



Vol. 32, No. 4

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Winter 1993



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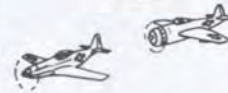
SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



JOURNAL



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THE SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION traces its initial meeting to 1948 in Chicago, Illinois. It was organized as a nonprofit corporation in the State of Illinois on January 10, 1950. Members of the original Board of Directors were Second Air Division veterans Marilyn Fritz, Howard W. Moore, Jordan R. Uttal and Percy C. Young. The association's purpose is to advocate and support an adequate, effective and efficient Army, Navy and Air Force at all times; to perpetuate the friendships and memories of service together in the Second Air Division, 8th Air Force in England during World War II; to support financially, and in any other way, the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division as represented by the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room of the Norwich Central Library; and to undertake such other activities as may from time to time be deemed appropriate by the membership.

REGULAR (Voting) MEMBERSHIP in the association is limited to those personnel, military and civilian, American or British, who at any time served with the Headquarters organization of the 2nd Bomb Wing, 2nd Bomb Division or 2nd Air Division during World War II and any person who served with any bomb group or fighter group or any other unit of the Second Air Division assigned or attached. Provisions are also made for Associate (Non-Voting) memberships.

Address all JOURNAL-related communications to:
Second Air Division Association, P.O. Box 627, Ipswich, MA 01938 • Tel. (508) 356-5470

Please submit material for publication to the editor by the 15th of January, April, July or October.

President's Message

by John B. Conrad

Now entering its 46th year, this Association has elected thirty-seven members to serve as president. Nine of these have served two terms each, beginning with Raymond E. Strong (HQ), Percy C. Young (HQ), and Stephen Posner (445th) in the 1950s. Young's and Posner's terms as president were separated with others being elected in between, as were the two terms of Jordan Uttal (HQ), one in the 1950s and the other in the 1960s.

Also in the 1960s, Warren Alberts (HQ/93rd) served two consecutive terms, as did John Jacobowitz (466th). In the 1970s, William Robertie (44th) served two consecutive terms.

For nearly twenty years thereafter, our presidents served one term each, following the established practice of the previously elected executive vice president being nominated and elected to the presidency. This accepted practice held until Richard M. Kennedy, my immediate predecessor, served as president in 1990/1991 and was reelected for 1991/1992. Having served as executive vice president during President Kennedy's second term, you followed the established custom and elected me as president for the just completed 1992/1993 term. You have now reelected me to serve a second term for 1993/1994. I am most appreciative of the honor.

Why didn't the executive vice presidents succeed President Kennedy at the end of his first term or me at the end of my first term just completed? Is the custom of executive vice presidents being elected to succeed the retiring presidents being discarded for some valid reason? Absolutely not. It is certainly appropriate for the person serving as executive vice president to be groomed in that position to fill the office of president.

Unfortunately, it is a matter of health that restricted further service to the Association at the time by the executive vice presidents who were otherwise expected to succeed President Kennedy at the end of his first term or to succeed me at this time. And it is also a matter of age and health that ended the services of another valuable officer of this Association.

I am speaking of Dean Moyer, whom you have elected and reelected as treasurer for twenty-four years. He resigned this past summer after the close of the Association's fiscal year because his health would no longer permit him to serve.

The average age of our members is estimated to be seventy-two, so age and health are or will become concerns of all of us. To continue the works and programs of our Association when we are no longer able to do so, the Heritage League was organized in 1987. Spouses, children and grandchildren of those who served in the Second Air Division during WWII are eligible to become members of the Heritage League.

Most of the present officers of the Heritage League are children of those who served in the Second Air Division. These officers are planning and executing programs to attract and interest others in various age brackets. The Heritage League needs and deserves our support.

You may not be interested in participating in the League's projects, but you can support the League financially by paying the annual membership dues of \$6.00 for each of your children or perhaps grandchildren whom you would be willing to cover. This financial support, a small amount for each member, collectively means so much to the Heritage League. A membership enrollment form appears on page 7 of this issue. Please use it.



Vice President's Message

by Floyd H. Mabey



I would like to suggest to all Bomb Groups of the 2ADA to be on the alert in case any more former air bases are chosen

to be a refuse tip (garbage dump), as Hardwick was. The efforts of David and Jean Woodrow and all the people of the villages around Hardwick held several fundraising affairs to fight the County against the tip.

I have just been notified by Charles Aton, Paul Steichen of the 93rd B.G., and a beautiful letter from David and Jean Woodrow (owners of Hardwick Airfield Farm at Topcroft), that after a two year battle in the courts they have won out. There will be no refuse tip at Hardwick. Mrs. Woodrow wrote, "You will be so pleased to hear that the council has been stopped from having a refuse tip at Hardwick, so once more that hallowed ground will be preserved and kept as a living memory to all those future generations coming back to Hardwick." I would like to thank all who wrote letters against the tip.

By the time you read this, my last report, I will have moved back to my winter address, 11524 Zimmerman Road, Port Richey, FL 34668-1559, and would like to wish all Happy Holidays.

As You Read Your Journal

Your Group Report.....

The page to which most of us automatically turn. Our Group VPs do a great job.

The 46th Annual Convention of Second Air Division Association ... 17

Once again, our Second Air Division veterans and their families came away from another great reunion with a feeling of renewed warmth, affection, and respect for those with whom they had the opportunity to mingle.

Bail Out!.....6

Did you ever wonder what it is like to jump out of an airplane and depend on a parachute to save your life? Richard Hoffman was the ball turret gunner on the William Nicholson crew at Wendling, shot down Nov. 5, 1943 on a mission to Munster...

The Tragic Bombing of Mortsel, Belgium, 5 April 1943 26

It was sad to have such devastation and suffering on a beautiful spring day in 1943. It is always the civilians who suffer most from the futility of war...

47th Annual Convention 35

May 1994 and our next 2ADA reunion will be here before you know it. Get your reservations in to Evelyn Cohen now!

Enjoy your Journal. It's good reading!



1994

Vice President Elect's Observations

by Chuck Walker

I wish to thank the Nominating Committee for selecting me and the Association membership for electing me to serve as your Executive Vice President for the upcoming term. I am indeed honored. You can be assured that I will devote my best efforts to furthering the goals and ideals of the Second Air Division Association.

I had recently been appointed by John Conrad to chair a Group Relations Committee and have done some work toward determining how the Group V.P.s view the overall administration of Association affairs. Let me hasten to add that without exception, the Second Air Division Association, and the manner in which it is operated, is considered the premier model for all veterans' organizations. The committee's purpose, then, became that of ferreting out ways in which the Association can continue to improve. This effort undoubtedly bolstered Group V.P. attendance at the Hilton Head Executive Committee meetings. Their participation in all discussions was very productive. The Executive Committee stands to gain from the ideas and suggestions put forth by the Group V.P.s. For that reason it behooves each Group to select their V.P. keeping in mind the best qualified individual to represent their Group and one who will make every effort to attend all Executive Committee meetings. It has been said by some that Groups should be better represented in the affairs of the Association. This can only be accomplished by the V.P.'s commitment to attend and participate in 2ADA Executive Committee deliberations. So, all you V.P.s, please keep in mind the mid-term Executive Committee meeting scheduled for March 11-14, 1994 in Kansas City, Missouri. We will look for you there!

Dick Kennedy's report on the progress of the Eighth Air Force Heritage Center, Savannah, Georgia, was most encouraging. This project, while it encompasses the whole Eighth Air Force, deserves the participation and support of 2ADA members to assure proper recognition for the vital role we played in the Eighth Air Force during WWII.

The 2ADA Heritage League is to be congratulated on their new slate of officers. The memory and continued recognition of the efforts and sacrifices made by those who served in the Second Air Division will, in not too many years, depend on the Heritage League to perpetuate. Please give them your support.

I have not as yet moved to Texas, but as soon as I do I'll let you know.

Report on the Memorial Trust

by E. Bud Koorndyk (2ADA Representative, Board of Governors)

This is a late and abbreviated report due to my arriving home from our convention at Hilton Head held November 4, 5, 6, 1993. Only Bill Robertie's kind permission to hold the printing of the December JOURNAL makes possible this report on the latest data as it relates to our Memorial Trust and the Memorial Library.

Again we were delighted to have in attendance from Norwich, England the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr. Tom Eaton, accompanied by Mr. David Hastings, Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors, and his charming wife Jean. Along with them our Trust Librarian, Phyllis DuBois, who has worked so diligently on our behalf, was privileged to attend and meet many of our members and share with them the day by day activities at the library.

Tom Eaton met with our Executive Committee and presented a series of proposals that have to do with updating our original Declaration of Trust, dated the 25th of June 1945. These changes have to do with strengthening the trust into perpetuity and also to bring it more into line with all the changes that have occurred in the trust and library since its inception. Any changes that will result from these proposals will be presented to the 2ADA for their approval prior to being voted on for acceptance by the Board of Governors.

A report on the ongoing renovation of the courtyard area of the library is pro-

ceeding forward on schedule for final completion in the early part of 1994. One of the major changes for our library will be that the passageway which ran from the entrance to the library and connected it with the reference library will be eliminated. This area will become part of our library and three panels of glass wall which now constitute the outside wall itself, will be opened up and become the entrance to the Memorial Library. The entire courtyard area which formerly held our memorial fountain will now become part of the library at large.

Upon the completion of this project, Tom Nash, the architect involved, will pursue the implementation of the new proposed fountain as presented to us at our meeting with him in June of this year.

Finally, with reference to the "Special Contributions for Books", and the "Special Personal Endowment" programs, effective January 1, 1994:

Please send funds, pertinent details, or inquiries relative to "Special Contributions for Books" (\$25.00 minimum) to: Geoff Gregory, 3110 Sheridan Drive, Garland, TX 75041.

Please send funds, pertinent details, or inquiries relative to "Special Personal Endowment" (500 pound minimum - \$800.00 at present exchange rate) to: Mr. E. Bud Koorndyk, 5184 North Quail Crest Drive, Grand Rapids, MI 49546.

Do You Feel This Way?

- TAXES, TAXES -

Tax his cow, tax his goat
Tax his pants, tax his coat.
Tax his ties, tax his shirt
Tax his work, tax his dirt.
Tax his chew, tax his smoke
Teach him taxes are no joke.

Tax his car, tax his ass
(father of his mule)
Tax the roads that he must pass.
Tax his land, tax his wage
Tax the bed in which he lays.

Tax his tractor, tax his mule
Teach him taxes are the rule.
Tax his booze, tax his drink
Tax him if he tries to think.
Tax his steers, tax his beers
If he cries, tax his tears.

Tax his ills, tax his gas
Tax his notes, tax his cash.
Tax his savings so they don't last.
Tax him good, don't let him know
That after taxes, he has no dough.

If he hollars, tax him more
Tax him till he's good and sore.
Tax his coffin, tax his grave
Tax the sod in which he lays.
Put these words upon his tomb
"Taxes drove him to his doom"
And when he's gone, we won't relax
We'll still be after inheritance tax.

Contributed by Jack Ilfrey
Editor of King's Cliffe Remembered
20th Fighter Group Association

1993 Financial Report

Second Air Division Association

GENERAL FUND AS RECONCILED 06/30/93

<u>CATEGORIES</u>	<u>DETAILS</u>	<u>SUB-TOTALS</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
June 30, 1992 Balance			\$193,201.30
1993 Receipts			
Membership Dues		\$116,116.06	
Las Vegas Convention Receipts		\$22,395.59	
Interest Income		\$2,519.90	
Computer Receipts		\$362.15	
Journal Purchase		\$5.00	
Total 1993 Receipts			\$141,398.70
Balance and Receipts			\$334,600.00
1993 Disbursements			
Journal		\$44,135.32	
Publishing & Printing	\$34,145.45		
Postage	\$9,989.87		
VP Membership Office		\$10,503.10	
Rent	\$5,950.00		
Expenses	\$4,553.10		
VP Journal Office		\$12,344.30	
Rent	\$7,800.00		
Expenses	\$4,544.30		
Executive Committee Expenses		\$8,319.75	
Other VPs & Officers Expenses		\$5,478.79	
VP Computer Office		\$2,016.13	
Rent	\$1,200.00		
Expenses	\$501.43		
Equipment	\$175.00		
Awards	\$139.70		
Treasurer Office		\$3,363.52	
Rent	\$1,200.00		
Expenses & Bond	\$531.02		
Equipment	\$1,632.50		
Audit Committee		\$1,710.14	
Banks Charges		\$50.45	
Donations		\$1,140.00	
Memorial Library		\$12,855.45	
Books - Terrill and Hodges	\$200.00		
Trusts - Eaton and North	\$1,650.00		
Representative Expenses	\$655.45		
Library Donations/Expenses	\$10,350.00		
Total 1993 Disbursements			\$101,916.95
June 30, 1993 Balance			\$232,683.05

Dean E. Moyer, Treasurer
Second Air Division Association

Bail Out!

by Richard Hoffman (392nd)

Did you ever wonder what it is like to jump out of an airplane and depend on a parachute to save your life? Richard Hoffman was the ball turret gunner on the William Nicholson crew at Wendling. They were shot down Nov. 5, 1943 on a mission to Munster. After a flak hit in the nose wheel area, which also took out the rudder pedals, throttles, and supercharger levers, the order was issued — "Bail Out." This is Hoffman's narration of his parachute escape from the disabled B-24, from his personal log and diary.

* * * * *

"Bail out!" shouted Nick over the interphone, and the guys on the flight deck rushed to jump out of the bomb bay.

"What did you say?" questioned a startled voice. It was me, wide-eyed in the ball turret. I was keyed up to fight, not to jump.

There was no answer, only the hiss of static. Nick had warned us that if he gave the bail-out order he wouldn't be waiting around to answer any questions. He was a man of his word. I scrambled to get out of the turret onto the rear deck. Both Olson and Martin looked startled as I hurriedly snapped my chest chute in place.

"What the hell are you doing?" bellowed Ole, yanking off his oxygen mask.

"Nick said to bail out!" I shouted.

"We didn't hear the order," yelled Ole.

Bosworth left the tail turret and ran forward to see what was going on. He thought I'd been hit.

"What's wrong?" he yelled.

With that the plane jolted us almost to our knees.

"Oh my God!" Bosworth exclaimed, looking back toward his turret. It had received a direct hit and leaned out from the tail section.

WHAM! Something slammed us off balance again and a large piece of the right rudder disappeared.

I yanked open the bulkhead door to the bomb bay and the wind almost blew me over.

"Look!" I yelled, pointing toward the flight deck as someone dived out of the plane.

Ole stared in disbelief and headed for the bomb bay.

"I'm going forward to have a look!" he shouted.

I didn't need to look, and climbed up into the waist window. The right inboard prop stopped turning as I lunged out, but something snagged the harness, pinning me to the plane. The fierce pressure of the wind buffeted me and a deadly chill shot through my veins. What if I can't get loose?

Something hit me hard in the rump and I sprawled out into frigid space, desperately clutching the rip cord, then the tail of the plane flashed by.

I swallowed hard and looked down at the ground miles below. Thin frigid air stung my face and the wind sounded as though a thousand screaming demons had grabbed me. I had expected a sinking feeling while falling like the ones on a roller coaster, but

felt nothing, just the wind and a terrible feeling of loneliness.

The crews had been warned during training not to pull the rip cord immediately, but to wait for the body to slow down to "a normal rate of descent. Otherwise the chute can shred or it can break your pelvis."

What if this chute doesn't open? I wondered, then decided I'd rather get that bad news later.

Our instructors had told us, "In order to have a better chance of escape, delay opening your chute until you can see the bricks on the houses." But they forgot to say what to do if you couldn't find a brick house.

Finally, I could see boards on houses. This was far enough.

I rolled over with my back toward the ground and feet pointed up at about a 45 degree angle, then yanked the rip cord and started praying. There was a burst of white from the chest pack and the whisper of shrouds as they uncoiled, then a loud snap. My fall stopped with a jolt as the shoulder straps took most of the force. Overhead the chute billowed out into a great white cloud.

"Oh you beautiful thing," I gasped. "Thank you, thank you, God." Then I realized something was wrong.

When I pulled the rip cord my legs were apart and the chute deployed between them, so my shrouds led from the harness under my left leg up to the open chute. My knee was pulled up almost to my chin, and I dangled like an insect caught in a spider's web. Damn! If I land this way I'll break my neck.

I struggled frantically until something in the back of my mind said, "Calm down! Don't panic!"

I settled down and started slipping the shrouds around my leg. Finally the last one came free, releasing the trap that held me. I was breathing heavily but could see that I was still quite a way up from the ground. I floated in a sea of silent air. I'm deaf, I thought, then I heard the sound of distant engines and saw a B-24. Poor guy's in trouble too, I concluded.

It came nearer, and I could see a smoking engine and the still blades of a feathered prop. It was my plane, headed right toward me. I watched nervously and wondered how to get out of its way. It came closer with three of its props spinning in a deadly, mesmerizing blur.

Suddenly an ME-109 screamed out of a dive behind the B-24. The fighter's wings leveled as it closed in fast. Its guns flashed in the distance, putting out long bursts of cannon and machine gun fire.

Now the bomber was so close I could see the rounds chew into the shattered tail, then rip into the fuselage and wings. The ragged B-24 shuddered and veered slowly into a steep right bank away from me. I exhaled a long-held breath.

The fighter kept coming at me, its black crosses gleaming in the late afternoon sunlight, and I thought, "This is it." The fighter swooped past in a slight bank while the pilot waved and saluted, and I returned his salute. He pulled up sharply and disap-

peared into the sun. I realized with great relief that the fighter pilot probably saved me from becoming mincemeat.

Below, the bomber slammed into the ground almost level, skidded, cartwheeled and was enveloped in dust and smoke.

I looked up and tried to spot the rest of the crew, but there was only one other chute in sight, thousands of feet above me. A swarm of something whizzed past making a whispering sound. I followed the sound with my eyes and saw tracers disappear into the blue, while the familiar rattle of a machine gun reached my ears from the ground.

"Now what?" flashed through my mind. According to our intelligence officers, "The enemy is supposed to capture, not shoot you!" Another burst of lead slammed by closer and sounded like a swarm of angry hornets. Something in my mind screamed, "The next burst is going to get you!"

I scrambled up the shrouds on one side of the chute, yanked the air out of it, and started dropping fast with the chute streaming in the air above me. I was afraid it would tangle and not reopen, but I hung limp in the harness trying to play dead and prayed the shooting would stop. The chute started to fill out with air again, but the earth was coming up too fast and I slammed hard into a plowed field. Pain shot up through me like red hot daggers. I folded, stunned and paralyzed by the impact.

A strong gust of wind filled the chute which dragged me face down about half way across the field. Finally, my muscles started working and I got to my knees, fumbling to dump the air out of the chute. Another gust of wind knocked me down. This time I was almost pulled into a narrow canal. I struggled and managed to get hold of the bottom shrouds and yanked hard, dumping the air. Now I had control and pulled the chute in, rolling it into a ball.

A fleeting thought crossed my mind that I might slip out of the harness and dive into the canal to escape. But I was immediately approached by three elderly farmers who seemed as frightened of me as I was of the pitchforks they pointed menacingly at me.

"Ist dis Holland?" I asked in crude German.

"Nein, Deutschland," replied one of the farmers. His saying, "No, Germany," just about destroyed any hope I had for escape. I thought that the plane might have flown far enough from the target area to have crashed in Holland where I might have been helped to escape.

* * * * *

Fortunately, crew 9-1 all bailed out safely, but over the next two hours they had all been captured and brought together in a flak battery command center near Munster.

The enlisted men were sent to Stalag 17B and contributed much to its infamous reputation. The officers were sent to Stalag Luft III.

At war's end, by chance, crew 9-1 was reunited at Camp Lucky Strike, near LeHavre, France, prior to shipping home.

Your Heritage League

by Billy Sheely Johnson, Heritage League President

It is indeed a pleasure to bring your membership greetings from the newly elected Heritage League Executive Committee. For the second year the committee consists primarily of children of Second Air Division members:

President: Billy Sheely Johnson (492nd); Executive Vice President: Irene Hurner (453rd); Secretary: Janice Bates (467th); Treasurer: Edward Zobac (445th); Vice President, Membership: Caron Veynar (Headquarters); Vice President, Communications: Mary Beth Barnard (445th); Directors: Vicki Brooks Warning (466th), Jeane M. Stites (453rd), Ruth Hunter Berkley (489th); 2ADA Liaison: Willis H. Beasley (492nd); 2ADA President: John Conrad (392nd).

Each member of this committee subscribes to the continued commitment of instilling respect for 2ADA veterans and their fallen comrades in subsequent generations. This commitment was exhibited by the previous Executive Committee in the success with which the League's goals for 1992-93 were met, and you can expect even greater success in the coming year.

As previously reported throughout the past year, progress was made in meeting the goals outlined for you in October 1992. They included:

(1) Public awareness was increased for

both the Heritage League and its purpose to support the Second Air Division through (a) placement of promotional brochures in various Air Force and aircraft related museums, and (b) advertisement of the League in military related periodicals which circulate nationally.

(2) Establishment of guidelines for an essay contest for all grandchildren, great nieces and nephews (grades 4-12) of Second Air Division members. The essay contest was particularly rewarding. Awards in the form of medals and \$100.00 U.S. Savings Bonds were presented to two Second Air Division grandchildren, Anne Westgate (448th) and Jessica Zobac (445th). We hope the 2ADA JOURNAL can salute these young ladies by allowing publication of their fine essays which so beautifully paid tribute to grandfathers they never were privileged to know but whose memory they respectfully cherish. Because a 2ADA meeting was being held at the same time as the Heritage League General Meeting, your membership missed being able to be a part of a most touching tribute. It exemplified what the charter members must have envisioned in founding the Heritage League in 1987...namely, that respect for you and your efforts be instilled in the hearts and minds of subsequent generations. Your hearts would have swelled with pride on

behalf of their grandfathers. Please encourage participation in this annual contest by your young relatives.

(3) Investigation is complete for establishing a tribute to Second Air Division veterans and their fallen comrades within the boundaries of the United States. Thank you to the 2ADA Executive Committee for allowing the Heritage League to join 2ADA in participating in the Eighth Air Force Heritage Center to be built in Savannah, Georgia...we pledge our support in honoring you within this center.

(4) We pledge continued monetary support to the Memorial Trust; \$750.00 was contributed to the Capital Fund in November, 1993.

On behalf of the entire membership of the Heritage League, the Executive Committee accepts with grateful hearts the support extended to the League during the recent Hilton Head reunion. Your support of our efforts will ultimately make the difference in our long range efforts to keep alive respect for what you fought for and your fallen comrades who made the supreme sacrifice. The League has moved forward significantly during the past year and will continue to do so. Mere words can't reveal our gratitude for your support...we shall make you proud! Thank You — our special heroes!

The Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF) Eighth Air Force

PURPOSES

The Heritage League was incorporated in 1987. Its membership consists largely of the family members of former personnel of the Second Air Division, as well as other friends and associates who have a demonstrated interest in the purposes of the League as outlined below:

To advocate and support an adequate, effective and efficient Armed Forces of the United States of America.

To carry on programs to perpetuate the memory of the 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force, USAAF members who gave their lives for the causes of peace and freedom during WWII and to comfort their survivors.

To conduct programs for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, through The Memorial Trust of the Second Air Division, U.S. Army Air Force, located in England.

To sponsor or participate in activities of a patriotic nature.

To provide social and recreational activities for the Heritage League and the Second Air Division Association membership.

The Heritage League further subscribes to the belief that only as we perpetuate the respect for and memory of those who served in Second Air Division during WWII, by instilling such respect in subsequent generations, will their contributions be valued into perpetuity. Please join us in this worthwhile endeavor!

REGULAR MEMBERS ARE:

Spouses, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren of former personnel, military and civilian, American and British, who at any time served with the Headquarters organization of the 2nd Bomb Wing, 2nd Bomb Division or 2nd Air Division during WWII and any person who served with any bomb group or any other unit of the 2nd Air Division, USAAF, either assigned or attached. These shall be voting members.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS ARE:

Friends or associates of regular members who have a demonstrated interest in the League and who make literary, artistic, historical or other valuable contributions to the 2nd Air Division Association, The Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division (USAAF) and/or The Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division. These shall be non-voting members.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to become a member of The Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF) and to support its purposes. I certify that I am eligible for membership under one of the categories indicated.

Name _____

Spouse _____

Street Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Tel. _____

Work Tel. _____

2ADA Sponsor _____

Unit No. _____ Relationship _____

Membership Category (please check)

☐ Regular ☐ Associate ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Annual Dues: Regular \$6.00, Associate \$4.00

Signature _____

Send Remittance To:

Heritage League of the 2AD
600 Sandhurst Drive, Petersburg, VA 23805

492nd Happy Warrior Happenings

by Willis H. "Bill" Beasley



492nd BOMB GROUP AT HILTON HEAD 2ADA REUNION: An updated report will be given later, but as of this writing (mid-October), 42 members and wives were scheduled to attend the reunion at Hilton Head, November 4-7, 1993.

More details and a complete list of attendees can be found in the next JOURNAL.

DID YOU KNOW???

The 492nd B.G. has several member/authors, two of whom were at the reunion in November. Four of the publications are:

"Carpetbaggers — America's Secret War in Europe," a new amplified edition by Ben Parnell. Contact: Eakin Press, P.O. Drawer 90159, Austin, TX 78709-0159.

"Education and Work for the Year 2000 — Choices We Face" by Arthur G. Wirth. \$29.95 pp from Jossey-Bass, Inc., 350 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104.

"To Rule The Sky" by Dr. Lou Jacques, Jr. \$12.95 pp from California Aero Press, P.O. Box 1365, Carlsbad, CA 92018.

"Fortunes of War — A History of the 492nd Bomb Group on Daylight Operations May 11, 1944 to August 5, 1944" by Allan G. Blue. \$8.95 pp from the author, P.O. Box 210, Bendersville, PA 17306.

INFORMATION WANTED: On page 17 of Vol. 3 #4 of the Happy Warrior, reference is made to the "Pangbourne Rest Home." Keith Thomas states he lived in this area for some 20 years and would like to trace it. Do you have a photo from your wartime visit? Let me know if you do.

SPIDER MONKEYS: Lt. Donald Miller's crew went down into Sweden on 16 June 1944. His crew adopted a spider monkey during their trip from the States. Several crews adopted these monkeys which had been purchased in Fortaleza by crews. Miller's was the only survivor. He was named Smoky. What became of Smoky? Does anyone remember any of these monkeys and the antics they got into? Russell Ives wants to know.

WILLIAM LYBARGER: Phyllis Bunnelle, whose late husband was William B. Lybarger, has done a phenomenal job of documenting his military history. Bill was a member of Gus Konstand's crew in the 857th B.S. as well as the 68th B.S. in the 44th B.G. She is working on phase two of her book which deals with his P.O.W. experiences. If anyone knew her husband and/or spent time in Stalag XIII D, please contact her at 2620 Monroe Street, Santa Clara, CA 95051-1837.

FRANK MILLER: "I have a mental picture of our second mission (6/15/44), a RR bridge SW of Tours, France. Fighters were

reported in the area. I was flying waist that day and noticed a plane flying on our left wing was firing on a plane that was coming over the top and to their left. The instant the plane cleared the top of the plane on our left, I fired an instant burst before recognizing it was a P-51 with invasion stripes. I don't recall if others on our plane fired as well. Someone in our squadron scored a hit, probably an oil line or something, for he was not damaged beyond his being able to land at an evacuated spot somewhere along the beachfront in France. This must have taken place because as we were going in, the fighter pilot beat us back to England by catching another plane (probably a C-47) that was returning to England. On our return, several crews including ours were dressed down for the incident. It was more or less a slap on the wrist, because long before we had started combat, we had been instructed that any time a plane came at us head on, shoot first and ask questions later. Under those circumstances our punishment was to attend aircraft identification classes a few times over a period of a couple of weeks when we were not scheduled to fly. I sure would like to know if there are any others left among us who might recall this incident."

AIR SEA RESCUE: Charles Hayes-Halliday, 3 Pelham Cottages, The Park, Nottingham, NQ7 1AQ is extending an invitation to the Air-Sea Rescue RAF Reunion, June 6, 1994, for any British, American, or Allied airman who was rescued from the "drink" in WWII.

THE SEARCH GOES ON: When the 492nd B.G. left Alamogordo, there were 72 original crews. In an ongoing search to locate the former members, I have recently found the Charles Arnett crew #717 of the 857th B.S. Members are: Charles W. Arnett, James N. Easley, Ernest M. Gavitt, Donald Pierce, and Lucien Stewart. I have also found: two members of Charles Beard's crew #603 of the 856th B.S., Israel Eiferman and J.W. Wolslager; one member of Carl Road's crew #915 of the 859th B.S., Gerald A. Polzin; Chris Dracopoulos of base defense; and Harold Walker of the Medics. After the first of the year, with the help of Dick Bastien and Ernie Gavitt, we will begin a more intensive search with the help of J.A. Hey from Holland and Klaas Niemeijer from The Netherlands.

ROLL OF HONOR: The following list of authenticated names have been added to the 492nd B.G. Roll of Honor: 2nd Lt. John E. Bronson 0-760438, S/Sgt. Donald W. Brown 3927825, S/Sgt. Fairce Conner 35128260, 1st Lt. John R. Curtis 0-789884, S/Sgt. Julius Jezior 35046846, 2nd Lt. Richard C. Kaufman 0-6933788, Sgt. James G. Morrow 34703623, Sgt. Miguel A. Reyes 39857267, 1st Lt. James P. Rogers 0-492700, T/Sgt. William J. Seufert 35789596, Sgt. Jack J. Swan 36454360.

The Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial

by Jordan R. Uttal

In the Fall 1993 issue of the JOURNAL you had the opportunity of meeting Keith Thomas, the new chairman of this organization in East Anglia which is dedicated to helping, in any way it can, the 2nd Air Division Memorial and the Memorial Trust.

Since then, he has been in the United States for a visit to the 491st Bomb Group get-together in Colorado Springs and he and his family visited with the Group V.P.s of the 492nd and 491st respectively, Bill Beasley and Hap Chandler. While Keith was here, he furnished me (as 2ADA Liaison Officer with the Friends) with an up-to-date membership list, and we had a brief discussion of the continued progress being made.

About the membership — I counted 174 names of individuals. Included among the members are 24 here in the 2ADA, and 9 British members living outside of East Anglia.

Following Keith's remarks at the Executive Committee meeting in Norwich on 15 June, I am pleased to report that the following attendees all joined the Friends: Bill Beasley, John Conrad, Evelyn Cohen, Geoff Gregory, Gene Hartley, Dick Kennedy, Bud Koorndyk, Bill Nothstein, Jim Reeves, Neal Sorensen, Ray Strong, Fred Thomas, Hathy Veynar, and Chuck Walker. Ten of them also signed up their spouses. Bud Chamberlain and I were already members.

So far, therefore, The Friends' membership includes seven current Group V.P.s. Also, in addition to our current President, seven Past Presidents have joined. We will make every effort to show our support by trying to enroll as many more as we can from our membership.

If you will re-read Keith's article from the Fall JOURNAL, you will see that the objectives of the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial are most worthwhile. Second and third generation members of the Friends from families in each base area of the Division who came to know us during the war will be there for our descendants who feel the urge to walk in our footsteps.

All of the Friends are unpaid volunteers, and proceeds from their efforts will be used to promote the work of our Memorial. I have just heard that early in October at the Annual General Meeting of the Friends, in addition to the presence of the Governors' Liaison Officer, David Hastings, they had Chairman Tom Eaton and Phyllis DuBois as interested guests.

Please consider joining the Friends. Annual dues (at present exchange rates) are \$5.00 (\$8.00 per couple). However, in view of the high bank charges for every dollar check that we may send, I will be pleased to assist by receiving your checks, made out to me, and I will remit to the Friends in pounds. (I have an account in Norwich.) For your dues, you will receive a membership card, and three or four issues during the year of their Newsletter called "Second Thoughts." I look forward to hearing from you.

466th Bomb Group

by Bill Nothstein

This will be my last message as the 466th Bomb Group Vice President. After the audit of the 2ADA funds in August, Dean Moyer resigned as Treasurer, and I was appointed to complete his term of office. I have received the nomination, and pending the election at Hilton Head, I will have a full time job.

I received a request from Charles E. Kagy (467th), 8401 Croydon Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90045, for information concerning some

close friends who were lost in an accident on September 1, 1944. They were Homer Y. Harris (pilot) and Lawrence J. Langer (navigator). Any details you have can be sent to Charles at the address above.

Since this is my last issue, I think it is fitting to share with you on this page my last mission, as related by Gene Saltarelli, my co-pilot.

Salzburg Mission: 21 April 1945

by Gene Saltarelli (466th)

This mission to bomb Salzburg on 21 April 1945 was a memorable one for two reasons: (1) it was a fiasco; and (2) it was our 27th and final mission.

With respect to the first item, when we were briefed for the mission it was made very clear that the weather was questionable and there was a possibility of recall. Secondly, the briefing officer was adamant about staying on course because the Germans had a high concentration of flak in the area. As a result, a course of least resistance had been plotted as the best route in and out of the target area.

As we approached the Regensburg area, the weather deteriorated badly. Our navigator, Dick Oatman, reported that we were off course and that we were heading for trouble. I called our leader and reported the situation. He told me to get off the radio; he was trying to get a weather report. Within minutes, all hell broke loose. The flak was extremely intense. We were flying in the second element lead position when our element leader took a direct hit, rolled over and blew up after he had fallen 500 to 1000 feet. I, as co-pilot, was at the controls at the time and made a violent maneuver to avoid an impact after he was hit.

About the same time, our flight engineer, Harry Renshaw, who had been in the top turret, ran up to the flight deck and screamed, "We are on fire!" He then immediately passed out because he did not have an oxygen mask on. We actually were not on fire. What happened was that a near flak burst wiped out the plexiglass in the top turret and literally threw him on the deck, tearing off his oxygen mask and his intercom connection. The last thing he remembered was seeing the flash from the flak shell and thinking we were on fire.

Del Pederson, our radio operator, reconnected his oxygen supply and heated suit, and treated his wounds as best as possible under the circumstances. He had a serious head injury which eventually resulted in the loss of sight in one eye.

We eventually landed at a field in Liege, Belgium, where Renshaw was hospitalized.



(L-R): Harry Renshaw, flight engineer; Gene Saltarelli, co-pilot; Del Pederson, radio operator; John Morrell, waist gunner; Dick Oatman, navigator; Ed Wygonik, pilot; John Cummings, nose gunner; Bill Nothstein, tail gunner; Stan Mohr, waist gunner.

He eventually was sent home directly from there and we did not see him again.

Since the airplane was not in the best of shape, we were taken by truck to Brussels and flown back to England in a B-17. (They can say what they want about that great fortress of the sky, but when you ride in the back, it's in a continuous fishtail.) We were gone approximately three days in all, and due to a communications fiasco, we got back just in time to prevent a "Missing In Action" telegram from going out for each of us.

We got back to Attlebridge only to be briefed for a mission to Munich. We were in the process of getting ready for takeoff when we were told to return to our briefing

room. The mission was scrubbed because the ground forces were close to the city and all bombing was suspended. Within a few days, the war in Europe was over.

The fortunes of war are unpredictable. No one can say what would or would not have happened with a slight alteration in the sequence of events. However, in retrospect, I learned a valuable lesson which has stayed with me all my life. It just takes a little patience and it may be well worthwhile, to just stop for a short time and listen. Someone may be trying to tell you something. It is unfortunate that the Lieutenant Colonel in this case did not understand that. However, it is he who had to live with it all of his life.



392nd B.G.

by Oak Mackey

"Maybe that's the way it was, Ed, but these are my memories and I will remember them the way I want." That's the punch line; I didn't hear the rest of the joke.

Today is October 8th and Editor Bill Robertie needs this report by the 15th. Looking back over the past three months, there has been a paucity of activity in the 2ADA and the 392nd B.G., so what will I report? By the time you read this, several events will have occurred. There's Halloween; then November 4-7, there is the 2ADA Convention at Hilton Head, SC; then Thanksgiving; and maybe Christmas and New Year's. As of now, I have a list of forty-five 392nd folks who will be at Hilton Head. Not a very good turnout. It may be that many 392nd members spent their time, energy and money at the 392nd BGMA Convention in May at Albuquerque.

There are two events of great interest still to come when you receive this issue of the JOURNAL. The Florida Regional Reunion II is in Orlando at the Clarion Plaza Hotel on February 6, 1994. For information and reservations, write or call Lawrence G. Gilbert, 1482 Granville Dr., Winter Park, FL 32789; phone 407-647-2623. Do not delay; time is short. On the West Coast, the Thirteenth Annual Southern California Dinner will be held February 26, 1994. Con-

tact Dick Baynes, 71 Night Hawk, Irvine, CA 92650, phone 714-552-3889; or Jay Jeffries, 17161 Westport Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92649, phone 714-846-1653.

One day last week, a "lost soul" called on my telephone. Phillip Earl was a first pilot at the 392nd BG from Nov. 1944 to the end of the war in April 1945. He and his crew completed 30 missions. He was not aware of the 2ADA until an acquaintance loaned him a copy of the JOURNAL. Over the years, he has lost contact with most of his crew, but the navigator, Raymond Perkins, lives in Las Vegas. Needless to say, both of these gentlemen have 2ADA membership application forms in their possession now. Their addresses are: Phillip Earl, 125 Oak St., Newark, NY 14513, and Raymond Perkins, 625 Royal Court Circle South, #22, Las Vegas, NV 89109. It is always most gratifying to enlist new members. We know they are out there, but finding them is an ongoing problem. If you should locate a "lost soul," please get his/her address to me ASAP.

Here are some names and addresses of new members. Perhaps some of you will recall them from wartime Wendling. John Delach, 500 Palm Springs Blvd., Indian Harbor Beach, FL 32937, was an original crew navigator in the 577th Squadron, and arrived at Wendling August 18, 1943. He flew on the first mission to Abbeville, France, Sept. 9, 1943 and on the last mission to Hallein, Austria on April 25, 1945. He flew a total of 43 combat missions, and stayed in the service after the war until his retirement in 1964. You may remember Earl

S. Parker, 2922 State Rd. #261, Newburgh, IN 47630. Manny Abrams, 68 Harwood Rd., Natick, MA 01760 was the navigator on Charley Neundorff's crew. He was a 2ADA member for years, dropped out, and has rejoined. Way to go, Manny! Jean M. Chamblin lives at 512 Haywood Creek Dr., New Bern, NC 28562. Edward J. Moran, 9515 4th NW, Albuquerque, NM 87114 was on the same crew as Fred Hollien. Frank E. Hostetter, P.O. Box 133, Osceola, MO 64776 checked-in in June '93. James H. Hair, 715 Pineview, Thomson, GA 30824 signed up in May '93. And in April '93, Harold Gates, 56 Fountain St., Ashland, MA 01721; Thomas J. Edington, 1930 S. Juniper, Escondido, CA 92025; James R. Tudor, Rt. 1, 6500 Mt. Zion Church Rd., Hallsville, MO 65255; Primo D'Alessandro, 6375 Harmon Dr., Sacramento, CA 95831; James A. Hoover, 3021 Tates Creek Rd., Lexington, KY 40502; George G. Judd, 750 Riverside Dr., Woodville, OH 43469; and Roy H. Latterhos, 2108 W. Northview, Phoenix, AZ 85021. If I left someone out, my apologies; my records are far from infallible. There are 477 392nd BG members in the Second Air Division Association as of October 1, 1993.

Think Kansas City — the 1994 Second Air Division Association Convention will be at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center, May 28-31, 1994, in Kansas City, Missouri. This central location should be more convenient for all. Try to be there; you will have a good time!

Maxine and I wish all of you Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year!

489th Notes

by Neal Sorensen

Our second great Hilton Head experience is now history. Once again the marvelous planning and negotiating skill of our V.P. Membership, Evelyn Cohen, has resulted in a memorable Second Air Division reunion. Thanks, Evelyn!

Members of the 489th B.G. are now looking forward to the annual mid-winter break in Orlando, Florida; ably hosted by Ginny and Harry Wagnon. This event, to be held February 11-13, 1994, promises to exceed previous events in attendance and activity. We are not certain how many Friends of the 489th will be attending. The 16 who flew over in 1993 promised to do their best to attend in 1994. We welcome them!

In talking to fellow comrades of the 489th I have become aware of a dichotomy of loyalties. All members (usually) will agree that without the formation of the 2nd Air Division Association it is doubtful if any of the individual Bomb Group Associations would have been formed or sustained. Indeed, our greatest membership gains in both the Division and the Group memberships occurred after the formation of the inspired effort in 1988 to establish a Memorial Trust Fund for the Norwich Library.

This highly successful drive which exceed-

ed the target of \$500,000.00 (now over \$600,000.00) ensures a perpetual memorial to our brave comrades who perished in the noble air victories of WWII.

But when I ask the 489th members who do not attend the 2ADA conventions the reason why, their reply is usually framed around this theme, "I enjoy the activities, but often cannot make contact with special friends due to the size of the event. I really come in the hope of spending a lot of time with those I worked with in England. Why can't the 489th have its own three or four day get-together? Time is running out on us."

Sensitive to these individual concerns, the 2ADA Executive Committee, in planning the 1993 Hilton Head Convention, set aside a full day for Group activities. In the case of the 489th, this worked out very well. Wyatt Porterfield kindly agreed to arrange exclusive boat or bus tour trips with those facilities at Hilton Head/Savannah. This gave those in attendance the best of both worlds; lots of one-on-one reminiscing combined with an appreciation of what the parent 2nd Air Division Association has accomplished.

The 1994 2nd Air Division Association

Convention, to be held May 28-31 at Kansas City, Missouri, offers all 489'ers and their spouses a new opportunity to expand on Hilton Head's one day of activities for their Group. If enough of us want to, we can add two days to our Group day by signing up for a period of May 26-31 when we send in our initial deposit to Evelyn Cohen. For those of us with limited incomes, a five day event would save the cost of transportation to a second event.

Due to previous requests from 489'ers for a totally separate event, we have inquired to four locations about the cost of a reunion in October of 1994. Sites investigated include Dayton, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri; San Antonio, Texas; and Little Rock, Arkansas.

Members attending Hilton Head or Orlando will be polled to see which of the above is most favorable; expanding on the May reunion in Kansas City, or holding a separate function. For those of you not attending, please call me at (612) 545-2698, or call Charlie Freudenthal at (703) 560-6422 for more information. Previous efforts of this type have not reflected great interest, but in response to those who have contacted me, I am pleased at the diversity that these sites offer to us.

One Mystery Solved

by Thomas V. Overturf

Editor's Note: In 1989 Tom Overturf wrote a letter to the editor requesting information about the crash of a B-24 that he witnessed in 1944 and the men who bailed out. Following is the text of that original letter, which was published on page 34 of the Winter 1989 JOURNAL, and then Tom's account of finally learning, more than three years later, what did happen that day.

* * * * *

"One morning about 7:00 A.M. I was standing in the chow line at my base station #131 Nuthampsted, England, 398th Bomb Group (H), and all eyes were directed skyward. It was the largest group of B-24s that we had ever seen over the base. It must have been an all out effort. Our B-17s were stood down that day and the morning was unusually clear and cool.

"Suddenly, I noticed a B-24 dropping back in the formation. It must have been at 6,000 or 8,000 feet and then the chutes started popping out. The chow line stopped moving and we counted 9 or 10 parachutes. The plane went on a few thousand yards and the right wing dropped slightly, putting it into a right turn. It then circled in a graceful manner at the edge of our base. We could not see any fire or smoke on board and it appeared that all four engines were turning. The crew all came down not too far from our bomb dump, and the plane circled several times before crashing and rocking the countryside with the explosion of a full load of fuel and bombs.

"I never heard what happened to the crew or why they bailed out. I suppose that not remembering the date of this account other than 1944 would preclude anyone being able to shed light on the particulars of this event." (End of original story)

* * * * *

As of Tuesday, April 27, 1993 no one had responded to the question, but on that date the B-24 Liberator "All American" and the B-17 Flying Fortress "Nine-O-Nine" arrived in Tucson. Several of us volunteered to help out with crowd control during the two day visit, and I met Sam Bargamian, who was a bombardier on B-24s. He said that he was going to reinstate his membership in the 8th AFHS as well as the 2ADA, and would like to attend our Arizona Chapter 8th AFHS Reunion in Tucson.

During the reunion, Sam's wife Josephine asked me to build him a B-24J with the proper colors and markings of the 409th Squadron, 93rd Bomb Group (H) as a surprise birthday gift on August 11, 1993.

On the appointed day my wife and I met them at a local restaurant and I presented him with the B-24. As we were exchanging prop wash on WWII, I mentioned the article and crash I had witnessed and he said, "That sounds like what happened to my ship and crew. When I get home, I'll dig into my records and call you."

Sam's story is as follows:

On the morning of June 11, 1944 he was flying high formation in B-24H 42-95034 on a mission to Beaumont A/D Eoix, France loaded with four 2,000 lb. bombs. Suddenly Engine #2 ran away; the pilot, Irving Fruchter, could not feather the prop. As he was working on that problem, Engine #3 also started to run away. He then saw the cowlings shaking off of Engine #2 and flames were visible as the cowlings came loose, so he rang the bell. Sam looked back from his nose position and could not see any feet on either set of rudder pedals, so he told the navigator, "Let's go now."

As he floated down, he saw the plane circling nearby and hoped it would miss them all. He landed hard on his back and just laid there thinking someone would show up to help out. After some time had passed and no one came around, he managed to get his harness off and in extreme pain dragged himself to a nearby farmhouse. There he found four of his crew having drinks on the house. He was taken to a base hospital and later learned that all the crew had survived the bailout and the only injuries, other than his own, were to the pilot who broke his ankle. The records indicate that B-24H 42-95034 crashed and burned at Newport, Essex, and the crew was as follows:

Pilot: Irving Fruchter; Co-Pilot: Unknown; Navigator: Alfred R. Thompson; Bombardier: Sam Bargamian; Engineer: Joseph Novak; Radio: Henry Blater; Nose Gunner: James Edward; Ball Gunner: Joe T. Doyle; Waist Gunner: Paul S. Batis; Waist Gunner: Harlan D. Wilkinson.

Sam tells me he has relived this bailout many times over the years wondering if somehow he could have crawled up into the cockpit and saved that B-24. He never flew with this crew again and finished up his 30 missions and came home.

Is this the bailout and crash I witnessed 49 years ago? I would say "Yes." It's a small world after all.

* * * * *

Sam Bargamian, 2302 E. Juanita Street, Tucson, AZ 85719 would welcome information on nickname of this aircraft and to hear from crew members, etc.

The Eighth's End-of-War Grand Tour

by Robert C. Sellers (458th)

At the end of the war in Europe, the 8th A.F. Commanding General, James Doolittle, instructed all groups with bombers to give their ground personnel a look at what their efforts had led to as the back-up forces behind the 8th's air crews.

Each Air Division was given a route to follow across Europe and well into Germany. Flights were to be made in good weather and aircraft were to fly at a low enough altitude for ground personnel to observe first-hand the utter destruction reigned down on Germany.

Our route crossed The Hague on to Arnheim, Munster, Bremen, Hamburg and then down to Brunswick, Hanover, Osnabruck, Hamm, Dortmund, Essen and Cologne, and then back to England.

The destruction wrought was not only an eye-opener to the ground personnel but also to the air crews who had never really seen what they now were seeing, having bombed from high altitudes only.

Post-war surveys indicated that 20% of all homes in Germany had been totally destroyed — 7,500,000 Germans were left homeless, and 3 million civilians had been killed. Germany's industrial plants were almost wholly destroyed, and the destruction was such that most observers felt the country could never be made whole again.

These Grand Tour flights continued until every member had the opportunity to go on one, which was perhaps one of their most unique experiences in the whole war.

Visiting Germany a number of times since WWII and seeing how the country had been rebuilt told me that we can never underestimate the resilience of man and the desire to come back. On one visit to Stuttgart I asked one of my German hosts, "That's an unusual mountain over there to the east of the city. It appears to have snow on it — am I seeing things?" His response was, "We don't talk about that anymore, for that isn't a mountain; it is the pile of debris taken out of the city after the war so we could rebuild the city where it was before."

He added a comment to the effect that the mountain was originally named something like "Hate Mountain" to be a constant reminder of what the Americans had done to them during the war. "All that is over, however, because of the help we got under the Marshall Plan."

The Grand Tour was a superb idea in that I, among many, felt that all ground personnel deserved to see what their contribution was and what it resulted in that hastened the end of the war in Europe. They had provided the teamwork amongst tens of thousands in the 8th A.F. which, combined with the efforts of air crews, amassed to the mighty force which resulted in the German defeat.



491st BOMB GROUP

THE LAST AND THE BEST

the RINGMASTER REPORTS

by Hap Chandler

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY REUNION:

After a six month hiatus your correspondent, with apologies, returns to report on the most significant event in 491st history since WWII — our Colorado Springs reunion marking the fiftieth anniversary of the activation of the 491st Bombardment Group (H) at Pueblo Army Air Field, Colorado. Beginning September 8th with a "sing-along" and concluding with a sold-out banquet the night of September 10th, Ringmasters returned to the B-24 Museum in Pueblo, spent a day at the Air Force Academy, and enjoyed the many spectacular attractions of Colorado. Many first time attendees renewed acquaintances, and frequent attendees were unanimous in their praise of the efforts of the reunion committee: Bill Rigg, Dean Sorrell, Harry Mellinger, Cal Shahbaz, and Nelson Leggette. Bill Martin was responsible for the fine program in Pueblo.

The three day reunion featured a surprise presentation Friday night of a bronze bust to Major General Frederic H. Miller, wartime commander of the 491st. The bust presentation was made by Nick Jabbour, Al Hayduk, Mike Dougan, Ralph Saunders and Cal Shahbaz, representing key command and staff echelons. This project was undertaken in secrecy prior to the reunion as a tribute to the commander who steered the group through its early exposure to combat. His leadership skills and managerial acumen were responsible in large part for the superlative record of the 491st Group. This bust will be permanently displayed at the Air Force Museum, Dayton, Ohio, in the 491st memorial plot.

Gen. Miller, on September 10th, dedicated a memorial plaque to our wartime dead at the Air Force Academy Memorial Wall. Frank Lewis and Oscar Gerstung, representing air and ground crews respectively, unveiled the memorial plaque. Reverend Doctor William (Bill) McClelland, a wartime pilot, opened the ceremony with the invocation. Major Walter Hinds, wartime navigator, gave a vocal rendering of "The Lord Is My Shepherd." After the closing prayer, the solemn and emotional ceremony was concluded by Taps. Truly a fitting memorial to our brave comrades who gave their lives in the defense of our beloved country.

Following the dedication ceremony, Ringmasters toured the Air Force Academy. Of particular interest was the Cadet Chapel, the noon cadet assembly, and the parachute team vying for landing honors on the Academy parade grounds. Later a festive lunch was served to the 330 plus attendees at the Academy Officers Club, where Association President Nelson Leggette presided.

ROBIN OLDS, BANQUET SPEAKER:

Introduced by his good friend and 491st pilot, Bill Getz, Brigadier General Robin Olds, one of USAF's outstanding fighter pilots and commanders, reminisced about



Colorado Springs, Colorado, Sept. 10, 1993: Nelson Leggette, President 491st Bomb Group (H), Inc., congratulates Gen. Frederic H. Miller, USAF (Ret.) upon presentation of a bronze bust honoring Gen. Miller's wartime service as Commander, 491st Bombardment Group (H). (L-R): Col. Al Hayduk, Group Operations Officer; Col. Nick Jabbour, Group Personnel and Chairman 491st Memorial Committee; Nelson Leggette; Gen. Miller; Col. John C. (Cal) Shahbaz; and Rev. Dr. William McClelland.

his early days as a P-38/P-51 pilot escorting B-24s into the heart of Germany.

He also recounted some of his experiences as Commander of the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing in Southeast Asia, where he downed four MIGs. These victories, when added to his World War II wins (he was the highest scoring P-38 pilot in the 8th Air Force), accord him a distinguished place in the pantheon of fighter pilots. The only World War II ace to score victories in Southeast Asia.

General Olds remarked that, during his one year tour as a wing commander in Vietnam, his wing lost 124 pilots, only 25 of whom were returned from P.O.W. camps. This does not include the pilots rescued by helicopter from enemy territory. A sobering statistic indeed, reflecting the price in lives of our country's unfortunate involvement in a "land war in Asia."

He also pointed out that the flak defenses of North Vietnam exceeded in numbers all of the guns in all of Germany during WWII. These guns, with their advanced radars and heat seeking missiles, were concentrated in an area approximating the Ruhr Valley in size. A sobering insight into the realities of the air war of a later vintage to those who remembered flak "we could walk on."

REPORT FROM ENGLAND:

We were pleased to have as our guests at Colorado Springs Keith and Iris Thomas, our Group Sponsors in the UK. Keith also serves as the President of the Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial. Keith and Iris are doing a marvelous job for the 491st and the Second Air Division in the UK.

They were accompanied by Alan Trattle, "Lord Mayor of North Pickenham," who presented a beautiful handmade oak traveling desk to our organization. Given the mounting duties of our management, this was a most welcome addition to the group's inventory.

SQUADRON COMMANDERS LOCATED

Through the untiring efforts of Jack Lepert, 853rd Squadron Navigator, we now have located two of our four wartime

squadron commanders. Colonel Harry M. Stephey, 853rd Squadron C.O., resides at 576 Meadowview Circle, Greencastle, PA 17225-1023. We previously had published the address of Colonel Kenneth R. Strauss, 852nd C.O., 19683 S.W. 93 Lane, Dunnellon, FL 32630. They look forward to being with us at future reunions.

FUTURE MEMORIALS:

There will be a formal dedication of the memorial to General Miller at the Air Force Museum upon completion of the granite base. The date has not yet been determined, but will probably be during the spring of 1994. Donations to cover the cost may be made to the 491st Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 88148, Dunwoody, GA 30338.

Considerable interest was expressed at the reunion toward a project to upgrade the memorial at North Pickenham with donations from group members. This matter is being considered by your executive committee in cooperation with our English friends. More on this later.

METFIELD CHURCH RESTORATION:

Keith Voorhees called recently to report on the reconstruction of the bell tower at the church of St. John the Baptist in Metfield. Keith, who was 8th Air Force Lightweight Boxing Champion in his 491st days, met his bride "Edie" while stationed at Metfield. They were married 49 years ago, November 25th, by Chaplain Lee Spencer in this church. Keith reports that the cost of this extensive reconstruction was approximately \$50,000. He would like to hear from any who have an interest in knowing more about this project at 116 S. Dunning St., Ventura, CA 93003.

DELAYED SUBMISSION:

The 491st has been absent from these pages for the last two issues, a fact for which I apologize. The reason is simple! On June 19th I was married to Caroline, a gorgeous Charleston belle. We are making our home at 18 Willow Glen, Atlanta, Georgia. We look forward to seeing many of you in Atlanta as you make your way to the warmer climes of Florida.

Another One of Those Afternoon Raids

by John Foster and Bill Olmstead (489th)

Our 14th mission, June 25th 1944, and the target was an aircraft factory at Villacoublay, near Paris; another one of those afternoon raids.

It started off bad, with one plane not being able to get off the runway. It kept right on going, and plane parts were scattered all over. The plane caught fire, but eight crew members managed to get out. The heat started the bomb load off, and they blew up all the rest of the day. We took off right after it happened, and on the same runway. We had no more than passed over the wreckage when one of the bombs exploded, making Capt. Elliott veer way to the left. The next bad thing was the bombing itself. I was never so scared in all my life. We went through hell for 15 minutes, and I can't see to this day how we managed to get through. When our formation hit the bomb run, I was just waiting for the flak burst that would blow our plane to bits. A hundred guns were firing at us, and I had resigned myself to getting it over Paris.

At the IP I got down on the catwalk and opened the bomb bay doors. I heard over the intercom that there was a hell of a lot of flak ahead but that we would probably miss it. In just a few minutes, Rubin Kaplan, our navigator, blared out, "Pull her up, Pappy. Pull her up, Pappy!" Blackburn, in the ship ahead of us, was going down on fire, and we were headed right into him. "Cover Girl" jerked up, and the flaming B-24 slid underneath us. At briefing, later, I learned the radioman was seen plunging from the plane, and on fire.

This bomb run was terrible. We must stay on course, and so offer the best target

possible to the flak batteries. Although it's really a matter of minutes, every one of them seems like hours, and there you are — a clay pigeon.

"Smitty" yelled "Bombs Away!" This was one time I didn't hesitate closing the bomb bay doors. At the end of the bomb run there were only two ships remaining in the formation; the rest took off like wild geese to avoid the damn flak. A woof-woof hit right under the bomb bay and ripped out our hydraulic system. The bomb bay was immediately flooded with the fluid, and there our troubles began. Number one engine started to smoke, so Captain Elliott feathered the prop. Marv Glassman reported that he had been hit, and all this time we were straggling away from the formation. Someone yelled that the oxygen was out and for us to check our regulators. It was impossible to keep up with the outfit on three engines, so co-pilot Doug Strong called for fighter protection, and I started shooting green flares.

Flight engineer Bill Olmsted recalled, "We got hit pretty good, then we also lost the formation. Doug Strong was calling for fighter support, to no avail. Getting a little irritated, he said, 'Where the hell are you?' A voice came back, saying, 'We're busy, but we'll be up there shortly.' It turned out they were down on the deck shooting up ME 109s as fast as they took off. Then the war really came home to Doug. There was a three-gun battery next to a river, and it was shooting at us. Being all alone, it occurred to Doug to say on the interphone, with much feeling, 'Those SOB's are shooting at

US!' He took it very personally, and I'll never forget the tone and feeling in his voice."

As we passed back over the IP, Captain Titus's PFF ship got a burst and was aflame from nose to tail. We saw several chutes, and the fellows floated directly into Paris. The P-51s and P-38s sure looked fine, and they helped us all the way back to the lovable Channel. Somebody went back and bandaged Marvin, and by that time we were over the field. This was the fifth time we had come back on three engines, but we didn't know if we had any brakes. The guys in the waist had chutes rigged up in case we didn't, but Pappy brought her in perfect.

When we got out of that ship we had more people around than we could do with. "Cover Girl" had over a hundred holes in her, and it was a miracle that more than one person didn't get hit. Flak had cut the heated suit cords on Bruner's suit, and knocked rivets into the Captain's lap. The hit on the bomb bay made a rip a foot long. It was impossible to fix her on the field, and "Cover Girl" had to be taken to the sub-depot for a complete going-over. Another B-24, coming in under the same conditions as ours, crashed short of the runway and killed eight of the crew. I knew the radio operator.

This was the most nerve-racking mission yet, and Captain Elliott and Hughey Smith were in the hospital along with Marvin, with shaky nervous systems. We're going to rest camp; hot dog! It was getting hard to sleep at night. And that was our last mission with the Girl.

Jack's "Perfect Landing"

by Ray Pytel (445th)

Author's Note: The following is "The Rest of the Story" or an addendum to Jack D. Pelton's "It's a Small, Small World, After All!" which appeared on page 9 of the Fall 1993 2ADA JOURNAL.

* * * * *

It was a cold and sunny day in 1943, when what was to become known as Pelton's crew first assembled and met each other for our final three months of training in Colorado Springs before assignment overseas. The three officers were apprehensive about how to relate to each other, as well as the six enlisted men, and the enlisted men wondered among themselves how they'd fit in and work together as a team when hitherto, nearly all communication with officers was usually very formal, best to be avoided, and flowed from a self-proclaimed "king of the hill" who seldom, if ever, considered that anyone below his rank knew anything worthwhile or had anything to contribute.

Final training as a crew requires not only knowing your own job, but the job of everyone else on the crew, and each position draws its respect from the knowledge

that without complete two-way communication, no member of the crew can perform "to the best of his ability," thus endangering the whole crew in combat. We soon established a working relationship, the training exposing each crew member's shortcomings and idiosyncracies. On our crew we soon established an evaluation of performance process that included everyone's performance on each practice mission, including the entire crew's critique of the pilot, "smiling Jack" Pelton as he was affectionately called, although not always in his presence.

At first, just like with any new pilot, Jack's landings were somewhat less than perfect; in fact, sometimes so bumpy that they woke up our then waist gunner, Jim Henderson. Jim (now deceased), a native of the state of Arkansas, in the truest of the southern tradition, operated at a very leisurely pace. Nothing, except a lively poker game, disturbed him very much, so when he drawled, "Something must be done about this," the rest of the crew quickly devised a plan to help him out.

It was the now deceased Harold Kennedy, our assistant engineer, and father of Mary Beth Barnard, the 445th's capable

historian, who suggested that a simple testing device could be used... an open bottle of beer on the bomb bay catwalk... if Pelton's landing tipped the bottle over and spilled the beer, it was my job as the person usually found between the pilot and co-pilot to immediately convey a "message of displeasure" from the passengers back in the bowels of the mighty Liberator. This soon became a ritual, and on a rare occasion a "boo" was said.

On this particular mission, when Jack dropped the "Rose" gently from "100 feet with a 30 degree crab" for a perfect "3-point" landing, I heard nothing but a loud "swoosh" from the rear of the plane, and no one was left to evaluate this particular landing, and in a split-second decision I felt it would be presumptuous to speak for the entire crew... needless to say I made this decision on the way out, bumping into Tom Hart in the bomb bay. Tom, our radioman, got delayed by the rest of the crew on the way out! Now this is the true story behind Jack's "perfect landing" without "nary a boo" from me. It is apparent that in the rush of the moment, the evaluation never materialized, so this must go into the records as a perfect landing.

Gen. Jimmy Doolittle Dies



Gen. James H. Doolittle

Retired Gen. James H. Doolittle, who became a national hero when he led the first World War II bombing raid on Japan in 1942, died September 27, 1993 at the age of 96. He died at his son's home after suffering a stroke.

Doolittle, known as "Jimmy" to virtually everyone, established an unparalleled string of aviation records in the 1920s and 1930s, first as an Army pilot and then as an employee of Shell Oil Co. In 1925 he became one of the first people to earn a doctorate in aeronautics.

But he was remembered above all for leading the April 18, 1942 raid on Japan. The raid on Tokyo inflicted no major damage, and a later Naval War College study could find "no serious strategic reason" for it.

But it stirred American morale just four months after the shock of Pearl Harbor, and it put the Japanese on notice that their cities were within reach of U.S. air power.

When President George Bush gave Doolittle the Presidential Medal of Freedom in July 1989, he described him as "the master of the calculated risk." General Doolittle also won the Medal of Honor and many other awards.

Shortly after the midday raid which stunned the Japanese, Doolittle was promoted from Lieutenant Colonel to Brigadier General, and by the end of the war, he was the youngest Lt. Gen. in the army. He went on to serve in a variety of posts during the war, including commander of the Algeria-based 12th Air Force and later the 8th Air Force, based in Britain, which blasted away Germany's air power.

Gen. Jack Merrell Dies

Gen. Jack G. Merrell, USAF (Ret) died in San Antonio, Texas, on August 14, 1993. Gen. (then Lt. Col.) Merrell served as the Deputy Commander of the 491st Bomb Group, Second Air Division, 8th Air Force from its activation in October 1943 until March 1945, when he became commander of the 389th Group. In the postwar Air Force he served in a number of high level positions including Comptroller of the Air Force, and Vice Commander US Air Forces Europe. He was promoted to four star rank when he assumed command of the Air Force Logistic Command in 1967.

On November 26, 1944 the 491st sustained its first massive fighter attack. The night before, Group Intelligence established that a large number of enemy fighters were in the target area and it was believed that they were ready for a big effort against the bombers. Jack Merrell, in going over the mission, decided to shake down the gunners and their equipment and include a strong specialized briefing for the gunners. A number of deficiencies were discovered during this pre-mission inspection. He

personally "gave the gunners hell the next morning" for careless housekeeping in the turrets and cleaning of the gun barrels. There was some grouching on the part of the gunners because of this. However, these efforts stood them in good stead when 150 plus fighters attacked the 491st near Hanover.

The Group received the Presidential Unit Citation for its efforts, including the destruction of twenty-five German fighters, on this mission. More important, when the crews returned gunners were observed shaking Jack Merrell's hand at debriefing. This early example of foresight and leadership, honed in the crucible of combat, was Jack Merrell at his best.

A long time member of the Second Air Division Association, he was buried with full military honors at the San Antonio National Cemetery. The Association, and his many friends in the Second Air Division, extend heartfelt condolences to his wife and family. Jack Merrell was one of that special breed of young officers who measured up to the challenges of World War II air commanders.

Folded Wings

44th

Edward P. Guzik
Peter G. Pasvantis
William F. Zoellmer

93rd

Robert F. Kusel
William O'Bannon
William P. Sineath

389th

V. Charles Bernotas
Richard E. Comer
Davis H. Lynn

392nd

Bernard P. Healy
John J. Kolodziejski
Col. Randell S. Mayer, Jr.

445th

Francis H. Farmer
Albert M. Horton
Lyle Papworth
Richard N. Vincent

446th

Philip Fruchtmann
Jack H. Heuser
Charles G. Pohlman

448th

Willard D. Cobb
Clifton H. Evans

453rd

R.D. Coggeshall
Albert J. Gehrt
Lawrence O. Moulder
Tommy Owen

458th

Ltc. Edward C. Eichorn
Elden Gebaross
Maj. Milton L. Jay

467th

Col. Carl O. Brasier
Paul Lamm
Gerald Quinan

489th

Wayne E. DeCou (453rd, 458th)
Warren Winfield, M.D.

491st

Gen. Jack G. Merrell

492nd

Frank C. Johnson
John E. Patterson

HM

Anne Brusselmans



by Ralph Elliott

I have two updates since the Fall 1993 JOURNAL of interest to the 467th. First, Vince La Russa says the reprinting of Alan Healy's history "The 467th Bombardment Group" is on target for December publication as planned. Advance copies may be reserved for \$35.00 each with a check to Vince La Russa, 8570 N. Mulberry Drive, Tucson, AZ 85704. The new addendum to the book will be of special interest, since it will contain the names of over 5050 persons who were at Rackheath during our time there. The MIA/KIA listing will now include the name of the crew's pilot for better identification, and other additions to the listings will be of special value to the reader. Because the cost of printing the addendum separately would equal the cost of the book itself, the addendum WILL NOT be sold separately. It's just as cheap for you to purchase the reprinted book. Thanks go to both Vince and Phillip Day for the tremendous amount of time they have spent in bringing the records up to date for publication.

As an aside, Vince underwent successful back surgery for spinal stenosis on October 9th at Tucson Medical Center. I'm sure he would enjoy hearing from you — even though some time will have passed when you read this.

The second update concerns the September 15-19, 1994 Convention of the 467th Bomb Group (H) Association at the Marquette Hotel in Minneapolis, Minnesota. A dinner cruise on the Mississippi River is only one item on an extensive convention program being put together by Lloyd Haug and his wife, Carmen. Fall colors should be at their peak in mid-October; it's a great time to visit. The central U.S. location should make it easy for everyone to get there, and planning ahead can save you dollars in airline reservations.

Daughter Becky Price, whom many of you may remember from the Tucson reunion and who now works for an Anchorage, Alaska travel agency, suggests you book early to avoid having to go "standby." It seems her agency received a call from a woman who wanted to go to Seattle and couldn't get a reservation, so they suggested she go standby. Her reply was that she "didn't think she could stand all the way to Seattle."

In order to stabilize 467th conventions, board member elections and business meetings at one year intervals and to overcome the problem we now have with 6 to 18 month intervals between conventions, serious thought is being given to having all future 467th conventions in the Fall. Minor variations in fall dates would allow us to meet anywhere in the country and would give our officers and members stability in planning future gatherings. This and several other important items on the Minneapolis agenda warrant that special effort for all of you to attend. Not the least of reasons is the rate at which "last post" is increasing with the decreasing opportunities we'll have to spend quality time with old Rackheath buddies.

I had a recent letter from Ray Pytel of Elkhorn, WI in which he enclosed a copy of the MAIL CALL page from the October '93 VFW magazine. The letter in question was commenting on a previous article on the Ploesti raid and included the statement, "Those young men who flew in the mass-produced, poor excuse of a flying machine called the B-24 were lucky if they came back alive." I won't include the writer's name, to protect the guilty, but he apparently hadn't read the 8th AF NEWS article Ray also enclosed that listed the 467th second from top of the list of all 8th AF bomb groups in SORTIES PER LOSS (of aircraft) at 191 sorties. Nor had he seen an earlier report comparing B-17 and B-24 battle casualties listing "1.87 casualties per 1000 man-combat missions for the B-17 and 1.25 casualties per 1000 man-combat missions" for those fortunate crew members who flew combat in B-24s. The report makes you wonder where all those fables about the perils of B-24 life came from.

"Fire!"

by James E. Straub (453rd)

I worked as a line mechanic with the 453rd Bomb Group and the 733rd Bomb Squadron at Old Buckenham for a year and a half during WWII. The following story was scary at the time, but we laughed about it later (after things quieted down). I hope someone out there might remember this incident.

The picture below of "Star Eyes" was taken before it took off on one of its many missions. While it was gone we went to our line tent to wait for it to return. We had sleeping cots in the tents so we could take a nap while it was gone, as we had gotten up at two a.m. to preflight, gas, and service the aircraft and make sure it was ready for the day's mission.

During the colder weather we would heat the tent. I am sure some of the other ground crews out there might remember how this was done. We hung a five gallon can of 100 octane fuel above the stove with a tube running down into the stove. The fuel would burn very nicely inside the stove. This worked fine on many occasions before.

This time things were not so good, as some of the 100 octane fuel had leaked out and onto the wood floor and ignited. We were sleeping at the time. All of a sudden my buddies yelled, "Fire!" You never saw three men move so fast.

We made it out all right, and no one was hurt. I think we were more scared of what might happen to us if the base commander got word of our mishap, as we knew this was not an approved method of heating the tents. (We never did hear from the base commander.) I think I do remember an order coming out soon after discouraging this procedure!

I hope someone out there might remember this incident, and/or might recognize my buddy in the picture. That's me between "Star" and "Eyes" in the picture with the plane, and he's the other guy. I would like to contact him if possible, but I have no name.

P.S. . . . The tent burned up in less than a couple of minutes and was totally destroyed; and we never did get another tent.



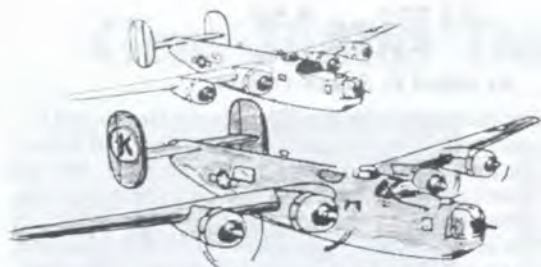
Jim Straub (right), "Star Eyes" line mechanic with the 453rd. Jim is asking our help to identify and locate his buddy on the left.

13th Annual Southern California 2ADA Regional Reunion Dinner Saturday, February 26, 1994

For further information contact either of the following:

Dick Baynes, 71 Night Hawk, Irvine, CA 92650
Telephone (714) 552-3889

Jay Jeffries, 17161 Westport Drive, Huntington Beach, CA 92649
Telephone (714) 846-1653



458th Bomb Group

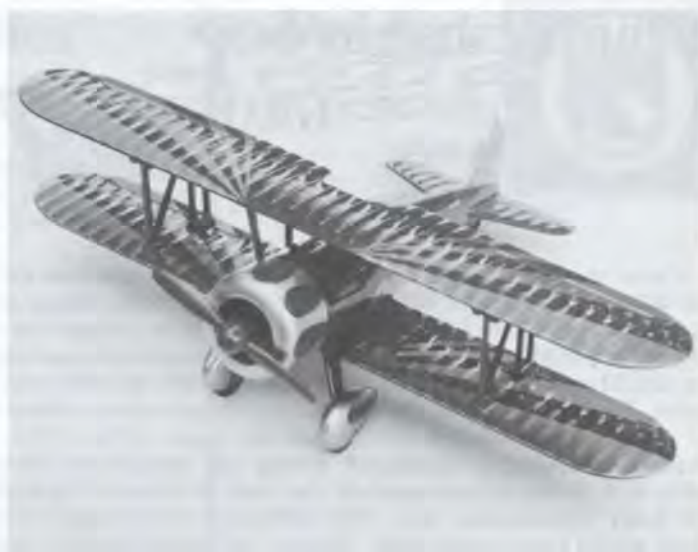
by Rick Rokicki

By the time you receive this JOURNAL, Ceil and I will be Hawaii visiting my daughter and her family until early January. My son-in-law is a Navy Commander at Pearl, and after two tours in Washington, they agree that the Islands are Paradise!

Please note that on page 3 of the Fall 1993 JOURNAL, a decision has been made that all reports submitted by Group Vice Presidents are to be limited in length to one printed page. I have little choice but to comply. I will make every effort to give you quality and pertinent information and especially that which you won't be able to get anywhere else.



Originally, I had D-Day certificates made and offered them to ALL Association members for \$2.50. Unfortunately, the 200 I had printed were flawed in the most important area, the 8th A.F. logo. This has been corrected, and the certificate is now being offered in a plaque form. It is walnut finished, 11 x 13½ inches in size, with a plastic cover over your certificate. I have 100 of these units, complete and ready to ship when we get back from Hawaii. Cost is \$23.50 plus \$5.00 shipping (weighs about 4 pounds, shipping). Plaques will be sent in the order that requests are received. Make out your check for \$28.50 (total) to me and mail to me at 365 Mae Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21061. The same guarantee of 100% satisfaction or your money back that I've always had, applies. At this price, the profits won't be very large, but everything over actual costs will be sent to Jordan Uttal for the Memorial Library Funding. Again, don't look for this D-Day plaque anywhere else but here.



Why are there two aircraft from the 30's shown here? Read on, because here is a way you may be able to help all the "friends of the B-24 Liberator." I don't know if you can visualize the quality of these models of the Lockheed Vega "Winnie Mae" or the PT-17 in "Civvie" paint. They are **NOT plastic**, but are die-cast metal, expertly made and painted, cost less than \$30.00, and are collector's items. So what does this have to do with the B-24? Here, my friends, is where I ask your help. This is my first serious effort to conduct a write-in campaign to the people who can make such a metal, die-cast 11 inch wingspan model. I have been in touch with the company that might do it if there is enough demand. I would sincerely appreciate all that could be accomplished if you send a message — write, call or FAX: **The Eastwood Company, 580 Lancaster Ave., Box 296, Malvern, PA 19355**. Please address your letter or FAX to **Rich Venza** or **Jim Shulman**. If you FAX, address it to **Eastwood Memorabilia, 215-644-0560**. The office number is 215-640-1450. They do *not* know of my appeal to you, our membership, to have them make this new model. My personal preference is (1) Letter, (2) FAX, (3) Telephone. At the same time, why not request their Memorabilia Catalogue of aircraft and automobile models. You'll be surprised, and the catalogue is free. I sincerely need your help to prove that there is a demand for the most manufactured four engine bomber of WWII. Just let them know you'd like to see the B-24 (in SILVER paint) be made available.

ON FINAL: Since the material I submitted for the last JOURNAL was too lengthy, the new members were left out (not by me, I must add). They are: **Les Skidmore AL, Dewey Turner CA, Harry Coyle IA, Walt Stackhouse NJ, Billy Rudder TN, Mike Mitchell OH, C. "Sam" Evans and L.C. Rokey Evans OR, Carry Rawls TN, Richard Pulse MD, Wm. Ward AZ, Robert Baer MI, Felix Turkovitz NY, and Wm. Lawrence OR**. Received word from **Ben Walsh** that **Col. Fred O'Neil** made his last flight last summer. Many of us remember him as "Fearless Freddie" who flew every tough mission they would let him. Group regrets to his wife, Jody.

I'm sorry that my mention of **George Reynolds** didn't appear in the last issue. George agreed to write the 458th History for the new book about the Second Air Division being produced by Turner Publishing. The entire Group owes George a well deserved "THANK YOU."

Some Squadron "patches" still remain, and about 25 of the 458th Blazer Insignia are left. Cost for these remains at \$10.00, checks made out to me. A new Group Roster will again be made available, cost \$4.50.

If you have received your 1994 **2ADA Dues Statement**, don't put it aside for some future action — send in your dues **NOW!** Avoid getting on the "drop list."

Group Reunion plans for Dayton in September, 1994 are in progress. Further info will be forthcoming. **ALOHA!**

The 46th Annual Convention of Second Air Division Association: We Care For Each Other

by Jordan R. Uttal (2ADA Honorary President)

Hilton Head, S.C. was the scene of the 46th Annual Convention of the 2nd Air Division Association. It was our second visit to that beautiful area, and once again, the 1,100 2nd Air Division veterans and their families came away with a feeling of renewed warmth, affection, and respect for those with whom they had the opportunity to mingle. And once more, we noted with a great deal of satisfaction that the mingling crosses over Squadron and Group attachments. Many were the strong handshakes and embraces between friends made at our many previous conventions.

Although the convention did not officially start until Thursday, 4 November, the Executive Committee, Group V.P.s and subcommittee Chairpersons assembled in time to have an all day ExCom meeting the previous Tuesday, November 2nd. President John Conrad led the discussions of a predetermined 70 item agenda. Although more time would have been of value, the schedule did not permit the luxury. The ExCom was joined at lunch by the Chairman of the Memorial Trust, T.C. Eaton, who provided an update on certain structural changes that have to be made as well as possible changes to update the original Declaration of Trust.

At dinner that evening, our respected Convention Chairperson Evelyn Cohen presented, on behalf of the Association, clocks inscribed with messages of appreciation to Past Presi-



2ADA President John Conrad (392nd) presents Georgia "Colonel" certificate to Tom Eaton (Board of Governors).

dents Richard Kennedy and Bud Chamberlain. This is a tradition that began in 1983, and our two honorees were surprised and pleased. All in all it was a fun evening.

On Wednesday, various subcommittees of the ExCom met at different times during the day. (We make them work.) That evening there was the usual Early Bird party (cash bar) for everyone who had already arrived. As far as we know, everyone ultimately managed to partake of the buffet.

Thursday turned into a beautiful day for the golfers, bright sunshine and mild temperatures. It is reported that the turnout this year was the largest in the history of 2ADA golf tournaments. A good time was had by all who participated. All during the day, the wives of some of the present and former Association officers manned (or laded) the registration desks. The huge number of members who arrived were warmly greeted and speedily registered. Again, it is very gratifying that a special family feeling was apparent from the warmth of the reception extended to everyone. We were pleased to hear the observations of two distinguished Air Force Generals attending our convention for the first time. They concurred that our Association is unique in that respect among WWII veterans' organizations. We rightly can be proud!

That evening was fine enough climatically for the cocktail party to be held outdoors on the terrace. The camaraderie and good fellowship and enough to drink got us off to a good start for the evening meal. In due course the troops entered the ballroom to partake of a tasty Oriental style buffet. This time there was no question about having enough food or seats.

After dinner the annual Awards Presentation, originally started in 1989, was conducted by Geoff Gregory (467th) with the able assistance of John Conrad (392nd) and Bill Nothstein (466th). Three Group Vice Presidents, Wib Clingan (453rd), Bob Sheehan (467th), and Bill Beasley (492nd) were given appreciation certificates for service to their respective Groups. An Association Exceptional Service Award was presented to the Headquarters WAC Detachment in recognition of their superb efforts during the war at 2AD HQ, as well as their tremendous contributions in time, effort and caring for the welfare of the Association since then. Fifteen of them were present to share in the award presented to Eleanor Storms on behalf of the entire wartime contingent of 150 young ladies.

Another Association Exceptional Service Award was presented to Past President Richard M. Kennedy (448th) for outstanding service to the Association during his two consecutive terms of office, 1990/91 and 1991/92. As Geoff pointed out, Dick was the 8th President who had been called upon to serve two terms.

Finally, and quite justifiably, Exceptional Service Awards were presented to the 44th, 93rd, and 389th Bomb Groups commemorating the 50th anniversary of their participation in the August 1, 1943 low level raid on the Ploesti oil fields in Romania. This mission is acknowledged by all historians to have been an outstanding example of heroism and self sacrifice, far beyond the call of duty. Accepting awards on behalf of their Groups were Pete Henry (44th), Paul Steich-



Evelyn Cohen (HQ) presents Distinguished Service Award (clock) to Past President Bud Chamberlain (489th).



Past President Dick Kennedy (448th) with clock awarded for Distinguished Service.



"Hap" Chandler (491st) and his wife, Caroline.

(continued on page 18)

46th Annual Convention

(continued from page 17)

en (93rd), and Gene Hartley (389th). As each award was presented, individual members of each Group in the audience who had flown this devastating mission were asked to stand. As could be expected, all of them were greeted with suitable rounds of applause.

Friday's miserable weather caused cancellation of the cruise and changes in plans, generally. However, that afforded more time for one-on-one get-togethers, and that evening everyone unwound and shed the cares of the day at the cocktail parties prior to each Group individual Mini-Dinner. Every group had the opportunity, either during the day or at their dinners, to conduct matters of individual Group business. Three Groups elected new Group V.P.s.

On Saturday, November 6th, an Association Business Meeting was held as required by our By-Laws. President Conrad conducted the meeting according to protocol, exhibiting his own efficient attention to detail and the wishes and needs of the members. Minutes of the meeting will be printed in the next JOURNAL. Suffice it to say that all Committee reports were accepted by the members with a minimum of questions. This is a testimonial to the excellence of the work of the Committee Chairpersons.

To reduce suspense in waiting for the minutes, two new Officers were elected: Chuck Walker (445th) as Executive Vice President, and Bill Nothstein (466th) as Treasurer. All other Association Officers were re-elected. The three Group V.P.s appointed to the ExCom for the coming year are Ray Strong (HQ), Ralph Elliott (467th), and Neal Sorensen (489th).

Special mention was made of the retirement as Treasurer of Dean Moyer (HQ) who, after 24 years of service in that office, had to yield to health problems. We wish him well, and salute his efforts.

The meeting was conducted in record time, and everyone except the ExCom, Group V.P.s and Committee heads were free for the day. The latter had to face another four hour meeting. (We told you before, we make them work.)



Col. Al Shower (467th) dancing with Cathy Henry, granddaughter of Pete Henry (44th).

The convention program concluded with the Banquet, preceded by cocktails that evening. As is revered custom, the program began with the singing of the American and British anthems, the recognition and welcome of the "first timers," and our beautiful Eight Candles for Remembrance Candle Lighting Ceremony. After a heartfelt and sensitive Invocation offered by Bud Chamberlain, dinner was served, and it was well received by the participants, who were in a particularly festive and jocular mood throughout the evening. The smooth music of a great dance band during and after dinner certainly added to the mood.

Following dinner we heard from four speakers. First was President John Conrad, who expressed pleasure with the events of the Convention, including his appreciation for his re-election making him the ninth two-term. He commented further on former two-termers, and the history of succession to office within the Association.

He was followed by very welcome comments from Frank Gyidik, President of the 56th Fighter Group Association. He reminded us of the wonderful accomplishments of the fighters in general, and of the great P-47 56th Fighter Group in particular. Applause on several occasions reflected the appreciation of the Division for their "Little Friends."

The next speaker was Tom Eaton, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust, who shared with us details of the most recent report prepared by Phyllis DuBois covering attendance at and use of our 2AD Memorial Room by local citizens, and a steady flow of American visitors. It was indeed a stimulating presentation, and as always, our members showed appreciation of Tom's efforts going back to 1949.

The M.C., Jordan Uttal, was then pleased to be able to add tangible support in the form of a check of \$750.00 for the Capital Fund of the Trust donated by the Heritage League. Also, checks for four Personal Endowments totaling \$3,600.00 were turned

over to the Chairman. Interestingly, three of the four donors were in the audience.

The final speaker was Lt. Gen. E.G. "Buck" Shuler Jr. USAF (Ret.), former C.G. of the 8th Air Force (1980s) and currently Chairman of the Board and C.E.O. of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center at Savannah. Buck made the project come alive for us, and there is no doubt that assistance in the form of contributions will be forthcoming from our members.

Interspersed among the talks were introductions of and acknowledgments to many people in the audience: the WACs, the Past Presidents (18 of them were present), and Vicki Brooks Warning, the daughter of one of the deceased Presidents. We saluted Maj. Gen. Lew Lyle USAF (Ret.), President of the 8th Air Force Heritage Center and a veteran of three tours in the ETO, and our own Maj. Gen. Andy Low USAF (Ret.), 453rd. We asked two Gold Star Daughters to stand, Billy Sheely Johnson and Mary Beth Barnard, who are President and Vice President respectively of the Heritage League. We added a further welcome to our beloved colleagues from the Memorial Trust, Vice Chairman David Hastings and his wife Jean, and the Trust Librarian who has made so many friends among us, Phyllis DuBois. Also recognized were four members of the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial from East Anglia, Agnes and Pat Ramm, and Eileen and Brian Marston.

Finally, a presentation which evoked strong applause was the introduction of the families of 25 of our members; sons and daughters (and many of their spouses), grandchildren, brothers and sisters, and two aunts.

And...oh yes, there was lots of laughter, and I am told, a tear or two.

The bottom line of our 46th Annual 2ADA Convention?

We are family...we have accomplished much and are leaving many markers in history...we are proud of each other...we care for each other. GOD BLESS!!!!



(L-R): David & Jean Hastings, Board of Governors; Joan & Dave Patterson (445th B.G.)

1993 Convention Moments...

Photography by Vince Re



Awards Chairman Geoff Gregory (467th) announcing the 1993 Awards recipients



Pete Henry (44th) accepting Exceptional Service Award for 44th Ploesti performance



Gene Hartley (389th) accepting Exceptional Service Award for 389th Ploesti performance



Presentation of Exceptional Service Award to Headquarters WAC detachment



Exceptional Service Award presentation to Richard M. Kennedy



M.C. Jordan Uttal conducting Candle Lighting ceremony at Banquet



J.D. Long (392nd), Paul Trissel (389th) and Bill Robertie (44th) lighting the last candle.



Paul Steichen (93rd) accepting Exceptional Service Award for 93rd Ploesti performance



Bud Chamberlain offering Invocation at Banquet

The Twelfth Annual 2ADA Golf Tournament

by Pete Henry (44th)

The Twelfth Annual Golf Tournament of the Second Air Division Association was held at Robert Trent Jones Course in Palmetto Dunes, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina on 4 November 93. We had 102 golfers, fifteen of whom were ladies.

Eight prizes were awarded as follows: John Harper (492nd), 2ADA Plaque for Men's Low Gross; C.M. Stout (453rd), 2ADA Plaque for Men's Low Net; Burt Madison (453rd), 2ADA Plaque for Winner of Men's Peoria Tournament; B.J. Kotapish (453rd), for Winner of Women's Peoria Tournament. The following four golfers received a ball marker kit from the pro shop: Vicky Warning (466th), Closest to Pin on #5 (Ladies); Al Ellwein (445th), Longest Drive on #5 (Men); Helen Freudenthal (489th), Longest Drive on #15 (Ladies); and Wyatt Porterfield (489th), Longest Drive on #15 (Men).

I want to thank Rick Rokicki (458th) for the beautiful 2ADA plaques, and Tom Neilan (453rd) for hanging around all day to take pictures of each foursome. Next May we will play at Belton Golf Course in the Kansas City, Missouri area (see details below).



(L-R): 2ADA Golf Tournament Director, Pete Henry (44th), with David Green (392nd).



(L-R): Jim & Polly Mahoney (492nd); Jim & B.J. Kotapish (453rd).

Attention Golfers

The Thirteenth Annual 2ADA Golf Tournament will be held on Friday, 27 May 94 at Belton Golf Course (formerly Richards Gebauer Air Force Base) in Belton, Missouri (approximately 20 miles south of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Kansas City). This date was made necessary because none of the courses we contacted would permit an 08:30 shotgun start on Saturday, Sunday or Monday over Memorial Day weekend. We will provide bus transportation from the Hyatt leaving at 07:00 AM.

The charge this year will be \$50.00 and will include greens fee, half a golf cart, souvenir golf balls, a few prizes and a box lunch, or possibly, a hot lunch if we have as many participants as we did at Hilton Head. 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 undersigned enclosing a check for \$50.00 (refundable if unable to play) and advise your handicap or average score and Bomb Group affiliation.

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

Book Review: John Matt's CREW DOG

Reviewed by Howard Temperley

Editor's Note: Howard Temperley is a Professor in the School of English and American Studies at the University of East Anglia in Norwich. He is a published author himself, and a member of the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust of 2nd Air Division USAAF. While visiting in the United States this past summer he came across John Matt's book and was so favorably impressed that he wanted to share his reactions with the 2ADA membership.

John Matt has produced a marvellously readable account of his war years in England and subsequent career in the US Air Force. Born in Yonkers, NY, he was inducted into the USAAF in 1943, trained as a navigator and arrived at Wendling, Norfolk, in time to start flying missions with the 392nd Bomb Group shortly after D-Day. Matt is not a professional writer, which is perhaps just as well because it is unlikely that a professional would have been able to capture quite that same sense of naive wonder at all the extraordinary things that went on around him that Matt

does. Some things about England, not surprisingly, he gets wrong. Back benchers are members of parliament, not people who keep to the back of the crowd at Speakers Corner, Hyde Park. But such slips merely add to the overall picture of what it was like to be a lonely wide-eyed young American far from home, enjoying the hospitality of the toy-town English part of the time and being shot to hell in the stratosphere by Germans much of the rest. The unreality of external events contrasts with the sense of comradeship that binds his own Liberator crew together and the technical problems of navigation. Pilots merely fly planes; navigators need to know where they are and where they are going, which can be much more tricky. Those who themselves experienced these events will want to compare their reactions with John Matt's; those who didn't will find out what it was like to be there. Either way, it makes for a riveting read. The book is handsomely printed and illustrated. Information can be obtained from Waterford Books, P.O. Box 669, Hamilton, VA 22068; Phone 703-882-3457.

On The Lighter Side

by Mark I. Knapp (445th)

At Christmas time, 1944, a party was held at our Bomb Group's Officers Club to distribute "goodies" to children of local English families. We contributed our rations of cookies and candy to fill Santa's bag.

One by one, the children walked up to "Santa" and a few pleasant words were exchanged. Each child took one candy bar and one package of cookies from Santa's bag, thanked him and returned to his or her place...all except one little boy who was standing next to me with his mother.

When his turn came he ran up to Santa's bag, grabbed two fistsful of goodies, and ran back to his place without a word to Santa.

His mother was horrified! She leaned over and, smiling sweetly, whispered in his ear. He immediately ran back to Santa, thanked him, and returned all but his proper share to Santa's bag.

I chuckled and was smiling broadly as the party broke up because I, alone, had been close enough to hear what the boy's mother had whispered. What she said was, "Say 'ta' you little bastard or I'll wring your neck!"



389th Green Dragon Flares

by Gene Hartley

The men with whom we shared our time at Hethel in the 389th Bomb Group are Folding their Wings at an ever increasing rate. It has to be expected as we enter our later years, but it is not something that we relish. Although I would like to individually recognize any one of our men in this column, I cannot. I don't have the information to treat all men equally. Space available is limited. A listing in the Folded Wings section of both the Newsletter and the JOURNAL will have to suffice.

As you read about and contemplate a loss, you might wish to remember those brief yet significant words from the lights-out bugle call, TAPS. They pretty well sum it up:

DAY IS DONE,
GONE THE SUN
FROM THE LAKE, FROM THE HILL, FROM THE SKY.
ALL IS WELL, SAFELY REST.
GOD IS NIGH.

THANKS AND PRAISE,
FOR OUR DAYS
'NEATH THE SUN, 'NEATH THE STARS, 'NEATH THE SKY.
AS WE GO, THIS WE KNOW.
GOD IS NIGH.

A yellow and green B-24 named the Green Dragon was the plane by which pilots of the 389th formed in the skies over Norfolk prior to heading across the Channel. Flares flew from the Green Dragon. I remind you that from this Green Dragon (column) will come flares of interest, information, and nostalgia. For instance:

FLARES FROM LOTUS AT HETHEL

Lotus has been at our old base, Hethel, since 1986, when founder Colin Chapman moved the company to Norfolk from London. General Motors bought Group Lotus for 22.7 million pounds in 1986.

Italian sports car maker Bugatti has bought Group Lotus from General Motors and pledged to revive its flagging fortunes by introducing new Lotus models.

"In the capable hands of Bugatti, the image which Colin Chapman created for Lotus will be strengthened and protected," said Romano Artoloi, President of Bugatti Automobili.

Bugatti has plenty of money behind it, having been revived in 1986 by a group of wealthy businessmen. It currently makes 150 supercars a year.

Bugatti has bought both Lotus Cars and Lotus Engineering, which employ a total of 700 people at Hethel. Early indications are that their jobs will be safe.

The Team Lotus grand prix team, based at Ketteringham Hall, is privately owned and not part of the Bugatti deal.

Roy Edney, our liaison with Lotus and curator of our Memorial Room in the Hethel Tower, writes that, "Upon reflection, the Company and consequently the Memorial Room are both secure for the time being."

A FLARE FROM OUR OLD CHAPEL

As many of you know, the crucifix painting on the wall of our Chapel at Hethel still looks good. Charles (Bud) Doyle did the painting.

I am in receipt of a letter from E.W.A.C.S. (Eighth Wall Art Conservation Society). EWACS' aim is to save WWII wall art. P.J. Dyer, EWACS Secretary, writes that they are interested in saving the crucifix scene painting.

He asks my assistance in informing the 389th Bomb Group veterans of their intentions. Mr. Dyer goes on to say that the project, if the go-ahead by land owner's permission is granted, will take some time to plan and execute. As their group is now involved in two projects, for the foreseeable future, the Hethel project is on hold.

With Roy Edney's help, we have been hopeful of getting on the EWACS waiting list. I'll write and express our hope that the painting can be saved.

FLARE FROM A ROMANIA P.O.W.

Richard (Dick) W. Britt was a navigator on the O'Reilly crew which flew the August 1, 1943 Ploesti mission. They were shot down, Dick was badly burned, and was trapped in the plane after it crashed. He was cut out of the plane some four hours later by Romanians. Thanks to Princess Catherine Caradja, Dick was kept a prisoner of the Romanians rather than being turned over to the Germans. I mention this because in 1988, Dick wrote his P.O.W. story in his book, "The Princess and the P.O.W." He tells of the rescue, recovery from serious injuries and the extraordinary events of thirteen months in "The Gilded Cage," a most unusual P.O.W. camp.

I heard about Dick's story during a visit to Texas. (He folded his wings in 1991.) I wrote to Dick's wife, Dorothy Britt, and got a copy of the book, which I enjoyed reading. Additionally, Dorothy has edited a book written by Princess Caradja about her life in Romania including many war experiences.

I mention all this in case one or more of you might like to read the book. It is published by the Gabriel Publishing Company, Comfort, TX 78013. If you write attention Dorothy Britt, it will come to her personal attention.

A FLARE FROM HILTON HEAD

This column was written four weeks prior to our meeting in Hilton Head, yet you will be reading it four or more weeks after that. Therefore, this flare can only assure you that a full report on 389th activities will be arriving via our newsletter in early January.

AND A HOLIDAY FLARE

I guess I can speak for all of us, to all of us, wishing us singularly and cumulatively a warm and caring Holiday Season moving into a bright and happy 1994.

Eagles on High

by Patrick O'Donoghue

Submitted by Frank DiMola (445th)

*They fly in the sky
Like eagles on high
To protect their domain
From the roughs in the sky
Eagles is the name they surely have earned.*

*The men of the United States Air Force
Who are always alert.
Soaring to the heavens
Their limits are unknown
Maybe tomorrow the universe they roam.*

*They fly like the wind
This special breed of men
Asking only to serve God and their country
right up to the end.*

*Victory was theirs in all previous fights
Because they fought to preserve what was just and right.*

The 445th Reporting

by Chuck Walker

The Hilton Head Reunion is now history, but I'm sure the memories will remain for a long time. At this writing, mid-October '93, the 445th had 132 members, relatives and friends registered to attend. I hope we all made it and then some.

As you know, this is my last effort as your reporter of 445th goings-on. It is my expectation that your next Group V.P. will be a better reporter and that he will not wait until the last minute to submit his articles. (Bill Robertie will appreciate your promptness.) Believe me, it has been a privilege to serve as your V.P. I only ask that you give the next V.P. the help and support you extended me.

Looking ahead, the 1994 2ADA Reunion will be held in Kansas City, Missouri, May 28-31, so get your reservations in to Evelyn Cohen pronto.

Carl Rambo says he will miss Hilton Head because he doesn't travel east of the Mississippi River. How did you get to Norwich and Dearborn, Carl? Unfortunately Bob and Pat Mead had a bad fire at their home and will have to spend the time and money to complete repairs on their home. Gene & Marge Buszta and Pete & Carol also report that health and family problems will not permit their attending.

Glen L. West wrote that his brother, W.D. "Willie" West, 702nd, was shot down 20 March 45 on a raid over Heligoland, Germany. His brother was a member of J.W. Barker's (701st) lead crew on that day, which took a direct flak hit on the bomb run and as a result all aboard were lost when the plane crashed into the sea. Donald H. Davis of Sherman, TX, was a witness, but to date Glen has been unable to make contact with Donald. If you knew S/Sgt. W.D. West and can provide Glen with information about his brother, please contact Glen L. West, Upper Bear Creek Rd., Evergreen, CO 80439. Their mother is 90 years old and would appreciate knowing more about the fate of W.D.

William J. Hild, Jr. recently sent a copy of "LITTLE FRIENDS," a Pictorial History of the 361st Fighter Group — "The Yellow Tails" — by Steve Gotts, for our review and comments. Eight pages of narrative and pictures are devoted to the 27 Sept 44 Kassel mission from the fighter escort point of view. I quote: "Intelligence personnel confirm that the 376th Fighter Squadron claim of 18 aerial victories plus 3 ground claims amounted to a record total for any 8th A.F. Fighter Squadron in a single day's operation." We found this to be a very interesting account of the 27 Sept. debacle written from the "Little Friends" vantage point. Publisher is Taylor Publishing Co., 1550 West Mockingbird, Dallas, TX 75235.

J.G. Young, an ardent WWII unit patch collector, has not yet been able to acquire an original 703rd patch. He has originals of the other three squadrons, so if you can

help him, please contact Jim at P.O. Box 89, Bridgeville, PA 15017.

Ben Grimm has provided further information about the names Harry Patterson and John Gorgas, which were left on a slip of paper in the 445th suite at Las Vegas. Although he did not leave the names at the suite, he identified them as original members of the Maciaone crew. When Lt. Maciaone was grounded in September '43 at Sioux City, his crew was literally "auctioned off" to other crews to fill vacancies. Grimm and Stracelsky went to Planka's crew, Harry Patterson became ass't F/E on Rodenback's crew, John Gorgas was made F/E on Soviar's crew, while John Vessels replaced the ass't F/E on Gabbe's crew. Now we know who Patterson and Gorgas were, but no one has as yet admitted leaving the note in the suite.

Efforts to dig up more information about the "Lucian Farr crew that flew the "Ramblin Wreck" produced this info from Bill Rasmussen. (Bill says he washed out of pilot training and went through Gunnery and Bombardier/Navigator schools before he joined the Farr crew.) He reports, "When we first arrived at Tibenham, our navigator was Ed Weiman and I was the bombardier... Ed was transferred to Wanner's crew and I became the navigator for our crew." So that clears up that bit of confusion. Just for interest's sake, Bill adds that he flew another tour of 55 missions in Korea in 1951 as bombardier/navigator in A-26's. He found those low level, at night missions, targeting trains, trucks and bridges, to be very interesting.

It's an unhappy task to report that Richard Vincent and Albert (Red) Horton have folded their wings. They will be missed by all of us, and we join in expressing our condolences to their loved ones.

New members we welcome aboard are: John F. Alonso, Redwood City, CA; Robert Ducharme, Evanston, IL; George L. Walker, Jr., Montpelier, VT; Richard F. Hanson, El Centro, CA; Marvin Gasster, Torrance, CA; William Fields, Cambria, CA; Arthur Miskar, Tacoma, WA; Herbert Simmons, Macon, GA; and Associate members Thomas Lowe (son of Glen), Clovis, CA; and Glen West (brother of W.D.), Evergreen, CO. We welcome you all to the 2ADA and know you will enjoy the association.

Our very dedicated and hardworking Memorial Trust Librarian, Phyllis DuBois, advised that she has purchased the following books in honor of Gen. Robert Terrill: *D-Day 6 June 1944* by Richard Collier; *Insects in Flight* by John Brockenbury; and *Coastal War: Chesapeake Bay to Rio Grande* published by Time-Life. Phyllis enclosed a copy of the bookplate that appears in these books which I submitted to the JOURNAL Editor, but unfortunately it was returned unpublished (due to lack of space).

Elden Zink sent a clipping from the Spring 93 *Liberator Club Briefing*: The Geschichts Museum in Herborn, GR has helped set up a memorial to the three U.S. airmen who were killed in action 24 Feb. 44 near the present site of the Museum. The plaque reads: "702 Squadron, 445th Bomb Group... Here Died 24 Feb. 1944 in the Plane Crash of an American Bomber Type B-24, 3 American Aviators, Lt. Looney, Sec. Lt. Dunmire and T/Sgt. Last." The aircraft was a B-24H, #42-7579, nicknamed "Paper Doll," shot down near Rodenroth, Gr., 40 miles north of Frankfurt. Six other members of the crew survived and became P.O.W.s. They were: 2nd Lt. Robert Whit-tet, 2nd Lt. Robert Baker, S/Sgt. Kenneth Hohman, T/Sgt. Wayne Bryant, S/Sgt. Thomas Dumas, and S/Sgt. Charles Sherd.

For those of you who missed Hilton Head, we wish you and yours a Very Happy Holiday Season, and The Best of Everything in 1994. Fortunately we were able to exchange greetings personally with most of those who made it to Hilton Head.

So that's the way it goes, tonight... goodnight!!!

Southwest Region 2ADA Annual Dinner

We are pleased to announce that the 10th Annual Dinner Reunion will be held on Saturday, 19 March 1994 in Dallas, Texas, at the Marriott Park Central — same place as last year.

The details will be mailed to our 2ADA membership in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas in mid-January. All members, however, are welcome. Information can be obtained from the Dinner Chairman:

David Nathanson (44th/HQ)
6417 Joyce Way
Dallas, Texas 75225
Tel. (214) 361-7695

Y'all come and see us, hear???

Mid-West Mini Reunion

The Mid-West Mini Reunion will be held at the Marriott Hotel, Dayton, Ohio, May 20-21, 1994.

If you wish to attend and do not receive information in the mail by March 1, 1994, please contact the Reunion Chairman:

Harold C. "Eck" Eckelberry
24 So. Twp. Rd. 15
Tiffin, OH 44883
Telephone (419) 447-9302

The 448th Speaks

by Cater Lee

All things indicate that the construction of the 8th Air Force Heritage Center is off to a great start in Savannah, Georgia, where the 8th Army Air Force had its beginnings in 1942.

Land has been donated on a site at the intersection of I-95 and US80, where passers by can witness a great tribute being paid to the largest and greatest Air Force the world has ever known. The volume of traffic on I-95 is very great.

The mayor of Savannah, the Savannah Economic Development Authority Board, Georgia Governor Zell Miller, and key citizens of the community are all enthusiastically behind this great project that will honor and pay tribute to the 8th A.F. of WWII. On August 27, Chatham County (Savannah) signed the documents to issue \$11.7 million in revenue bonds to guarantee construction.

Organizers have asked that each group of the 8th A.F. pledge \$25,000.00 toward the cost of this great project. These funds will be used to pay the interest and principal of the bond issue.

The 448th has fully accepted this challenge and pledged for each living 448th veteran to give \$100.00. Please make your check out to "The 448th Bomb Group" and note for "8th A.F. Heritage Center." A separate account has been set up for this project and we are already well on the way with contributions as of October 11, 1993 amounting to \$8,710.00. This leaves a long way to go, but we know our members will make the \$25,000.00.

Contributions are not limited to \$100.00 nor under \$100.00, as all will be graciously accepted. We already have a \$200.00 donation from two couples and a \$500.00 donation from three couples. By our next newsletter we plan to raise this figure, and hopefully

our 448th will be one of the first, if not the very first, to reach its allotted goal.

Some attendees of our last group reunion may not be aware that Leroy Engdahl, while walking around the block with Bob Angle at our hotel in Bellevue on June 30th at about 12:30 p.m. to get some fresh air and stretch their legs, was hit and knocked to the ground on the sidewalk at the exit ramp coming from the underground parking. By the time Bob, who was walking on the street side, got the van stopped, Leroy was under the bumper at the right front wheel of the van. The Chinese American driver had failed to look in both directions before entering the busy street.

Leroy had to have surgery to repair torn muscles, and eventually his movement will be restored and the pain will leave. Leroy tried to be cheerful at the reunion as he was so thankful Bob Angle was with him and got the van stopped. Leroy said it just wasn't his time, and he hopes to see all his friends in Boston.

Speaking of Boston, this is where our 448th group reunion will be held September 1-5, 1994. By the time you read this, the hotel will have been selected and most likely, tours will have been arranged or in the process thereof. We expect one of our largest attendance records ever, as this area is where our country got its start and there are so many historical points of interest. Too many to see in just the few days of our reunion, but we imagine many will want to stay over for several days to visit the historical and beautiful northeast.

Leroy Engdahl has made a photo album for almost all of our group reunions, and asks that you please send him a good snap or two of yourself and spouse taken during our activities and please identify the place, occasion, etc; for example, "lunch at Space

Needle." Leroy will have this album on display in the memorabilia room at our next reunion.

Remember, if you have need for any of the following 448th or B-24 mementos for yourself or perhaps a crew member or grandchild, here is a list of items available and where you can get them:

A good supply of 448th group insignia patches with plastic holders are \$5.00 each plus \$1.00 each for packaging and postage. Also a tie tac or lapel insignia of our 448th checkerboard on tail insignia, same price. Write to Cater Lee at P.O. Box 850, Foley, AL 36536.

If you would like a squadron patch with squadron insignia painted on leather, write to William Lantz at 4533 Laura, Wichita, KS 67216. Send \$15.00 plus \$1.00 postage.

Squadron caps with the 448th and B-24s across the front are available from Charles Bonner at 750 East Oak Road, Porter, IN 46304. He also has a very attractive 448th T-shirt at \$10.00 plus \$1.50 postage. State size (small, medium or large).

Also, 448th group caps with B-24s across the front and 8th Air Force emblem on both sides, attractive at \$6.00 plus \$1.00 postage. Available from Ben Johnson, 3990 15th Street, Port Arthur, TX 77642.

For sale the following B-24 mementos. (1) B-24 pewter tie tacs at \$6.00 each. (2) Smaller silver plated B-24 lapel pins, \$7.00 each. (3) Same silver plated B-24 but as a ladies charm at \$7.00 each. (4) Same silver plated B-24 but as ladies earrings, \$12.00 a pair, specify screw type or pierced. (5) 8th lapel pins for \$4.00 each. (6) U.S. flag lapel pins for \$4.00 each. Add \$1.00 for packaging and postage. Available from Leroy Engdahl, 1785 Wexford Drive, Vidor, TX 77662.

Thanks for reading, and good health.

Flame Leap

by Wilbur L. Clingan

* * * * *

As this article is being written prior to the 2ADA Reunion at Hilton Head, I cannot comment on what transpired there nor what activities occurred. Guess I'll have to make do with what I have.

Speaking of reunions, the 1994 one is scheduled for Kansas City, Missouri, May 28-31 at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center. Future reunions are scheduled to be held in central states for easier access. Put the above dates on your 1994 calendar now and plan on the flood waters having lessened.

The 2ADA reunions are and have been well arranged and enjoyable. Much time, effort and energy is expended by those charged with making such arrangements. However, there exist some criticisms by some of our members. The principal one that I am aware of is that the reunions are too large and personal contact with others is limited. What are your thoughts on this, and do you have any suggestions that might improve or alleviate these or other matters that are perceived as detrimental? If so, please let me hear from you.

We've heard from **Morgan Hartman**, who says that his health has improved, and he's walking and feeling better. Fairchild AFB is to lose their B-52s but will add to the KC-135s. **Ed Bebenroth** wrote to say that the 733rd was the Squadron cited by Gen. Kepner for flying 82 missions without a loss. "**Dusty**" **Rhodes** wrote that he is now retired and that his sight is improving. "**Sy**" **Syverson** wrote to tell us that he sent his old A-10 sextant to Capt. Willis at Fairchild AFB. Today's navigators may not know how to use it. **Andy Low** wrote to say they had a great time touring Scotland in conjunction with their trip to England. They were at Norwich and Old Buck and were accompanied by **Catherine Benarcik**, who got to see where Mike was stationed. Andy found the village where his father was born and the graveyard (near Aberdeen). **Dale Long** wrote seeking information and/or pictures of his father, **Robert Charles Long**, who was with the 453rd at Old Buck. If you have any knowledge of

Robert Long, please write to Dale at SFC: Dale M. Long, HHC 61st Ordnance Brigade, Box 43, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21005. **Vincent Lamphier** is seeking information on his uncle, **John Hynes**. John was a tail gunner with **Robert Swiger's** crew. They were shot down April 8, 1944 and were assigned to the 734th Squadron at the time. Please write to Vincent Lamphier, 213 Wiener Ave., Harrington, DE 19952. And **Robert Yudelson**, 621 S. Barrington Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90049 is seeking information on **Lt. Eugene Jochens**, who was a pilot with the 732nd Squadron. We have had nice talks with **Lloyd Prang**, **Jim Kotapish**, **Pat Ramm**, and a nice letter from **Leon Helfand**. Some of you haven't written or called. We'd like to hear from you. Pick up your pen and paper and drop us a line.

* * * * *

A hearty welcome to the following new members. We are happy to have you with us: **Montford Fischer** (733rd SQ), Mt.

(continued on page 24)

Flame Leap (continued)

Gilead, OH; **Reuben Brockway**, Hialeah, FL; **William O'Neil** (733rd), Deland, FL; **Jack Stilbert** (734th); **Wilmer Henson** (733rd), Freeport, TX; and **Enwin White**, Woodburn, Ore. (their crew had a mid-air collision at Old Buck with a loss of thirteen). Enwin flew with John Glass' crew. **Lester Barton** has a new address: 313 N.E. 35th St., Newport, Ore. 97365. So does **Bob Anderson**, 44 Woods Way, Woodbury, CT 06798.

Not a pleasant duty, but we must report the deaths of: **Wayne E. DeCou** last July, **Lawrence Moulder**, and **Gus Dragoni**. Our sincere sympathies go out to their families.

* * * * *

On a happier note, we received from Head Teacher **Ralph Cross** a really nice thank you for your contribution to the school at Old Buck. Enclosed was a book of drawings done by the children at the school to mark their developing friendship with the 453rd.

Bill Kirwan, 15500 Bubbling Wells #80,

Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240 has written. He is a military combat historian and would like to hear from any combat gunner. **Wilbur Stites** will have more on this in our Newsletter (I think). We need to hear more from and to give greater recognition to all of you non-flying members as well. These are the ones who worked 16-18 hours a day, six and seven days a week, so that our air crews could be airborne.

James Reidy wrote to tell us that **Reuben Brockway** (one of our new members) has been in ill health, but also cheerful. He said Rube was fluent in French and was our Santa Claus on the Liberty Run, Christmas of '44. Rube was their radio operator.

Frank Thomas had a setback and is experiencing problems with the arterial chamber of his heart. We hope he gets that thing working well and that we see him and Jackie soon.

Dan Reading received a nice note from **Liz Orrie**, 453rd Ops Gp Executive Officer at Fairchild. She requested an explanation of our logo, how it came to be and what the markings meant. She stated that they have adopted it for their use on stationery, and

their C.O. Lt/Col. Mark Johnson wanted to know its background. How about that, sports fans?

What do **Thomas Bent**, **William Dennis**, **Robert Golen**, **Morgan Hartman**, **Frank Holt**, **Samuel Scott**, **Albert Soltau** and **Frank Walton** all have in common? Give up? They were all P.O.W.s at Stalag Luft IV in Germany during WWII. They were all enlisted men on bomber crews. I'm sure there were others as well. This information was from **Leonard E. Rose** in Indiana.

* * * * *

Probably some time at Hilton Head was devoted to a discussion of whether the 453rd should have another Group reunion, and if so, when and where. If you would like to have one and are willing to handle the arrangements, let us hear from you. It takes some effort, but it is rewarding. I'm not sure either coastal area is the better place for such things.

That's all for now. Thanks for your time; and let us hear from you. Get some letters and articles in to **Wilbur Stites** for use in our Newsletter. Diana and I wish you well and God Bless you all.

The Amazing Major Gladych - 56th Fighter Group

by Ray Ward

The amazing Major Gladych was a Polish gentleman. He spoke the broken English and he murdered up the verb. But his fame was as a brawler; from a fight he never ran. This Pole was born survivor and by odds was undisturbed; Such times we wished our friendship Was at distance from the scene. Michael Gladych wasn't crazy, but his luck just seemed obscene.

He joined our fighter squadron in the process of the war Serving first within his nation, then in France until it fell. His five years fighting Germans made him pilot non-compare; Most astounding was his temper, like a devil's out of hell; And it paled us as we watched him in his disbelieving dives Trailing hot on Nazi grupens — numbers seldom one survives. Michael Gladych wasn't crazy, but his luck was pure obscene.

Take that day o'er Happy Valley where the usual welcome was A battery of flak guns coughing out a deadly tune, Blotching up the pretty scenery with their particles of fuzz; 'T was the place we never loitered, and the reason is because Herr Otto, or whomever was observing from below Would send up nasty fellows — Stiffles, grupens — and you know Prudence prompted that our presence Be at distance from the scene; That is, all of us but Michael, of a pattern to be mean.

We were tooling in formation, close to 18 thousand feet, When somehow he had "lost" us on a cloudless lovely day, As we cast about to find him, I exclaimed "For love of Pete!" There was Michael screaming downward Having found his wanted prey, In his three-mile wing-tear hurtle He had thrown the book away, His interest was three aircraft, evil ME 109's; Rising from the deck and hunting, Came these big and ugly brutes, Unaware a Thunderbolt with reciprocal designs Would leave them trimming toe nails And nursing broken snoots, Mike's five years fighting Germans Made him pilot non-compare; What some considered folly Mike viewed as banquet fare, While we knew him as a brawler, Yet we marveled at each dare — The odds he took upon himself would stain our underwear.

One episode best illustrates just such an escapade: Our jaunt had been to Dummer Lake.

'T was timely to turn back; But Mike had drifted off a bit in search of German trade. He found his Focke-Wulf fighters which, As "escorts" seemed to lack An open, trusting attitude, and gave him cannonade. He blasted one clean off the map, Then tucked for home in haste; His gauge was reading critical, much to his great distaste. With coffin eyes a vengeful pair continued on his tail, More mad than he about events, and sure they would him nail. They wanted him *gestorben*, and vowed they would not fail. Or so they thought, not knowing they Would never get the chance; The tune was always Michael's, this was a Polish dance.

He flashed on over tree clumps, thinking quickly what to do. There straight ahead was airbase, a German fighter field, While right behind, drumming, came nauseous Nazi-two, Gloating how they had him boxed, his fate foregone and sealed; "Ein guter platz den feind zu treffen," with all to see the deed." In warped concurrence Mike had plans to satisfy that need. He strafed what craft were on the ground And shot the tower loose; He racked the base from end to end with heavy streams of lead; He got the cook, the pots and pans, but missed the dinner goose. He knew damn well he woke them up, as from that field he fled; For every gunner on that strip was blazing up in hate. Now any man who's made a run on guarded real estate Knows fully well the first ship in will fly away unscratched. The second bastard, it is he who catches all of hell. Such was the plan our Polish ace by strafing run had hatched. In stylish way he gave that pair just what they wished so well. One plane was splashed, then number two In quick succession fell, While homeward flew our fabled friend this incident to tell.

A final note about that flight, Mike had to jump enroute. Above the Channel in the fog he almost lost his war. He made it past the coast of France, but then his fuel ran out; The engine died and Mike hit silk, almost at English shore. A short, brisk swim, and home to base, and brand new aeroplane. Our Polish friend, within the day, took up his war again.

Division Headquarters

by Ray Strong

It is early October as I write this for the Winter issue of the JOURNAL, and less than a month until we gather at Hilton Head for another reunion. The next issue of the HQ Newsletter will probably be after the first of the year. And therefore, I want to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season.

First, I want to report that I now have \$479.87 in the Newsletter Fund at the Village Bank. This will be enough to pay for two more issues. I appreciate very much those of you who sent me the money. Checks ranged from \$5.00 (which I hoped that everyone who could afford it would contribute) to \$30.00. Thanks to all of you. Of course, there are still over 100 who have not contributed, but I suspect that it is just forgetfulness (which most of us have at our age). But, if you haven't already done so, I would be pleased to receive some more checks.

At Hilton Head, we will be talking about the possibility of moving the plaque at Ketteringham Hall into the lobby, about the possibility of raising additional funds for the HQ Endowment Fund for the benefit of the Memorial Room, and the election of a HQ Vice President and Assistant Vice President for the coming year. I will report to you on these matters in the next Newsletter.

* * * * *

Following are some more excerpts received from some of you several months ago:

Florence Stafinsky Pollner worked at the Switchboard at Ketteringham Hall. Over the last 50 years, she has "worked, married, raised three children, returned to work, had grandchildren, retired, traveled extensively. Indulged completely in all my hobbies — reading, needlework, had many physical ups and downs, but still in there punching shifts. Made many friends. Took the liberty run into Norwich. Went to the pubs. Shared Nissen huts. It was always cold! The job, I handled well and was proud of any contribution I might have made." And, she also writes, "Arrived in the ETO on D-Day and was assigned to U.S. Staff near London. One week later, on my birthday, the first Buzz Bomb flew over — my comment, 'A fine birthday present!' Transferred to 2AD, in October, I believe, and guess what — the V-2 arrived the same week! Then won a trip to Paris — picked the right number out of a hat — and arrived in Paris the day the war in Europe was officially declared over. Had 48 hours there. The experience of a lifetime."

George E. Dukes, Sr. was in the Signal Corps and stayed in the Air Force after the war. "I went down to London a few times. Enjoyed a USO trip to Cambridge, Ely, York, etc. The first time in London we stayed at the Savoy. Real plush. In the bar

after dinner, we heard the Buzz Bomb. We rushed to the window to see it, and everyone else headed for the bomb shelter. We stood on the balcony. Worked in Operations. Was sent on several missions to the continent. Had a unit of Signal people and vehicles to set up a radio net with 9th Air Force but it didn't work out, so we came back to England, minus our equipment. Another time I took a small group to the continent to keep track of a group of Buncher Beacons. It seems that when the Groups were called upon to send a group of men to man a station, they pulled the old Army game of sending the worst goof-offs. So after a few weeks, they were unable to function — no supplies, etc. About once a week I made a trip to Brussels, Liege, Luxembourg, Nancy, etc., help the incompetent officer, etc., get radio supplies, etc., and to help them keep the Buncher Beacons in operation. One time I was on the continent and 8th AF sent a transport to pick us up and recover a large diesel generator at Nancy. The crew stalled around long enough so that we didn't have the proper IFF night frequency. So on to Paris we went, arrived at Orly just at dusk. Found a truck going into town. How about going into Paris in a 3/4 ton truck, hanging over the back taking in the sights. We smelled perfume and saw a man and a woman in evening clothes riding bicycles down the street. It took us till the next afternoon to round up everyone from bars, brothels, etc. For some reason, I landed in Paris about 10 days after it was recaptured. I also was in and around Bastogne just before it was surrounded by the Germans. Somewhere south of there we came upon Patton's armored column alongside the road having lunch. They looked startled at seeing this Jeep with the driver and myself going south. When I got to Luxembourg, I went into the War Room and found that the Battle of the Bulge was on. I'm sure the Germans had the road under observation. Why didn't they blast us?? I had an order from a Signal Depot Colonel saying that I had permission to travel anywhere on the continent under Allied control. Just think what the Germans could have done with that if they had captured me!! (I still have it.) I was in Brussels when the Germans attacked the airport. I was going to pick up a Col. Rendle. We looked around at all the noise and saw the Germans strafing the airport. We look up and here comes an ME 109 about 50-100 feet high right at us. You never saw two men abandon a jeep and run for their lives so fast. A Belgian woman opened a door and beckoned us in and we did. After it was over, we inspected an FW 190 in a nearby field. When we finally got Col. Rendle, we caught holy hell. He wouldn't believe us, so I finally got him to phone the airfield. He never apologized. . . On one trip through Paris my

Lt. and myself were stopped by the MPs for not having on a Class A uniform. We were taking the back streets trying to go to the Follies. But sure enough, the MPs stopped us. . . At Ketteringham Hall, I used to lay awake and listen to the Brits night fighters trying to shoot down the buzz bombs. . . I was sent home to be a part of a B-29 Group to go to the Pacific. But after R&R at the beach in Santa Monica, the Japs quit. Of course we had excess troops coming out of our ears, so after being pushed around, I was sent home. Retired Sept. 1, 1968. . . In Luxembourg, I was billeted in a small hotel near HQ run by a WWI Italian. When he saw that I was nearly bald, he told me that if anyone remarked about it, I was to tell them that you can always shave the hair off a horse's ass, but it will grow back again!"

James W. (Jimmy) Tune says about the last 50 years, "Finished school. Played semi-pro baseball for several years and worked in the insurance business 25 years. Spinal cord injury the past 14 years." About his work at HQ he states, "Separated mail incoming and outgoing from all 2AD stations and delivered it to all HQ Departments every hour. Couriers from all stations picked up mail twice daily." And, about a memorable incident, he reports, "One day on the bus to Norwich, I overheard two P-51 pilots talking about the different colors of smoke that came out of a chimney in Germany, and they were discussing whether to buzz it or not and try to see what was going on."

Roy M. Devlin entered the service in August of 1942 and by March of 1943 he was in OCS followed by pre-flight and advanced navigation school. Married in September of 1943. Flew to England on a B-24J by way to Presque Isle, Goose Bay, Meeks (Iceland), Prestwick, and Alconbury. Assigned to the 44th, Roy flew 25 missions. His crew was often Deputy Lead or Lead of the Wing. Two days after his last mission, he was interviewed by Division Navigator, Major Carl Barthel, and joined the HQ Staff. Roy Devlin was one of many (including Carl Barthel) very talented, dedicated, highly effective combat veterans who were brought up to the Division HQ. They all, and especially Roy, made very significant contributions to the ability of Division HQ to manage the Second Air Division and assist the Groups, Squadrons, and Combat Crews to perform their missions. Roy returned to Wisconsin in 1945 and rejoined Chain Belt Company. He retired from Rexnord as Production Manager of the Malleable Casting Division, after 40 years with the same company. He retired from the Air Force Reserve in 1980. After retirement, he and Betty moved to Florida. (Written by Ray Strong from information received from Betty.)

The Tragic Bombing of Mortsel, Belgium, 5 April 1943

by Jim O'Brien (44th)

After 50 years we are all reflecting a bit on the heroics and courage of our younger days, whether it was in B-17s, B-24s, A-20s, P-51s, P-47s, or a variety of other fixed wing aircraft of the period. When we look at the civilian side of the war, it is usually thoughts of the love and sacrifice of our families and the outstanding support of our war production on the homefront. We never have given much thought to the darker side of civilian casualties, both Allied and German-Japanese. Today's war reports refer to it as "collateral damage."

Certainly WWII was the largest mass of men and machines ever assembled on both sides of the conflict. Flying our machines of war at 20,000 to 32,000 feet, we were somewhat insulated from what was happening on the ground unless we were shot down and were lucky enough to survive and become POWs or possibly escape. Airmen had their own world of combat and strategy for survival against enemy fighters and anti-aircraft fire. If you did give some thought to the numbers of people killed or injured by your bombs, you quickly dismissed it to preserve your sanity and courage to keep going. After all, we Americans were doing strategic "pinpoint" bombing.

The mission of 5 April 1943 to Mortsel, Belgium, a suburb of Antwerp, was mentioned in the official war reports which stated, "The staccato rhythm of bombs falling across Europe was felt in the biggest ever Allied raids today when Naples, Italy and Antwerp, Belgium felt the sting of American airpower." Just to keep this in perspective, we only marshalled 80-100 Fortresses and Liberators in those days, compared to the 1000 plane raids of 1944-45.

The sting of the Eighth Bomber Command was dramatically felt in Mortsel, Belgium when a total of sixty-four B-17s and eighteen B-24s dropped 245 tons of 1,000 pound bombs aimed at the Erla Works, an automobile factory converted by the Germans into a major repair depot for Messerschmitt 109s. The results of the raid were disastrous, but not for the Erla Works, which was moderately damaged (300 workers killed), and it was back in operation one week later. The real damage was done to the civilian population in the surrounding homes and neighborhoods clustered around the plant. Several churches and three school buildings suffered direct hits. 980 people perished, including 200 children. Over 2,000 were wounded.

The Belgian ambassador in London cabled a message to President Roosevelt protesting the killing of Belgian civilians. Many Belgians were active in the resistance movement, and following the raid they sheltered some surviving shot-down airmen. In fact, one 16 year old Belgian boy escorted four escapees to the Spanish border, where unfortunately they were captured and promptly sent to Buchenwald concentration camp. After two months the POWs were finally placed in Stalag Luft III. In my

conversations with some older Belgian natives in January 1993, it was pointed out that collaboration with the Germans increased to about 90% after this raid.

The real irony of this whole event was that the target (Erla Works) was selected by the Belgian underground resistance movement called the "Tegal" intelligence ring. They had been sending regular reports to London, and on 30 March 1943 they sent the complete specifications and layout of the factory to London.

So, the "Mighty Eighth" was picked for the job. Hindsight now shows that it would have been less tragic for civilians if British Mosquito dive bombers had been used for the mission where there was so little margin for error. American P-51s and P-47s were not yet on the scene for combat in the ETO. I never saw the original target photos, but my personal review of the photos 50 years later in Brussels showed the Erla Works as barely distinguishable from high altitudes.

Since I was shot down over Kiel, Germany five weeks later, my memories of the Mortsel mission (my 19th mission) were rather faded. I recalled moderate fighter opposition for our B-24 group and the bombardiers' reports of the target destroyed and burning. Over 100 FW-190s and ME-109s from the famous Abbeville sector attacked the lead group of B-17s (the 306th B.G.) and they lost the four lead bombers from the I.P. into the target. For a change, the B-24s flying as the low group at the tail end of the formation only had moderate fighter opposition, and we were greatly relieve at the change in tactics by the Germans. The fact that the four lead aircraft were shot down after leaving I.P. contributed to the inaccurate bombing. The German plan worked perfectly.

Nothing was revealed to me about the Mortsel tragedy until 1983 when I received a letter and large packet of official documents obtained from the U.S. war archives by Mr. Achille Rely, a native of Mortsel. It turned out that he was a 12 year old boy at the time, and he was now age 51 and endeavoring to write a book for a historical account of what happened on 5 April 1943. He had collected numerous documents, including the German combat records and photos and our bomb group operations orders and debriefing reports. He was corresponding with former American airmen who had been on the raid and who also were still around in 1983. He got limited responses from about 15 of the 40 to whom he wrote. Most were turned off from replying by the passage of time and the sensitive nature of the event. Some accused him of being a "damned Nazi."

To say the least I was surprised to hear from Mr. Rely. The reality of the facts which he gave to me were sobering and thought provoking within the context of total war against the Nazi regime. I gave him what little I could remember about the mission. He published his book in the

Flemish language in 1987, selling out all copies in Belgium.

Moving ahead to November 1992, I received a hurried letter from Belgian BRT public television requesting my presence in Belgium on January 21, 1993, to record a television documentary of the Mortsel bombing as part of a 50th anniversary commemoration of that event. They had been holding annual memorial services to honor the victims. Two other veterans of the mission were also selected for the trip to Belgium, an offer none of us refused. One was Joe Consolmagno of Englewood, FL, an old war buddy of mine from Stalag Luft III prison camp. He was one of the lead navigators shot down in a B-17 (306th B.G.). The other person going to Belgium was Douglas Boles of Santa Barbara, CA. He was a radio operator and gunner on another B-17 (306th B.G.) shot down before they got to the target. I was the only one of the three who actually got over the target.

All three of us were welcomed at Antwerp airport with a very friendly reception by two Belgian authors, four television personnel, and numerous spectators. One of the welcoming party was an elderly 76 year old native who had brought his wife, son-in-law, daughter, and grandchildren to see us. It turned out that he had been one of the workers in the bombed factory and had survived by sticking his head inside a large toolbox. He had become a very successful businessman and was now a retired millionaire. He offered for us to be guests at his seaside resort on the North Sea coast, an offer we could not accept because of our time schedule. Mr. Rely was our official guide and host. We got to see many historic and beautiful places in Belgium, and were hosted at two private homes. We visited places where Joe and Doug were first held captive after being shot down. One such place was a Catholic orphanage where about six of the nuns were still working or living in retirement, having also survived the past 50 years. They and the other nuns greeted us and eagerly sat down to talk over old times and show us photos of the period of occupation by the Germans and the subsequent liberation by the Allies. One 90 year old nun joyously exclaimed that she was a "Yankee" from Hoboken, NJ. We accepted her signs of affection, and after she left the room the other nuns quietly said to ignore what she said because she was a little senile. She was probably from Hoboken, Belgium, about 10 miles from Antwerp.

I even visited a Rotary Club in Antwerp (I am a Rotarian), and several of the elderly members remembered the bombing very well, but with no animosity toward the American airmen. One retired judge said I had bombed his house and wounded his mother. Another had worked with the Belgian resistance movement.

(continued on page 27)

The Tragic Bombing of Mortsel, Belgium (continued from page 26)

Mr. Eric Pertz, the T.V. producer, had us spend about four hours at the very elaborate studios in Brussels. This included one hour of exquisite wining and dining, some socializing, and three hours of taped interviews. The finished one hour program was edited to include about five minutes of my interview, six minutes of Joe's interview, and none of Doug's interview, which is typical of television editing. Since I was the one who got to the target, Mr. Pertz asked me a lot of questions about the accuracy of the Norden bombsight. I pointed out the German fighter tactics of breaking up the bombing run and the effects of formation flying on bombing accuracy. We

wanted to meet the German fighter pilots who attacked the formation, but they had been interviewed the day before us. Their comments are on the VCR tape, and they show lots of respect for the wall of fire from our gunners' 50 caliber weapons. They were part of the "Abbeville Kids" under the great German ace, Galland.

The finished film is very depressing and somber, with lots of film footage of the destruction and human suffering after the bombing. To date, it has been shown twice in Belgium.

In conclusion, I will add that from my conversations with the Belgian people in January 1993, they held no grudges nor animosity toward us. They were somewhat sensitive about the British receiving all of the credit for sacrifice and casualties in the air war and the ground war. There were far more casualties at Mortsel than at Coven-

try, England, the much publicized target of German Luftwaffe bombers in 1940-41. In 1944 there were over 8,000 casualties in the Antwerp area when German V1 buzz bombs were aimed at the Antwerp harbor facilities. This was the main supply post for the Allied invasion forces in 1944-45. Over 30,000 Belgian civilians were killed in WWII. As the elderly woman summarizes the event in the VCR television film, it was sad to have such devastation and suffering on such a beautiful spring day in 1943. It is always the civilians who suffer most from the futility of war.

P.S. I finally worked out the English translation of the VCR tape which I have. I found a 74 year old native of Mortsel living in the Pittsburgh area, and he did the translation for me. He escaped the bombing because he was working in a coal mine that day.

Mission Attempted

by James B. McCloskey (93rd)

On November 26, 1944, *Stars and Stripes* stated that "yesterday, 800 bombers of the 8th Air Force attacked a town of Bingen." The target was an oil refinery as well as the marshalling yards. Our total losses amounted to 12 bombers, which made the mission sort of a milk run. However, *Stars and Stripes* usually didn't tell the truth anyhow, so 12 bombers one way or the other doesn't mean a lot unless you happen to be in one of the 12 bombers. I don't know if I was in one of the 12 bombers or not, but anyhow, here's what happened to Brandfass's crew that day.

We were in the 93rd Bomb Group, 409th Bomb Squadron. We took off along with the rest of the airplanes and unfortunately after we got to altitude, right after forming, our first engine went out. That was number 1. Over the target and in spite of the fact that flak was light, we got hit and number 4 went out. Now everybody knows that a B-24 won't fly on two engines, and that's precisely what happened to us. We started to lose altitude. After awhile we found ourselves to be completely lost in the sky, as when our engine was knocked out, our G box was also knocked out. It was decided that there was no way we could even make the English Channel, so the best thing to do rather than crash land or bail out was to find ourselves an airfield. Maybe we could find a spot where we could land and be behind the lines. By this time we were getting low. Very low. Suddenly we spotted an airfield. The unfortunate part about it was that it was loaded with 190's and a couple of JU88's. Nevertheless, we fired red flares to stay away. I don't know what kind of an enemy that was, but nevertheless that's what happened. As we got closer, we could see it was a mesh fighter strip and of course the weather had been raining and raining and raining and it was miserable looking. Just as we started our final approach, the third engine went out. Wetterhahn, our

nose gunner, had a church steeple go by his face probably not more than 15 feet away as we came down. We weren't scared; we were petrified. The plane, like a glob of lead, hit the runway and came to a total stop within a distance of 100 to 150 yards, leaving two tracks approximately 2 feet wide and 4 feet deep among the mesh and wire in the strip.

All of a sudden, all sorts of humanity came charging out to our airplane. In the lead was an ambulance with someone sitting on top of it waving his hands. As he got closer we could hear him scream "hokey dokle" over and over again. We later learned he was a Polish colonel in charge of an infantry regiment or battalion which had captured this field from the Germans approximately three hours before. Here we were, right in the middle of the battle for Ghent Belgium.

After getting straightened out as much as we could, we discovered there were a couple of American bombers that had previously done the same darn thing we had done. That is, crash landed or landed on this fighter field. Now Brandy, our pilot, and Reds Hanna, the engineer, were both pretty dog darn good mechanics, and they said they would see what they could do to get something rolling so we could get home. Max Wilson and I decided it would be fun to go to town, which is kind of stupid when there's a battle going on, but nevertheless we stole somebody's jeep and took off in the general direction of Ghent.

We succeeded in getting into the downtown area and parked the jeep. It was now getting to be dusk. We started walking along the street, and after a couple blocks got into a fire fight, or should I say walked into a fire fight. I think we broke the world's record for the 100 yard dash in getting out of there. A few minutes later we heard all this noise coming from this obviously commercial building. We walked in and here was a bar with about 300 locals

partying and celebrating their liberation. It didn't take long to find out that one of the females was a young lady by the name of Sigmone D'Hoore. She and her family came over to visit the grandmother in 1939 and had been stuck there throughout the entire war. She was an American from Mishawaka, Indiana. I was invited to the house and met the family; stayed at the house and partied with the whole gang of these recently freed people for a period of a couple of days. Of course, in the meantime I checked on the progress of the repair of the airplane.

Finally, on the third day, one plane was repaired to the extent that we could go home. Of course, Brandy, being a hot shot pilot, started to taxi the airplane down to the end of the runway in full view of all our Polish hosts, and in his showoff manner ran the plane at the end of the runway right into a marsh. I was delighted. That meant more time in Ghent. In fact, we were all delighted except Brandy. We took off again in different directions, me with the D'Hoore family, and resumed our partying. Thank God for the escape kit. I would have never made it. A couple days later they had the airplane dug out and ready to go again. This time we all climbed on board and taxied down the runway, turned around, revved up the engines and took off. We buzzed the field so low that we had to look up as we waved goodbye to our Polish friends. We came over the coast with our wheels down, our flaps down, firing red, red flares. A couple of RAF planes escorted us back to Hardwick. We landed and reported our escapade to the proper authority. We were the only crew I ever heard of who took off for a mission in a B-24 and landed with the crew intact at their home base in a B-17. We never bothered to ask or find out how the official records were changed as a result of our little incident.



Open Letter To the 93rd

by Paul Steichen

NEW MEMBERS: Sam Bargamian, Tucson, AZ; Jack E. Bazer, Armegard, ND; Virginia Borshoff (A.M.), Pittsfield, NY; Frank L. Burkholder, Naples, FL; Gene S. Clark (A.M.), Manchester, TN; Morgan K. Harris, Scottsdale, AZ; John C. Hewitt, Davenport, FL; John S. Lucas, Greensboro, NC; William J. O'Neil, Deland, FL; Robert Palestri, Hackettstown, NJ; Tony Prins, Three Rivers, CA; George M. Riess, Largo, FL; Mary W. Schaller (A.M.), Burke, VA.

GREAT VICTORY IN DECISION OVER HARDWICK RUBBISH DUMP: South Norfolk has won the battle against a rubbish tip near Hempsall after a three week Public Inquiry. Norfolk County Council's case in favor of Hardwick Airfield was comprehensively rejected. The Inquiry Inspector upheld South Norfolk's objections to the site Norfolk County Council described in evidence as "ideal."

In his decision letter to Norfolk County Council, the Secretary of State said that he disagreed with its geological case. He also considered that lorries along narrow country lanes would adversely affect the rural environment.



David Dennison, right, who presided at the Public Inquiry, is shown examining the Hardwick site.

Long before the Public Inquiry, South Norfolk and local residents tried without success to persuade the County Council to reconsider its proposal for the reasons now endorsed by the Secretary of State. Preparation of South Norfolk's case cost 70,000 pounds. Norfolk County Council spent 450,000 pounds fighting for Hardwick tip. Council taxpayers will foot both bills. The Hardwick Public Inquiry decision report runs to 120 pages, but the main reasons for refusal are: effects are contrary to the objectives of the Development Plan; serious traffic implications; detrimental impact of

the haul road on an area of high landscape quality; doubts concerning potential pollution of ground and surface water; cumulative impact on the environment.

USAF MEDAL OF DISTINCTION

AWARDED TO BRITISH NATIONAL: Mr. John W. Archer has been awarded the USAF Medal of Distinction, with citation, for his 33 years of service to the USAF Bentwaters and Woodbridge communities.



John W. Archer

Col. Roger R. Radcliff, the 81st TFW Commander, presented the award to Archer of Bungay in Suffolk in a special ceremony on July 21. The medal is the highest award given to civilians working with the USAF. The 81st TFW has awarded only two such medals in its more than 40 years in Suffolk.

Archer served 30+ years as a head usher for both weekly services and parish-wide activities and as a member of the Protestant Parish Council. A history buff, Archer was considered the resident historian on chapel affairs and also gave tours to nearby historical sites. When the chapel section was short of personnel during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Archer took over the distribution of more than 1,000 church bulletins.

The East Suffolk Anglo-American Committee recognized Archer with an award in 1984.

John's overview of the 93rd dates back a full 51 years, all seen from the village of Earsham, a bike's ride away from Hardwick base. John and his lovely wife Lorna are equally involved in their care for all their friends from America. Gracious hospitality flows from them, and their knowledge of the 2nd A.D. bases ensures a productive day to each visitor they host.

BALL OF FIRE QUARTERLY EXPRESS

UPDATE: The Winter edition will soon be mailed to members who have made a donation to its upkeep and also to those who have advised that they are financially unable to pay but want to receive a complimentary copy. For those who have not made a donation but still want to receive the *BOFQE* on a regular basis, please send a check for \$9.90, or more if desired, to the 93rd Bomb Group, 2227A Ruhland Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278.

"ALWAYS FIGHTING THE ENEMY"

by Col. Luther C. Cox, 93rd B.G.: Good news to many who were unable to get copies of this remarkable story of serial battles staged between the 8th Air Force crews and Germany's Luftwaffe and their equally devastating anti-aircraft artillery. Col. Cox vividly and accurately describes the early days of the 8th Air Force daylight bombing, "Double Trouble." His B-24 was shot down on his 21st mission. As in the air, these determined fighters never quit fighting the enemy. Col. Cox became "The Doc" for thousands of his fellow prisoners at Stalag Luft III in Sagan, Poland.

Another first arises in that Cox presents a very comprehensive account of the physiological and psychological battles that he daily (and often nightly) faced as the Camp "Doc" while fighting against many odds in his attempt to heal the wounded and otherwise battle-scarred brother P.O.W.s.

In spite of the apparent hopelessness of both surviving aerial combat against seemingly insurmountable odds and the frustrations he encountered while tending to the wounded and sick, Cox has found opportunities to bring humor into his book through the contributions of his fellow Kriegies in his Kriegie Log, the same humor that he himself manifested no matter how tough the going got. Price for the book is \$22.00, postage prepaid to all members. You can order now by writing Luther Cox at 4932 Oakbrooke Pl., Orlando, FL 32812.

DESCRIBING THE BALL OF FIRE TO THE BRITISH:

When the concept of the *Ball of Fire* as a formation tool was finalized, someone in Flying Control had to notify the British military flying control how to identify her. This task fell to Paul London, who now lives in Denver and was at the time of notification an air traffic controller for the Hardwick tower. He was asked to call London and describe the plane to the proper authority. Paul reports that after each bit of description about first the stripes, the colored lights around the fuselage, then the red flares coming from the tail turret and other more minor strange characteristics, he asked the Brit at the other end of the phone if he understood. His reply was, "Oh, my God!" Paul was sure he thought that this American group had, as they say in Britain, gone "round the bend."



by H.C. 'Pete' Henry



Finished rear side — Shipdham Tower

Marion and Jim Wright visited Shipdham and the Tower in mid-August. They report that the coating is complete on two sides of the building (sent along above picture of the smooth finished back wall showing all three levels), but work had been held up because the English weather had not been kind to the construction workers this summer. Jim was advised that the walls must be absolutely dry before applying the first of three full coats. He also reported seeing Steve Adams collecting window frames around Shipdham for use in the Tower when needed. We may get another progress report from Wm. Barrett Taylor (HQ) about his visit to Norwich/Shipdham in September.

Earlier this year, Daniel Vasquez joined the 2ADA as an Associate member. He is the son of Octaviano D. (Toby) Vasquez, who Daniel believes was a member of the 44th B.G. from 1942-45. Daniel wrote that he just met his sister from New Buckingham, England last April 19th for the first time in their lives. The first contact with his English sister was 7 Aug 92. Daniel is 45 years old and a Vietnam veteran. His dad passed away in June 1965, and that was when he learned that he had a sister and brother in England. He has yet to meet his brother. If anyone has information about "Toby" Vasquez, send it along and I'll pass it on to Daniel.

We have not seen Wally Balla (68 SQ) at any of our conventions or northeast area dinners in a while, but he is still getting around. A postcard dated 27 Aug was written from *under* the Atlantic Ocean. He was

a VIP guest of Admiral Goebel aboard the nuclear and newest SSN in the fleet.

I was pleased to receive a letter from Bill Rendell (66 SQ) in August informing me that Stanley "Lankey" Langkaskey (66 SQ) is still very much alive. While doing some research in Will Lundy's book, *44th Bomb Group — Roll of Honor and Casualties*, I read that "Lankey" died of a coronary several years ago. Bill said that this was the result of an erroneous report that he sent to Will and the book got into print before he could correct it. Bill sent a picture of the two of them taken at the Holiday Inn, Dayton, Ohio while both were attending the 44th HMG (Heritage Memorial Group) Reunion 30 July 93. Stan said that he will try to help Bill find a record of Dick Miller's fabulous evasion and escape story from their mission to Ludwigshaven 30 December 43. (Dick Miller is listed as George R. Miller in Lundy's book.) Dick died of a massive heart attack several years ago while changing the oil in his vehicle.



Bill Rendall & Stanley Langkaskey at 44th HMG Reunion in Dayton, Ohio, 1 Aug 93.

It has also been reported that Jay Spencer (67 SQ) has a severe back problem and is in the Veterans Hospital in San Diego awaiting an operation as soon as possible. We wish you the best of luck, Jay. Send get-well card to 5664 Adobe Falls Pl., San Diego, CA 92120.

As this column is being written on 1 Oct 93, how many of you recall that 50 years ago on this date, our Group attacked the airframe plant for Messerschmitts at Wiener-Neustadt, Austria with the loss of eight airplanes, although one crew landed safely at Bari, Italy? (See Will Lundy's *44th Bomb Group — Roll of Honor and Casualties*, pp 88-102.) Will Lundy feels that this raid, in some respects, was worse than the 1 Aug 43 Ploesti raid.

Speaking of the Ploesti raid, as most of you know, the 44th HMG Reunion was held in Dayton, Ohio the weekend of 1 Aug 43 to commemorate the occasion. Members of the 93rd B.G. and 389th B.G. were also present from the 2ADA for the ceremonies at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. We presume that members from the 98th and 376th Bomb Groups were also in attendance, as were P.O.W.s from all five Bomb Groups that took part in this raid (Ploesti P.O.W. Association). There was considerable confusion and consternation

amongst the members about plans to phase out the 44th HMG in early 1994 as announced in the Spring 1993 Logbook. Subsequently, the 44th HMG Executive Board announced that there will be a reunion in Colorado Springs, CO, October 5-9, 1994 and, possibly, one other one in New Orleans in 1995. They reported that plans now are to close out operation of the 44th HMG in January 1995. The Board encouraged the formation of *Squadron* activities groups but made no suggestion that the 44th Bomb Group should attempt a reorganization. The 44th Bomb Group, Second Air Division Association, has no plans to discontinue *Group* activities and will continue to operate as it has in the past in conjunction with the Second Air Division Association Conventions.

I would like to remind you that Steve Adams is working on the 66th Squadron History and is in dire need of material. Some of our Squadron members have sent part of their records to him, but he could use a lot more. His address is 28 Bassingham Rd., Norwich NR23 2QT, England.

It has been some time since I offered a copy of the 44th Bomb Group Roster, and a new one was received 13 September 93. If anyone is interested in a copy, send \$4.00 to Pete Henry, address inside front cover of the JOURNAL.

Keith C. Schuyler (66 SQ) reports that he only has 20 copies left of his paperback *Elusive Horizons* (144 pages — available for \$6 including postage). He sent a hard-back copy to Phyllis DuBois for our Memorial Library after leaving a paperback copy there when they visited Shipdham and Norwich with the 44th HMG in October '92. The book describes Keith's tour of duty with the 44th B.G., an unforgettable true story of life and death in the flak-filled skies above Germany. If interested, write to Keith Schuyler, Box 3094, R.R. 3, Berwick, PA 18603.

Leroy "Ted" Newby advises that Stereovision International Inc., of Burbank, CA, is in the pre-production stages of producing a movie based on his book, *Into The Guns Of Ploesti*, in 35mm and 70mm, regular and 3D. Ted reports that his book is still available for \$14.45 (192 pages in paperback). Roger Freeman described it thusly: "It is refreshing to read a book about a major military campaign written by one who was there." Write to Leroy Newby at 346 Pineview Drive, Venice, FL 34293.

Word was received from Mrs. Wayne M. Rickert that Wayne (68 SQ) died 3 June 93. He was really looking forward to seeing his crew at the 44th HMG Reunion in Dayton 1 Aug 93, but he succumbed to cancer before he could make it. Our condolences to Mrs. Rickert.

It is expected that most of you will receive this JOURNAL sometime in December, so it is appropriate to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and Happy and Healthy New Year.

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
Marvin H. Speidel



The title of this year's Air War Symposium, sponsored by the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation, was "D-Day: The Biggest Mission Ever Staged." One of the featured speakers was Colonel Jacob J. Brogger, who led the first group over the enemy coast on D-Day, the 446th Bomb Group, 20th Combat Wing, 2nd Air Division. Also on the panel was Major Michael Paczan, who was the Lead Navigator on the mission. As formation commander, Brogger rode as co-pilot with Captain Charles Ryan of the 704th Bombardment Squadron. The lead aircraft was "Red Ass" and the formation carried 1,000 and 500 pound bombs with its target of enemy defense installations at Vierville on the French coast. As to "Red Ass," the powers that be, feeling that the name "Red Ass" might be too indelicate for the sensitivities of the civilian population should it appear as such in the stateside newspapers, changed the name to "Bungay Buckaroo" for that one important day and the aircraft became "Red Ass" again after that and for the rest of the war. That is also the source of the name by which the 446th became famous and is known as today. In addition to being honored as the D-Day leaders at this symposium, there is another 446th honor that is not commonly known. John McCoy, Colonel (Ret.) was an Army Air Force artist who was sent to England by General "Hap" Arnold to paint some living history. Upon arriving in England he was told by General Doolittle that he would be sent to "the best damn B-24 Group we have. The 446th at Bungay!" As a result, among McCoy's many original paintings displayed in the Arnold corridor of the Air Force section of the Pentagon, the only B-24s of the 2nd Air Division are four of the 446th Bomb Group, with the yellow and black tails proudly displayed.

* * * * *

In the July issue of *Air Force Magazine* in the column titled "Valor," there was an article called "Unsung Heroes of World War II." Telling of the exploits of John Foley and Arizona Harris, the text also pays tribute to all aerial gunners. With a salute of gratitude to the editors of *Air Force Magazine*, here is a quote from that article: "In the years of World War II, the Army Air Forces trained 193,000 pilots, 50,000 navigators, and 45,000 bombardiers; but the top spot in the aircrew training programs went to aerial gunners. Flexible gunnery schools turned out 297,000 graduates, most of them enlisted men. A high percentage were volunteers who, like bombardier trainees, knew they had but one destination on graduation — combat. The success of bombing campaigns in every theater of operations rested heavily on the aerial gunners, whose lot was not easy. Of all crew positions, the gunners had the most physically demanding, especially in heavy bombers that flew at high altitudes where temperatures ranged down to -60 Fahrenheit. There was no heat and no armor protection in the gunners' positions. Despite the perils and physical suffering of their trade, a surprising number of gunners volunteered for second and even third tours. Thousands of aircrew members survived the war because of the dedication of the aerial gunners. Their contribution to Allied victory was immeasurable."

* * * * *

Among the daily correspondence and the junk mail litter recently received have been several items dealing with the Air Force and, more specifically, "The Mighty Eighth." For what it's worth and for those who might be interested, here 'tis: Antiquary Video is offering "Target For Today," "The Fight For The Sky," "Target For Tonight," and "The Battle of Britain" at attractive prices and the complete set at a discount. For information and ordering call 1-800-225-0208. Sarpedon, 166 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010 will be publishing a book, which is now at the printer, titled "Or Go Down In Flame." Written by W. Raymond Wood, a professor of anthropology who used his extensive research skills to recreate the death of his brother who was a navigator on Second Schweinfurt, the most savagely fought air battle in U.S. history. The published price will be \$24.95 plus \$2.50 S/H, but by mentioning in writing to the above address (no credit cards) that you are a veteran of the Eighth Air Force, the cost will be \$20.00 including

shipping. Michelin Travel Publications has reprinted their original 1947 commemorative map of the Battle of Normandy, June to August 1944. This large map of the invasion area and beaches is comprehensive and includes a short history of the battle plus a listing of principal places of interest such as battlefields, landing zones, war memorials, areas damaged or destroyed, museums, and scenic landmarks. Also available as reprints of the originals are the Battle of Provence, August 1944; the Battle of Alsace, Nov. 1944 to March 1945; and the Road to Liberty, June 1944 to March 1945; all of which, together with the Normandy map, comprise "Les Michelin de la Liberation." Those interested in any of these reprints, particularly the Normandy Invasion Map which is destined to become a collector's item, and most particularly, those who were involved on that memorable day when the 446th was the D-Day Leader, should call 1-800-223-0987 and ask for operator #32. A 1993 Government Publication, "Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents," Stock Number 051-000-00200-8, ISBN 0-16-041625-6 is available at \$3.25 from: Superintendent of Documents, Washington, DC 20402-9325, or to order with Visa or Mastercard, call 1-202-783-3238. An English author who is writing a book to be called "Armageddon 1945" is seeking personal accounts from U.S. Army fliers who were over Germany or were P.O.W.s in Germany at the end of WWII, asking for your age and rank in 1945, what you were doing on January 1st and May 8th, and memories of times in between. He is particularly interested in encounters with the ME-262 jet, missions in support of the Rhine crossing, the February 12/13, 1945 Dresden mission, and any Berlin missions. Send to: Robin H. Neillands, P.O. Box 345, Bourne End, Bucks, SL8 5NH, England.

* * * * *

Attention War Brides: The Evening News of Norwich, England will be doing a series of editorials on your 50th anniversary. They want to know: how and when you met your GI? Were you in the Air Force, ATS, Land Army or were you at home? When and where you were married? They would also like wartime pictures of both of you, and something of your post-WWII life with photos. All photos will be returned. Send material to: Mr. Derek James, Editor/War Bride Stories, The Evening News, Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 1RE, England.

* * * * *

Herewith, the last of the mission reports from Dick Ghere. Mission No. 13, Nuremberg-Furth, Germany, Feb. 25, 1944. Code Word: Knothole. "After an early breakfast we went to the briefing room where we learned that the primary target for visual bombing was the Bachman-Von Blumenthal aircraft plant at Nuremberg-Furth, Germany, makers of ME-110 and ME-210 aircraft. We boarded ship #498, 'Desperate Desmond,' and left the runway at an early hour. Loaded with fifty-two M-47 incendiary bombs, we climbed to an altitude of 17,500 ft. and took number 4 position in the second section. On our way to the target we did not see any enemy fighter or flak until we reached the IP. There we saw plenty of heavy flak. As we started down the bomb run, we could see the target already ablaze. At 1432 hours our bombs landed on the target. Pilot 'Mac' McKeny then turned 'Desperate Desmond' and we headed for home base with only one flak hole at this point. Seconds later our formation was attacked by ME-109s. We had no fighter escort protection, as they had returned to base. Two ME-109s repeatedly attacked our waist, coming in from nine o'clock high. Four ME-109s were attacking stragglers. They downed three B-24s, one from our squadron — Lt. Hockensmith and crew. I fired the nose guns at the ME-109s but they were mostly out of my range, coming in from nine o'clock. The ME-109s finally left, and our next problem came up in the way of heavy flak as we flew over Saarbrücken. Later we were in flak thrown up from Amiens. The last barrage came up from Poix. Our lead ship was hit by the first burst. We could feel it and other bursts as well. Also on our way back we saw burning targets at Stuttgart and Ludwigshafen — targets that the B-17s had hit earlier. Pilot McKeny landed 'Desperate Desmond' at home base late in the afternoon. We then went back to coffee, sandwiches and debriefing. Another tough one." Thanks, Dick, for sharing these with us. How about hearing from more of you out there? I'm sure there are countless untold stories just waiting to be heard.

* * * * *

In closing, it gives me a great deal of pleasure, on behalf of Marge and myself, to wish each and every one of you Seasons Greetings and all the best of health and happiness in the coming year.

Letters



Dear Bill:

I recently wrote the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum a letter, explaining my displeasure with the book they published in which they featured the B-17 but not one word about the B-24.

The Smithsonian has replied, saying I was right and they were going to make some changes in the WWII exhibit, also!

Now, here is the important part — they are going to open up a museum at Dulles Airport and asked if I could help them locate a B-24 for that museum, preferably one combat B-24. They, of course, would like it donated. I am therefore asking you to publish this letter and see if we can come up with a B-24 to be displayed in Washington, D.C. What a great opportunity for us!

Keep me posted.

Edward J. Barton
44th Bomb Group
3593 East Elma Street
Camarillo, CA 93010

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

Please accept my compliments on how you continue to stay focused on the purpose of our association, which is to look back on our experiences in England; to personalize that experience with stories, poems, photos, sketches; to keep track of our buddies; to maintain our friendship with the kind and gentle people of and around Norwich; and to leave a clear record of what we contributed to the destruction of the evil which almost smothered the world.

I have to tell you, however, that I am suspicious of the purpose of "advocating and supporting an adequate, effective and efficient Army, Navy and Air Force at all times." Those words are a bit too subjective for me to accept without question. One wonders who inserted those words as a purpose of a periodical aimed principally at civilians who just happened to have been in World War II and generally want nothing to do with the military.

The official 8th Air Force Historical Society NEWS, in spite of its slick format, too often departs from the purpose of our association into rather tedious organizational material, which has discouraged me from reading it during the past year. In contrast, I read every word of your JOURNAL.

Fred Becchetti
3710 Persimmon Circle
Fairfax, VA 22031

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

In response to the article "Hethel Highlights" by Earl Zimmerman (389th) on the "Flying Jeep" controversy (*Spring 1993*, pp 29-30) I am attaching some information from an article published in the January 1993 issue of *Fly Past*, a magazine that is published in England.

The article, "Rotocraft Pioneer" by Nick Sayer, is about the career of George (Mickie) Walker. It reads, in part:

"TDS.3 set to work to produce a suitable design to meet the need to deliver a Jeep (or even a Valentine tank) via a detachable rotor head, Mickie Walker's principal contribution being the rotor hub mechanics. First flight of the Rotabuggy, as it was known, was carried out on November 27, 1943 under tow from a Bentley motor car. Take-off speed was 37 mph (59 km/h) with a rotor speed of 235 rpm. A crew of two was used — one person in charge of the flight controls, the other the Jeep steering wheel. Later tests were conducted under tow by a modified Whitley bomber which had had its rear turret removed, replaced by a towing rig and observation platform. Flight speeds of 72 mph (115 km/h) were achieved.

"It soon became apparent that the most delicate part of the flight occurred during Rotabuggy landing. If a touchdown occurred onto the rear wheels, which was considered the best method, proper directional control was maintained by way of the rotor. However, the alternative front wheel touchdown had the potential for disaster. If the front wheels contacted the ground first, co-ordination between the driver at the steering wheel and the pilot at the flight controls was vital. Failure to co-ordinate usually resulted in total loss of control and caused the Rotabuggy to overturn.



Interior of Rotabuggy showing modifications for flight operations.

"On February 23, 1944 such a loss of control resulted in an accident in which Mickie, wearing only his Trilby as head protection, suffered three broken ribs, a damaged spine and head injuries. The pilot, wearing his polo helmet, escaped major injury. From this point on rear wheel landings became mandatory, as did proper head protection!

"The tide of the war gradually began to favour the Allies. D-Day had come and gone. Development would not be completed in time for the Rotabuggy to play the significant part for which it was intended. A decision was made to terminate the project. The final act was to conduct the one and only true flight of



Rotabuggy airborne at Sherburn-in-Elmet.

the design, previous tests having been restricted to the length of the runway.

"On September 11, 1944 under the control of F/L Little and under tow from the Whitley piloted by F/L Palmer, the Rotabuggy rose to a height of 700 ft (213 m) and completed one full circuit of the aerodrome. Mickie observed from the rear platform aboard the Whitley. The flight experienced the same vibration problems which had dogged the whole development programme, with F/L Little requesting that the airspeed be reduced, but F/L Palmer was reluctant to do so for fear of stalling the bomber. The landing was made as usual under tow, but a little more bumpy than usual, probably in part as a result of pilot fatigue or nervous tension. So ended the project."

Maybe this will convince the skeptics.

George F. Johnson
445th Bomb Group
515 Shippeetown Road
East Greenwich, R.I. 02818

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

I would like to hear from anyone who completed a combat tour in bombers and then volunteered for and flew combat in fighters in the 8th Air Force during World War II.

Apparently, few pilots completed a tour in bombers, then, without leave or delay wrangled a transfer to fighters. The AF Historical Research Center has no record of these "double-duty" pilots. We know of two; surely there were others. Who were they?

Please send information to me at the address below or to G.W. Ford, 1930 Cabana Drive, San Jose, CA 95125. Please send pilot's name, bomber group, type bomber, fighter group and type fighter, and tell us your story.

James J. Scanlon
453rd B.G., 4th F.G.
949 Washington Blvd.
Abilene, Texas 79601

P.S. Would also appreciate help in locating Robert Kanaga, who was 733rd Squadron C.O., 453rd Bomb Group, but transferred to 4th Fighter Group without completing a bomber tour.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

As someone from the Cajun country might say, "Coincidence, she got one long arm, no?"

The observation is prompted by two entries in the Fall 1993 JOURNAL. May I share a bit of information with you, and perhaps use it to possibly glean some specific information about members of my crew (Herb Lambert, 732nd Squadron, 453rd Group, 1944).

The first item was the note by Wib Clingan on page 14 of the issue: "We've heard from Kyle Clay, Sissonville, WV, who was with us in the 732nd Squadron. He hopes to join with us soon."

The second item, page 36 (back cover), was at the end of the letter from Alex Wallace, Carnelian Bay, CA. The final part of his letter, which included a photo of his crew, noted that the ship forming the background was not theirs: "Ours was the Linda Lou."

Here's how the two hang together.

Our crew finished our tour (30 missions) in November '44. Soon afterward, I went to 2AD HQ and remained in Ops there until VE Day. I never saw any of my crew after that departure.

In May this year, some 49 years later, I had a phone call from Kyle Clay. He wanted to know whether I was the Herbert Lambert who served in the 453rd and flew the Bayou Tiger (a name we used and referred to, but never got to paint on the aircraft. Unofficially, it was Bayou Tiger to us.)

I assured Clay I was, indeed, that Lambert, and before he could further identify himself I knew he was our crew's flight engineer. It was good to hear from him and know that he had been trying for a long time to contact me. We've exchanged letters several times in the ensuing months. He's the only crew member I've ever heard from or about.

In August, I had a similar "out of the blue" phone call, this time from New Haven, Connecticut. Again, I was asked whether I was H.G. Lambert, from the 453rd. I assured the caller, Andy DeCusati, that I was. The next question sort of floored me: "Did you fly a mission 26 October 1944 and did you fly it in a ship named Linda Lou?"

DeCusati has been, for quite a while, seeking information about a relative who was a crew member on that ship, Sgt. Joseph DeCusati, radio operator. (He is not among those shown and identified in Wallace's photo. He may have been a replacement or maybe another crew had once claimed the Linda Lou.) DeCusati said his relative was hit by a flak fragment and killed instantly. Andy DeCusati has been in touch with numerous 453rd people, and said all have been quite helpful and considerate as he seeks to piece together data about Sgt. Joseph DeCusati.

I fortunately was able to check my log books while Andy was on the phone, and I did fly 26 October 1944, though I had no note of the name of the ship. He had more precise info than I did! We've also ex-

changed correspondence since that call. He asked for, and I sent, a copy of the photo of the Lambert crew (original, before we were made a lead crew).

Finally, perhaps some reader, somewhere, may know something about the others of my crew — still living, or with folded wings. Besides Kyle Clay, engineer, and myself, pilot, they were: Ralph Tucker, co-pilot, Birmingham, AL; Ben Belzer, bombardier, New York City (Bronx?); Michael Venezia, radio operator, Connecticut; Wesley Doolittle, nose gunner, New Jersey; Lonnie Akins, top turret, Texas; Ferris DeBerry, tail turret, Arizona; and Sidney Talisman, waist gunner, Pennsylvania.

If any JOURNAL readers have any information, I would appreciate receiving it. I perhaps should have added that I'm a native of New Orleans and was graduated from Louisiana State University, hence Bayou Tiger.

As a retired magazine editor, I can truly appreciate the work that you, and Wilbur Stites, editor of the 453rd Bomb Group Association Newsletter, put into your dedicated efforts.

Herb Lambert
1680 Valley Ranch Circle
Prescott, AZ 86303
Tel. (602) 778-4427

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

We have lost an original 453rd B.G. member, my tail gunner and friend, Fred Gonzalez, who flew 30 missions with original crew 53. He leaves his wife Louise and three sons Paul, Mark and David of 1100 Oakwood Place, Sierra Madre, CA 91024. He retired in 1988 from Bell & Howell, (Intl.)

Ray L. Sears was our pilot. We do not know what has happened to him, but he was still in the Air Force in the late forties or fifties. He may have flown in the Berlin airlift.

Jim Kotapish was our co-pilot, as well as Andy Low and others. Jim came to see us in 1992. Eugene Minor was our navigator, and Leonard Phillips was our bomb aimer. Radio was Frank Youtsey, who got a recall over Holland to bring us back to Old Buck, although we had frostbite. Top turret was Leon Oppis. He lives in Brooklyn, NY, and we see each other occasionally. A real friend, too. I do not know where Frank Youtsey is, or Charles Cannon (from Ohio). Cannon was R.H. waist gunner. Herbert Bieling was in the ball turret. I flew L.H. waist gun and nose turret January 1944 to August 6, 1944.

The Folded Wings group is getting larger. Thank you for all you have done for us through the years.

John Burkhardt
33-26 92nd St., Apt. 2N
Jackson Heights, NY
11372

+ + + +



Howard Macreading, 93rd, standing alongside "Heavenly Daze."

Dear Bill:

First I want to congratulate you on the super job you have done and are still doing as Editor of the JOURNAL; thank you very much.

The article in the Fall 1993 issue on "Heavenly Daze" brought back more memories. As a member of the 93rd B.G., 330th B.S., I was very familiar with "Heavenly Daze" and Ray Bader, and we spent many hours together; on base, at London, etc.

I am enclosing a snap of "Heavenly Daze" with yours truly standing by same; perhaps some day it could be included in the JOURNAL.

Hope all is well with you, and keep up the super work.

Howard Macreading
93 Darrow Drive
Warwick, RI 02886

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I hope that you will run a notice in your publication to help us.

The Yankee Air Force Library would like to locate and obtain copies of all of Tony North's B-24 albums. I recently corresponded with Tony North and he told me that he knows of no source for these albums; therefore, I am asking your readers for assistance.

Anyone who would like to donate copies can receive an acknowledgement for a tax deduction. Anyone else who may want to sell an album(s) can contact me with a notation of the book's condition and asking price. Any information would be most appreciated.

Harold W. Sherman
Library Chairman
Yankee Air Museum Library
P.O. Box 590
Belleville, MI 48112-0590
Tel. (313) 483-4030

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Last September (1992), five members of the Bill Bonner crew met for the first time since we finished our thirty missions with the 448th B.G. in May 1944. We had a marvelous time rehashing our mission experiences and catching up on the intervening years. I hope that we can meet again in May 1994 to commemorate the 50th anniversary.

We took a photo of the five of us which is enclosed. Also enclosed is our original crew picture from 1943. It seems we have "matured."

I love receiving the JOURNAL.

John B. Richmond
205 N. University Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37130



December 1943: Bill Bonner Crew, 448th B.G., Seething. Standing (l-r): Joe Enovitch, ball turret gunner; Jean Beaulieu, radio operator; Bill Van Slyke, waist gunner; Gil Morensey, waist gunner; Carl Ehret, flight engineer; Stan Zoborowski, tail gunner. Kneeling (l-r): Tom Kavala, bombardier; Bob Johnston, navigator; Bill Bonner, pilot; John Richmond, co-pilot.



September 1992: Five members of the Bill Bonner crew reunite. Standing (l-r): Joe Enovitch, Jean Beaulieu, Stan Zoborowski. Kneeling (l-r): Bill Bonner, John Richmond.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

The B-24 we flew over from Topeka to Valley, Wales, I had named "Little Audrey," after my bride of only one month. It had painted on the nose section a little girl shooting a shotgun, and the words "Little Audrey" underneath.

I left the ship at Valley and never saw it again. It sure would be great to hear from anyone who might have flown it on combat missions.

John Stavenger
489th Bomb Group
P.O. Box 386
Morris, MN 56267

+ + + +

Dear Ray [Strong]:

Rummaging through some old papers recently, I came across this plaque; I can remember that it was made at the 96th CBW headquarters when I was on the staff of Brig. Gen. Walter Peck. I can't take the credit for the design, but as operations Sgt. it came to my desk; someone in our group had designed it when the General asked for suggestions for a Bomb Wing Insignia patch.

I thought it was a great design but can't remember if it was ever adopted. Perhaps if it is displayed in the JOURNAL it may jog someone's memory.

I was with the 458-466-467 as operations Sgt., and finally moved to the General's office where I finished the war. I get great feelings when news reaches me through the JOURNAL, even though most is about the fly boys, and not much is written about the cooks, medics, photo, admin, ops, G-2, motor pool, radio, MPs, special services, chaplains, ammo personnel, bomb loaders, printers, quartermaster, tower personnel, weather station, dispatchers, and on and

+ +

Dear Bill:

I took the enclosed picture (B-24J) at the Pima Air Museum, just outside of Tucson, Arizona, when we were down there a few months ago. They were just finishing work on the upper turret. Excellent job of reconstruction. When you see a bird looking like this there is no need for any imagination to bring back a lot of memories.

I thought the members would enjoy seeing this picture, and if anyone plans to travel in that area for a vacation, they'll find it worthwhile to drop in for a look.

Keep up the good work on the JOURNAL, Bill, it is really a professional publication.

Thomas J. O'Halloran
445th Bomb Group
P.O. Box 10037
Prescott, AZ 86304-0037

+ +

Dear Bill:

On July 20, 1944 I lay in a bomb carpet from the 2nd Air Division.

Target of eleven B-24 Liberators was airfield Erfurt-Bindersleben. The squadron dropped the bombs too short. The most bombs dropped in the village Bindersleben. Only one bomb hit a repair hangar. The last bomb dropped 20 metres from me. I still have a bomb splinter as memory.

I would like to know what bomb group and squadron flew the attack. Have you a contact address, and is it possible to receive a strike photo?

I hope you have a little time for me. Many thanks for an answer.

Hans Hoehler
Meisenburgstr. 60
W-4300 Essen 1
West Germany

+ + + +

on... Not a plane would move, repeat, not MOVE, if all these units did not do their job. That plane MAY fly, but it is the mechanic with the wrench in his hand that put it there, and all the aforementioned people who stood behind him.

Lt. Col. Albert Hanson
167 North Street
Woodbridge, NJ 07095



Design for a 96th Bomb Wing insignia patch. Does anyone remember whether or not this patch was ever adopted?

+ +



B-24J at Pima Air Museum, Tucson, Arizona, as work was being completed on the upper turret.

+ +

Dear Sir:

I am trying to trace the owner of a World War II leather flying jacket.

The jacket was found in a garage at 8, Shipdham Road, Toftwood, Dereham, Norfolk. Name tag inside collar reads: J.F. CAUFMAN (Custman or Cusfman). Number 0-555268, or prefixed 0-8 or 0-6. Type B 3, OWG no 33H5595, A.C. Order No 43-13609 - AF, Size 40 R, Property Air Force, U.S. Army.

The finder would be willing to return this jacket to the original owner if he so wished.

Mrs. June Farrow
Clinkhill,
New Road,
Bawburgh,
Norwich,
Norfolk NR9 3LZ
U.K.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

At times one's nostalgia for the past gets wrapped up in small details. Well, in thinking about my time spent with the 491st B.G. I find it difficult to relive the combat experiences at my advanced age. The mass-produced B-24 was a fine aircraft but hardly one that could be considered airworthy. To fly in a hulk of metal that weighed thirty tons which was held together with sheet aluminum about 100 mics thick was to court disaster. Indeed aviation was in its infancy. So what if the open bomb bay doors created an air pocket half the size of the aircraft. And to fly the unstable plane with ten 50 cal machine guns blasting in all directions was too much to fathom.

Visibility was limited in one direction and you had to concentrate on your job as well as to know what was happening with other planes in the group. Clouds were a continuous threat to the mission's success. And who could tell what lurked in the next cloud bank?

To begin with you were too tired to be

rudely awakened by the orderly after only a few hours of sleep. Going to bed without supper even if it was only rancid pork wasn't very smart, and a breakfast of green slimy eggs wasn't any help either. Again you would get by thanks to the candy bar you picked up, and there was always an assist from a couple of healthy gulps of pure oxygen. How long could this go on? Well, as long as you could stand the odor of your unbathed body.

In retrospect, the hard times of cadet training were paying off. But they didn't tell you the G4 taken before leaving your last base would last during your tour of combat. No sick calls, because the flight surgeon would not be around for briefing. Complaints such as defective clothing and non-functional space heaters were unheard of. An abortion of a mission just because the navigator had severe stomach cramps could be grounds for disciplinary action and even derisions of cowardice from fellow crew members. You would not get sick once you arrived in England. Well, the

booze and donuts when you returned from a mission would make you forget your woes. Unless you kept tabs of your missions by hauling fuse pins above your bunk.

Despite all the hardship, my only tough mission was the 28th over France. It was supposed to be a milk run, but I wound up in the hospital to do more agonizing. Well you know you can't survive forever. Old age is going to exact its toll of all mortals. Now it's a day by day job to stay healthy. Ironically doctors are as scarce now as ever.

George A. Risko
28801 Imperial A231
Warren, MI 48043

P.S. There are quite a few of the 491st still around. But I've only been able to locate one survivor of the two crews with which I flew. Hope they're doing a better job of staying healthy than I am.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

On Monday, 19 June 1944, a B-24 Liberator of the 328th Bomb Squadron, 93rd Bomb Group crashed near Bruges, Belgium after being hit by the German flak of Maldegem (at 15 km of Bruges). Three men died in the accident: 2nd Lt. Michael Pietruccioli, navigator, and T/Sgt. Kenneth V. Ehrhart, gunner, who both bailed out too late; and the co-pilot 1st Lt. Floyd R. Cook, who remained in the plane. The seven remaining crew members bailed out safely but were taken prisoner by the Germans. 1st Lt. Kavanaugh, bombardier, escaped for one night but was taken prisoner the day after.

The remaining members of the crew were: 1st Lt. Robert W. Brown, pilot; T/Sgt. Oliver J. Wood, engineer; Sgt. Raymond F. Pulley, radio operator; S/Sgt. John H. Worrell, gunner; S/Sgt. Lilian E. Wolfe, gunner; and S/Sgt. Robert R. Meltzer, gunner.

Lt. Cook and T/Sgt. Ehrhart are buried in Epinal, France. We don't know where 2nd Lt. Pietruccioli is buried; perhaps in the United States.

Next year it will be 50 years since all this happened, and for this occasion I am making a detailed study for publication in the local newspaper. This study will probably be published in a booklet if I can find sufficient material. It is also possible that the City of Bruges will have a ceremony and perhaps inaugurate a memorial plate at this occasion. They are awaiting the results of my investigations before making a decision.

I am applying to you and your Association to obtain more information. I am in search of survivors of this crew so they can tell me their story about this flight which ended so dramatically and what happened after.

Hoping you can help me I send you my friendly greetings.

Jacques Willems
Grauwwerkersstraat, 8/4
8000 Bruges-BELGIUM

+ + + +

Optional Activities Reservation Form: 2ADA 47th Annual Convention Kansas City, Missouri, May 28-31, 1994

For details on these optional activities that will be offered during our convention, please see the back cover of this JOURNAL. Please be aware that three Groups have opted to make their own plans for Sunday, May 29th: 392nd, 446th, and 489th.

To reserve space for these activities, mail this form with your check payable to **AGENDA: Kansas City, Inc.**, by April 20, 1994. **DO NOT MAIL THIS FORM OR MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO 2ADA.**

Activity	No. of People	Cost per Ticket	Total Amount
SUNDAY, MAY 29, 1994			
Harry Truman's Independence 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM	_____	x \$45/person =	\$ _____
Kansas City/Steamboat "Arabia" 10:15 AM - 3:15 PM	_____	x \$30/person =	\$ _____
MONDAY, MAY 30, 1994			
Fashion Show & Luncheon Noon - 1:30 PM	_____	x \$33/person =	\$ _____
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE			= \$ _____

YOUR NAME(S): _____
(please print or type)

This completed form, **plus payment in full**, is required for all optional event reservations. Tickets will be delivered to you upon your arrival in Kansas City. Please complete this form and mail it with a check (sorry, no credit cards) payable to:

AGENDA: Kansas City, Inc.
15305 West 78th Terrace
Lenexa, KS 66217

All reservations must be received no later than **April 20, 1994**. Reservations received after that date will be accommodated on a space available basis only. Cancellation of activity reservations must be received, **IN WRITING**, no later than April 20, 1994.

Second Air Division Association

47th Annual Convention • May 28-31, 1994

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Crown Center, 2345 McGee Street, Kansas City, Missouri • Telephone (816) 421-1234

FRIDAY, MAY 27	SATURDAY, MAY 28	SUNDAY, MAY 29	MONDAY, MAY 30	TUESDAY, MAY 31
Registration	Registration	Buffet Breakfast	Buffet Breakfast	Buffet Breakfast
Golf Tournament	Cocktail Party	Group Day	Fashion Show and	
(see page 20 for details)	Buffet Dinner	Tours (see reverse	Luncheon (see	
Early Bird Party	Awards Ceremony	for details)	reverse for details)	
(Cash Bar and		Cocktail Party	Cocktail Party	
Complimentary Buffet)		Group Dinners	Banquet and Dance	

The costs listed below are for the entire package (5/28 - 5/31) listed above, including hotel room for three nights, 5/28-29-30. For special requirements, drop me a line and I will advise costs.

COSTS PER PERSON

Single Occupancy	\$455.00
Double Occupancy	\$335.00 each
Triple Occupancy	\$290.00 each

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

In all future conventions, an advance deposit of \$50.00 per person attending will be required, which will be non-refundable if 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 prior to convention start.

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

The cost for extra nights is \$76.00 per room + 11.975% tax.

Reservation Cut Off Date Is April 28 — after this date only if rooms available.

GOLF TOURNAMENT: Contact Pete Henry, 164B Portland Lane, Jamesburg, NJ 08831. Phone 609-655-0982.

NON-SMOKING ROOMS: 300 • HANDICAPPED ROOMS: 15

PARKING: FREE. Garage will issue in and out tickets for 2ADA attendees.

LIMO SERVICE: KCI Shuttle, \$18.00 round trip, \$11.00 one way. Tickets can be purchased from KCI driver, or call 1-800-243-6383.

GROUP VICE PRESIDENTS: Please send a postcard advising them of your plans to attend or if you must cancel.

PLEASE SEE REVERSE FOR TOUR INFORMATION AND CONVENTION RESERVATION FORM.

CAMPGROUNDS: Contact has been made with K.O.A., Kansas City East, MO for our 1994 reunion. Early campers' get-together will be the day prior to reunion activities. Full hook-up is \$21.00 (\$15.00 deposit will be required). If 10 or more attend all will receive 15% discount. All reservations MUST be in by April 10, 1994 along with your deposit check made payable to Kansas City East K.O.A. Fill out the form below and send to Roberta & Floyd Bull, Box 30, Circleville, NY 10919. Phone 914-361-2632.

Name: _____ Group: _____ Phone: _____
 Address _____
 Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____
 No. In Party: _____ Children: _____ Pets: _____
 Type of Unit: _____ Length: _____
 Type of Hook Up: W _____ E _____ S _____ Location of Sewer: _____

Please see reverse for Convention Registration Form...

47th Annual Convention (continued from page 35)

THE FOLLOWING OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE AT ADDITIONAL COST FOR THOSE INTERESTED. TO RESERVE TICKETS PLEASE USE THE FORM ON PAGE 34. PLEASE NOTE: Three Groups have opted to make their own plans for Sunday, May 29th: 392nd, 446th, and 489th.

SUNDAY, MAY 29th: HARRY TRUMAN LIBRARY, TOUR OF INDEPENDENCE AND LUNCH. Depart 10 AM - 3:30 PM. Visit Truman Library, Old Independence Courthouse and drive by Summer White House. Lunch at Stephenson's Old Apple Farm, rustic country inn with homestyle cooking. After lunch visit to either the Bingham-Waggoner Estate or the Vaile Mansion. Minimum 100 people, Maximum 260. **Cost: \$45.00 per person.**

SUNDAY, MAY 29th: GUIDED EXCURSION OF KANSAS CITY, SHOPPING AT THE FAMOUS COUNTRY CLUB PLAZA. LUNCH ON YOUR OWN. AFTER LUNCH A TOUR OF THE STEAMBOAT ARABIA. Depart 10:15 AM - 3:15 PM. The Arabia was sunk in 1856, then salvaged in 1989. Her cargo included china, jewelry, clothing, etc., all still in pristine condition. Minimum 30 people, Maximum 350. **Cost: \$30.00 per person.**

MONDAY, MAY 30th: FASHION SHOW AND LUNCHEON AT THE HYATT, Noon - 1:30 PM. Fresh fruit and cottage cheese, dessert, tea and coffee. Professional commentator introduces and describes the ensembles worn by professional models ranging in dress sizes from 10-20. Minimum 200 people, Maximum 700. **Cost: \$33.00 per person.**

IMPORTANT NOTES: No smoking on all vehicles. If totals drop below minimums, trips will be cancelled and full refunds made. If you must cancel, full refund will be made up to 4 weeks prior to the event. No refunds will be made for cancellations received less than 4 weeks prior to the event. If there is still room available for the above trips, tickets will be sold during convention registration. **DO NOT MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO 2ADA, DO NOT MAIL SAME TO 2ADA.** Please use the Optional Activities Reservation Form on page 34.

47TH ANNUAL 2ADA CONVENTION RESERVATION FORM

Name _____ Spouse _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Group for Group Dinner Seating _____ Group for Banquet Seating _____

Sgl. _____ Dbl. _____ Trip. _____ Will Share _____ Arrive _____ Depart _____

First Convention _____ Deposit _____ Payment in Full _____ Nicknames _____

Names of other parties in room if triple occupancy _____

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

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

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