 07652.

Floyd Mabey, Executive V.P. of the 2nd ADA, is seeking information about this crew: Pilot Lt. Herbert Loeb; CP Lt.



392nd BG Memorial at Wendling. Photo courtesy of Douglas J. Wickwar.

William West; Nav. Lt. Glen Evans; Bom. Elmer Rightmire; Eng. T/Sgt. William Baas; Rad. T/Sgt. Jack Gould; Gunners S/Sgt. Lawrence Beukema, S/Sgt. Thomas Yelvington, S/Sgt. Loumiz Lewis, S/Sgt. Lewis Elwood. Floyd believes this crew was on its way to England in August 1943 in a B-24 #209 named Big Joint. If there is anyone out there who has any information, please pass it on to Floyd (address on page 2).

Ed E. Roloff of the 445th BG is seeking information about T/Sgt. John H. (Jack) Hollings of the 392nd BG on behalf of Hollings' nephew. Jack Hollings was killed in a crash near Wendling on August 12, 1944. He was flying with Lt. J.D. Ellis that day, and all aboard perished. However, it is believed by his relatives that he was a substitute member of the crew. If any of you recall or have record of who his regular crew was, please inform Ed E. Roloff, 424 O'Farrell, Olympia, WA 98501.

You have made your reservations at the Marriott Hotel in Albuquerque, and you have sent your registration form and money to Charly Dye at 7000 Louisiana Blvd., NE, #1601, Albuquerque, NM 87109 for the "stand alone" meeting of the 392nd BGMA on May 20-25, 1993, haven't you? If not, you better get cracking — time is running out.

It's near St. Patrick's Day: "May the roads rise to meet you, May the wind be always at your back, May the sunshine warm your face, The rain fall soft upon your fields, and until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of His hand."



389th Green Dragon Flares

by Gene Hartley

May I restate the concept of my using the 389th Green Dragon as the basis for our quarterly JOURNAL column. The B-24 painted yellow and green, used to assist the 389th in getting in formation prior to leaving England for the continent, was called the Green Dragon. Flares flew from the Green Dragon. They also flew from many other sources at our base, conveying any number of different meanings. From this Green Dragon (column) will come flares of interest, information, and nostalgia. For instance:

FLARES FROM THE FUTURE

A reminder that a 389th reunion is set for the Concord Resort Hotel at Kiamesha Lake, NY, for June 8-10, 1993. Other than a mini-reunion at Dayton in 1987, this will be our first attempt to meet alone as a Group. The setting of future Group reunions (always a half year away from our regular reunion with the Second Air Division Association) will depend on the success of this effort. You can write or phone Allan Hallett, 249 Highland Avenue, Leominster, MA 01453 (phone 508-537-7284) for further information. We need a registration of at least 50 by March 15 to go ahead with our plans.

Our annual business meeting will continue to be held at the Group meeting of the 2ADA convention. A continuing reminder that 2ADA will meet this year at Hilton Head, SC, in November.

FLARES FROM THE PRESENT

Our membership continues to increase at a rather astonishing rate. Every issue of our Newsletter or the JOURNAL brings a new influx of interest. I am sure it is because of you, our membership. It is your work in seeking old friends, in reminding others of their past participation, in suddenly remembering and contacting an old buddy, that assists our continuing growth. Keep it up.

FLARES FROM THE PAST — THE TS CARD

Remember the TS Card? Here is the wording on one of those issued at the Aero Club by the Red Cross girls.

Name: _____

We have listened (at length) to your troubles. They are undoubtedly the most heart-rending we have ever heard. We have never come across anything equal to them. We feel for you and sincerely hope it won't happen again. But things are rough all over, and if you will present this card to your nearest Chaplain, or Top-Sergeant, or KP pusher, he will be glad to check or punch one of the numbers below for you.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

(After punching all numbers, holder is eligible for a new card.)

A FLARE FROM DEARBORN

Even as the 1991 reunion in Dearborn, MI convened, word came that our long time member and past Assistant Vice President, Frank Vadas, had folded his wings. A spontaneous collection from among those present was taken to remember Frank in some way. Lloyd West, working with Bud Koorndyk, searched for a way to best use this fund. When an opportunity to buy an oak chair for the Memorial Room in the Norwich Library presented itself, they leaped at it. Within the last two months, the Frank Vadas Chair for the Memorial Room has been ordered. For those of you who knew Frank, but were not at Dearborn and would like to contribute to the Chair, you may send your remembrance to Allan Hallett (see address above).

FLARES FROM LAS VEGAS

As a fundraiser at our Las Vegas reunion, we raffled off several paintings done by Bud Doyle. I did not properly keep track of who the winners were, and Bud would like to know where his work is

being enjoyed. If you have one of his paintings, and have not already done so, would you drop a note of thanks and appreciation to Bud Doyle, 522 NW 195th St., Seattle, WA 98177.

A FLARE FROM HETHEL

Rupert JA Aubrey-Cound is an English gentleman from Norfolk who has often met ex-389th visitors from the States to show them around. As a token of our appreciation, I sent him a Newsletter. I thought you would enjoy his reply:

"Thank you for the copy of your Newsletter which I received some time ago. With it was an insert addressed to me, with thanks. May I say here and now — you are entirely welcome!

"For some time now I have been involved with various aspects of remembrance concerning the Second Air Division, and the most enjoyable part of it is taking returning veterans, usually accompanied by family members, out to their old bases. This year has been possibly the most fun I can remember recently; there have been so many groups and individuals all full of beans and joyful impatience to visit old haunts. As you know, there is sometimes a building left — sometimes not, but seeing that most of them were purposely built to last only a few years, it says a lot for the contractors who built them.

"At Hethel, as you know, there is the matter of security, but the company concerned has always been kind and cooperative in my experience. The tenant of the farm where the Chapel is located tells me I can always take folks there, and access to the various old squadron areas seems to be no problem. Jonathan Smith has far deeper and greater knowledge than I; he has researched it for years, and I too owe him a debt for his assistance.

"I see that Skip Pease gave me a kind mention in his Mail Bag letter. It may have been on his visit that the affair of the apple occurred. We had walked in from the eastern side of the base, after passing Hethel Church, and were standing by an air raid shelter where some of the 567th huts used to be. Whoever it was who was visiting reached up among the now all encroaching 'jungle' and picked an apple. I looked about for the other tree or trees. There's definitely no orchard there, nor the remains of one. We couldn't see another among all the blackberry bushes and elderberry trees.

"Pondering on this lone apple tree, and an old historical legend of 'Appleseeding' in the USA, I wondered who it could have been who was munching an apple in 567th, and missed the bin when he threw away the core! Here we were, fifty or so years later, with the descendant of his apple. (I know what some will say, but I don't care, that's what I think happened, so there!)

"There has been some discussion during visits as to the location of the Burma Road. At one stage, I thought it must have been the present track leading in toward the 567th site. I now believe it is the road (still there, in concrete) which runs across the top of the 463rd sub depot site toward Mulbarton. I think it was Skip Pease who recalled that the MPs used to wait in ambush for those returning late after the World's End pub had shut. A friend of his decided to outwit them and so turned south before reaching the gate. He then fell in a pond. The MPs pulled him out; life was unfair in those days!

"Whenever I visit the Chapel at Hethel, or indeed discuss any aspect of the 389th with veterans, the name of Father Beck comes up. The more I hear of him the more apparent it becomes that he was called to be in the right place at the right time. Standing in his office, amongst the hay, looking at the map of Europe painted by Bud Doyle, one is reminded of his ministry, by those who witnessed it. The "Black Pouch" inside his side door is still there, complete with its wooden pelmet across the inner entrance. Only the curtain is missing.

"I am glad I grew up at the time when it was all going on, as I am able to recognize little details like the pelmet as echoes of my childhood.

"Let me finish by reminding you that you have my address. Being an ex-serviceman myself, and this being my twenty-second home since my wife and I got married thirty years ago, I don't intend on moving from here. So — those who return are welcome to get in touch either on my telephone (0593) 452790, or through the library at Norwich.

"Very best wishes to all 389th!"

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
Marvin H. Speidel



The warming sun of spring has started things budding in the yard and the grass is beginning to cry, "Cut me now that we are well into 1993." I hope that you all slid into the New Year in good fashion and that by now you have marked your list of things to do in '93 with the resolution that you will become more active in the doings of both the Group and the 2nd Air Division Association. If you haven't — do it now by sending in your deposits for the reunions to the appropriate people. Evelyn Cohen is waiting to hear from you with your reservation for the 2nd ADA Convention in Hilton Head, South Carolina, November 4th - 7th; and Frank Bigos will be getting information out soon via the "Beachbell Echo" for the 446th BG Reunion in Denver. It will be to your advantage to attend either or both, especially if you have never been to one in the past. For anybody who can only get to one, Hilton Head will be ideal for those along the East Coast and its environs, while Denver will merit the consideration of those from the Rocky Mountain states and further west. For anyone who makes it to both, I'll see you there.

As Group V.P. I'm hoping to meet a large group of Bungay Buckaroos at Hilton Head and am asking for help in the form of suggestions for activities for the Group Day, November 5th. We will have our Group Dinner early in the evening and I'm planning for a Group meeting around 10:00 AM or so, but I am still searching for something that will provide an afternoon of fun and entertainment for all of our 446ers and their spouses, families and guests. I have been in contact with several companies in the Hilton Head area that provide tours, day cruises, etc. but have not come to any decision yet. I would welcome any suggestions you may have. My address is on page 2 of the JOURNAL. I would also appreciate any volunteers willing to share the management of our hospitality room in order to provide security for any memorabilia that those in attendance may bring along to share.

The next item you should have marked on your calendar is the reminder to send your donation to the 446th Museum Fund, c/o Marvin Anderson, 8411 East Albion Place, Tucson, AZ 85715. This is a project for all 446ers, and any and all donations, be they big or small, are needed. It is critical that we meet our pledge to this worthwhile cause, and we would appreciate your contribution now. Incidentally, a second donation from those who have already contributed will not be refused.

In response to my request for stories about your personal experiences in training, on leave, with the Mighty Eighth in England or whatever, I received a rather lengthy article from Al Pishioneri, which is printed here with apologies to Al for some extensive editing due to space limitations.

ALL GUNNERS WERE WATCHERS

by Al Pishioneri

In 1992 I made a return to the 446th Bomb Group Air Base in the Flixton Castle area of East Anglia. There is much change at the old station, but there was little change in the feelings that my mind conjured up as I walked into the past. Having been a gunner there, I was a watcher. All gunners were watchers. We were fresh out of gunnery school and proudly wearing our gunners' wings. There were six of us in each air crew, and we were trained to protect our bomber on each mission and to ensure its return to England and the tranquility of the Midlands. We were prepared to repeat the chore the next day and the next, if need be, until we completed our tour of duty.

Gunners were watchers. Looking for signs of trouble: with the plane, with others in the Group or from German fighters. Watching the sky! Always watching the sky and the endless formations of bombers and their fighter escort. Still to come was the possibility of enemy fighters and the flak on the way in and at the target. Watching the flak and watching those oily black bursts coming closer and

closer. Then the bomb run with no evasive action allowed and no turning back. Once the bombs are away, there comes the sharply banked turn to get out of there. All the time we are watching: for the bomb hits, for parachutes from stricken planes and for danger to ourselves. Watching for any and all of this becomes difficult as all the planes are at steep angles turning away from the target and rejoining the formation.

The return leg to our base in England has to be more thought provoking for us watchers than the ride to the target. There is still some flak and the nerve wracking watching for the Luftwaffe. It feels great to get out of Germany and out of Europe, but we are watching all the way. And now, with the Channel in sight, the watching becomes crazy. The entire flying Eighth Air Force is converging on that little isle, approximately 65 miles by 65 miles — East Anglia, or the "Fields of Little America" as Martin W. Bowman called it. The watching gunners begin to watch in earnest. Looking left, looking right from their positions, they see hundreds of bombers closing in on that one vanishing point — England. It now appears to be a race. A race, it seemed to this watcher, that pitted one Group against all the others in their urgency to get down. Now the intercom becomes crammed with desperate calls. Some for help with wounded, some regarding lost planes, and still others sounding a "May Day" call to the air-sea rescue dispatcher.

Now there are bomber groups above and bomber groups below. Groups passing over to the right and groups passing under to the left. Fuel gauges must now be reckoned with. Pilots are looking for room to fly it in, every plane in its proper place, and with that comes the final watch. The gunners' last watch for the day is looking for the ground and the runway to come up and then watching and waiting for the thump of the tires telling one and all that they are home. Now button her up, ride the trucks in to debriefing with coffee, sandwiches and a shot of Old Overholt. Then the welcome sack and a sigh of relief. But the next day there will be more watching all over again. If not the next day, then the next or the next until it is over. Finally, you're through and with it the end of the gunners' posture, the end of the watching.

As I reminisce some 47 years later, two distinct thoughts cross my mind. One, that we were very fortunate in safely completing our tour and returning to the States; and two, that we need to give prayers of thanks for those 446ers, some 400 plus, who never returned. I'd like to think that they are still watching and that they arrived home ahead of us.



Maj. Paine (93rd M.O.) moves quickly to make a house (back) call and he fervently desires, above all, to make it in time. Whether he did or not, we'll never know.

489th News and Reflections

by Neal Sorensen

Harry and Ginny Wagon's marvelous mini-reunion for a capacity crowd of 489th comrades and their wives in Orlando, Florida will be past tense when this goes to press. February 12, 13 and 14 will be long remembered by those who jammed the hospitality room atop the Universal Tower Hotel. The tales were humorous, nostalgic and sad all in one. With 18 British Friends of the 489th in attendance, the marvelous ties that bind our two great countries together were strengthened even more. With limited seating capacity of 130 for the banquet, Harry has set out to find a banquet room that will hold all who wish to attend in 1994. The casualness of the reunion underscores the purpose of getting together — to recapture those moments when each of us felt a sense of mission that seems so limited in today's society.

A truly enjoyable added feature was a caravan to Lakeland, Florida on February 14th to entertain our British guests at the Lakeland Country Club. Helen and Garrett Verplanck graciously hosted a Bloody Mary reception in their lovely home, followed by a lovely luncheon at the Country Club. Virginia and Ralph Belward, along with Helen and Garrett deserve the accolades for a most enjoyable event.

To Ginny and Harry Wagon, Helen and Garrett Verplanck and Ginny and Ralph Belward, a great heartfelt THANKS!!!!

A PLEASANT MEMORY... Nothing was more enjoyable to a lowly Aviation Cadet than using a Tac Officer's "know it all" attitude to create a result quite opposite to the Tac Officer's intent. With the passage of some 50 years, I confess to the following:

Our group of Navigation Cadet aspirants had completed Pre-Flight training and were awaiting assignments to Navigation School. On an exceptionally hot and muggy day we had been marched to the base theater to see a movie, "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine." (Randolph Scott was the hero, if memory serves me well.)

We never saw the end of the movie!

A hurricane which the weather forecasters said would miss Galveston and Houston changed its path with a tremendous roar. Class A's and all, we were double-timed to the flight line. Three cadets were stationed at the end of both the left and right wing. Our primary task was to keep the tie-downs from breaking loose if at all possible. When the wind actually lifted the planes off the apron, we were to hang by the tie-downs! Our little group was lucky; the tie-downs held and our plane was still intact when the eye of the hurricane reached the field.

Shortly after sundown we were relieved of duty. As we made our way to the mess hall, I counted 29 partially or completely wrecked aircraft. Several had broken their tie-downs and skidded into those still secure. A few had reared up like a terrified stallion and had been flipped completely over!

The Mess Sergeant was a "Houston Volunteer," one of those marvelous men (well beyond conscription age), who enlisted with

the proviso that they serve near their homes. And SERVE he did! With all power out, we brought our weary bodies into a mess hall that was dimly lit with candles. This marvelous man had a few camping stoves that he had scrounged up, so we had hot soup and sandwiches. Nirvana to a starving cadet!

In their undying gratitude to us for the planes saved by our six-men-on-a-plane hold down efforts, we were rewarded with three days of shovel and broom clean up privileges. Better yet, (and this winds its torturous way back into the heart of my story about the unsympathetic Tac Officer), I was awarded DEMERITS at our next inspection because the "Erstaz" material the visor on my hat was made of had blistered and was "a disgrace to the uniform."

Being subordinates, but not stupid, I, and others who had similar storm-induced damage to their uniforms, waited for the next Pilot Class to graduate so we could hopefully scrounge the needed gear.

The day arrived. Early in the day my buddies and I trekked over to the Cadet Supply Room. The Supply Sergeant was good natured. We explained our mission and he waved us toward the various piles of turned in uniforms; shirts, trousers, blouses and hats.

Fortunately for me, the hats were separated by one aisle from the other uniform parts. I spied the perfect hat — it had a genuine horsehide leather visor and fit my egg-shaped head perfectly. Better yet, it had a 20 mission crush!

Just at that moment of happiness, I heard the gruff voice of a Giver of Demerits, "Sergeant, what are these Cadets doing in Clothing Supply?" "Getting clothes to replace worn or torn articles, Sir," was the Sergeant's courteous reply. "They have no right to be here!" Then, addressing the Cadets in sight he commanded, "Put those supplies down and return to your areas."

I almost panicked. If I didn't get the new hat, I was doomed to more demerits. Open Post in Houston was too precious a commodity to surrender without my best effort. Quickly I thrust the grommet from my damaged hat into the desired hat. Placing it squarely on my head in the best Cadet manner, I transferred the damaged hat into my left hand. By so doing, I covered up the demerit-causing blisters. Just then, the Tac Officer came into my aisle. "Mister, didn't you hear my order to the other men?" "Yes, Sir, but..." He interrupted my plea gruffly, "Put that hat you're holding down on the pile and return to your area." "Yes, Sir," I said in what I hoped was a tone of proper regret. Remembering not to expose the damage on my former hat, I turned it upside down, placed it carefully on the pile and walked out quickly.

Outside, one of my buddies who had heard the verbal exchange waited for me with a sympathetic look on his face. Slowly his look turned to wonder. "You son of a gun," he said with admiration in his voice, "you tricked that S.O.B.!!!"

Hethel Highlights

by Earl Zimmerman (389th)

Would you believe a flying jeep? The photos (please see page 30) were sent to me by my pilot, Colonel Harold L. James, Ret., who served as Engineering Liaison Officer at Third Air Force Headquarters at South Ruislip, England after the war. He was involved in research with the M&L Engineering firm, which worked on the project during the war to develop the flying jeep.

During the Tuesday morning ham net of the 2nd AD, I mentioned the flying jeep to the lads on the net and received varying responses. A few, knowing of my impeccable reputation, took me at my word. Some were a little dubious, and a few were hard to convince and made statements like, "Earl is seeing ghosts again." A few of the lads sat on the fence and waited for further proof. So I made copies of the jeep sitting on the hardstand and in the air and mailed them to the interested lads on the net.

Bob Jordan, 453rd type, apologized after seeing the photos, but I suspect he had tongue in cheek, and still thinks I am seeing ghosts. John O'Grady, 93rd type, advised that the flying jeep was not unlike Santa's sleigh. Edward Schwarm, 44th BG, an electrical engineer, said he had made some calculations on his computer but wasn't thoroughly convinced that a jeep could fly. Colonel Daniel L. James, Ret., 4th Fighter Group, and a member of the Eagle Squadron, is one of my strongest backers. He advised that after the war he was assigned to McDill AFB and heard of the flying jeep project which operated under the code names "Flat Foot Floogie" and "Wiggletail." Charlie Weiss, 93rd BG, another engineering type, claimed he could not make any determination as he was in the process of dressing out a buck deer during the net and had to study the matter further. If I know Charlie, he will contact a friend in the Pentagon and do some research before making any declarations. Engineers are like politicians — they beat around the bush, expound many theories, but never seem to give a definitive answer.

Others involved in the flying jeep controversy are: Bud Sargent Jr. (466th), George Hill (44th), Fred Browning (44th), Frank Gyidik Jr. (56th FG), and Walter Eichensehr (44th).

By the way, the net is alive and well, and we are usually the first to hear of any new developments in the UK concerning the 2nd AD, as we talk to Bill Holmes in Norwich every week to get the latest and pass on any requests if we need a favor for our particular group. If you ex radio operators would like to get in on the act, or even some of you ex pilots, who at least could manage five words per minute, get in touch with our net chairman Ed Schwarm, 251 Regency Drive, Marstons Mills, MA 02648. We welcome all newcomers. It's not that difficult to get a ham ticket these days.

(continued on page 30)

Folded Wings

44th

Leo P. Austin, Jr.
William R. Austin
John J. Brown
Albert D. Franklin
Harm J. Krull
Harry Lemond
Norman A. Ross

93rd

Robert T. Coleman
Paul D. Kennon
Martin Naberezny
Roger C. Nelson
Chester M. Preston
Howard N. Young

389th

Albert C. Ahlers
Colie G. Cape
Donald N. Fetts
Robert F. Frank
William A. Joerin
Col. Alvin J. Sheard, Ret. (96th, 466th)
Cecil M. Sheeder
Lester L. Wagner (392nd)

392nd

Ltc. Raymond F. Berthiame, Ret.
Walter M. Harvie
Joseph B. Payton
John M. Serafini
Felix W. Susen
Ernest W. White

445th

Paul S. Hahn
Henry Orzechowski
James R. Paul
Bernard S. Rubin

446th

Haywood N. Nichols
Harry J. Reece
Thomas J. Ryan, Jr.
Col. Charles O. Smith, Ret. (44th, 93rd)

448th

R.F. Eldridge
John W. Hortenstine (389th)
Robert C. Klein
Peter J. Murray
Raymond Peterson
John R. Royski

453rd

William Clearfield
Glen L. Hodge
Frank J. Krakowski
Quentin Kroeger

458th

Dee J. Butler
Col. Richard J. Gibney, Ret.
Gerard F. Guerette
Charles F. Jordan
Francis C. Van Blargan

466th

Charles L. Gibson

467th

Sherman Brockett
Gail A. Derr
Alexander K. Duncan
Paul Erlich
Michael Hasiak
Victor Ladan
Harold W. Larson
Jack H. Viets

489th

Horace E. Davis
Franklin L. Roll
Russell C. Savage
David D. Tracy
Julius E. Vanerwegen
Louis J. Wagner

491st

Jerome R. Apelman
Bill M. Bost
John C. Carlson
Jacob J. Holman
Lloyd D. Hubbard

HDQ

Frederick B. Simard

361st F.G.

Donald F. Vulgamore

479th F.G.

Verlin F. DeBolt

65th F.W.

Dominick F. Tucci

Assoc. Member

Esta Yoakum (389th)

S. Member

Albert G. Kimble

Hethel Highlights...

(continued from page 29)

To ward off all the doubting thomases regarding the flying jeep, and protect my reputation, I am having the records of the archives in Washington D.C. checked for the code names "Flatfoot Floogie" and "Wiggletail." If any of you research types out there have any knowledge of the flying jeep, drop me a line or send your article to Bill Robertie, our 14 carat editor. If you can lay your hands on some hard copy, so much the better.

Some of the questions asked about the flying jeep: What gear for takeoff? Do you make one 4 point landing or two 2 point touchdowns? What rank does a jeep pilot hold? Where is the relief tube located? Is the windscreen (English term) fitted with deicer fluid? Etc.

Come on, guys, give me a break. If we can get to the moon, we can surely fly a jeep. Stay tuned for further information.



Would you believe a flying jeep?

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Letters



Dear Bill:

I just re-read Steve Birdsall's "Log of the Liberators" and once again was infuriated by the Confederate Air Force's reference to their C-87 as a B-24. I quote from page 50 of Birdsall's book:

"In other roles the B-24Ds became the first Liberator Express, the original C-87 being the result of a crash-landing by a B-24D early in 1942. The aircraft was repaired and flown to San Diego with fixed gear, where Isaac Laddon and an Army Air Force representative organized a three-week modification. Laddon recalls that 'we did it mostly by waving our arms and pointing to show where we wanted equipment taken out, a deck laid, or openings cut.'

"The British called these aircraft Liberators C VIIIs and they could carry twenty passengers and their crew of five — in all 280 C-87s and six C-87As were built, all at Fort Worth. Air Transport Command Pilot Ernest Gann called them something else: 'It was said the assembly of parts known collectively as a C-87 would never replace the aeroplane — they were an evil bastard contraption, nothing like the relatively efficient B-24 except in appearance — the C-87s would not carry enough ice to chill a highball.'"

To those of us who flew a real B-24, calling the CAF C-87 a B-24 is obscene.

Merritt Derr
Box 705 RD 1
Barton, PA 19504

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I have heard quite a lot of conversation and also read about what people thought the Confederate Air Force's "Diamond Lil" was before conversion. I decided to find out.

I contacted General Dynamics and was referred to Aero Space Museum, then to their archives.

I considered "Diamond Lil" to be a C-87, the cargo version of a B-24. There were 276 C-87s built by Convair Ft. Worth.

"Diamond Lil" started out as a B-24A. In landing at Albuquerque, NM, it was badly damaged and was converted to a passenger version. I also asked if Churchill flew in a C-87 but was told that the English converted an LB-30 for his transport.

I hope this will settle any questions about what Confederate Air Force's "Diamond Lil" was before it was converted.

Herman A. Peacher
202 Nixon Place
Chula Vista, CA 91910

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

In reference to the article on page 25 of the Fall 1992 JOURNAL ("Three Brief Glimpses of the Air War" by Robert E. Oberschmid, 93rd BG) about a crew going to Switzerland, I must make the following observations.

It is part of the official record of WWII Air Force operations that under orders of Gen. Hap Arnold and other commanding generals in the Air Force, a complete and intensive investigation failed to show one incident of where an American air crew went into Switzerland without justifiable reasons. The implication that any crew would defect to Switzerland while on a combat mission for no apparent reason has been proven unfounded.

The official investigation covered some 160 aircraft of the allied air forces that were interned in Switzerland. If there had been even the slightest suspicion that even one of these crews went there without sufficient battle damage or aircraft operational losses, it would have turned up.

The fact that there were 61 American airmen killed in action going into Switzerland is eloquent testimony to these facts of the courage and heroism of these crews. To imply otherwise is unjustified.

Forrest S. Clark
703 Duffer Lane
Kissimmee, FL 34759

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Just wanted to say "Amen" to Jordan Uttal's letter in the Winter 1992 issue of the JOURNAL commenting about Fred Breuninger's letter in the previous issue.

I first saw the "Diamond Lil" in 1978 and have been lucky to have been able to see it four other times since then. When possible I try to be at the airport when it comes in for landing and also for takeoff when leaving. On each occasion I have always felt a strong emotional feeling within me and had a lump in my throat. If that makes me an old "softy," so be it. Yes, Fred, I do know the difference between a B-24 and an LB-30.

The week before the convention in Las Vegas we were fortunate to have the CAF's "Diamond Lil" and B-29 "Fifi" here in Amarillo on display for three days. I spent three days at the admission gate visiting with many old B-24 types and answering questions from some of the younger generations who came out. The second day there, a fellow at the gate was making comments similar to Fred's and saying he wasn't about to pay because it was not a B-24. My first reaction was to reply, "Yeah, and your mother wore Army boots," but of course I didn't. I introduced myself, struck up a conversation with him and learned he was a former B-24 crew chief. I was surprised he did not know the history of "Diamond Lil" so I explained it to him, at the same time emphasizing that most of the equipment he had worked on was the same as that on "Diamond Lil."

After a while he looked at his wife and said, "Well, we drove all the way out here, we might as well go through it." Sam Mangrum, one of the flight engineers who made the flight back to England on "Lil," was working the plane that day and gave the old crew chief a good tour. When the old crew chief came back to the gate to leave, he stopped to chat with one of the CAF fellows. His wife kind of eased over by me and in a low voice said, "Thank you — he wouldn't admit it, but I know he really enjoyed getting to go through the plane."

The last day, about 2:00 PM, as preparations were being made for takeoff, a sleek British "Spitfire" on the way to an air show in Texas came in for refueling. It was different than other "Spitfires" that I had seen in that it had two seats in tandem on it. I was told it was used to train pilots. Sorry, Fred, I didn't know what else to call it except "Spitfire."

Bill, I thoroughly enjoyed James Graham's article, "The Caravan" in the Winter issue. Speaking for our crew, we appreciated all our ground support personnel and many times let them know it. They do deserve more recognition than they receive. We would have been in a "mell of a hess" without them. I know you can't print articles if you don't get them, so I hope they will keep sending their stories in to you.

I too have a gripe — I wish we had more space for "Letters" in the JOURNAL — but then again, we can't have everything, can we? Keep up the good work and hang in there.

Buddy Cross
4810 Tulip
Amarillo, TX 79110

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Dear Bill:

I am still trying to get in touch with my crew members. We flew together with the 453rd BG, 732nd BS from November 1944 to April 1945. Our pilot (deceased) was Ralph Sheringham from Islip, Long Island. The rest of the crew is as follows:

Rick Gourley, co-pilot from Minocqua, Wisconsin; Irving Ratner, navigator from New York City; Otto Scharmacher, engineer from Oklahoma; Victor Hauser, asst. engineer from Minnesota; John H. Cox, tail gunner from Atlanta, Georgia; John P. McGeary, nose gunner from New Jersey.

The locations listed are probably outdated as they go back more than forty years. Other crew members, now deceased, were Charles Hiskey from Memphis, Tennessee and Carrol Archibald from Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

If anyone knows the location of the surviving crew members, please contact me at the address below. My telephone number is (617) 325-7111. I'd like to talk to any or all of these men who were so close to me at "Old Buck."

John F. Best
10 Edgemont Street
Roslindale, MA 02131

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Original "Witchcraft" flight crew in January 1944 at Wendover, Utah before flying to Rackheath, England. Standing (right to left): Lt. Jack Kraemer, bombardier; Lt. Charley Mintzlaff, navigator; Lt. John Oder, co-pilot; Lt. George W. Reed, pilot. Kneeling: Sgt. Bob McCuen, tail gunner; Sgt. Alex McLean, gunner; Sgt. Kubacek, gunner; Sgt. Vern Bundoock, gunner; Sgt. Mel Bland, radio operator; S/Sgt. Bob DeKerf, engineer.

Dear Bill:

I enjoy reading the JOURNAL very much, and look forward with great anticipation to receiving my next copy.

I consider myself very fortunate to receive many letters from other comrades. I have made many friends from other Bomb Groups due to the JOURNAL, and there are several people from Norwich and Rackheath, England who have become pen pals. It is all due to the letters section in your magazine.

Bill, you have been very generous in publishing information about the "Witchcraft" record. As Crew Chief I feel very honored, and thank you for the write-ups.

Going through some old photos and letters recently, I came across an original photo of the first crew that flew the gallant "Witch" to England and completed their tour on her.

I feel they should be recognized because they were one great crew under Lts. George Reed and John Oder (Stinky). The crew members are still with us except Charley Mintzlaff, navigator, who passed away some years ago.

This crew certainly merits being shown in the JOURNAL. I am equally proud of them as I am of my old B-24H "Witchcraft."

Joe R. Ramirez
13727 Cornish Crest Road
Whittier, CA 90605

Dear Bill:

I am writing to tell you of a book I discovered and read in my local library, the title of which is "The Escape Factory" by Lloyd R. Shoemaker (1990 St. Martin's Press, ISBN 0-312-03826-7).

I believe it is a must for all former air crew members to read, about an organization sworn to secrecy for all these years and now the cat is out of the bag.

Some of our friends we flew with were trained in secret, as code writers and called CVs. We all may have had one on our crew and never knew it.

They were trained to help in the escape of POWs and our escape kits were put together by this factory. They hid and shipped escape items into POW camps, etc... but if I go on you won't need to read the book, and I recommend you do so. It gives you a very nice, warm feeling to finally find out after all these years that someone besides God was watching over us and trying to help those who were taken prisoner.

Henry A. DeKeyser
21742 Walnut Street
Lake Elsinore, CA 92530

Dear Bill:

You do a wonderful job with the 2ADA JOURNAL and I appreciate your efforts more than you could know. I also appreciate the job that Evelyn does with the Association and the reunions. They seem to improve each year, and the one at Las Vegas was the best yet — the band was excellent, food good, most of the speakers kept it short, and we had more time to dance.

The JOURNAL, the reunions both group and division, and the fellowship and comradery I enjoy with men of like experiences are the reasons that I am a member of the 2ADA. I am not interested in building monuments or memorials, but I have no conflict with those who do.

I especially enjoy reading the letters in the JOURNAL, but was disappointed in the one in the Winter 1992 issue from our Honorary President. We are getting too old and have too little time left to be engaged in such vindictive deviousness.

O.G. Martin
HC 67 Box 169
Ash Flat, Arkansas 72513

Dear Bill:

In reading letters in the JOURNAL, I thought I could give some help to folks who are trying to find former buddies.

The Social Security office will help locate people for you by:

(1) Your furnishing full name and middle initial. (2) Your furnishing name of state you think the person's original Social Security number was obtained. Each state has identification number. (3) Social Security will tell you if the person is living or deceased. (4) They will forward a letter from you to living persons. (5) Social Security will not give you the address of living people you are seeking, but will give you the address of wife or other family member if deceased.

I tracked down the crew members on my plane this way. Found all I was seeking, thanks to the Social Security people.

Ron Ring

Journal Policy For "Snowbirds"

PLEASE NOTE: For members of the Second Division Association who have both a summer and a winter mailing address: **We mail one JOURNAL to each address.** This is the easiest and least expensive way, as third class mail is NOT forwarded, and you all come and go at different times and we can't keep track of you.

Dear Mr. Robertie:

I am a member of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and am researching the history of the U.S. air war effort during the Second World War.

I would like to obtain information about the 2AD's activities during the war and to correspond with ex-members of 2AD units (ground as well as air) regarding their war service. As my research is purely personal, any information that may be related to me would remain strictly confidential.

Please don't feel under any obligation, as I realize that memories of these years would be both traumatic and personal. However, if you're interested I would be only too glad to hear from you.

Best wishes to all the men of 2AD for 1993 and the future.

Cpl. Mark Wyllie A129767
HQ Logistics Command (RAAF)
PS2B1A1
1st Floor
Cordell House
16/18 Albert Road
South Melbourne 3205
Victoria, Australia

Dear Bill:

In the fall of 1944, the 96th Combat Wing sent a bunch of "Happy Warrior" officers to the 467th BG at Rackheath. Capt. Ted Clymer had been a Lead Crew 1st Pilot at Horsham St. Faith, I think, before his H/W tour with us. He was assigned to Gp Ops. I have tried for 30 years to get a line on Ted or any word on his fate after May 1945. Ted was from Tennessee.

Another mystery man in the 467th BG was LTC. Walter R. Smith, Gp Ops Officer, and a human dynamo. He dropped off the edge of the earth after 1945. Neither Col. Al Shower, Major Capers Holmes, or T/Sgt. Larry Spencer could say if he is alive or dead. Every outfit seemed to have a dedicated wheelhorse who got things done even if he trod on tender toes doing it. Smith was from Minnesota, blue eyes, sandy hair, no sense of humor.

Tom Swint
Box 117
Fox Island, WA 98333

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Dear Bill:

Please publish this picture of S/Sgt. Lawrence Beukema and the names of the other members of his crew who flew a B-24 #209, possibly named "Big Joint." They left Scottsbluff, Neb. around August 1943, possibly for England. A good buddy of Beukema had this picture and had written to him in England, but the letter came back "deceased."

Crew names are: P-Lt. Herbert Loeb; C-P-Lt. William West; N-Lt. Glen Evans; B-Lt. Elmer Rightmire; E-T/Sgt. William Baas; R-T/Sgt. Jack Gauld; G-S/Sgt. Lawrence Beukema; AG-S/Sgt. Thomas Yelvington; AE-S/Sgt. Louis Lewis; AR-S/Sgt. Lewis Elwood.

Any information about Beukema or any of the crew, please contact Floyd H. Mabee, 11524 Zimmerman Road, Port Richey, Florida 34668.



S/Sgt. Lawrence Beukema

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Crew Chief Sgt. Gill (?), 453rd BG, 733rd BS, with aircraft "Star Eyes."

Dear Bill:

I am a fairly new member of the 2nd Air Division Association and have enjoyed very much reading the JOURNAL. I would like to contact some of my old Army buddies that I served with while we were in England.

We were with the 453rd Bomb Group, 733rd Bomb Squadron at Old Buckenham, England from December 1943 to June 1945 as line mechanics. This is 48 years later so I don't remember names. I am enclosing pictures of our ground crew and crew chief with plane "Star Eyes" in the hope that somebody out there might have some infor-

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Dear Bill:

As 2ADA Liaison to the Heritage League, I recently sent a letter to each Group Vice President and member of the Executive Committee and associated committees with a request to consider enrolling their family members in the Heritage League.

I now address the entire 2ADA membership with a request to enroll their spouses, their children and grandchildren in this budding organization. The present Executive Committee of the Heritage League is comprised of first generation members who appear to be very dedicated to furthering the Heritage League for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of those men and women of the Second Air Division who gave their lives during World War II, as well as those of us who are still around. Their goals include support of the Memorial Library in Norwich, England and also to find a location in the United States where a display of World War II, 2AD memorabilia can be housed. In addition an essay contest is being sponsored by the League with a monetary reward. Details are forthcoming in the *Heritage Herald*, newsletter of the Heritage League.

Billy Sheely Johnson, an Associate Member of the 492nd Bomb Group, is the current League President. If you have ideas or comments, please send them in. An application for membership in the Heritage League was included in the Winter 1992 issue of the JOURNAL, page 11.

Willis H. "Bill" Beasley
1525 South Garfield Street
Denver, CO 80210

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James E. Straub (right) is looking for the other members of his ground crew from the 453rd BG, 733rd BS.

mation that would help me contact them.

I think our crew chief's name was Sgt. Gill but I am not sure. In the picture of the ground crew, that's me on the right, without arm patches showing. Also any information on the aircraft "Star Eyes" would be appreciated.

I am not much for writing letters and composing experiences, but maybe by the next time I do this I will have a couple more pictures and an experience to relate.

James E. Straub
213 Walters Ln #1A
Itasca, IL 60143-1495

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Dear Bill:

You will recall our previous correspondence concerning the possibility that at least one of the original wing models prepared for David Davis by Leland Reid might still exist. [Please see Fall 1992 JOURNAL, page 9.] Such is indeed the case; not one but TWO such models have been unearthed by Bob Reid at the Reid family farm in Iowa. Their small size, compared to the much larger B-24 wing model described in the Davis article, probably accounts for their preservation.

I welcome hearing from anyone who has knowledge of David Davis and/or the early development of the Davis Wing for the Liberator.

Allan G. Blue
Box 210
Bendersville, PA 17306



Bud Reuter holding one of the two wing models discovered by his cousin, Bob Reid. Even after fifty years, the superb glossy finish is evident. Judging from the shape, this model probably was made for Davis during the Manta Aircraft Corporation period around 1940/41.

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Second Air Division Association

46th Annual Convention • November 4-7, 1993

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Ocean Front at Palmetto Dunes
Hilton Head Island, S.C. 29938 • Telephone (803) 785-1234

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

Registration
Early Bird Party
(Cash Bar and Complimentary
Hors D'Oeuvres)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4

Registration
Golf Tournament
Cocktail Party
Buffet Dinner
Awards Ceremony

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Buffet Breakfast
Free Morning & Afternoon
(Group V.P. will advise you as to group
activities for this morning and afternoon -
costs not included in package.)
Cocktail Party
Group Dinners

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Buffet Breakfast
Business Meeting
Cocktail Party
Banquet & Dance

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Buffet Breakfast

The costs listed below are for the entire package listed above, including hotel room for three nights, Thursday 11/4 to Sunday 11/7. For special requirements, drop me a line and I will advise costs.

COSTS PER PERSON

Single Occupancy\$455.00
Double Occupancy\$330.00 per person
Triple Occupancy\$285.00 per person
Quad Occupancy\$265.00 per person

DEPOSIT WITH RESERVATION — \$50.00 PER PERSON — FULL PAYMENT BY SEPTEMBER 1st.

In all future conventions, an advance deposit of \$50.00 per person attending will be required, which will be non-refundable if written cancellation request is not received before 90 days of the convention starting date or by due date of the entire payment. Confirmations will be mailed upon receipt of deposit.

We will no longer provide you with insurance forms. You may obtain these from your travel agent.

All extra nights and incidental charges must be paid upon check out, directly to the hotel.

Cost for extra nights — \$80.00 + 7% payable on check out.

PLEASE SEE REVERSE FOR ADDITIONAL NOTES AND CONVENTION RESERVATION FORM.

CAMPGROUNDS — R.V. Resort & Yacht Club, Hilton Head Island

Full Hookup: \$28.00 per night.

Rental Camper: \$55.00 per night. (\$150.00 refundable deposit required for rental.)

Notes: (1) You must first send your reunion deposit to Evelyn Cohen. (2) Early camper get-together will be held on Wednesday, 11/3. (3) We are working on shuttle transportation. (4) No reservations accepted after 9/25.

Name _____ Group _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Arrive _____ Depart _____ Total No. in Party _____ Children _____ Pets _____

Type R.V. _____ License No. _____

Make check payable to: R.V. Resort & Yacht Club (\$25.00)

Mail to: M&M Floyd Bull, P.O. Box 30, Circleville, N.Y. 10919. (Phone 914-361-2632).

Please see reverse for Convention Registration Form...

46th Annual Convention (continued from page 35)

PARKING: Free at Hyatt Regency.

GOLF TOURNAMENT: Contact **Pete Henry**, 164B Portland Lane, Jamesburg, N.J. 08831. Phone (609) 655-0982.

NON-SMOKING ROOMS: 145 Available

HANDICAPPED ROOMS: 15 Available

WHEELCHAIRS: 2 Available

AIR TRAVEL: If you wish to avoid going to Atlanta, I would recommend that you fly U.S. Air to Charleston, S.C. and change for flight to Hilton Head.

RESERVATION FORM

Name _____ Spouse _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Group for Group Dinner Seating _____ Group for Banquet Seating _____

Sgl. _____ Dbl. _____ Trip. _____ Quad _____ Will Share _____ Arr. _____ Dep. _____

First Convention _____ Deposit _____ Paid in Full _____ Nicknames _____

Names of other parties in your room if triple or quad _____

DO NOT CALL HOTEL FOR RESERVATIONS, CHANGES, CANCELLATIONS, ETC. All these should be sent to:

Evelyn Cohen
06-410 Delaire Landing Road
Philadelphia, PA 19114
Telephone (215) 632-3992

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

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