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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Spring 1994

Ernie Pyle on Air Warfare

by Louis A. Montalvo, Past President, 91st Bomb Group (Heavy) Memorial Association

Many men and women covered World War II for their media, and many were the nicknames by which they fondly described its American participants: Dogface, GI Joe, Sad Sack and Kilroy (who had been everywhere) were some of these.

Of all these men and women Ernie Pyle stood out. Pyle knew the American soldier and loved him...even as much as his typewriter. He was as well-known to the GIs as he was to the ranking generals. His reports appeared in newspapers all over the United States. Pyle, as one would suspect, died doing what he did best...writing about WWII. Unfortunately, a bullet meant for some anonymous American soldier found him, and he died on a small Pacific island during the battle of Okinawa.

It is a report Pyle wrote a year before he died that I bring to your attention in memorializing those who fought World War II over European skies.

Hiding in a barn in France with GIs and officers, pinned down by the Germans during the D-Day landings in Normandy and awaiting a supporting air strike to set them free, Ernie Pyle witnessed and wrote what he saw and felt. Perhaps no airman involved in that strike was so aware, and moved, as Pyle was by what he saw.

War on the ground provided many opportunities for recording the heroism of the foot soldier, tanker or artilleryman. But there was no "press seating" in B-17s, B-24s or P-51s. Recording the air war was left mostly to the airmen themselves who ultimately wrote exciting and factual stories about the air war and its heroes.

As Pyle saw it, the B-17s, B-24s, P-40s and P-51s came in groups, the fighters diving in every direction, perfectly timed, one right after the other. Everywhere he looked, separate groups of planes were on their way in or out of the target, some diving down and some climbing back up, or slanting over for a dive, or circling, circling, circling over his head awaiting their "turn at bat."

Pyle saw the air full of the sharp and horrible sounds of exploding bombs, the heavy rip of airplane machine guns and

the splitting screams of diving wings. The action was fast and furious but yet distinct...as in a musical show where one can distinguish voices and words.

And then a new sound gradually droned into his ears. In Pyle's words, "A sound deep and all encompassing with no notes in it...just a gigantic faraway surge of doom-like sound." It was the "heavies" and it was their turn at bat. At first they were the merest dots in the sky and they came on with a terrible slowness.

They came in flights of 12, three flights to a group and in groups stretched out across the sky. Maybe these gigantic waves were two, five or ten miles apart...it was hard to tell. But they came on in a constant procession which one thought would never end.

"What the Germans must have thought is beyond comprehension. Their march across the sky was slow and studied. I've never known a storm, or a machine, or any resolve of man that had about it the aura of such ghastly relentlessness. You had the feeling that even had God appeared beseechingly before them in the sky with palms outward to persuade them back, they would not have had within them the power to turn from their irresistible course," Pyle wrote. He stood in awe with a little group of men, from colonels to privates, back of an old stone wall.

The first huge flight passed directly over their heads and others followed. With feet spread out they leaned back trying to look straight up, until their helmets fell off. They cupped their fingers around their eyes like field glasses for a clearer view. And then the bombs came!

They began as a popping of popcorn that almost instantly swelled into a monstrous cacophony of fury and noise that seemed to destroy the world around them. From then on, for over an hour and a half that had in it the agonies of centuries, the bombs came down. A wall of smoke and dust grew high in the sky. It filtered back along the ground to the stone wall and into their noses. The bright day slowly grew dark from it. Now everything was an indescribable fury of sound. No individual noises existed. The

thundering of motors in the sky and the roar of bombs ahead filled all the earth. They could hardly hear the artillery crashing all around them. The heavies had had their turn at bat.

The Germans responded with heavy and high anti-aircraft fire...great, black puffs in the sky...until it was hard to distinguish smoke puffs from airplanes. And then someone shouted that one of the planes was smoking. A long, faint line of black smoke stretched for a mile behind one of them. It was the Germans' turn at bat!

As they watched there was a gigantic sweep of flame over the stricken bomber. From nose to tail it disappeared in flames and slanted slowly down and banked around the sky in great wide circling curves. Then, suddenly, it seemed to change its mind and swept upward, steeper and steeper until finally poised motionless on its own white pillar of smoke, turned over and dived for earth and disappeared behind the treetops. Before it was done there were more cries of "there's another one smoking, and another, and another."

Parachutes came out of some of the planes. Out of others came no chutes at all. One of white silk caught on the tail of a plane and men with binoculars could see the airman fighting to get loose until flames swept over him. Then...a tiny black dot fell through space, all alone, to eternity. And all that time the great flat ceiling of the sky was roofed by all the other "heavies" that didn't go down...plowing their way forward as if there were no turmoil in the world. Nothing deviated them by the slightest. They flew on, slowly and with a dreadful pall of sound as if they were seeing something at a great distance and nothing existed in between.

"God, how you admired those men up there and sickened for the ones who fell," exclaimed Pyle.

And so it was! Skinny, wiry young fellows who months before had been plowing fields, fixing cars, delivering mail, looking for jobs...proving they were in fact...men.

President's Message

by John B. Conrad

Your attention is directed to the listing of Association officers and others appearing in the *Journal* Directory to the left of this writing. You will note that the office of Vice President — *Journal* is now filled by C.N. (Bud) Chamberlain, succeeding William G. Robertie, who resigned effective January 1st.

Bill Robertie has filled this position for 24 years, dedicated to producing the best publication possible for our membership. With an educational background in business and library science, Bill was a dealer in rare books until his retirement in 1980. During the war, Bill served as a cryptographer and in addition flew 18 combat missions.

It is a pleasure to report that Bill is willing to continue as Editor of the *Journal*, as also listed in the Directory at the left. Assisted by Hazel Robertie and experienced printers Defiance Graphics Corporation, the continued production of the *Journal* will remain unchanged.

As Vice President — *Journal*, Bill was a member of the Executive Committee and therefore shared in the responsibility for the overall operation of the Association. Having resigned from this position he is free, as Editor, to devote his time and energy to the *Journal*.

Bud Chamberlain, who succeeds Bill as Vice President — *Journal*, is a 2ADA Past President who has remained active in the affairs of the Association, including his service as Chairman of the Editorial Review Board. I want to express my personal appreciation to Bill for his willingness to continue as Editor and to Bud for his willingness to assume the additional duties of Vice President — *Journal*.

On another matter, I want to thank all of our members who have paid membership fees to the Heritage League to enroll one or more of their children or grandchildren in the Heritage League. I asked for your support at our reunion at Hilton Head and am certainly pleased with the response. For others who would like to support the Heritage League financially by paying the annual membership fee of \$6.00 for each person you are willing to sponsor, there is a Heritage League application on page 11 of this issue. The continuation of the Heritage League will perpetuate the memory of our comrades killed in action and the part the rest of us filled in bringing World War II to a successful conclusion.

In one of our lighter moments at the Hilton Head Reunion, I had the pleasure of presenting a Kentucky Colonel's commission to our Memorial Library Board of Governors Chairman, Tom Eaton; not a Georgia Commission as reported in the most recent issue of the *Journal*. It was easy to make the mistake, since Past President Jim Reeves had previously presented a lieutenant colonel's commission to Tom issued by the Governor of Georgia, promoting Tom from his WWII rank of Captain to Lieutenant Colonel. After receiving a detailed report of Tom's activities on our behalf and his friendship with us, the Governor of Kentucky was pleased to promote him to full Colonel.



Executive Vice President's Report

by Chuck Walker

I am happy to report that the Walkers have finally arrived in Dallas, Texas. This is not to say we are all squared away in our new home, as there are at least 75 cartons yet to be opened and decisions to be made as to where to place the contents thereof. Maxine and I have sold homes and moved many times during our 48 years together, but never have we faced the trials and tribulations we encountered in this move. However, there was one very fortunate aspect of this exercise — we left California five days before the earthquake!! Weathering a "Big Shaker" is not to be taken lightly, and our heartfelt sympathy goes out to all L.A. basin residents.

Because of the turmoil of our move, I have not been able to devote the time and energy I would like to have to matters of the 2ADA. However, we were able to get letters out to

the Group VPs soliciting their suggestions and recommendations (if any) for improving our Association. They have been asked to enumerate those areas they feel can be improved. We look forward to their responses.

The mid-term Executive Committee meeting in Kansas City in early March will no doubt prove to have been most interesting and productive. The caliber of men the Groups have chosen to represent them on the Executive Committee cannot but assure the Association members of continued excellence and safe-keeping of our unique Association.

I hope you have made your reservations for our next Convention in Kansas City, May 28-31. It promises to be a great get-together. All you golfers are urged to sign up for the 27th golf tourney. I hope to see you all there.

As You Read Your Journal

Your Group Report.....

The page to which most of us automatically turn.

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Not just any library books, but rather those books which are donated to our Second Air Division Memorial Room in Norwich, as a living tribute.

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The restored B-24 "All American" brings back memories and evokes nostalgia for 2AD vets when it visits local airports.

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When we left war torn Germany after a trolley mission, there was no one there to shed a tear and say, "Farewell, Godspeed or Auf Wiedersehen."

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Do you recollect on occasion the varied thoughts and prayers that must have run rampant through the minds of our men on a day they were to fly? This anonymous poem may well be of interest to you.

Enjoy your Journal. It's good reading!

Second Air Division Association

47th Annual Convention!

May 28 - 31, 1994

Hyatt Regency Hotel
Kansas City, Missouri

Evelyn Cohen
06-410 Delaire Landing Road
Philadelphia, PA 19114

Report on the Memorial Trust

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

From my last report from Tom Eaton, Chairman of the Board of Governors, I am informed that the work on the renovation of the Norwich Central Library is proceeding on schedule and should be completed by the time that I will be going to Norwich in the latter part of June for the annual meeting of the 2ADA Memorial Trust. This meeting is normally held in the month of May, but Tom Eaton graciously consented to delay the meeting until the latter part of June because of the convention of the 2ADA in Kansas City at the end of May.

Although a complete financial report for the year ending April 1994 will not be available until the June meeting, Tom Eaton has advised that an additional amount of 3,200 pounds has been donated to the Special Endowment Fund from which the interest of the corpus is used solely for the purchase of books. Jordan has also forwarded an additional \$3,600, which on a pound basis, is an additional contribution of some 2,200 pounds. It was reported in the April 1993 financial report that the Special Endowment Fund totaled 19,900 pounds, and the additional 5,400 pounds should bring the total to over 25,000 pounds.

Many of our Bomb Groups have donated an equivalent of 500 pounds in U.S. currency which will give their Bomb Group a separate listing in the financial report into perpetuity. The income generated from their gift will buy books each year with the appropriate bookplate designating this book or books as a gift from this particular Bomb Group. May I take this opportunity to encourage each Bomb Group to seriously consider a gift to the Special Endowment Fund so that we would have a listing for each in the annual Financial Report into perpetuity. Address all gifts for this project or any questions relating to it to E. Bud Koorndyk, 5184 N. Quail Crest Drive, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546.

As for the continual impact that the Memorial Library has in Norwich and in the four branch libraries surrounding Norwich, I cannot think of a better report than that written by Phyllis DuBois, our Trust Librarian, and delivered by Tom Eaton, Chairman of the Board of Governors, when he addressed our convention at the banquet at Hilton Head in November. This report from Phyllis speaks for itself, and will conclude my report as your representative on the Memorial Trust of the 2AD USAF.

However, I would be remiss if I did not share with you Tom Eaton's final words in his address to our body, words which I thought were priceless, and I quote: "As it has been said, there are only two forces in this world, the sword and the spirit; and in the end the spirit always wins."

Here is Phyllis' report:

"I thought you might like to have a report on the Memorial Library at the end of the 1993 tourist season. May through



(l-r): Lesley Fleetwood, T.C. Eaton, Christine Snowden, Phyllis DuBois

October is always our busiest time. I often wish that the 2ADA members could occasionally turn a knob on the TV in order to observe the activity in the library. This year about 500 people signed our visitors' book. About half of this number were 2AD men and their families. We saw many children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. We also welcomed other veterans, students, and American tourists. Most of these people turned up unexpectedly. We now have a long list of local people who have volunteered to take people out to their old bases. Many of the volunteer drivers have themselves become interested in the history of the 2nd Air Division and they borrow our books in order to gain more information.

"Most visitors are not sure what they are going to see here. It takes about 15 minutes to tell them about the origin and purpose of this unique memorial, to show them the books and the various elements of the Memorial and to settle them down with piles of material. These occasions are often very emotional. I can see facial expressions change as each visitor begins to realize the dimensions of this splendid and special place. Some people weep. Many make large on-the-spot donations. While we round up a volunteer driver and alert the base contact that a visitor is coming out to the base, it often happens that our regular readers (many of whom remember the 2nd Air Division from wartime) introduce themselves to our visitor and sit down to talk. They love doing this and often our most difficult problem is getting our man out of the library and into the car when the volunteer driver arrives. Most people return

to the library after their visit to the base. By this time the driver has become an old friend. When I leave to catch my bus at 5 o'clock they are still sitting in the library looking through unit histories and considering the merits of the B-24. We receive wonderful letters of appreciation and encouragement.

"Use of the library has increased dramatically in 1993. Local people never cease to be grateful for this special collection of books on American culture which they know is a gift from "their" Americans. They bring their own relatives and children and visitors to see this special place in Norwich, and they show it to their friends with pride. Young people use the books to write papers on the American presence in East Anglia during World War II. Children borrow books about the Western Frontier; people come in on their lunch hour to look at the beautiful magazines. I have used our new projector to show videos about the 2ADA and the USA to women's clubs, Rotary groups and school children. Each time I do these programs, more local people come to the library.

"If the 2ADA members were able to turn on the TV and observe the Memorial Library, I know that they would be delighted to see how successful it is. They would be proud to know that they have established such a rich and vital place in Norwich in which to honor their fallen comrades and to provide a source of information about the 2nd Air Division and American culture for themselves, their descendants and their East Anglian friends."



Open Letter To the 93rd

by Floyd H. Mabee

I am pleased to inform our 93rd Bomb Group members that Vice President Paul Steichen has appointed me to the job of Assistant Vice President for the 93rd. My main duties will be membership and writing the "Open Letter to the 93rd." I am very happy to get back working for our Group again. The job of putting out the "Ball of Fire Quarterly Express" is very time consuming for Paul, and I asked him if he could use some help.

GIVE US A BREAK: I encourage all of our 93rd members, if you haven't already paid your 1994 dues to the 2ADA, please do so, as in April your name will be put on the drop list for non-payment of dues. Last year the 93rd had 34 members on this drop list, and through a lot of unnecessary extra work by Paul Steichen, 12 were reinstated. I'm sure our time consumed writing letters to each member who was dropped could be used more productively by answering the letters received asking questions of us. Come on, fellows, give us a break. I just can't understand why this same thing happens every year. Also, if you have moved, PLEASE notify Evelyn Cohen and Paul or myself.

NEW MEMBERS: As of January 1, 1994, our 93rd membership has been built back up to 700, plus 34 Associate members and 44 men who list another group before the 93rd. Recent new members are: Douglas C. Garner, Huntsville, AL; John C. Hewitt, Davenport, FL; Edith G. Wand (Associate), Mission Viejo, CA; Reinhardt W. Barhr, Jefferson, LA; Laurence A. Yates, Orchard Park, NY; Father Marshall Minister, Bellevue, NV; Rev. Donald F. Pruitt, Fairfield, TX; Roy Schulbach, Salem, OR. If you want an address for any of these, drop me a line. I hope I haven't missed anyone (changing jobs has been a little confusing) — if so, I'll try to make it up in the next *Journal*.

MEMBERSHIP: Now is also a good time to ask that you get your crew members who don't belong to 2ADA to join; we don't have too many years left to enjoy their company. Let them know what they are missing, get them to attend one of our reunions, and just see how pleased they are that they finally joined the Second Air Division Association. Any names and addresses that you find for 93rd men, please pass them on to me, and I will get an application right off to them. My winter address (November through April) is: Floyd H. Mabee, 11524 Zimmerman Road, Port Richey, FL 34668-1559; Tel. (813) 862-2309. May through October I am at 28 Hillside Ave., Dover, NJ 07801-3144; Tel. (201) 366-5916. Right now I have a list of over 200 93rd men who still haven't joined

after being sent one, two, sometimes three applications. If you have anyone you're looking for, drop me a line and I will go over this list.

HILTON HEAD REUNION, NOV. 1993: I'm pleased to report that the 93rd had a good turnout of 100 plus at this convention. Vice President Paul Steichen provided a nice hospitality room, but the voluntary contributions didn't cover the cost of everything provided. Shame on you, fellows. If you want this hospitality room in the future you will have to do better... I'm sorry that I didn't get a chance to spend more time with each of you, especially you first-timers. We had a good turnout for our 93rd meeting; all attending had a chance to speak, and Paul showed the video "Utah Man" at the end. Paul presented me with a beautiful plaque at the meeting for my service to the 93rd B.G. 1986-1992 — I took a picture of the plaque to go with this report, but the flash was too much. Don't forget to send in your reservations for the next reunion, Kansas City, Missouri — May 28-31 is just around the corner.

STORIES FOR THE JOURNAL: I was very disappointed at the lack of stories and pictures from the 93rd in the Winter 1993 *Journal*. Come on, fellows, I know that you have stories to pass on to our members. It's very simple: Type your stories double spaced, if possible send a good picture with everyone identified (or ask that they be identified), and send to William Robertie, *Journal* Editor, P.O. Box 627, Ipswich, MA 01938. Any picture you want back, just let Bill know that and note your name and address on the back of the picture. If all of this is too much trouble, send stories and pictures on to me and I will submit them for you as long as I can understand your writing. These stories must be submitted for the Winter issue by October 15th, Spring by January 15th, Summer by April 15th, and Fall by July 15th. I have had good results finding lost souls this way in the past — a good picture is better than a thousand words. Paul has had good results with good pictures in the "Ball of Fire Quarterly Express," but that only goes out to our 93rd members. Just remember, a lot of our 93rd personnel were transferred from one group to another.

93RD B.G. EMBLEMS: Paul and I still have the 93rd B.G. cap emblems at \$3.75 each. The 328th, 329th, 330th, and 409th B.S. emblems are \$4.75 each, postage included.

WE HAVE ANOTHER LOST CREW: It's too bad I didn't get a picture with this request, but I didn't. George A. Gross, P.O. Box 496, Upperco, MD 21155, would like to find members of his crew (330th B.S., 5/44-8/44). All he has are the names and wartime addresses: Robert G. Douglas, Philip Becker and Philip Beagle, all from the Pittsburgh, PA area; Nicholas House, Memphis, TN; William McAlese, Syracuse, NY; Junior De Pree, Tampa, FL; Kenneth Smith, Evanston, IL; Charles Rice, Racine, WI. Please notify me if you know any of these fellows and their addresses — Floyd H. Mabee, 11524 Zimmerman Rd., Port Richey, FL 34668-1559.

The American Air Museum in Britain

The American Air Museum in Britain will be built at the Imperial War Museum Airfield at Duxford near Cambridge, England. This was the wartime base of the 78th Fighter Group, USAAF and is now home to the premier collection of historic aircraft in Europe. The American Air Museum, a British tribute to the decisive role of U.S. airpower in World War II and since, will be housed in a stunning new museum building designed by Sir Norman Foster, recent recipient of the American Institute of Architects' Gold Medal Award. The new Museum will house twenty historic U.S. military aircraft, the finest collection outside the United States.

The museum will be a fitting memorial to the thousands of U.S. airmen who flew from the United Kingdom in World War II and will ensure that future generations never forget the huge contribution of American airmen to the Allied victory in World War II and the preservation of peace and freedom since.

More than 42,000 "Founding Members" have responded to an appeal by the late General Jimmy Doolittle to support this great Anglo-American project.

Two special events have been scheduled in California in April in aid of this outstanding project.

On Thursday 7 April there will be a black tie dinner at the Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel, Beverly Hills, California, in the presence of His Royal Highness The Duke of York.



The Duke of York met USAF veterans at Duxford in 1992.

At the dinner the American Air Museum campaign (U.S. Chairman Charlton Heston) will honour Bob Hope for his outstanding contribution to the entertainment and morale of the armed forces in World War II.

On Friday 8 April His Royal Highness The Duke of York and Mr. Heston will attend a special reception at the Santa Monica Museum of Flying, California for Founding Members and other supporters of the American Air Museum project.

For further details of both events, call Ricardo Gaitan or Michele Novack at 202-547-4226 or write to The American Air Museum, 709 2nd St NE, Washington D.C. 20002.

D-Day & The B-24, "The Bad Penny"

by Lt. Col. James R. Maris (Ret.), 392nd



"The Bad Penny" opened up for inspection and repair



Blondie, "The Bad Penny" mascot

The crew of "The Bad Penny" was in its Quonset hut relaxing at 2200 hours (10:00 PM) on the 5th of June 1944, when Sgt. Choury, the Squadron clerk, came in to tell the crew to report for an immediate mission briefing. Since most wake-up calls came a few hours after midnight depending on the type of mission, we were immediately aware that something special was in the air.

We begrudgingly laid aside our books, the playing cards and the letters to loved ones at home, and began to speculate on what was up and why there was such an early call to a mission briefing. Mounting our bikes, we left the Squadron area and pedalled through the darkness to the Squadron briefing room, still complaining.

When the briefing officer raised the curtain in front of the mission map, we all gasped. THE 6TH OF JUNE WAS "D" DAY. Takeoff was scheduled for 0230 hours in the dark, with a climb up to assembly altitude with no lights showing. They planned to have the tail turret gunner flashing an Aldis lamp to the rear. We were to follow the light ahead. Takeoff roll was to start when the B-24 ahead was half down the runway.

It all sounded good, but as we climbed up in the clouds at 400 feet, we immediately lost sight of the light from the aircraft ahead. Trying to hold a careful heading, a constant rate of climb and a steady air speed, we were all praying to penetrate the clouds without hitting another B-24.

We broke out above the clouds and continued our climb to half of the assembly altitude plus a thousand feet where a turn of 180 degrees was initiated to come back over the field, homing in on the field's ADF signal. About this time there were blinding flashes in the sky as two heavily laden bombers collided without seeing each other. Immediately a pilot broke radio silence and said, "To hell with this, turn on your navigation lights."

Suddenly the sky was lit up with thousands of red, green and white lights. It was a frightening sight and made it seem like you were flying in the center of a Christmas tree. My instincts were to turn north toward Scotland and climb out of the mass of

assembling bombers. I immediately called Herb and told him to direct us north for a short while, turn us west then south and plan a turn to the east, so that we'd be at the coastal departure point at the time our 14th Combat Wing was to depart the coast.

He directed us on this course and as I set up a descent for the departure point, I saw the wing lead B-24 approaching the coast. We slid into formation with the 492nd Group and continued across to the invasion coast.

We penetrated the invasion coast at 0625 hours, one of the first four-engine heavies to cross the coast on D-Day. The B-26s and B-25s had already been in and out to hit their assigned targets. We were to hit bridges, roads and railroads to try to disrupt the flow of supply and troops moving up to meet the invasion forces. We returned at 0900 hours, with no damage and mission #2 under our belts.

At debriefing they announced that the limit on missions was off for the push. Later they said if you had eighteen missions you could quit at twenty, next you could quit at twenty-five if you had twenty-two missions complete, and finally you could be relieved at thirty if you had twenty-eight missions complete. The Maris Crew was always just one or two missions short of the required completed missions, and we were not relieved until we had completed thirty missions.



Jim and his base transportation (basket was for Blondie).

The Cutest Barmaid

by Ed Wanner (445th)



Visiting England is sort of exciting for an ole war bird — driving on the wrong side of the road, figuring out what road we just crossed, where we were on our map.

My wife and I were driving to my air base south of Norwich. I just had to see it *one more time*. I'd told her about the little tavern we used to go to during WWII. There were still some of those quaint thatched roofs in the little village — just like I remembered.

At last, there was the tavern up ahead. I knew we "couldn't miss it." It probably had warm beer on tap, just like before. I told my wife about this pretty little barmaid with the cute figure and the long dark hair who worked there. I mentioned that we ought to stop in to see if she was there.

My wife gave me a sort of funny look and said, "Do you think you'll recognize this pretty 67-year-old barmaid with the cute figure?"

There are times when you can't go back. I drove on by.

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
Marvin H. Speidel



The 50th Anniversary Reunion of the 446th Bomb Group held at Denver, Colorado from October 6 to 11, 1993 proved to be a huge success, with almost 400 Buckaroos, spouses and guests in attendance. Tours included Golden and Buffalo Bill's grave and museum, Coors Brewery, the Air Force Academy, Garden of the Gods, and Lowry Field where the Group originally trained. Needless to say, the luncheons at the Academy and the Lowry Field NCO Club were delicious, the western buffet and the banquet were palate pleasing, the dinner theater proved to be an interesting evening, and the Coors tour was a highlight wherein the 446ers clobbered the target — the bar in the lounge at the end of the tour. Congratulations to Frank Bigos, Art Meyer, their Committee and all the helpers for an outstanding job. Well done!

Just about three weeks later the 2ADA gathered at Hilton Head, SC, and the 446ers were hard to find. After the heavy turnout in Denver, it is no wonder there were so few at Hilton Head, but what we lacked in quantity we made up for in quality. Bob and Mary Alexander, Bill Booth, Harold Carter, Marv and Mary Finger, Ted and Barb Nichols, Joe and Cass Soder, and Marv and Marge Speidel composed this rather exclusive group which bonded together like a '40s air crew and had a great time. Good meetings, an enjoyable lunch at the Crazy Crab despite the weather, great dinners with a degree of imbibing and some risqué storytelling by one and all, along with staying to the end for dancing after the banquet created a weekend that you should all be sorry that you missed.

Unfortunately, the 2ADA has moved reunion time from the fall to the spring for 1994, announcing Memorial Day weekend in Kansas City, Missouri as the time and place of the 1994 Convention. In as much as the 446th Bomb Group has had plans in the hopper for almost three years now to meet in Tucson, Arizona in May of 1994 for the dedication of the B-24 Liberator at the Pima Air Museum there, and whose restoration and refurbishing have been the focus of their fundraising efforts during that same time, I cannot foresee many, if any at all, 446ers being present at K.C.

While recognizing that there are greater problems in scheduling an event of the size and scope of the 2ADA Convention as compared to a Group Reunion, it would be helpful to all those Groups holding independent reunions if 2ADA could keep to the same part of the year each year so that Groups could opt for a calendar time frame five or six months opposite 2ADA, thereby allowing more members to attend both.

Considering reunions, are you aware that the 2ADA plans a return to Norwich, England one more time in May of 1995? Numbers will be limited, as only 250 hotel rooms will be reserved and available, which means that no more than 500 persons can be accommodated. A \$50.00 per person deposit sent to Evelyn Cohen will hold space, with final payments coming due after all arrangements and costs are finalized and announced. If you should have any thoughts at all about taking part, you had better get your deposit in as soon as possible, if not yesterday. Along with that — if you, as a member of the 446th Bomb Group have, or will have, registered with Evelyn and might be interested in a return to Bungay and the Flixton/Station 125 area after the 2ADA events for a day or two, I would appreciate your letting me know right away. None of this would be binding and no monies would be necessary at this time; your response will only be for planning. Please advise of your interests now, as something of this nature needs time to put arrangements in place and cannot be left until the last minute. A postcard will do, and I'll see what we can come up with.

Received too late for the last issue of the *Journal* was a note from Bob Fosse, an Air Force historian and 2ADA Associate, with the information that Roy E. Houghton of Medford, Michigan passed away in September and was buried in the Fort Custer National Cemetery in Battle Creek. Also, it is with regret and sadness that I

report the passing of the following 446ers who were not members of the 2ADA and have not, therefore, been listed in *Folded Wings*: Richard P. Brackus of Skokie, IL; Joseph Brugas of New Britain, CT; Luther J. Cobb of Hempstead, NC; Bert A. Farrell of Ft. Worth, TX; Jack Heuser of Kirtland OH; Charles Roesser of St. Paris, OH; W.F. Rusche of Owatonna, MN; David H. Thimmes of Lancaster, OH; and James J. Toolan of Flemington, NJ.

Did anyone out there happen to catch the letter in the Mail Call section of the October VFW magazine from a Kent Froelich of Oseloa, Missouri, who called the B-24 "a mass-produced, poor excuse of a flying machine, and the young men who flew in her were lucky if they came back alive." Obviously, this is a feather merchant with his head up and locked. With regard to coming back alive, he missed the reference to the loss of sixty B-17s on each of the two Schweinfurt missions written up in the same issue. A little known fact is that there were almost as many B-24 crews as B-17 crews around D-Day. A poorly considered "correction" in August of 1944, when the B-24 Groups of the 3rd Bomb Division were converted to B-17s, saw the balance move closer to "two to one" and according to a report of the Medical Department, U.S. Army Office of the Surgeon General, casualties also were almost "two to one." Maybe Froelich just isn't bright enough to realize that enemy action had a little bit to do with aircraft losses.

Another tribute to the value and hardiness of the B-24 which I stumbled upon by accident is the following. On the way home from the 2ADA Convention in November, I stopped off to visit friends near Brevard, NC. While there I was given a half dozen old magazines that my host had bought at a flea market run by the Connestee Falls Volunteer Fire Department. Contained in the January 1944 issue of "Flying" (Volume 34, Number 1) was an article entitled "The World's Best Aircraft," written by Peter G. Masefield, who was the Technical Editor of the British publication "The Aeroplane" at that time and who served as aviation advisor to Lord Beaverbrook. Mr. Masefield starts by stating the criteria used in his assessment of the aircraft of that time in order to arrive at his best aircraft list; including such items as speed, range, ceiling, armament, bomb load, pay load, maneuverability, fire power, and ton miles per gallon per hour. Using this basic information, plus practical research and actual operations experience, he arrived at the conclusion that, taken all-around, the three most outstanding aircraft in the world of 1943/44 were: the North American *Mustang* (Merlin engine) single seat fighter, the DeHavilland *Mosquito* fighter-bomber, and the Consolidated *Liberator* day bomber. To quote: "The *Mosquito* and the *Liberator* shine among the galaxy of fine aircraft; the *Mosquito* combining speed with a shattering weight of fire in its fighter form, and range and bomb load in its bomber version. The *Liberator* now is more thoroughly defended than any other day bomber, and has an advantage in speed, range and load over the *Fortress*. In addition, as a land based patrol bomber, the *Liberator* would seem to cover most tasks of the patrol bomber flying boat with greater speed and load."

Masefield's complete list of the best aircraft in several categories follows: (1) Heavy day bomber: Consolidated *Liberator*. (2) Heavy night bomber: Avro *Lancaster II*. (3) Day and night reconnaissance bomber: DeHavilland *Mosquito*. (4) Long range patrol bomber (anti-submarine): Consolidated *Liberator*. (5) Low/medium altitude single-engine fighter: North American *Mustang II*. (6) High altitude single-engine fighter: North American *Mustang II*. (7) Single seat fighter bomber: Lockheed *Lightning*. (8) Single seat escort fighter: Republic *Thunderbolt*. (9) Bomber destroyer: DeHavilland *Mosquito* (fighter). (10) Night fighter intruder: DeHavilland *Mosquito*. (11) Two-engine attack bomber/tank buster: North American *Mitchell*. (12) Land based torpedo bomber: Bristol *Beaufighter X*. (13) Naval interceptor/fighter: Supermarine *Seafire IX*. (14) Single-engine naval dive bomber: Curtiss *Helldiver*. (15) Single-engine naval torpedo bomber: Grumman *Avenger*. (16) Naval escort fighter: Grumman *Hellcat*. (17) Long range transport: Douglas *Skymaster*. (18) Medium range high capacity transport: Curtiss *Commando*. (19) High speed medium capacity transport: Lockheed *Lodestar*. (20) Short range single-engine transport: Noorduy *Norseman*. (21) Long range transport flying boat: Boeing *Clipper*. (22) Air sea rescue and general amphibian: Chance Vought *VS-43B*.

"Ah've Got It..."

by Walter Cline and Donald R. Conway (458th)

Letter from Walter Cline, navigator, to his crewmate Don Conway, re air collision:

August 18, 1944 was a beautiful, clear day over France. The Allied forces had pushed inland to near Paris, and the war was going well. The 458th Bomb Group was on a mission to Metz, with the initial point of the bomb run over Verdun. Our crew, flying "A Dog's Life" with Charles S. Evans as pilot, was leading the high right squadron at 21,000 feet. No flak — no fighters — an ideal type mission.

That ideal mission suddenly became disaster. As we turned on the I.P., we encountered severe turbulence, propwash from the squadrons preceding us. That turbulence bounced the aircraft violently, flattening us out from our turn. At the same moment, our Deputy Lead squashed into our right wing tip, stripping eleven feet from the wing, and leaving it dangling in the wind.

The drag of that broken wing sent us into a diving right turn. Somehow, the Deputy Lead slid under us, so close that I could have reached out and shaken hands with the top gunner. Fortunately, no actual contact was made. However, we continued in our diving turn, dropping 6000 feet in one 360 degree turn. (Pretty close to a spin — yes?)

During the descent, the following conversation was heard on intercom: "Evans, have you got it?" ...no answer. Again, "Evans, have you got it? If you don't answer me, I'm getting out of here." Finally, a slow Texas drawl came back: "Ah've got it," and sure enough, he did. We straightened out at 15,000 feet, still dropping, but at least flying again.

Our bombs were still on board, of course, so we started trying to find a place to unload them. We could not make a left turn to hit a rail yard we saw ahead, so we found a convenient forest to drop them in.

Meanwhile, our Command Pilot, Major Hinckley, was trying to get fighter escort for us. It seemed an eternity, but it was really only a few minutes before we had a P-51 sitting on each wingtip. ...Don't try to tell any of us that the P-51 isn't the most beautiful airplane ever built!

The navigator was laying a course for Allied lines. According to our briefing information, Paris was still in German hands. However, our escort pilots assured us that they had been flying over Paris all day, without seeing any flak; so we altered course to go that way. Indeed, Paris was beautiful, two miles below; but our course took us close to Le Havre, and there were a few anxious moments when flak started coming up from there.

We really were not in a position to take any evasive action. With climb power on engines 3 and 4 — with full left rudder trim cranked in — and with both pilots "standing" on the left rudder — we could maintain straight and level flight at 153 mph indicated airspeed. When power was reduced to reduce the strain on the two engines, we found our stall speed to be 148 mph. That wasn't very comforting.

Eventually, we reached England and proceeded to the crash strip at Woodbridge. There, life became a bit complicated again. Of necessity, we flew a right hand pattern, and when we turned on final, the right wing simply refused to come up. There we were,



November 5, 1993 at Hilton Head, Don Conway was presented with the Distinguished Flying Cross 49 years late. (l-r): 2ADA President John Conrad, Don Conway (waist gunner), Claire Conway (Don's wife), Walter Klein (navigator), Charles "Sam" Evans (pilot), Carrie Evans (former WAC and Sam's wife).

descending to touchdown, unable to fly level. But there was no chance of going around. We were committed.

Finally, as Evans flared, preparatory to touchdown, the wings reluctantly leveled, and we were down and rolling. We were a much relieved crew — and a very thankful one for the skill of Charles Evans.

Post-landing note: The leading edge spar of the wing had remained intact, and from the front of the airplane, it looked as though we had only lost a foot or two of wing. As we in the front section exited the aircraft, one by one we looked up to see the damage, and then our eyes slowly followed the damaged wing section down to its end — about 18 inches from the ground. That shock added the cap to our climax of excitement for the day.

* * * * *

Letter from Don Conway to Walter Cline, relating his own recollections of that day from another perspective in the plane:

Hi, Walt:

Today is Veterans Day and it is an appropriate time to write to another veteran who shared similar experiences on "A Dog's Life" B-24 in 1944-45. First, thank you for your phone call. You are the only one on crew 33 from whom I've heard in all these 49 years, and I'm grateful for the contact.

You asked if I had been on the mission when we had the air collision. Yes, and I'd like to give you my impressions and recollections from the perspective of one who was in the rear of the ship.

As I recall we were to bomb a target in Metz in the southern part of France near the Swiss border. It must have been you who called the crew's attention to the Alps. When we made our turn toward the target, we were agitated by the prop wash of the group before us causing our right wing to dip and rise and to collide with the left wing of the bomber on our right wing. I never did know what happened to that bomber, but we were left with 11 feet of our wing dangling uselessly, causing us to fall in a circling pattern. I remember seeing Latch evacuate the tail turret very rapidly. I was the left waist gunner and did not see the contact, but I did

feel it. I think that Matson was the right waist gunner. I do not know who was in the ball nor who got him out, and I believe that Johnson was riding in the rear. He was an officer at any rate, getting credit for a mission as we had a command pilot (red-headed) next to Evans up front.

Someone had opened the hatch, and all were looking at me because I was the only one who still had his helmet on listening to what was going on up front, waiting for a signal whether to jump or not. I am certain that if I had pointed to the hatch, we all would have left immediately. I remember wishing that I had put on my shoes under my boots — that I would be losing them when the chute opened and be only in my stocking feet on the ground. I heard someone saying in an agitated voice, "You got it, Evans; You got it, Evans?" A long pause followed and a voice with a Texas drawl slowly answered, "Ah got it." I then gave the OK signal and nerves were calmer.

The plane was again under control but losing altitude as we still had our bombs. We went back to our positions looking for bandits, as we were all alone. The decision was made to seek a target of opportunity, but finding none, we subsequently jettisoned the bombs on some woods.

Up front, I heard a debate on where to go: whether to try to land on a beach near Normandy or to go to Spain, but the Pyrenees posed a problem. It was finally decided to try to return to England, and we radioed for fighter escort. Two P-51s finally came, greeted us with their wings, and led us part way home. We landed at an emergency field in Woodbridge, England, at night. The runway was brilliantly lit by what I thought were torches, not electricity, perhaps to cut the fog, and I thought that foam was on the runway. Did they give us whiskey? Later, a bomber came from Horsham and took us home that same night. I often wonder if the command pilot had not been with us if we would have gone to Spain. All in all, it was an eventful and dangerous day. Had it not been for Sam Evans' skill as a pilot, we wouldn't have made it.

Nice to visit with you, Walt. Let's keep in touch.



by H.C. 'Pete' Henry

We had the largest turnout of 44th people at the 2ADA Convention at Hilton Head last November that we have had in a number of years. 74 were present for the Group Dinner. Unfortunately, the weatherman failed to cooperate on Group Day, 5 November, and the cruise, lunch/shopping excursion on Colibogue Sound to Harbortown had to be cancelled. We had our Group Dinner and Business Meeting that evening as planned, but I was so involved with those two cruises and the bus tour to Savannah, I had the feeling that the plans for the Business Meeting got short changed somewhere along the way. More than one person who requested time at the podium was overlooked, and for this, I extend my sincere apologies. In addition, Norm Kieffer (506 Sq.) had planned to attend the Group Dinner and Business Meeting to present a two-page report on a study that he had conducted among just the 506th personnel with regard to continuation of National Reunions of two or three days duration following cessation of 44th Heritage Memorial Group operations, when and if. Regrettably, he suffered a mild heart attack about two weeks earlier and was unable to attend. Norm sent the letter to me to be read at the Business Meeting and it was completely overlooked. I have extended my apologies to Norm and will try to present a brief summary in this column.

Of 449 questionnaires distributed, 121 responses were received, but only 90 offered positive replies. 86% wanted the reunions to continue. 56% wanted National Meetings, with 36% expressing the desire to hold these with the 2ADA. 23% wanted Regional Meetings, and most of these voted to hold these with the 2ADA Regional Meetings. (Note: These percentages are not additive because some individuals voted for both Regional and National Meetings.) Other items were considered; such as one, two, three or four day Reunions; but this appears to be the meat of the report. I hope that Norm will agree with me.

Phyllis DuBois, Memorial Trust Librarian, wrote in November '93 advising that the following books were purchased with income from the 44th Bomb Group Endowment Fund for the year 1992/1993: *This Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga*, by Peter Cozzens; *U.S. Army Vehicles of World War II*, by J.M. Boniface; and *The Third Five Years of the Eighth Air Force Historical News*, by J.H. Woolnough. Phyllis comments further that they are most grateful for the gift to the Memorial Library and their readers will certainly enjoy and appreciate the books.

Those of you who have attended the 2ADA Conventions the past several years have no doubt been present on Awards Night. Various officers and members of the

Association have received awards for outstanding service to the 2ADA, etc., and the Executive Committee recently voted to broaden the Awards criteria, particularly in the area of the Distinguished Service Award. The Group Vice Presidents have been asked to solicit nominations from their membership and to submit names of people who might qualify so that they can be considered for an award by the Awards Committee. Please send your recommendation(s) to me as soon as possible.

General Leon Johnson's daughter, Sue Vandenberg, sent a copy of a letter describing the General's party. "On 1 August 1993, Mrs. Sue J. Vandenberg, daughter of General Leon Johnson, gave a luncheon to honor the 50th Anniversary of the now famous low-level attack on the Ploesti Oil Fields (in Romania), for which her father was awarded the Medal of Honor. Among those present who were associated with that mission were Barrett Taylor and Ed Mikolowski (both acted as MCs), Chuck & June Merrill, and Lew & Betty Ellis.

"The 44th B.G. Tower Association Committee took this opportunity to present to the General a copy of Robert Taylor's "Ploesti" — The Vital Mission. This painting shows Major W.H. Brandon piloting "Suzy-Q" with Col. Leon Johnson as Command Pilot just after leading the 44th B.G. through the target of Ploesti, and for such leadership, was awarded the MOH.

"Captain W.R. Cameron, who followed immediately behind the General on this mission, personally signed this painting, along with Maj. Gen. Philip Ardery, Maj. Gen. Ramsay Potts, Maj. Robert Sternfels, and Lt. Gen. K.K. Compton. Col. Cameron, along with four other pilots who flew

drop a note, his address is: General Leon Johnson, Fairfax Apartment A221, 9160 Belvoir Woods Pkwy, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060."

Forrest Clark sent the following note in December: "Those of the 44th Bomb Group and other Groups who were at the 50th Anniversary Memorial program in Norway in November '93 are seeking a permanent Memorial there to honor the men of the Second Air Division killed or missing on the missions of 16 and 18 Nov. 43. A temporary memorial was dedicated at Kjeller, Norway, 18 Nov. 93. Contact for this Memorial is Forrest Clark, 703 Duffer Lane, Kissimmee, FL 34759."

Bob Eddings (67 Sq.) telephoned early in December to report that Odis "Curly" Nelson's wife, Mary, passed away 5 December. "Curly" is one of six members of the 67th Squadron and six wives, affectionately referred to as "The Dirty Dozen" who have frequented the Second Air Division Association Conventions and could usually be found congregated together in one corner of the hotel lobby rehashing old times. We extend our sincere condolences to Curly and his family. Mary will be sorely missed by all of us. Norm Kieffer's letter also mentioned the following Folded Wings from the 506th Squadron: Ross Carrow, Charles Heintz, Ralph Jorgenson, Lyle Murphy, Raymond Murray, Robert Petkoff, Irvin Rada, Henry Siteman, Herman Smith, and Harry Steel. The 68th Squadron News Letter reports that George Bryant, Kenneth Moore, Walter Nealon and Wayne Rickert passed away in '93. Mike Fusano (44th B.G./14th CBW) called 7 January to advise that John Kirby (67 Sq.) died 8



"Ploesti" — The Vital Mission, by Robert Taylor

this historic mission, are members of the 44th B.G. Tower Association which donated this outstanding painting to General Johnson.

"Mrs. Vandenberg stated that her father was still enjoying good health, but his memory is slipping a bit. But, at 89 years of age, he still does remarkably well. As a current update, it was reported that the General recently suffered a mild heart attack, but was released from the hospital. If anyone would like to send him a card or

December. Although some of these names may have been reported in other Folded Wings columns, we wanted to make certain that our sincere condolences are extended to all of these families.

And finally, we'd like to thank all 44thers and others who sent Season's Greetings to Mary and me this past Christmas. We really do appreciate them and hope to hear from you all again before next Christmas. See you in Kansas City?

A Very Good Day

by Harry Whitlock (445th)

There she sat — like an old battle ax — quite intimidating. She looked old — after all I had not touched one like her for forty-nine years. I had to see her — that's why I came. At last I would see her again. I wondered how I would feel.

My grandchildren, Chapman, Bennett, and James, were climbing all over her. My son John was touching her side.

A B-24 bomber like the one I flew 30 missions out of England in World War II. John had called me one day and said that a B-17, a P-51, and a B-24 would be parked at the Executive Airport on John's Island, Charleston, S.C., the week of April 1-6. The B-17 was to leave on Friday, April 3rd. I did not care to see the B-17, but I felt drawn to go see the B-24. I have nothing against B-17s or the people who flew them. It's just that they got all the praise and publicity, when everyone knows the B-24 won the war.

While the B-17 was getting her picture taken, the B-24 went on with the war.

She would fly faster and farther than the B-17 — of course. A B-24 had a bad habit of exploding sometimes, but that was a minor inconvenience. She was no pleasure ship, and when she took off she shuddered and groaned like an old lady, but enough of that. She flew, and most of us came back home. I must admit that I never spent a moment with her that I was not scared. I mean like scared to death.

Carolyn and I left home about 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning and arrived at the air field about 11:30. I went through the airport building on the field where the plane was parked and paid the lady \$10.00 for two tickets. I had ridden 30 free missions on one of these planes, and now I was paying ten bucks to show my wife around the plane.

As I went through the gate, I told the lady proudly that I had flown on a B-24 like that one during World War II. She said, "Is that right?" in the same tone that she might have said, "So what!" It reminded me of the time Carolyn and I went to England a few years ago. I was terribly disappointed that no one over there remembered me. We were riding the tour bus and the lady tour guide was telling how she had been on General Eisenhower's staff during WWII, and I raised my hand and said, "I was in the Eighth Air Force over here." She said in her most sarcastic English voice, "Oh, you were one of the glory boys who came over to get all the English girls pregnant!" Well, I shut up on that bus, but I could have told her that the army had already cooled me off with their sexual training films — about the diseases the women had — I was in no mood to get anyone pregnant.

We went to the plane and Chapman and Bennett showed us how to slip in under the bottom. The entrance hole was much smaller than I remembered — in fact, the whole inside was smaller. Either the plane had shrunk or I had grown. I remember I used to be able to scramble all over the inside of that plane — now so small!!!



Crew members from 701st Squadron, 445th Bomb Group. Standing (l-r): S/Sgt. McNeil (2nd engineer), 2nd Lt. Matthews (co-pilot), 2nd Lt. Cook (pilot), 2nd Lt. Strawinsky (bombardier). Kneeling (l-r): T/Sgt. Galloway (radio), T/Sgt. Westerly (engineer), S/Sgt. Whitlock (armor), S/Sgt. Merritt (armor).

These were the men on a B-24: the pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bombardier, radio operator, engineer, tail gunner, two waist gunners, and a ball turret gunner. Since I was the last person assigned to the crew, they let me have the ball turret position.

A flood of memories came back to me as I stood in the waist section of the plane. The belly turret had been removed, but there was enough evidence for me to tell the boys all about my experiences in that thing. You got in feet first and sat down with your knees up. You resembled a baby in a womb except for two 50 cal machine guns sticking out. There were two handles up near your ears that you used to turn the turret 360 degrees and the guns horizontal or vertical.

It was when they were in a vertical position one day that I saw a German FW-190 flying right below us, close enough I could see the pilot's hands on the control stick. His head was dead center in my gun sight. We had just dropped bombs on the Kiel canal and had turned to start home. This would be my first kill. Without even thinking I pressed the buttons to fire the guns, knowing that this German would be blown to bits at this close range. The guns failed to fire! They had worked all through the mission. I checked everything. I even beat on the side of the gun case. Still they would not fire. At that moment, the German pilot looked up and saw our plane. He gave a look of horror and flipped his plane over to the right. At that exact moment, my guns went off — but I missed and he was gone. I have been thankful ever since. I knew it was my duty to kill or be killed, but to this day, I have a feeling that in this rare incident God had a hand in this for him and for me.

Well, I told John and the boys stories like this, like any old veteran talking about his

war experiences. Maybe our stories begin to take on a little color after 50 years. So what! We went to war, we did our duty in a small way, and I keep repeating — we were scared! We grew up in those few hours of combat. We had some adventures by seeing parts of the world that we would never have seen. We who are veterans pray and hope that there will be an end to all conflicts.

Someone asked me if I had a chance to ride in the bomber again while I was at John's Island. I said that if the pilot had asked me to ride, I would have said to him, "Up yours!"

I fulfilled a wish the other day. I went to visit a part of my past — a B-24 bomber parked on John's Island, Charleston, S.C. I did it and I'm glad. I really don't care to go again.



Harry Whitlock shows grandchildren a B-24, the type plane he served in during WWII.

Your Heritage League

by Billy Sheely Johnson

Thank you 2ADA veterans for having responded so positively to John Conrad's request of support for your Heritage League by enrolling your children, grandchildren and spouses in the League. It is the Heritage League's sincere hope that once your children and grandchildren become acquainted with the League and its purposes that they will join with us in our most important mission...to perpetuate your memory and what your contributions represent. Assist us further please, in sharing with your children and grandchildren the valuable heritage of your experiences during your tenure in Second Air Division during World War II.

As promised in the Winter issue of the *Journal*, we think it is important to share with the entire 2ADA membership the touching tributes of our essay winners in the Spring and Summer issues. The first essay is a tribute to Robert W. Zobac, waist gunner, of "Asbestos Alice" of the 445th Bomb Group. It was written by Jessica D. Zobac, Robert's 16 year old granddaughter, who never had the privilege of knowing her grandfather but cherishes the memory of him instilled in her by his family. May your hearts be warmed on behalf of Bob as his heritage "lives on" in the heart of a very special granddaughter. Jessica's essay follows:

"The Dream Is Alive"

by Jessica D. Zobac

Only Hitler's mad dash across Europe could have assembled such an unlikely group of men from all over the United States to join the deadly game called World War II. Their very lives and the freedom of their nation hinged upon how well they played their unfamiliar roles. The ever present reality was that each day might be their last.

Far from that frightening world, their glistening silver war bird now cruised quietly over the untroubled skies of the North Atlantic. The strain of combat seemed a world away from the boredom of the endless ocean waves below. The "Asbestos Alice" was finally fulfilling her crew's long awaited dream of heading home. A United States Army Air Corps B-24 "Liberator" bomber, "Alice" was with the 445th Bomb Group of the Second Air Division.

Seeking to stretch his legs from his gunnery position in the plane's waist, Bob, one of the crew members, slowly rose, picked his way down the narrow fuselage, and crawled through the doorway that opened into the plane's cockpit.

As if reading Bob's mind, Doug, the pilot seated behind the controls, called over his shoulder, "Hey, Bob! Want to take over?"

With a grin Bob slid behind the controls of the four whirling Pratt Whitney 1200 horse power engines as Doug slid from his seat. This was quite a change from the

single engine trainers he had flown in St. Louis, Missouri during cadet training.

Enjoying the tranquility of the moment, Bob's mind drifted back to the morning of March 23, 1945, the day of the 445th's mission to Munster, Germany. In his mind he was there again, flying a mission over heavily guarded northern Germany to one of the ten most heavily bombed cities of the war. The early morning briefing about the target location, objectives and anticipated resistance made it clear this was no "milk run." After taking off, forming up and heading out over the English Channel, the crew of "Asbestos Alice" was feeling the unmistakable roughness of an engine missing ignition.

Feathering the left inboard engine, Doug radioed their group leader about the problem and dropped out of formation. There was no way they could keep up with the group with only three engines. Uncertainty was heavy in the air throughout the whole crew. Each man wanted to complete the mission and be one more step closer to their quota for returning home, but it would be suicidal to be stranded by themselves.

"You want coordinates for home, Skipper?" came the navigator's voice through the ship's intercom.

"Not yet...let me try something," replied Doug.

With a cough, the Pratt and Whitney powerhouse sputtered to life as a cheer went up from the crew. Unfortunately, there was now no way they could catch up with their own group. Minutes passed like hours before they heard the throaty roar of a new group of Liberator engines. As "Alice" eased her way to the back of the newly found formation, the crew soon had another unpleasant surprise. Slowly all the 50 caliber guns in the new group turned to train on this unfamiliar plane that might be planning to attack. Bob held his breath, hoping that everything would go all right as the air filled with tension.

You could hear the strain in Doug's voice as he barked to the crew's bombardier, "When we get over the target I don't care if you have to crawl out on the catwalk and kick those bombs out. We drop when they drop!"

"Yes, sir!" came the reply.

"Here's the flak!" cried Earl, the top turret gunner. "Man, it's so thick you could walk on it."

"Bombs away!" came the cry through the crew's intercom.

"Stay alert," Bob thought to himself. "You want to get home in one piece."

"Stay alert, Bob. You're losing altitude." With a start, Bob snapped out of his reverie. Had he been dreaming or had it all happened? As he glanced around, the sky was free of flak and the lump in his throat dissolved as he realized where he really was.

"Sorry, Skipper. I guess I lost my focus daydreaming about the Munster raid. I

wasn't sure we were going to make it that time."

Grimacing at each other, they scanned the western horizon that pointed toward home. It was clear that this group of strangers had been forged in the furnace of combat into a unified team, with a bond of lifetime respect. With their combat service now over, their hearts turned from the horrors of war toward the dream of freedom that lay before them. Fifty years later that "dream is alive."

* * * * *

Now you understand our wanting to share this tribute to Robert W. Zobac, the crew of "Asbestos Alice" and the 445th Bomb Group with the 2ADA membership. Thank you, Jessica, for having so ably demonstrated the vision of the 2ADA Heritage League's founders. Veterans, please encourage your young relatives to participate in the Heritage League's annual essay contest. Guidelines may be obtained from: Billy Sheely Johnson, 600 Sandhurst Drive, Petersburg, VA 23805.

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



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

by Hap Chandler

PANORAMIC PHOTO OF THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY DEDICATION CEREMONY

Ringmasters gathered at the Memorial Wall of the Air Force Academy to dedicate a plaque honoring the memory of the men who died in action while flying combat from England in 1944/45. Approximately 325 members attended this impressive ceremony on September 10, 1993 (see photo below).

AIR FORCE ACADEMY PLAQUE

It reads "Honoring the Memory of Those Gallant Members of the 491st Bombardment Group (H) 'The Ringmasters' Who Gave Their Lives in the Defense of Freedom." The plaque includes the Group logo, battle honors and the Distinguished Unit Citation 26 Nov 1944.

"No other 8th Air Force Group was committed to action so fast; flew so many missions in so short a time achieving such fine results." This is a direct quote from the 14th Combat Wing final report rendered by General Leon Johnson, Commander, at the conclusion of World War II.

Ringmasters, saddened to remember

their comrades who gave their lives so that we could enjoy ours, were heartened to learn that their efforts were so highly regarded by their commander.

ASSOCIATION DUES

Please take a minute to send your annual dues of \$15 to Evelyn Cohen, Vice President Membership, Second Air Division Association, 06-410 Delaire Landing Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114. It is very important to get your dues in immediately, as the roster count for our group will be reported in the next *Journal*.

If your circumstances are such that you are unable to pay at this time, drop Evelyn a note and your membership will be continued.

MEMBERSHIP COUNT

The 491st Bomb Group had 411 members of the Second Air Division Association on December 1, 1993.

354 of our eligible 491st Bomb Group members who are not affiliated with the Second Air Division Association are being contacted by mail. Please assist in this effort by contacting your friends from World War II regarding membership in this exceptional organization.

KANSAS CITY REUNION

Our next reunion will be Memorial Day weekend at the Hyatt Regency, Kansas City, Missouri. The dates are 28-31 May 1994. Plan now to attend. Full registration details appeared in the Winter 1993 *Journal*.

"PROJECT LOCATE"

Nelson Leggette, President of our 491st Association, reports that our flight leaders continue to locate members of the 491st after almost fifty years. Some who are especially active are: Norm Johns, Oscar Gerstung, Bill Koon and Bill Getz, among others. If you have an interest in assisting with this effort, please contact Nelson Leggette, P.O. Box 7273, Rocky Mount, NC 27804-7273; phone (919) 443-6542.

NELSON LEGGETTE ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT

Nelson Leggette was elected Vice President of the Second Air Division Association at the Hilton Head reunion, November 4, 1993. Nelson has completed two years as President of the 491st Bombardment Group (H), Inc., our Memorial Association. During his term of office he has promoted "Project Locate" which has found many of our "lost sheep" through an aggressive campaign. The Colorado Springs reunion was his responsibility, as was the placing of a memorial plaque at the Air Force Academy.

Nelson was a member of one of the first replacement crews assigned to the 852nd Squadron. He completed a tour of operations in 1944 at the tender age of eighteen. Subsequently he was assigned to pilot training and flew combat in the Korean War. He retired as a Colonel, and continues to be active in the business world.

We can look forward to a busy and dedicated 491st member in the top management of the Second Air Division Association.



Ringmasters gathered at the Memorial Wall of the Air Force Academy for plaque dedication on September 10, 1993.

Auf Wiedersehen

by Ken "Deacon" Jones (389th)

Letter orders of the 389th Bombardment Group (H) set up the first Trolley Mission the group flew on 3 May 1945. These tours were a belated recognition of the vital and invaluable services provided by ground support personnel in bringing the war to a successful conclusion.

The pre-dawn briefing held that morning revealed this first aerial tour of war-torn Germany would get to land on the German border at Y-55, an advance base at Venlo, Holland. Army trucks would transport visitors to the heavily bombed cities of Cologne and Dusseldorf for walking tours.

The sight-seeing bombers would fly individually. We were one minimum flight crew of four, with 16 ground support people as passengers. Nazi fanatics were still active. We were issued helmets, firearms, K-rations, canteens, and two blankets. The .45 cal. pistol in a shoulder holster was the deodorant prescribed by the Army Air Force for some of us and others had carbines.

Route: 0700 hrs. Base, Southwold, Ostende, Aachen, Ludwigshafen, north along the Rhine River through the Ruhr Valley (Flak Alley) to Y-55 (Venlo) to Duren ETR 1800 hrs. Hethel AAB.

Instrument Flight Plan: 6-10/10 strato-cumulus and cumulus base 1-3000 ft., 600-1500 ft. in Ardennes Mts. and 500-1000 ft. in showers. Tops 6-10,000 ft. with few tops 12-18,000 ft. Visibility - 2-3000 yds. at base becoming 2-3 miles over route and over continent except in 1-2 miles in rain showers and 1-2000 yds. in snow showers.

The weather set the overall mood for this special flight — cold, dreary, and bleak.

I noted that although the war was not officially over, the 8th A.F. ran out of targets in April. The Allied ground forces were busy rounding up the last remnants of the Wehrmacht armies in now mostly occupied Germany.

No one could have adequately prepared us for the big picture we were going to see — the massive destruction of aerial bombing and hundreds of thousands of German prisoners behind barbed wire fences without shelter of any kind.

The sameness of the scenery of sunken barges, collapsed bridges, including the Ludendorf Bridge at Remagen, the shredded devastation of a torn landscape littered with burned-out military vehicles and the shocking view of leveled cities became monotonous as we became immune to the savagery of war. You knew what the next town would look like before you came to it.

We landed at Venlo air base and were trucked back south to Cologne and the twin spires of the famous Cologne cathedral there. I found part of a nose fuse of a 500 pound bomb in the rubble. We boarded the trucks and were convoyed back north toward Dusseldorf, where our interest improved.

Our group was given an extremely interesting historical lecture and an account of

the battles of the 1st Army across the Plain of Cologne by an Army intelligence major. He advised us to stay out of deserted German buildings, as isolated Nazis were still knocking off a Yank or two. He stated again that we should not fraternize with the frauleins (darn it — all because of the razor blade in the towel trick) and he again warned us about booby traps under choice souvenirs. He then turned us loose to wander on our own.

We already knew a Court Martial kinda took all the fun out of fraternizing with German girls. After our walking tour, we were escorted to a large cement SS building where confiscated Nazi artifacts were warehoused under padlock and armed guard.

The major asked if we had the opportunity to pick up any souvenirs. I said some unsolicited souvenirs were sent express mail courtesy of the German Flak Gunners Society. However, the souvenirs that got us really excited were aimed at our rear ends and came from gross batteries in the target area.

The major laughed and started handing out Nazi flags, German helmets, belt buckles with "Gott Mit Uns" on them, etc. The scene was like Santa Claus at a kid's Christmas party.

There were no wings or patches on our B-13 jackets but some air and line crew members wore leather jackets. One old, starving German grandfather recognized us as the much-hated "Terror Raiders" and asked us to look around at the damage we had wrought. In German he asked if we felt pride. I knew a little Platt Deutsch, but it seemed pointless to argue concentration camps and other atrocities with a defeated enemy. There also was no sudden urge to start a victory dance in the rubble of the cobblestone street.

We gathered back at the truck convoy, waiting for stragglers. Someone told the story of the brain-damaged gunnery officer who wanted to change the method of calling off enemy fighters to the 24 hour clock. An example: sighting an enemy jet coming in on the right in mid-afternoon would be called off as "ME 262 at 15:00 hours level."

The trucks delivered us back to the Venlo air base. No friends were waiting to see us off on departure. There was no one to shed a tear and say, "Farewell, Godspeed or Auf Wiedersehen."

The sight of the B-24s sitting on the flight line kind of brought the day's events back into perspective. We were mentally and physically tired, but really grateful we had the exciting opportunity to make this trip.

Buckling up, we built a fire under the engines and headed out for the take-off runway. Take-off was at 16:00 hours. Right on time. Some of us had not eaten our K-rations and it really didn't matter.

The gear was coming up, and as you looked down on the neatly laid out fields

and forests below, your thoughts were of hope that you would never have to come this way again — for any reason.

I kept thinking of the cold, ragged, forsaken German soldiers, sitting on the damp ground behind barbed wire. Who said, "It doesn't make any difference if you win or lose?" The haunting sights of that day kept returning as ghosts in my mind, no matter how hard I tried to think of other things.

Going south, we passed over Duren, Germany on the way out. Another pulverized town. No roofs or ceilings intact; only jagged walls. We left behind the ruin that was Germany and turned west to Liege, Belgium and the coast. A silence came over the occupants of a front line military bomber called "The Liberator."

The feeling of a door closing behind you came as the coastal city of Ostende went astern for the last time. We pointed the nose across the Channel for England, flying smoothly under a low ceiling and leaden skies, into dim light and home. We landed at Hethel, in the quiet of the evening, at 18:00 hours.

For several years, we drank a little and sang and joked our way through a small slice of a big war. And, one damp, foggy day, we went to a funeral at Cambridge. Out of this came the meaning of 3 May 1945 when a few citizen/soldiers were given the rare privilege of going back over the battlefield after the guns were silent to see what it was all about.

We already have the honorable POW, Caterpillar and Goldfish Clubs. In May we added the exclusive Trolley Club. This new auxilliary celebrates the team struggle of all men and women in the 2nd Air Division to bring the curtain down on a mad dream of conquest.

In the jargon of the times, many of us were twenty years old and still wet behind the ears. Five decades later, the memories are as vivid as yesterday. Notes scribbled on cheap paper with now fading ink, create a stirring in the dust of years.

Fate determined what role each one would play. The air crews owe a debt of eternal gratitude to the always gallant and sometimes homesick ground echelons whose dedication would keep 'em Flying to final victory. A million thanks to those unrecognized patriots.

NORWICH 1995

Cost and complete information for the 2ADA reunion at Norwich, England in 1995 will be mailed only to those people who have sent deposits. Space is limited, but reservations are still being accepted with an advance deposit of \$50.00 per person attending. Contact:

Evelyn Cohen
06-410 Delaire Landing Road
Philadelphia, PA 19114

2ADA Film Library — Revised 1-94

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

"Images of the 2nd Air Division"	}	Produced by Joe Dzenowagis
"Faces of the 2nd Air Division"		
"Eight Candles for Remembrance"		
"24's Get Back"	}	donated by Hugh McLaren
"Aerial Gunner"		
"Battle of Britain"		
"B-24 Liberators in the ETO"		
"World War II" with Walter Cronkite 10 Volumes		donated by Roy Jonasson
"Passage to Valhalla"		donated by William Fili, 15th AF
"Ploesti! B-24s At War — Series I"		
"Flying the Bombers — B-24 Liberator"		
"B-24s At War — Series II"		
"The B-24 Story"		
"Diamond Lil"		

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

Video tapes — VHS — (Order by Roman #)

I Remember Them	}	Order together	\$3.00
II A Village Remembers			
III Target for Today The Men Who Flew the Liberators 2ADA Reunion 1973 — Colorado Springs 2AD Memorial Dedication — Norwich 1963			\$3.00
IV The Mission Night Bombers — RAF Schweinfurt & Regensburg Memphis Belle			\$3.00
V Ploesti 93rd B.G. in North Africa The Fight for the Sky 2ADA Reunion Film Clip — Norwich 1983			\$3.00
VI The Air Force Story — Vol. I — Chapters 1-8	}	Order together	\$9.00
VII The Air Force Story — Vol. I — Chapters 9-16			
VIII The Air Force Story — Vol. I — Chapters 17-24			
IX The Air Force Story — Vol. I — Chapters 25-26 The Air Force Story — Vol. II — Chapters 1-6			
X Smashing of the Reich Medal of Honor — The Burning of Ploesti Oil			\$3.00
XI Some of Our Airmen Are No Longer Missing 2ADA March AFB Memorial Service, 1984 The Superplane That Hitler Wasted — ME-262			\$3.00
XII The Story of Willow Run Preflight Inspection of the B-24 Flying the B-24 (This tape donated to 2ADA by 467 BG in memory of Adam Soccio)			\$3.00
XIII Battleline Series — Bombing of Japan The Last Bomb — B-29s and P-51 Documentary Target Tokyo — B-24s Narrated by Ronald Reagan			\$3.00
XIV Aviation Cadet Wings of the Army			\$3.00
XV Air War Over Europe Target Ploesti Raid on Schweinfurt Counterblast: Hamburg Guided Missiles			\$3.00
XVI The Last Mission — 5 days of Norwich 1987 2ADA convention plus additional camcorder scenes by several members			\$3.00

Order from: Pete Henry, 164B Portland Lane, Jamesburg, NJ 08831

Diamond Lil Tape

We have remaining 20 copies of this tape. You are reminded that there will be no more when these are gone.

Under the heading "2ADA Video Library Update" in the Summer 1993 JOURNAL (page 19) was an item about "Diamond Lil — Flight Across Atlantic and Tour of Norwich." David Hastings also had an article about Diamond Lil in the same issue on page 6.

Orders for this tape will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Purchase price including postage is \$37.50. Order from:

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

Lines of Communication

From 8th Air Force Historical Society
New Jersey Chapter "New Jersey News"

A memo from 8th Air Force Headquarters passed through three or four echelons with instructions to keep it brief.

From 8th AAF HQ to Division CO:

"Tomorrow evening at approximately 2000 hours, Halley's Comet will be visible in this area, an event which occurs only once every 75 years. Have the men fall out in the flight line area in fatigues, and explain this rare phenomenon to them. In case of rain, they will not be able to see anything, so assemble them in the base theater and show them films of it."

From Division CO to Wing CO:

"By order of the General, tomorrow at 2000 hours, Halley's Comet will appear above the flight line area. If it rains, fall the men out in fatigues, then march to the theater where this rare phenomenon will take place, something which occurs only once every 75 years."

From Wing CO to Group CO:

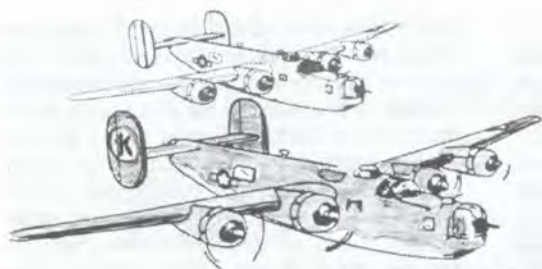
"By order of the Colonel in fatigues at 2000 hours tomorrow evening, the phenomenal Halley's Comet will appear in the theater. In case of rain in the flight line area, the Colonel will give another order, something which occurs every 75 years."

From Group CO to Squadron CO:

"Tomorrow at 2000 hours, the Colonel will appear in the theater with Halley's Comet, something which happens every 75 years. If it rains, the Colonel will order the Comet into the flight line area."

From Squadron CO to 1st Sergeant for posting on bulletin board:

"When it rains tomorrow at 2000 hours, the phenomenal 75 year old General Halley, accompanied by the Colonel, will drive his Comet through the flight line area in fatigues."



458th Bomb Group

by Rick Rokicki

Earthquakes, ice storms, snow and below zero temperatures... hopefully that's behind us for this winter. Looking forward to: "Spring has sprung, the grass is riz, wonder where the robins is?" Obviously the weather has had much to do with a lower response rate than anticipated with both the D-Day plaque and the balance of the B-24 Formation plaques. Still have both in stock and recently sent **Jordan Uttal** another \$50.00 check to make it an even \$100.00 as profits from these plaques. As previously mentioned, all profits are committed to the **Memorial Library Funding**. The D-Day plaque (11 x 13 1/2 inches) cost is \$23.50 plus \$5.00 for shipping. The Formation plaque is 9 x 12 inches, 5 x 7 photo of a 16 plane formation, 3 1/2 x 7 inch engraved plate plus aircrew wings or large pewter B-24 in semi-profile instead. Basic cost remains at \$39.50 plus \$4.50 shipping. Ribbons and O.L.C. & Battle stars are extra. Please check the Winter 1993 *Journal* for full details, or write/call me at 365 Mae Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21061; Tel. 410-766-1034.



Many thanks to those of you who have written to the **Eastwood Co., 580 Lancaster Ave., Box 296, Malvern, PA 19355**. Thanks also to the ones who sent me copies of their letters sent to **Rich Venza** or **Jim Shulman** (who has since moved to another position), requesting consideration to supply a die-cast metal B-24. I sincerely hope that those of you who haven't written to the Eastwood Co. will do so as soon as possible. If only 10% of our members write, that's about 850 letters... it may be enough to make them seriously consider arranging for the B-24 manufacture. Again, full details are in the Winter 1993 *Journal*.

The 458th Group reunion in Dayton, September 23 & 24, is progressing well. The Marriott room rates are \$64.00 plus hotel tax (per night, per person) and registration is \$90.00 per person which pays for meals, buses to the 458th Memorial, etc. All members will receive a personal letter in early May with full explanation. As in the past, Duke and his wife Doris are handling this event. If you have any questions, call or write **Duke Trivette, 1791 Utica Drive, Dayton, OH 45439-2541; Tel. 513-299-7125**.

ON FINAL:

Charles T. Voyles (491st) requested 6 ea. D-Day plaques for each of his surviving crewmen. **Nelson Dimick (445th)** ordered 4 ea. of the Formation plaques for his grandchildren. Several others have ordered dual plaques, as something to be remembered after they've made their "last flight." Please don't make the mistake of waiting until June 6th, the 50th anniversary date, to order this plaque. It may be too late by then.

The **Mystery Stamp Person** has struck again, this time from **Nairobi, Kenya**. Letter had many sheets of U.S. stamps. Previously, letters have been sent from Pennsylvania and Florida, but the return address always shows "Horsham St. Faith." Many thanks to the M.S.P. for supplying postage for my response to Group letters. In any case, he advises that he will attend the Group reunion at Dayton.

I have written to the families of **Keith Yerty, Bob Hunter, and Eldon Gebaroff** (name was incorrectly spelled in last *Folded Wings*), expressing the Group's sympathy.

Bob Sturenfeldt, 1122 Deardon Drive, Venice, FL 34292 has sent me his original 754th Squadron insignia. This is still uncut on blue felt 5 x 6 inches. As an original made in England, it could be worth several hundred dollars to an avid collector of WWII memorabilia. Bob has instructed me to give whatever it brings, to the Memorial Library Fund. If you know of any collector of WWII 8th AF interest, please have him contact me. If not sold before our September Group reunion, I will bring it to Dayton.

Letter from **George Reynolds** advised that he was contacted by someone who wanted the serial number of "LILY MARLENE." George advises that he's lost or misplaced the letter, but that the following is factual: "Lily Marlene, S/N 42-50907-D, 752nd Squadron, pilot Wm. N. Frederick, was on a night practice mission and crashed near Crowland, England. One survivor, no name given." The only one I know for sure who was a crewman on "Lily Marlene" was **Gene Young**. Any help, anyone?

Received a book from **Frank Coleman**, titled *Overpaid, Oversexed and Over Here*, authored by Juliet Gardiner. I found it most interesting and a worthwhile addition to your WWII library. Book can be purchased from **E.P. Hamilton, Bookseller, Falls Village, CT 06031-5000**. Item #927457, cost \$5.95 plus \$3.00 shipping.

Lastly, my son and daughter arranged for a flight over the Arizona Memorial as one of my Christmas presents. The airport is called "Dillingham" and is run by a "Mr. Bill," Waialua, Hawaii. Aircraft was one of the few remaining Navy N3N "Yellow Peril" two seat open cockpit biplanes still flying. (My antique airplane listing shows only two such aircraft still flying with an Airworthiness Certificate.) Cruise at 115 MPH and at 1500 feet almost simulated the Pearl Harbor attack between the two hills which was a major attack route. Viewing the Arizona Memorial from this height, the battleship could be clearly seen under the Memorial. The pilot was **Ray Galliher**, son of a WWII naval aviator who is employed as a flight instructor in Kenai, Alaska, and I took several photos of their facility on our last trip to Anchorage. He instructs during the Alaskan summer and works in Hawaii in the winter, as a glider-tow pilot and biplane scenic tour pilot. Talk about the best of two worlds!



1938 U.S. Navy N3N Primary Trainer (Restored)

See you all in Kansas City, Missouri, May 27th through May 31st...ALOHA & MAHALO!



While at Hilton Head in November for the Annual Convention, I observed first hand the passing of the hat, not for the collection of funds, which we did, but rather the passing of responsibility of office from one fellow to another. This process has been continuous for 46 years to give continuity and purpose to the Second Air Division Association. Men doffing different hats, assuming leadership and giving vital direction to our organization.

In 1986, one of the hats was passed to Bill Nothstein when he was elected Group Vice President for the 466th Bomb Group. In his words he said, "...when elected, I had no idea of what to expect. At times the position was frustrating, yet it always seemed to be worthwhile. My wife and I have traveled many miles to places we would not otherwise have visited, were it not for my connection with the Second Air Division Association. We have enjoyed serving these past seven years and will forever remember the many good times we have shared and sorely miss those who have 'folded their wings.' "

Bill wore his hat so well that the 2ADA elected him to serve as Treasurer for the entire Association. Not being prone to wear

two hats at the same time, he surrendered his role as V.P. of the 466th, and conducted an election at the Group Meeting on November 5, 1993. I was elected. I am highly honored to serve in this capacity. And Bill, on behalf of the membership, I want to express our appreciation to you for your unselfish and dedicated service. As a 466er I know we can count on your loyal support and presence at all future meetings.

Like Bill Nothstein (1986), I had no idea (1993) what to expect. Following the congratulations, a fine dinner, and some picture-taking, Bill took me in tow and we went to his room for "hat fitting time." First, he asked a question: "Did you drive or fly to Hilton Head?" Well, I thought, this isn't bad for starters, and answered, "By auto; Bowling Green, Kentucky isn't that far. Why?" "Good," he said. Then he pulled out a huge, heavy box laden with official-looking things and remarked, "This would be difficult to carry on an airliner." Late at night, we went through each book, manual, letter, list, and procedure; until we were both bleary-eyed. He loaded me with the box, opened the door and I found the elevator, went to my room three or four levels up, kicked on it to gain entrance and Cindy, my wife of 47 years and faithful Air Corps Convention attendee, let me in.

In a nutshell, I perceive my role to be first of all, an itinerant encourager, to inform our membership that they may honor our "Fallen Angels;" to comfort the bereaved; to nurture the sick; to welcome our new 466ers just joining the ranks; to recruit and encourage those joining as Associate Members, children and grandchildren alike; to plan meaningful Group Meetings for the Annual Conventions; to keep the member-

ship roster up-to-date; to work with the Executive Committee hand-in-glove; to support in every way possible the Memorial Library in Norwich; to assist in the development of the Heritage Center of the Mighty Eighth located in Savannah, GA, which could be the American counterpart to the Norwich Memorial; and to prepare noteworthy, historic, and informative articles for the 466th Bomb Group page in the Second Air Division Association *Journal* which you are now reading.

In closing...

Our congratulations! To our own Harry A. Dolph...the condensed version of his book, *The Evader*, has appeared in the January 1994 issue of *Reader's Digest*.

Did you know? *Attlebridge Diaries*, the history of the 466th, is being reprinted with additions — it will contain the original text and many previously unpublished photos and events which have occurred since it was published in 1979. Please support this 50th Anniversary event by purchasing a copy for yourself and copies for those you hold dear...your children, grandchildren, your public library, and friends. Spread the news. We must not be forgotten! You may order direct: Taylor Publishing Company, P.O. Box 12431, Charlotte, NC 28220. Cost is \$40.00 plus \$4.95 shipping and handling.

Looking Ahead: The 1994 2ADA Reunion will be held in Kansas City, Missouri, May 28-31. Get your reservations to Evelyn soon. Let's have a great 466th turnout. At the Group Dinner, we are planning a special program along with an *Attlebridge Diaries* update.

Let me know! I'm the "new kid on the block." Write, call, share your good news, problems, or concerns and I will pass them on to the rest of the 466ers.

Memorial at Lillestrom: A Healing Process

by Forrest S. Clark (44th)

The people of a tiny village in Norway and the American people formed a bond recently by the efforts of a group of twelve American World War II veterans and their wives.

The people of Lillestrom, a village about 15 miles east of the Norwegian capital of Oslo, made friends with the Americans at a World War II memorial in their community. The memorial, dedicated November 18, 1993, is to honor 82 Americans and three Norwegians killed in an American bombing raid over Norway 50 years ago. The 8th Air Force groups represented were the 392nd, 93rd, 389th and 44th, Second Air Division. The target was the German airbase at Kjeller, a mile outside the village.

The church in Lillestrom was filled to capacity by hundreds of townspeople to mark the memorial. Many of the village people said it was the first time since WWII ended in 1945 that there had been such an event in their town.

Two of the organizers of the memorial event are from central Florida, one from

Winter Springs and another from Kissimmee. Oscar Kaalstad and Forrest Clark were assisted by ten other Americans in devising the memorial. Among them was the son of one of the bomber pilots killed in the raid, Edward Dobson, Jr. of Bozeman, Montana.

Joseph Whittaker of the 392nd Bomb Group, the lead bombardier, gave the dedicatory address and eulogy. There was a fly-over by Norwegian Air Force planes and a display of flying by warbirds.

Bernt Aspang, pastor of the Lillestrom church, said it was an emotional experience for all, both Americans and Norwegians, and especially for those who are survivors of the casualties. Some broke down and cried at the service. Many said the fact that the Americans bombed the German base was a boost to the Norwegian morale after years of Nazi occupation.

Major Gen. Erik Hernes, commander of the base, gave an emotional talk to the group at a memorial dinner given by the Royal Norwegian Air Force. He told of his

youth during wartime and the work of his father in the resistance movement against the German occupiers.

Many of the people came forward to greet the Americans and to tell personal stories of the raid and of the hardships they endured during the war. Some told of seeing the destruction of the bombs and others of how their homes were damaged and some family members killed. One of the survivors invited the Americans to her home and displayed a picture that was marked by shrapnel from the bombs. One told how 20 or more bombs fell around her home on the mountain above the air base and how the Germans came to dig up the unexploded bombs on her property.

The American bombers dropped 838 bombs on the air base, destroying an estimated 80 percent of it. It was one of the longest missions of the war and one of the few on Norwegian territory.

All agreed the memorial was a healing process for Norwegians and Americans and a renewal to strive for peace in the world.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome:

44th

Robert A. Ricks
James A. Richardson
Robert F. Westcott

93rd

Richard Baehr
Douglas C. Garner
Father Marshall V. Minister
Wayne Moeller
Edwin R. Perrin
Rev. Donald F. Pruitt
Ralph F. Sanderson
Roy Schulbach
Laurence A. Yates
Felice Zerella

389th

Maurice A. Bartell (458th)
Col. A.L. Berthelson (Ret.)
Paul C. Lewis
Bernard H. Shelley
Peter J. Tutuska
Joseph K. Wall

392nd

John H. Bross
Lloyd J. Burns
Philip R. Earl
Marilyn Lane
Wilbur S. Stanford

445th

Frank W. Aaronson
Eugene A. Fippinger
Jay A. Ream
Gilbert S. Shawn
Ray F. Souders, Jr.
Robert E. Vest

448th

Stuart K. Barr
Earle P. Durely, Jr.
C.J. Howell
Howard F. Whitney

453rd

Melvin L. Bishop
Col. Alfred J. Guetling (Ret.)
George P. Keenan
Albert Stoltz

458th

John B. Beasley
Robert E. Voss

466th

M. Fred Coon

467th

Lawrence Belanger
John J. Mario
Robert P. Spivey

489th

Albert P. Hall
Max E. Van Horn (446th)

491st

Waymon A. Baker
Charles M. Bancroft
Clifford W. Bouche
Alfred P. Conner
Amos B. Dolliver (93rd)
Cordell Duncan
Lloyd H. Gibbs
Walter R. Hinds
John H. McCormick
Jerome Muhlberg
Ltc. William R. Penzien (Ret.)
Glenn L. Robinson
Ltc. Howard R. Schroeder (Ret.)
Mark Skinner
Richard R. Sternberg
Vernon S. Tappan

492nd

Chris C. Dracopoulos (491st)

479th F.G.

Bernard L. Hanlon

For addresses of new members, please write to your Group Vice President (not to the Journal Editor). Thank you!

Where Is This Man Now?

Submitted by Jim Reeves (HQ)

The following from a wartime article by Stars and Stripes Staff Writer Sid Schapiro:

75 LIB MISSIONS AND STILL GOING STRONG

93rd Bombardment Group: The top-mission U.S. heavy bomber flier in the ETO minces no words in debunking the law of averages, saying: "It's a lot of hokum."

What's more, Capt. Kenneth L. Gilbert, 21-year-old Liberator pilot from Newport, R.I., who completed 75 consecutive combat missions over Germany and occupied territory in six months by turning down chances of recuperative rest, leave or even a 24-hour pass, has no intention of returning to the States even now.

"I'll keep on going up, so long as they let me," he said.

He completed his first 25 missions in 29 days. Later, rather than return home for the customary furlough upon completion of a tour of operations, the blond, five-foot-seven Gilbert kept right on flying in his B-24 Missouri Sue.

"The boys get a big kick out of kidding me because I don't drink or smoke, and believe in getting at least eight hours' sleep each night," he said. "But when they start joking about my not liking the girls, they're way off base."

However, Gilbert let loose with his crew



Capt. Ken L. Gilbert

when he won a bottle of bourbon from medics who bet he wouldn't do over 50 missions. But he still maintains that drinking and flying don't mix.

He was a private in 1941, when he left Rhode Island State University to enlist in the Air Corps. Later, he became a flying sergeant, piloting training planes. In May 1943 he was given a direct commission as a second lieutenant.

He arrived in the ETO Feb. 3 and started combat flying April 12. He finished a tour July 12. His 75th mission took him to Coblenz

Oct. 9. Two days later he went to a rest home for the first time, remaining six days.

Four complete crews and 12 spare crewmen completed their tours of operations with him. His original engineer, T/Sgt. Joseph Evanovich, got in 47 ops, while his first radio operator, T/Sgt. Dale Jennings, finished 39 missions.

No member of his crews has been awarded the Purple Heart. "We were always lucky and never had too much trouble," Gilbert said. "They weren't all milk runs, though."

His squadron commander, Lt. Col. Therman D. Brown, of Plant City, Fla., wants him to take it easy. "Gilbert is an extremely good pilot," the CO commented. "He flies in combat with great ease, and most of all he enjoys doing it."

M/Sgt. John L. Underwood, of Jacksonville, Ill., has been Gilbert's crew chief from the start and he is still looking after Missouri Sue, whose No. 4 engine has put in 750 hours and is still going strong.

While he has no regard for the law of averages, Gilbert does not wear his decorations — the DFC with cluster and Air Medal with ten clusters — because of superstition.

Editor's Note: If you have any information on Capt. Gilbert and/or his crew, please contact Floyd H. Mabey, Asst. V.P. 93rd, 11524 Zimmerman Road, Port Richey, FL 34668.

Attendees at Hilton Head Convention, November 1993

44th Bomb Group

Bob and Ginny Bratzel
Jean and Gloria Bressler
Dave and Peg Brown
Al and Doris Browning
Fred Browning
Howard and Helen Brunner
Dick and Ardith Butler
Don and Ula Chase
Ed and Kathryn Clark
Forrest and Ruth Clark
Pat and Virginia Colucci
Ed Dobson and Nancy Verling
Bill and Virginia Douglas
Mike and Kaye Fusano
Ted and Mary Grey
Jack Gibson
Griff and Bobbie Griffin
Art Hand
Mike and Ione Hause
Pete and Mary Henry; Bill, Caran
and Cathy Henry
Charlie and Marilyn Hughes
Bob and Bert Johnson
Joe Kukulicz
Will and Irene Lundy
John McClane
Ray and Mary McNamara
Tony and Cathy Mastradone
Chuck and Gladys Mercer
Bob, Helen and David Mundell
Dave and Maxine Nathanson
Bill and Betty Newbold
Bill and Hazel Robertie
Frank Schaeffer & Grace Fitzgerald
Ed and Erla Schwarm
Archie Solatka
Bill Taylor
Charles and Betty Tilton
Ray Ward
Jim and Marion Wright

93rd Bomb Group

Jim and Dot Adams
Harry and Mary Albright
Ed and Thelma Allen
Al and Naomi Asch
Tom Bamford
George and Beverly Baker; Sandy
and Bobbie Henderson
Carl and Helene Barthel
Jack and Verna Bazer
Joe and Peggy Bradley
Lew Brown
Harold Burks
Nick and Rose Caruso
Jim and Alice Cooley
Cal Davidson
Mike and Mary DeBrino
Moses and Eileen Gozonsky
Paul and Nora Harwood
Earl and Gini Heffner
Tommy and Cathy Hernandez
Larry and Barbara Hewin
Chuck and Yonnie Hoffman
Mark and Barbara Hontz
Paul and Martha Hood
Bob and Nancy Jacobs
C.D. and Simone Johnson
John and Midge Kerler
Art LaMontagne and Pat Kaine
Burt and Carol Lenhart
Earl and Frances Long
Floyd and Dot Mabae
Bob and Madeleine McKeever
Paul and Janet Meyers
Mike and Dot Mikolajczyk
Homer and Dorothy Moran
Henry and Bea Nykamp
Ed Powell
Jack Preziose
Anthony Rapp
Bill Reynolds
Ray and Mary Rhoades
Dan Rouse and Eileen Hunt
Joe Schwarzgruber
Walt Smelt
Lloyd and Jacqueline Smith
Don and Marylou Spencer
Wallace Spencer
Paul and Marie Steichen
Fred and Inez Strombom
Joe Thorley
Carl and Joanne Todd
Dick Trousdale
Norm Watten
Charley & Peg Weiss
Bob and Marjorie Wright
Sam and Sylvia Zinn

389th Bomb Group

Bill and Betty Berry
Warren and Rachel Birkhead
Jim and Iola Mae Brewton
Gaynell Clark
Chuck and Gennie Dearing
Bill and Helene Denton
Barney and Emme Driscoll
Reuben and Mary Lou Duke
Andrew Ewanus
Jack and Mary Fanelli
Allan and Jean Hallett
Gene and Nancy Hartley; Dennis
and Cathy Hartley Culver
Maurice and Georgi Hebert
Gene and Ruth Jeanne Hetzler
Wally and Marge Jambeck
John and Lorraine Kane
Don and Shirley Kinard
Ken and Cathy Kleinshrot
Bud and June Koorndyk
Felix and Marge Leeton
Ralph and Elizabeth Leslie
Vince and Carroll Lozowicki
Bill and Florence Medeiros
Bill and Elsie Meyers
Ray and Ruth Nathe
Newt and Marge Newton
Gerard Opitz
Charlie and Doris Peterson
Dick and Flo Peterson
Dave and Polly Reich
John Repola
Pete and Kate Rice
Tom and Virginia Rockett
Walt and Eleanor Rosson
Bob Schwellinger
Bob Seigh and Debbie Seigh Martin
Bill, Frances, and Bill, Jr. Selvidge
Ken Smith
Gene, Judy and Pat Spenser
J.L. and Ruth Spooner
Bob and Jeannie Stout
Paul Trissel
Tru and Jamie Trulove
Tuck and Margery Tucholski
Jim and Mary Valla
Bill and Jane Vinette
Chuck and O'Neilda Wells
Henry and Eleanor Wentland
Bill and Lynne Wheeler
Earl and June Zimmerman

392nd Bomb Group

Ernie Barber
Vernon Baumgart
Joe and Anne Bonanno
Floyd and Roberta Bull
Carroll and Mabel Cheek
Jack Clarke and Mary Gombatta
Jim and Jeanette Conley
John and Wanda Conrad; Douglas
Stephen
John and Marilyn Delach
Arnold and Cleome Dovey
Art and Teddy Egan
Burrell Ellison
J.B. and Lena Freeman
Herman Garner & Annette Courtney
Gil Gilbert
Jim Goar and Virginia George
Dave and Renee Green
Bob Gries
Harold & Mary Esther Hutchcroft
Bob and Marilyn Lane
J.D. and Emily Long
Oak and Maxine Mackey
John and Priscilla Matt
Cliff and Mary Peterson
Milt and Bunny Planche
Warren and Dettie Polking
Bert and Margaret Prost
Bill and Kathryn Riddleberger
Lou and Delores Stephens
J. Fred Thomas
Joe and Mary Westbrook

445th Bomb Group

Mary Kennedy Barnard
Pete and Ida Belitsos
Frank and Mary Bertram
Rowe Bowen
Larry, Mary, Greg and
Connie Bowers
Hoby and Jean Bowlby
Bob Brunst
Harold and Renee Clark
George and Florence Collar

Bob and Lou Conrad
Fred and Marge Dale
Roland and Lil Desjardins
Frank and Elizabeth DiMola
Bob and Cass Drummond
Seymour Eisenberg
Roy and Marian Ellender
Al and Irene Ellwein
Leroy and June Elfstrom
Elmer and Jean Fischer
Bernie and Estelle Fishman
Karl and Barbara Goff
Ben and Lucy Ann Grimm
Andy and Gin Haley
Lowell and Louise Harris
Harold and Gerry Hartner
Howard and Mary Hinrichs
Norm and Bernice Jensen
Ted Kay / David Rawlings
Al and Evelyn Kitchens
John and Elsie Knizeski
Jack and Dede Knox
Mike and Marge Larson
George and Lucille Leininger
Ray and Jean Lemons
Dick and Marge Littlefield
Meg Lynes
George and Bertha Lyons
Bob McCormack and Joan Flynn
Pat McKeever
Jack and Peggy Magee
Glen and Jean Marsteller
Sam and Joan Mastrogiamomo /
Vern and Marian Goedeke
Bob and Charlotte Meyer
Sam and Pate Miller
Reg and Martha Miner
Dan and Anne Moore
Ab and Ellen Musser
John and Dorothy Nortavage
Ode and Geri Odegard
John and Jean O'Fee
Ron and Rita Parrott
Dave and Joan Patterson
Mike and Mary Planka
Ray Pytel and Twyla Kieffer
Al and Dot Querbach
Ed, Sue and Randy Roloff
Bob Russell and Coyla Hewitt
Ben and Hildred Schlosser
Horace and Joan Shankwiler
John and Mary Stemmer
Ralph and Genevieve Stimmel
Bob and Shirley Suckow
W.M. and Sarah Ruth Thompson
Bill and Anne Tierney
Hal Turell and Phyllis Bruner
John and Marie Vessels
Chuck Walker
Ed and Doris Weddle
Roland Woods
Elden and Pat Zink
Ed and Rosalie Zobac

446th Bomb Group

Bob and Mary Alexander
Bill Booth
Harold Carter
Marv and Mary Finger
Ted and Barb Nichols
Joe and Cass Soder
Marv and Margaret Speidel

448th Bomb Group

Al and Irene Bishop
Yvonne Daley Brusselmans
George and Joylea Dupont
Clyde, Annie & Clyde, Jr. Hatley
Joe and Kathleen Kasack
Dick and Bobbie Kennedy
Cater Lee
Charlie and Agnes McBride
Milt and Ruth Nichols
Quig Quigley
H.O. Riley
Clarence and Alberta Schrader
Tom Taylor
Mike, Nancy and Anne Westgate
Dearl and Lela Whitaker
Fred, Aaron, Roy and Louise
Youngblood

453rd Bomb Group

Amos and Dorothy Adkins
Will and Marion Adler
Moose and David Allen /
Linda Anderson
Julio and Gladys Alonso
Eino and Edna Alve

Hank Barker
Lew and Trudy Barley
Ed Becker
Katherine Benarcik
Leroy and Gloria Berg
Bob Bieck
Bert and Claire Biel /
Keith and Irene Hurner
Walt and Estelle Brown
Wib and Diane Clingan
Dick and Mary Cluphf
Walt Conneely
Anthony Corbo
Lyman and Geneva Crumrin
Dick and June Marie Dean
George and Kay Desmarais
Tommy and Verner Dickson
Jim and Dorothy Dyke
Bill and Dorothea Eagleson
Jim Elkins
Joe Edwards
Montford and Bonita Fischer
Jim and Ann Halligan
Dave and Harriett Hamlin
Russ Harriman
Ed Jackson
Jay and Anna Jane Jeffries
Bob and Betty Jordan
John and Fran Keane
Jim and B.J. Kotapish
Bob and Mary Ann Lambert
Grace Lane
Doug and Jane Leavenworth
Joe and Lil LeBoeuf
Graham and Nell Logan
Andy and Helen Low
Carl and Janet Lutz
Burt and Maggie Madison
Bob and Thelma Marx
Ralph and Agnes McClure
Eugene McDowell
John and Teresa McGough
Joe and Gloria Meintel
Dot Middleton
Mo and Ludie Morris
Carl and Mary Moss
Earle and Marly Nase
Russ and Marguerite Neatrou
Tom Neilan
Bob and Betty Nelson
Cal and Pat Neuhauser
Art and Dorothy Noonan
Don and Mimi Olds
Bill and Leonara O'Neil
Don and Peggy Parcells
Charlie Parker
Bob Pedigo
Nick and Frankie Plasmati
Lloyd and Irene Prang
Dan and Muriel Reading
Al and Rickey Ricci
John and Marie Roth
Jack and Helen Sanders
Morrie and Shirley Schwartz
Jim and Jane Shaw
Glenn and Jean Smith
Lloyd and Marty Smith
Harold and Ruby Speer
Lou Stern and Marie Pangaro
Wilbur and Jeane Stites
Milt and Lucille Stokes /
Ginger Stokes & Clay Brubaker /
Rhonda Stokes & Chris Vinson
Caleb and Virginia Stout
Frank and Jackie Thomas
Russ and Edna Thompson
Glen and Edith Tisher
Jim and Dorothy Turner
Ralph Walker
Alex and Tootie Wallace
Ed and Francie Werner
Bill and Mary Wheeler
John and Dorothy White
George and Helen Wigfield
Abe and Janet Wilen
Don and Ina Wills
Harry Winslow
Dick and Gene Witton
Bob Zimmerman & Collie Strahan

458th Bomb Group

Gerry Allen
Dick Bateman
Wesley and Marjorie Belleson
Frank and Lu Birmingham
Bob and Marie Birmingham
Birto and Jean Brumby
Bill Case
Walt and Eleanor Cline
Phil and Dottie Cloud

458th continued...

Don and Claire Conway
 Bob Deegan
 Dale and Virginia Dyer
 George Eifel
 Sam and Rockey Evans
 Bob Fletcher
 Don and Carolyn Fraser
 Elmo and Betty Geppelt
 Jim and Marian Ginn
 Ken and Emma Gorrell
 Lionel Goudreaux / Patricia Molloy
 Kim Greene
 Bob and Janet Henn
 Ken and Alice Holcomb
 Roger Hicks
 Fred and Virginia Honold
 Milt and Eleanor Kenyan
 Frank and Janet Kinker
 Tim and Annette Kinnally
 Peter and Evelyn Kowal
 Al and Helen Lankus
 Darrell Latch
 Bill and Jackie Matthews
 Ray and Martha Metz
 Bernie and Jean Newmark
 Santos and Maxine Ortega
 Ed and Dorothy Robbins
 Rick and Ceil Rokicki
 Charley and R. Ryder
 Bob and Lillian Schauseil
 Del and Sara Shaffer
 Gordon and Evelyn Shupp
 Veto and Jane Stasunas
 Dale and Carole Steiner
 Austin and Betty Stirratt
 Van and Mildred Taylor
 Lawrence Van Kuran
 Frank and Mildred Vermeiren
 Bill and Neta Weiland
 Morell and Jean Whipple
 Edwin and Helma Wilcox

466th Bomb Group

Andy and Evelyn Banko
 Dick and Margaret Baynes
 Frank and Louise Bostwick
 Mike and Pauline Hoover
 Perry and Joyce Kerr
 John and Martha Kraeger
 Jim and Mary Lorenz
 Gerry and Sammy Merket
 Stan and JoAnn Mohr
 Bill and Lue Nothstein
 Bob and Sybil Pettersen
 Jim and Elinor Russell
 Gene and Jean Saltarelli
 Kurt and Vicki Brooks Warning
 Earl and Cynthia Wassom

467th Bomb Group

Jim and Janice Bates
 Ray Bickel
 Ralph and Doris Davis

Roy and Ruth Dettinger
 Ralph and Yvonne Elliott
 Hank and Catherine Fagan
 Geoff and Terry Gregory
 Howard and Gretta Johnson
 Larry and Faye Kurtz
 Jim and Polly Mahoney
 Dick and Bernie Miller
 Will and Cecily Noden
 Vince and Carolyn Re
 Bob and Rosemary Sheehan
 Al Shower
 Walt and Mary Weaver

489th Bomb Group

Lee and Max Baker
 Clarence and Lil Barras
 Mickey Baskin
 Ralph Belward
 Otey, Ruth, Scott, Laura and
 Robin Berkeley / Mitch Hedrick
 John Bignoli
 Frank and Gin Bodine
 I.D. and Lil Brown
 Bud, Mike & Rusty Chamberlain
 Don, Betty & Nancy Champagne
 John and Kathleen Dagleish
 John DeCani
 Henry and Alva Dellano
 Dick and Josie Dietrick
 Don and Shirley Engler
 Charlie and Helen Freudenthal
 Charles, Olga, Chuck & Marty Gabrus
 Bob and Ev Gast
 Laverne and Dorothy Graf
 Lou and Kathleen Gramando
 Ken and Mary Gullekson
 Morgan and Ella Deane Higham
 Ted and Carol Hills
 Hank and Colleen Hoeckel
 John and Irene Homan
 Dick and Marge Johnson
 Ed and Eleanor Johnson
 Leroy and Marguerite Johnson
 Bob Jurgens / Gayle McMurtry /
 Lisa Jurgens / Karen Knight
 John and Louise Kazanjian
 John and Mary Ann Kennedy
 C.W. and Helen Kidd
 John and Pat Lamar
 Joe and Germaine Lapiere
 Dean and Mimi Leonard
 Tom and Betsy McQuoid
 Ted and Gladys Maruschak
 Paul and Eleanor Menzenski
 Rick and Gigi Metzger
 John Nemeth / Kathleen Constanza /
 Barbara Price
 Mel and Marcie Pontillo
 Wyatt and Joanne Porterfield
 Chuck Reeves
 Carl and Helen Rosendahl
 Mel and Dolly Sharpe
 Neal and Pat Sorensen
 Dick and Bev Stenger

John and Kay Strauss
 R.W. and Miriam Thomas
 R.B. and Lucille Tolson
 Frank and Millie Trinder
 Garrett and Helen Verplanck
 Ed and Betty Wall
 Bill and Polly Wilkinson

491st Bomb Group

Bob and Faith Bacher
 Hugh and Thelma Bennett
 Ed and Sue Brown
 Vince and Wilma Cahill
 Hap and Caroline Chandler
 Royce and Jeanette Colby
 Bill and Patricia Ducey
 Seymour and Hazel Eisenstat
 Joe and June Flagler
 Harold and Florence Fritzler
 Lou and Anne Gallo
 Ott and Edie Gerstung
 Hank and Harriette Gibbs
 Larry and Joan Hassell
 Bernie and Clara Head
 Russ and Mary Hellwig
 Jack Lane
 John and Violet Lefever
 Nelson and Irene Leggette
 John and Marilyn Leppert
 Mick McMeche / Princess Aiello
 Harry and Kiki Mellinger
 Harry and Betty Stephey
 Norman Stickney
 John and Sarah Torode
 Mark Turner
 Ed and Betty Watson
 Shelton Wrath

492nd Bomb Group

W.D. and Inga-Lisa Austin
 Dick and Lorraine Bastien
 Charles Beard
 Bill, Norma and Craig Beasley
 Frank Beatty
 Al and Betty Blue
 Jerry and Freda Campbell
 Bud Carter
 Bob and Dorothy Cash
 Barney and Hazel Edwards
 Tom and Margaret Floyd
 Gil Green
 J.P. and Jac Harper
 Lou and Jacque Jacques
 Billy Sheely Johnson / Freda Boone /
 Gigi Brown / Bernice Magoulas
 Jim McCrory
 Jake and Helen Mink
 Harry and Katherine Rawls
 Bill and Kitty Riggle
 Jerry Schoor
 Elvern and Hazel Seitzinger
 Bill and Molly Sparks
 Lee and Billie Woods

Headquarters

Hazel Bliss
 Lyle and Gertie Carbaugh
 Evelyn and Lillian Cohen
 Val Brinegar Conroy
 Virginia Tomlin Davis /
 Phyllis Clark
 Mary Williams Elder
 Earline Embrey / Jamie Groninger
 Harriett Fau
 Charlie & Chris Collins Henderson
 Art and Martha Howe
 Bill and Mary Jenkins
 Livingston and Tina Jones
 Dottie Reim Krogmann
 Wade Lemmons
 David and Lida B. Cowen Norris
 Jack Nye
 Beatrice Puch
 Jim and Edna Reeves
 John and Janice Sanders
 Helen Hanson Sheppard
 Wally and Marvis Snyder
 Eleanor Storms
 Ray and Ruth Strong
 Jordan Uttal
 Milt, Hathy and Caron Veynar
 Joe Whittaker

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56th Fighter Group**President**

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Past Reunions of the Second Air Division Association

October 1948	Chicago, Illinois	October 1964	Chicago, Illinois	July 1980	Cambridge, Massachusetts
October 1949	Chicago, Illinois	June 1965	Washington, D.C.	October 1981	San Antonio, Texas
October 1950	Cleveland, Ohio	June 1966	Dayton, Ohio	July 1982	Nashville, Tennessee
October 1951	New York, New York	June 1967	Washington, D.C.	May 1983	Norwich, England
October 1952	Chicago, Illinois	June 1968	Chicago, Illinois	October 1984	Palm Springs, California
October 1953	Chicago, Illinois	June 1969	Gettysburg, Pennsylvania	September 1985	McAfee, New Jersey
August 1954	Washington, D.C.	June 1970	Cincinnati, Ohio	July 1986	St. Charles, IL (Chicago)
August 1955	Washington, D.C.	July 1971	Williamsburg, Virginia	May 1987	Norwich, England
August 1956	Chicago, Illinois	May 1972	Norwich, England	June 1988	Colorado Springs, CO
August 1957	Hershey, Pennsylvania	July 1973	Colorado Springs, CO	November 1989	Hilton Head, S. Carolina
August 1958	New York, New York	July 1974	Wilmington, N. Carolina	July 1990	Norwich, England
August 1959	Chicago, Illinois	May 1975	Norwich, England	July 1991	Dearborn, Michigan
October 1960	Washington, D.C.	July 1976	Valley Forge, Pennsylvania	October 1992	Las Vegas, Nevada
October 1961	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	July 1977	Lake Geneva, Wisconsin	November 1993	Hilton Head, S. Carolina
September 1962	Chicago, Illinois	July 1978	San Diego, California	May 1994	Kansas City, Missouri...
June 1963	Norwich, England	June 1979	Norwich, England		SEE YOU THERE!!

Flame Leap

by Wilbur L. Clingan

Lordy, as I write this, January is nigh gone and July is lurking around the corner. When one attains the age I have, time does go swiftly. Or perhaps you've noticed this as well?

Nothing earthshaking to discuss with you at the moment other than to urge you to *remember to pay your 2ADA dues each and every January*. They are \$15.00 per year and should be sent to Evelyn Cohen. Please remember to do so. You may pay for more than one year at a time. Also, dues for the 453rd Bomb Group Association are due each January as well and are \$10.00. These are to be sent to Frank Thomas. Also, we must again urge you to notify Evelyn Cohen each time you change your address. Some complain that their copies of the *Journal* haven't arrived — this is often because there has been a change of address but notification hasn't been sent to Evelyn.

As you know, California has had an earthquake of a magnitude strong enough to cause considerable damage. There are those who maintain that one of the most important assets one can have is humor. I subscribe to that credo. It is apparent that humor exists among some of those who suffered in the quake. Signs seen on a house for sale: "some assembly required," another "newly remodeled," and "get your kicks on quake 6.6."

NEW MEMBERS: The 2ADA has around 8200 members. Of these, the 453rd

has about 570. Let us now welcome **Raymond Lynch** (733rd Sq.) from Vancouver, WA; **Walt Balla** (732nd) from Southfield, MI (he writes that Lt. Don Baldwin's crew changed the name of their plane from "Black Widow" to "Little Becky" after the crew chief's new baby); **Al Stoltz**, tail gunner with Jerry Baier; **George "Ike" Keenan** (733rd), now in Seattle, WA; **Al Guetling**, Sacramento, CA; **Melvin Bishop**, Enid, OK; and **Bob Voight**, Carson City, NV. Forgive me if I have missed any.

SAD NEWS: It must be reported that we have lost the following: **R.D. Coggeshall**, **Albert Gehrt**, **Tommy Owen**, **Ralph Langley**. Our sympathies are with their survivors — it is sad and we shall miss them.

WE'VE HEARD FROM: **Carl Lessing** who sent several pages about flying the B-24 with the 453rd. His recollections were accompanied by comments on their missions by **Ed Winick**, rear turret. These were a good read; I enjoyed them and hope they are being made available. I am reminded that **Bill Hailey** hasn't been heard from for a time. Bill flew with Lessing's crew. **Ken Nellis** wrote seeking information on his father. If you knew his father, Ken would like to hear from you. Nellis was one of the great crew chiefs with the 734th I think. Write to Ken at 45 Perry Avenue, Latham, NY 12110. **Harry Godges** sent a copy of a nice letter he had received from **Delbert**

Mann. Delbert flew "Dumbo." A note from **Bob Collings** thanked the 453rd for their support — our logo now graces the plane again. **Fred Weatherly** wrote to us from Wilmer, AL. **W.E. Klockow, M.D.** is in a nursing home now and would like to hear from you. Drop him a note at Riverdale Manor, 1000 W. Wisconsin Ave., Muscoda, WI 53573. **Morgan Hartman** called to say he is all right; **Bill Eagleson** wrote to say they are going on the 8th Air Force cruise next year.

Bill Voight wrote a nice letter and said their crew was getting together. **Vic Templer** wrote. He flew with Capt. Odie Boyd's crew in "Cooter" and with Capt. Lambert's crew in "Bayou Tiger." **Dante Morroni** called and wrote. He sent some sketches that **Bert Mangel** had drawn. He was with **Jim Owens**.

It is always a pleasure when we receive calls (as we did from **Frank Thomas** and **Lloyd Prang**) and letters from each of you. Please write some of your experiences for the *Journal* and for our 453rd Newsletter as well.

That's about all for now. Do not forget that Diana and I expect, hope, and want to see you in Kansas City at the 2ADA reunion May 28-31. We hope you are also with us in Rapid City, South Dakota for the 453rd B.G. reunion October 9-12.

Thanks for visiting with us. Write if we can be of help in any way, or just to say hello.



by Ralph Elliott

The 467th Bomb Group (H) Association is one of the few groups in the Second Air Division which operates under formal Articles of Incorporation with By-Laws that set forth procedures for election of officers, term limits, membership, annual meetings, etc. There are 1,348 names on the 467th roster, with 560 of those names also on the 2ADA roster. May '93 attendance at the 467th convention in Kissimmee, Florida was 250. 467th attendance at the November 2ADA convention at Hilton Head was 30. Rather than denoting lack of interest in 2ADA, I think it reflects a difference in costs and programs between the two activities, and any action to correct the imbalance in attendance needs to address those differences. 2ADA Executive Committee action to allow all Group Vice Presidents to attend the committee meetings was a positive step in encouraging

group participation in 2ADA, but action will not be complete until ALL Group Vice Presidents can VOTE; not just three, as is now the case.

However, along with the vote must come an awareness of added responsibility by the Vice Presidents. Otherwise, the criticism that the Vice Presidents aren't familiar enough with 2ADA problems to cast an informed vote, and therefore should not be allowed to vote, will continue to have some validity. Why bring up the subject in the *Journal*? Because final resolution of this and several other important items will be on the agenda of the 2ADA Business Meeting at the May 28-31 2ADA Convention in Kansas City, and your attendance there can have an impact on decisions taken at that meeting.

Additionally, every *Journal* has a series of articles relating to the Norwich Library Memorial Trust, the Heritage League (do you know what it is?), and reports of Executive Committee action. While these may not be as interesting to you as the "war stories," they are even more important to the continued existence of our Second Air Division heritage.

I've raised a few questions; your comments on these and any other subjects of interest concerning operation of the 467th or the 2ADA would be appreciated and helpful to me as your representative on the Executive Committee.

The Annual 2ADA Awards Program

by Geoff Gregory (467th)

Last year at Hilton Head, the 2ADA Executive Committee made a change in the criteria for choosing awardees from among those nominated. This change reflects a liberalization of the rules governing nominee selection.

Previously, the Awards Committee was restricted to choosing those nominees who best met very strict criteria with reference to their considerable service to the 2ADA. This was particularly true in the area of the Distinguished Service Award. The change made serves the purpose of making the rules less restrictive, thus broadening the base of our potential awardees.

In past years as well as current times, many men and women have contributed greatly to the growth and excellence of their group organizations. As a by-product, this service to the group has

resulted in the strengthening and the growth of the 2nd Air Division Association. These people can now receive a demonstration of our appreciation.

The general membership of the 2ADA, along with group officers, are urged to make nominations, *in writing*, which reflect the new criteria. Nominations may be made through your Group VP or directly to me. Nominations should include a brief outline of the reasons you feel your nominee merits consideration for an award.

Geoff Gregory
2ADA Awards Committee Chairman
3110 Sheridan Drive
Garland, Texas 75041

The Subject Is Library Books

by Geoff Gregory (467th)

The subject is library books — not just any library books, but rather those books which are donated to our 2nd Air Division Memorial Room in Norwich, as a living tribute.

Every once in a while, it is important to review one of the most valued programs existing in our organization. This is especially true for our many new members, and it doesn't hurt to remind our old faithfuls. One of the principal and most important ways our wonderful Library replenishes its book supply on a continuing basis is the donation of books in memory of a comrade in arms, loved ones, friends and relatives, etc.

When the occasion arises, remember, a spray of flowers is beautiful, but flowers wilt and die. A book, on the other hand, will live on for years. Your name and the name of the one you honor will be inscribed on a special book plate. Whoever picks up the book in the future will see that you care!

Jordan Uttal has for years done yeoman-like work handling this program, processing all checks and necessary paperwork. He has asked me to relieve him of this responsibility, which is quite a tedious one. Since I have been involved, I have seen the importance of this program first hand. Here are some of the do's and don'ts — rules and regulations which might prove helpful to you.

(1) First — How much does it cost? Certainly not as much as a bouquet of flowers. Twenty-five dollars is a minimum book donation. Many give more, but \$25.00 is all it costs for a book to be placed on a shelf with your name as the donor on it.

(2) Who can give: almost anyone. Member or non-member of the 2ADA, friend, co-worker, crewmate, comrade in arms, your group, a relative. Just about anyone with the desire and the reason.

(3) Who can be honored: Here again, about anyone. It need not even be a veteran or 2ADA member. For example, I have personally donated books in honor of members of the 2ADA, a non-member belonging to my group, a small child, a college roommate, and a good friend. The choice is yours.

(4) Are group donations acceptable? Absolutely! Thousands of dollars worth of group donations are already in place.

(5) What information is needed? I am including at the end of this article a form which outlines the information required.

When sending a check, please include the information indicated on the form. Put the form in a safe place for later referral.

Your donation will be acknowledged by the Trust Librarian, with the name of book(s) purchased, and a copy of the book plate.

Please send your check, made out to the 2nd Air Division Association, to me.

For those gifts of 500 pounds or more (equivalent dollar amount dependent on commercial exchange rate), an endowment program is in place under the direction of E. Bud Koorndyk, 2ADA Trust Representative. This program provides for the yearly purchase of books with the proceeds of the endowment.

I hope this article reminds you and helps you. If you need my help, I'm as close as your phone, (214) 278-8537.

Remember — flowers wilt and die. Books live on, and just think of how much you will help our Library.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BOOKS FOR THE 2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL ROOM

To be filled in by donor (please type or print clearly):

Date: _____

Name of Donor: _____

Address of Donor: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Amount of Donation: _____

Name of Honoree: _____

2nd Air Division Unit: _____

Rank: _____

Military Specialty: _____

Was honoree killed in action? (yes / no) _____

Date of Death: _____

Special wording for Memorial bookplate? _____

Send this form with your check made out to "2nd Air Division Association," to:

Geoff Gregory
3110 Sheridan Drive
Garland, Texas 75041

492nd Happy Warrior Happenings

by Willis H. "Bill" Beasley



The attending members of the 492nd Bomb Group had a great time at the 46th Annual Convention of the 2ADA, held in November 1993 at the Hyatt Hotel on Hilton Head Island, SC. A list of

those who were there appears on page 19 of this *Journal*. Due to illness, Sam & Edith Miceli and Gene & Renie Gossett were unable to attend.

Following a moving invocation given by Barney Edwards, we had dinner and a short business meeting. Jim Mahoney and Allan Blue shared their thoughts and experiences with the 492nd Bomb Group. Billy Sheely Johnson, President of the Heritage League, spoke to the group about the goals of the Heritage League, their dedication to the preservation of the memory of the deeds of the men who served and died and those men who served during WWII and are still living. She urged everyone to have their family members join the League to help in this endeavor. This year two members of the Heritage League received medals and savings bonds for their entries into the essay contest.

As the 2ADA Liaison to the Heritage League, I urge you all to enroll your family members in this organization, both for the historical preservation of our Group, and also to show our support for Billy Sheely Johnson, who is a very dedicated member of the 492nd B.G. and the 2ADA. Please look for the Heritage League membership application on page 11 of this issue.

J.P. Harper won a golf award at the reunion, the second year the 492nd B.G. shone in the golf tournament. He was the recipient of a dozen "golf ball eggs" in the prize drawing donated by Jerry Schorr. Jacque Jacques won an original watercolor drawing by Lou Dezarlo. The pilot bear was won by Hazel Seitzinger. Prizes were cups, pens, caps, Swiss knives, books, etc. Pretzels from Jerry and Virginia peanuts from Jake went in a hurry. A partial list of prize contributors is as follows: Coors Brewing Company, Public Service of Colorado, Dick & Lorraine Bastien, Charlie Beard, Bill & Norma Beasley, Lou Dezarlo, Barney & Hazel Edwards, Jake & Helen Mink, Jerry Schorr, and Bill & Molly Sparks. Jake and Dick were in charge of the drawing.

I was elected to another term as Group V.P. I wish to thank you for the vote of confidence. I will continue to do the best job I know how to do. (Sorry the *Happy Warrior* is late again — we were behind

following the reunion and then Norma and I caught the virus that plagued so many in Denver.)

Placement of Into the Hornet's Nest was again discussed and the consensus is to wait until the Heritage Center in Savannah becomes a reality.

I was given a service award by the Second Air Division Association which I appreciate very much.

Bud Carter and Larry Kurtz brought packets of orders and pictures. Allan Blue contributed pictures and other group info which is greatly appreciated.

Outside of a little rain which changed our plans on Group Day, we had a terrific time, and look forward to the 47th Annual Reunion of the 2ADA in Kansas City, MO, May 28-31. Hopefully, we will have as many attend this reunion as we did at Hilton Head. There is an application on the last page of the Winter 1993 *Journal* and one on page 23 of the *Happy Warrior*, so don't delay — get your reservation in.

* * * * *

In the ongoing search for former members of the 492nd Bomb Group, I was able to contact the crew members of the Charles Arnett (pilot) crew with the help of Alice I. Hunter, Chief Field Servicing Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs, St. Louis, MO. Ernie Gavitt, navigator, enthusiastically responded and shared the following letter with me (from Don Pierce, "Boomerang" radio operator):

"In 1964, another lawyer and I went to Germany on a special European tour that the Missouri Bar had arranged, and we spent 21 days there. My friend spoke German, which helped. Before leaving for Europe, I had received from Art Oakes the name and address of a Dutch boy who lived near where we crashed. While over there, I met another friend who was in Amsterdam, and one Sunday morning the three of us rented a car and began looking for the village in which this Dutch boy lived. We found it and went to a pub. My friend speaking German did not get us very far because the Dutch were still fighting World War II. I finally mentioned the name "Boomerang" and by sign language motioned an airplane going down. One of the men in the pub motioned for us to go with him; he got on a motorbike and took us to a house where the Germans had held us after we crashed.

"There was a lady at the house who apparently was a young girl at the time we were held there; however, it was difficult to

communicate and we did not carry on much of a conversation. The man again motioned for us to follow him and he took us to a little store in the village where there was a prop blade off of our airplane which was put up in the front of the store. It had been made into a memorial and listed all of the crew members' names, except that it had Jim Easley as killed in the crash rather than Uriel Robertson. [This picture shows] Don Pierce standing by the prop blade:



"On the same trip, I went to Moosburg where I was liberated. We talked to the Germans in the area. Parts of the old barracks are still there and have been converted into public housing."

Ernie Gavitt has organized a trip to England and Holland for this coming May, 1994, to return to the crash site in Holland on 19 May 1994 as well as to visit the old base at North Pickenham and to see the library in Norwich. He, his wife Arline and their grandson Doug, along with Don Pierce and his wife Doris, and Charles Arnett and his wife Laurene, will be making this anniversary trip.

* * * * *

I received a phone call from Jay Steinberg, the grandson of Jack Rosey, bombardier on the Brantley crew. I was pleased to give him as much information as I could regarding his grandfather. I was able to put him in touch with two living members of the crew. This crew also went down on 19 May 1944. Unfortunately Jack Rosey was not a survivor. Jay told me that because of his contact with me, he learned more about his grandfather than he and his family knew. I have encouraged him to become a member of the 492nd B.G., the 2ADA, and the Heritage League.

Was This As Low As It Got?

by J. Wm. Tikey (466th)

On June 11, 1944 my crew embarked on a mission that could have been the lowest heavy bomber (B-24/B-17) raid out of England. Our target was a huge combination railroad/automotive bridge over the Loire River at Blois, France, some 100 miles southwest of Paris. At the briefing we were told the bridge had to be destroyed at all costs because it was a very key supply route for all the Germans who had the Allied Forces bottled up around the Normandy (St. Lo, Caen) area. We were ordered, "Bomb visually! Go as low as necessary. The bridge must be destroyed."

I was leading the 96th Bomb Wing with Col. Sisco from Group Headquarters as my co-pilot - in command. We were in the B-24 "Slick Chick" and carried four 2,000 pound bombs. The other planes in our Group's anticipated formation of 24 planes carried three 2,000 pounders. We were ordered to bomb in trail in three ship elements (instead of the usual Squadron salvos) to give many more bombardiers a crack at the target. Capt. Harry McGregor (later shot down and killed) led our Group's second squadron of twelve aircraft. The 458th and 467th Groups also were assigned this target.

Our Wing formed at 19,000 feet and proceeded to the mission area. We had to keep going down, down, down, until we were completely clear of the clouds at 5,500 feet

and made the first three ship element's run on the bridge.

My dedicated waist gunners, Jovaag and Condon, and tail gunner Massing reported solid hits on the target by our first element and took some good, sharp photographs. Why we encountered no flak is beyond me!

General Doolittle issued a Special Order 466 the next day applauding our Wing's effort and results.

Here are my navigator Hank Tevelin's written comments to me - verbatim:

"In Woolnough's *Attlebridge Diaries*, reference is made to a newspaper writeup out of Springfield, Missouri in June 1944 on this mission. I recall the Associated Press gave the mission great coverage, and I enclose an article from my hometown paper, *The Morning Herald* of Uniontown, PA, giving me a special 'hot-shot' writeup.

"As to the mission itself, I recall the descent through the clouds and trying to determine where we were by dead-reckoning navigation. When we broke out below 6,000 feet, I figured we were still a few miles north of the Initial Point. But, visually, I spotted a road and river crossing that put us a little south of where DR had us. Within five seconds I determined my visual interpretation was correct - and to hell with all the instrument calculations. I immediately gave you a corrected easterly direction and we did what we had to do."

My personal notes on this raid had our I.P. at Vendome, France. Hank probably spotted the road and river near St. Calais. Our bomb run was made at 135 degrees at 5,500 feet. Needless to say, our Wing's return to England was "hectic." We mingled with B-26s and other craft in the area. We slowly climbed out of there.

When I completed my 30 mission tour and was leaving the 466th in mid-December 1944, Group Operations told me Hank Tevelin and I were recommended to receive two of the five French Croix de Guerres awarded our Group for the June-December 1944 Liberation of France. It reportedly is the highest award France can award to a non-Frenchman.

I finally received my Citation in the summer of 1945 while I was instructing pilots in B-29s at Maxwell Field. The actual medal finally arrived in mid-1946 while I was well on my way to receiving an Aeronautical Engineering degree at the Carnegie Institute of Technology.

The Citation signed by President Charles De Gaulle on 29 Janvier 1945 in Paris spells out the award as the Croix de Guerre avec Etoile d'Argent (with Silver Star).

I was told that this Blois raid had a lot to do with our selection. Hank and I are honored to receive it on behalf of our crew, but we know that there were many more 466ers who were just as deserving!

Folded Wings

44th

Charles N. Atkins
John N. Clark
Robert E. Felber
Richard M. Hager (448th)
Ralph C. Jorgensen
John E. Kirby
George W. Mercer
Jack J. Rollins
Robert W. Ryan
John H. Stewart
Joseph Stewart

93rd

Dan Comingore
John H. Finitzer
Joseph R. Gama
Theodore Guzik
Carl W. Hall
Robert L. Warner

389th

Willard M. Davis
C.W. Empkie
William D. Foster
Charles Puchalski
T.M. Watkins, Jr.

392nd

Clayton H. Jennings
Clyde G. Williams

445th

Lawrence E. Graupner
Richard H. Nason
Lyle R. Papworth
John E. Queenan, Jr.
Roger L. Scott

446th

John R. Edwards, Jr.
Joseph W. Larkin
Charles E. Roesser

448th

Joseph A. Moeller
Thomas W. Patterson
Edward W. Pinner

453rd

Robert DeNeal
Ralph G. Langley
Robert J. Lumpkin
Vincent J. Turro

458th

Raymond S. Ash
Robert E. Clark
Robert G. Fletcher
Elden S. Gebaroff
Joseph J. Kania

466th

Maj. Lovell E. Baker, Jr. (Ret.)

467th

Charles D. Finn
Charles E. Kagy
Robert L. Salzarulo
John W. Schultz
J. David Swearingen
Charles F. Taylor (392nd)
Lindley A. Wing

489th

William D. Kean
Leon J. Rodriguez

491st

George J. Aschinger
Albert Ratner

492nd

Gerald G. Clinch (44th, 93rd)
John A. Moran
Berl Robinson

HDQ

Wilbur E. Simons (AM)

SM

Dennis R. Scanlan, Jr.



389th Green Dragon Flares

by Gene Hartley

A yellow and green striped B-24, the Green Dragon, was the plane on which pilots of the 389th formed in the skies over Norfolk prior to heading east 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:

A FLARE TOWARD KANSAS CITY

We will be having the yearly business meeting of the 389th Bomb Group during the 47th Annual Convention of the 2ADA in Kansas City. There are, to my knowledge, only three items of business to bring to the Group. (1) A report on the number of orders for a reprint of the Blue Book, and the resulting need to make a decision regarding that printing; (2) Any new business; and (3) A report from the nominating committee and the election of officers for the year ahead.

For this reason, a brief business meeting will be held in conjunction with our annual banquet on Sunday evening, May 29. Our hospitality room will be open Sunday afternoon to share memorabilia, to greet old friends, and to make new ones.

A PLOESTI FLARE FROM HILTON HEAD

Those men of the 389th Bomb Group attending the 47th reunion of the 2ADA were privileged to see an Exceptional Service Award (in the form of a beautiful 13" x 11" plaque) presented to the Group on the 50th Anniversary of the Ploesti Raid. The men in turn voted to have 9" x 7" replicas of the plaque presented to each man from the 389th who participated in the raid. The plaques have been ordered and will be sent, with OUR SINCERE COMPLIMENTS, to the following men: Dave Altshuler, Phillip P. Ardery, Bedford B. Bilby, Glen W. Binder, John T. Blackis, William J. Bour, John A. Brooks, Orvillet Browning, John T. Burke, Curtis W. Callahan, H.H. (Chris) Christensen, Ernest J. Cox, Domenick D'Adamo, William J. Denton, Grover A. Edmiston, Lewis N. Ellis, C.W. Empkie, C.E. Fager, John A. Fino, Norbert N. Gebhard, Ernest A. George, Alan L. Green, Edward C. Griffin, George E. Hammond, E.H. Henderson, Frank C. Jacobs, Harold L. James, Theodore Katz, Julius M. Klinkbeil, Gerald Kuhlmann,

Wallace Lemmons, George G. Makin, John C. Martin Jr., Frank B. McLaughlin, Stell Meador, Harold B. Moore, James E. Morgan, Raymond J. Nathe, Milton Nelson, Donald A. Norton, Andrew W. Opsata, Donald G. Pierce, Lee W. Rackley, Peter J. Rice, Fred E. Sayre, Robert W. Schwellinger, Dale E. Sisson, Lee D. Slessor, Richard B. Smith, Joseph P. Sullivan, Rocky Triantafellu, John P. Tucholski, Merle H. Ver Burg, Vernon G. Wells, Robert D. Woofter, Robert L. Wright, and Earl L. Zimmerman.

Additionally, the following men are known to have flown that mission but their current addresses are unknown: Owen Calderon, Hugo C. Cross, Robert Levine, Kenneth Matson, Chester Moore, James J. Sedlack, and Charles Winberg. If any one of you can help, please send the information to me at 3950 Via Real #233, Carpinteria, CA 93013.

There could well be an omission of one or more of the men who flew this mission. If you can add to our information or correct an error, please drop me a note.

A LOCATION FLARE

You might be interested in knowing where we of the 389th are located. The following list indicates our membership by state, including Associate members. If you live in a section of the country where we have a large membership, would you be interested in helping organize a 1995 389th reunion for that area?

Alabama 12, Alaska 0, Arizona 28, Arkansas 5, California 89, Colorado 14, Connecticut 8, Delaware 1, Florida 67, Georgia 14, Hawaii 2, Idaho 3, Illinois 34, Indiana 25, Iowa 16, Kansas 6, Kentucky 7, Louisiana 6, Maine 4, Maryland 6, Massachusetts 31, Michigan 30, Minnesota 14, Mississippi 6, Missouri 17, Montana 3, Nebraska 7, Nevada 4, New Hampshire 10, New Jersey 25, New Mexico 4, New York 52, N. Carolina 18, North Dakota 1, Ohio 40, Oklahoma 8, Oregon 13, Pennsylvania 59, Rhode Island 3, South Carolina 10, South Dakota 1, Tennessee 9, Texas 60, Utah 3, Vermont 3, Virginia 13, Washington 21, West Virginia 4, Wisconsin 16, Wyoming 2, England 1.

A FLARE FOR AN A2 JACKET

Felix Leeton agreed (at Hilton Head) to order and then ship an A2 jacket from the 389th B.G. to Roy Edney, the gentleman who takes care of our Memorial Room at the Hethel Tower. He has completed this task, and Roy has his A2, complete with our best wishes.

A FLARE TOWARD SAN ANTONIO

Jack Spooner is working on plans for a 389th reunion to be held in San Antonio, Texas, in late October 1994. Details will be in your April Newsletter.

Our Memorial American Presence (An Update)

by C.N. (Bud) Chamberlain (Chairman, 2ADA/FMLA Oversight Committee)

On page fifteen of the Fall 1993 *Journal*, among other things, we reported upon our efforts to implement our 2ADA/Fulbright Memorial Library Award. We indicated that, following Bertha Chandler's departure, 2AD Memorial Room personnel requirements were seen to be an American librarian and a library aide. However, since then, the 2AD Memorial Trust has envisioned a third position to assist with a growing call for outreach activity into the community.

Your Oversight Committee has entertained extensive dialogue on this issue for some time, and members of your Executive Committee held protracted discussion at Hilton Head with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the 2AD Memorial Trust. After all of this, it became obvious that we

must reaffirm our position concerning placement of an American presence at the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room. That position is as follows:

(1) The 2nd ADA raised the American Librarian Fund to provide a professional American presence (librarian or, as needed, archivist, educator, historian) to fill the position now filled by the Trust Librarian.

(2) When that position is open, funds will be available to apply toward a qualified U.S. citizen, recently resident in the USA, filling that position.

(3) To avail themselves of that resource, the Trust Governors need only to identify the characteristics of the individual and the nature of the tasks to be done. An American agency skilled in such matters then will

identify candidates for final consideration by the Governors of the 2nd AD Memorial Trust.

The above position will form the basis for any future discussions on the matter and has been confirmed to both the Chairman of the 2nd AD Memorial Trust, USAAF and Fulbright Commission Chairman Edward C. McBride. Until the time comes to recruit a new Trust Librarian, fund earnings will be reinvested in the corpus to improve further the award size. Meanwhile, contributions from new members and additional ones from previous participants are welcome. Make checks out to the Second Air Division Association, annotate them for the "American Presence" and send them to Jordan Uttal, whose address is in the page two Directory.

A Soldier – His Prayer

Submitted by Gene Hartley (389th Group V.P.)

We often remember and honor the terrible losses suffered by our Second Air Division. And then we remember that our losses were but a fraction of the lives lost during the Second World War. Do you recollect on occasion the varied thoughts and prayers that must have run rampant through the minds of our men on a day they were to fly? Similar thoughts had to prevail in the minds of men in every theater of war. A poem written by a man of the British Eighth Army may well be of interest to you.

In the Christmas 1942 issue of *The Crusader*, the British Eighth Army's own weekly paper, a poetry competition was announced, this during the extreme conditions being suffered by Montgomery's Eighth in that winter on the desert. The competition was open to all members of the Eighth Army, but only poems actually written in the Western Desert were to be submitted.

The closing date for entries was 28 February 1943, and by that time a total of 403 poems from 280 different competitors had been submitted — this, let it be remembered, at the very time that the Desert Army was wholly engaged with hitting Rommel.

The following poem has a unique history. This anonymous poem, written on a scrap of paper, fluttered into the hands of a soldier sheltering in a slit trench, during the battle of El Agheila.

*Stay with me, God. The night is dark
The night is cold: my little spark
of courage dies. The night is long;
Be with me, God, and make me strong.*

*I love a game. I love a fight.
I hate the dark; I love the light.
I love my child; I love my wife.
I am no coward. I love Life,*

*Life with its change of mood and shade.
I want to live. I'm not afraid,
But me and mine are hard to part;
Oh, unknown God, lift up my heart.*

*You stilled the waters at Dunkirk
And saved Your Servants. All your work
Is wonderful, dear God. You strode
Before us down that dreadful road.*

*We were alone, and hope had fled;
We loved our country and our dead,
And could not shame them; so we stayed
The course, and were not much afraid.*

*Dear God that nightmare road! And then
That sea! We got there — we were men.
My eyes were blind, my feet were torn,
My soul sang like a bird at dawn!*

*I knew that death is but a door.
I knew what we were fighting for:
Peace for the kids, our brothers freed,
A kinder world, a cleaner breed.*

*I'm but the son my mother bore,
A simple man, and nothing more.
But — God of strength and gentleness,
Be pleased to make me nothing less.*

*Help me, O God, when death is near
To mock the haggard face of fear,
That when I fall — if fall I must —
My soul may triumph in the dust.*

Ploesti Air Raid Commander Honored

Submitted by Will Lundy (44th)

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "Pure hell!" is how one World War II crew member described the bombing raid on the Ploesti oil refineries in Romania on August 1, 1943 — one of the most costly air battles of the war. Of the 1,726 airmen who courageously flew the Ploesti mission 50 years ago, 532 never returned. Fifty-four B-24 Liberator aircraft were lost. Five crew members received the Medal of Honor — the most ever awarded from a single mission on a single day. Three of the five died during that day. General Leon W. Johnson was one of the five.

General Johnson, one of the group commanders during the famous WWII Ploesti bombing raid on August 1, 1943, was honored on August 1, 1993 by fellow veterans commemorating the 50 year milestone at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia.

The Ploesti Air Raid is to the Air Force what the Battle of the Bulge is to the Army or Guadalcanal is to the Marines. Known as the "graveyard of the bombers," more bombers were shot down over Ploesti, Romania, during World War II than over any other target in the world.

During 1943, Adolf Hitler dominated Europe with a military machine dependent on oil. A third of the German petroleum supply came from refineries in the Ploesti area of southeastern Rumania. If the Allies could shut down those refineries, they could shorten the war.

Because Ploesti was too far to be bombed from England, the Army Air Forces planned a massive low-level surprise raid from Libya. Code-named "TIDAL WAVE," the operation included 177 B-24 aircraft mounted with extra fuel tanks for the dangerous 2,500 mile mission.

German intelligence learned of the mission through intercepted Navy radio messages, destroying the element of surprise. Two of the five aircraft formations became separated and turned in the wrong direction — on a collision course with those already striking from the south.

Facing a gauntlet of flak and enemy fighters, General Johnson saw the targets assigned to his group had already been attacked and rerouted his forces to bomb different enemy refineries. He courageously pressed his attack from the north while dodging other B-24s roaring through smoke and fires from the south. The huge oil fires, heavy black smoke, and delayed-fuse bomb explosions obscured targets for the remaining three formations.

TIDAL WAVE destroyed forty-two percent of Ploesti's refining capacity. Of the eight refineries targeted, one never reopened, one remained shut down for four months, and one was out of action for a year. In July 1943, Ploesti's refineries produced 403,000 metric tons of oil; in August, they produced only 259,000 tons.

The mission furnished the Allies with important lessons about navigation and the need for further escort, which were applied in more successful raids to follow. The Army Air Forces launched no other low-level mass bombardment raids in Europe during World War II.

The Dream Of a Lifetime!

by Fred Becchetti (445th)

The Palladium!

The Hollywood Palladium!

He was actually going to the Palladium with a beautiful girl on his arm, a tall, brunette, fun-loving American girl who liked to dance!

He would spend a full night of dancing and fun at the Hollywood Palladium with a beautiful girl. The dream of a lifetime!

* * * * *

October 1944. He was back in the U.S. after doing 35 missions with the 702nd Squadron of the 445th Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force. They had sent him on leave to Albuquerque to be with his folks, who admired the Air Medal and DFC he had earned for not getting shot down. Then the Air Corps gave him his first ride by Pullman train, from Albuquerque out to Santa Monica, California, for something called "a few days of rest and rehabilitation" in a quiet cottage right on the Pacific Ocean.

The first night in the cottage, he listened to the boom of the waves and thought of only one thing: He was in Santa Monica! In Los Angeles! With Hollywood and the Palladium just a bus ride away! The center of the world for any boy or girl who liked movies and dancing in those days.

Tomorrow night, he would catch a bus to Hollywood and go to the Palladium. He would dance with the first girl he saw there.

The next day, he put a sharp shine on his shoes. He put on his best uniform, with the Eisenhower jacket. He cocked his hat at just the right angle. He squared off the ribbons on his chest that gave him the right to be cocky in a world based on deeds of war.

The ribbons spoke of four months and 35 harrowing bombing missions out of Tibenham. They told of the chaotic D-Day mission; the terror of the low-level mission at the St. Lo breakout; the major league flak over Berlin; the three consecutive nine-hour nightmarish missions to Munich; an emergency bailout from 1,200 feet through the clouds over Norwich; and dozens of other missions through deadly, living bursts of flak that sent jagged steel rattling from one end of the ship to the other, leaving ugly gashes in machines and boys. The ribbons reminded him of the flight surgeon's sleeping pills and tranquilizers he took to make it through the last ten missions. He remembered the scotch, the warm beer, and the dancing with English girls at the club to take his mind off the next mission. And the ribbons brought to mind his crew's two visits to London, with buzz bombs roaring overhead, sputtering into silence and bringing on death.

Yes, he needed to go to Hollywood. He had to go to the Palladium, have some drinks and dance across that immense floor all night with pretty girls to all the good music of the time.

He boarded the bus and saw her in the bus sitting alone, upswept hair and beautiful, with an empty seat next to her. He sat next to her, noticing that she did not slide away from him against the side of the bus. He said, "Hi." She smiled. They talked.

She told him that he was on the right bus to Hollywood. Yes, he could find the

Palladium very easily if he got off at a certain bus stop. She would show him where to get off the bus. Yes, she liked to dance. Yes, she had been to the Palladium a couple of times. Yes, she was "positive" he would enjoy it. Yes, she would go dancing with him at the Palladium that night if he wanted her to, but she would have to call her mother.

They got off the bus, she called her mother, and they walked to the Palladium.

He had died and gone to heaven! He was in Hollywood! At the Palladium! With a beautiful girl who liked to dance!

They pushed their way through the crowd. No empty tables. He wanted a drink, so they edged up to the crowded bar.

With the practiced air of a man who had drunk the best they had to offer in the club at the 445th in Tibenham, in the pubs and taverns of England and in the clubs in London, he shouted over the heads of the drinkers at the bar, "A scotch on the rocks and a Tom Collins, please."

The bartender looked him over, looked at the girl and yelled back, "How old are you?"

Caught off guard, the combat veteran blurted out, "Twenty. Why?"

The bartender looked at the uniform and the ribbons, shrugged his shoulders and said, "Sorry, but you have to be twenty-one to get a drink here."

* * * * *

The boy with the 35 combat bombing missions over Nazi Germany and the beautiful girl from Santa Monica ordered chocolate milkshakes and danced all night to the greatest music of the time on the huge floor of the Palladium, where a large ball of tiny mirrors created shooting stars across the ceiling.

The dream of a lifetime!

The Truth About the First Mission on D-Day

by Robert A. Jacobs, Col. USAF (Ret.)

Attention all former members of the 446th Bomb Group! Reference is made to the first paragraph of the "Bungay Bull" article by the Vice President of the 446th Bomb Group contained in the Winter 1993 edition of the 2ADA Journal.

Unfortunately, it serves to perpetuate the inaccuracy that Col. J. Brogger and Capt. C. Ryan were in the lead aircraft to cross the French coast on the first D-Day mission. The section of the 446th Bomb Group, which included the airborne commander Col. Brogger, was led by a PFF crew assigned to the 564th Squadron of the 389th Bomb Group. The aircraft was piloted by Lt. Lester J. Litwiller. I was the DR navigator. We were originally from the 93rd Bomb Group, but like other 2nd Air Division air crews selected to be lead PFF

crews, we were assigned to one squadron at Hethel until sufficient H2X equipment and trained radar maintenance personnel became available for dispersal to each group.

Before members of the 446th come after me with mayhem in mind, please consider the following:

(a) On the first D-Day mission, the invasion beaches were obscured by a solid undercast as briefed. Every member of the 446th who flew on that mission can verify that fact. There was no possible way for an air crew without special blind bombing equipment to bomb through clouds. Capt. Ryan's aircraft did not have such gear!

(b) Any surviving crew member of the 446th B.G. who flew in Col. Brogger's section will confirm that a PFF aircraft from the 389th B.G. (black tail with vertical

white stripe) led that mission. I met one of those crew members during the 2ADA reunion at Hilton Head, SC in November 1989. Part of his comment to me was, "... I knew it would get out some day. ..."

(c) Finally, I challenge those who doubt my veracity to contact Col. Brogger, who will corroborate the above as he did when talking to my former pilot Lester Litwiller in Chicago at the 8th Air Force Historical Society's D-Day Symposium, October 1993.

After 50 years, I think it is time for the facts about the aircraft and crew leading the 446th B.G. on the first D-Day mission to be acknowledged by that unit. To besmirch the occasion of a great historical event by obscuring the truth, be it unintentional or otherwise, demeans the dignity of all who flew on that mission.

489th Notes

by Neal Sorensen

Harry and Ginny Wagnon's marvelous hospitality at the mid-winter 489th mini-reunion is now a happy memory. The talk by Dr. Volker Wilikens, our German guest who served as an anti-aircraft gunner at Munich, Germany while still a boy, was truly fascinating. Again, we echo our thanks to Ed Whelan for arranging to bring this speaker to our function.

There have been a number of responses to the article I wrote for the Winter 1993 2ADA *Journal*, requesting location preferences from 489th members who are interested in a stand-alone 489th Bomb Group Reunion. I stated that inquiries have been made to four locations for costs of a three-day event, tours of local interest we could enjoy while there, and other pertinent information. The first three weekends in October, 1994 were researched for Dayton, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri; San Antonio, Texas; and Little Rock, Arkansas.

My article was also sent to Charlie Freudenthal to condense for use in his fine December 489th Bomb Group Newsletter, together with a mail-back slip for you to express your location preference for a stand-alone reunion. Unfortunately the Newsletter space did not permit the body of my article listing the locations mentioned above. The mail-back slip asked for your choice of location, but without the source information, the several responses received to date are for locations for which we have no information. Dayton and St. Louis are favored in the responses from members who read the *Journal* article as well as the Newsletter.

The second option mentioned in the *Journal* article was to add two days to the May 28-31, 1994 2ADA Reunion. We would have two days, May 26 & 27, PLUS the Group Day set aside by 2ADA, during which the business meeting and Group banquet would be held.

Evelyn Cohen has provided me with the name of the agent in Kansas City who is arranging Division tours. If the 26th and 27th are your selection, a full program for 489th activities will be arranged for those two days.

One of my respondents pointed out that a sizable contingent of 489th members will be at Halesworth during the May 26-31 period to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the 489th's first mission in World War II. That respondent suggested postponing our 489th stand-alone to October 1995!!!

These and other options were discussed at our Orlando mini-reunion. Look for information in Charlie Freudenthal's February Newsletter; then let me hear from you, please!

The balance of this issue's 489th space is well-served by two fascinating diary excerpts from Staff Sergeant Arthur G. Cressler and Tail Gunner Bill Campbell, recounting momentous experiences from their combat tours. The following by Cressler, shot down 6 August 1944:

"Aug. 6, '44 — Awakened at 0315. Just Mac and I because we were to fly 'Cookie,' our forming ship. Got to briefing room and

we were listed in the formation, so we were off to Hamburg. Our target was oil installations and storage tanks west of the city... An '88' went through #2 engine and exploded just as it broke through the top of the nacelle. A miracle saved Mac because the burst that started the fire in #2 also wrecked the turret controls and made a mess out of his flak helmet, plus cutting his oxygen line. Bailed out about 12:10 P.M...I landed in a small wheat field close by the town of Stade. Picked up by farmers after I took about ten steps toward nearby woods. Later picked up Mac, Jack, and Fred, then marched to nearby 'love camp' and then to a Luft base at Stade...We were interrogated, searched, and placed in solitary confinement. After about two hours I was called out and Mac and I helped Nick into my cell — he had two bad legs as a result of his jump...We got straw mattresses and spent the night in a large room with 30-35 men, where we found Hank and Mark. The next morning we were served cold coffee, and it tasted terrible. At noon we got soup which contained potatoes, cabbage, and turnips. For supper we got a millet soup, similar to cream of wheat but not as tasty. The morning of the 8th we were awakened to be moved. Got into a bus and met Buck and Ty. Went to Hamburg, where we were put on a train; passed through Hanover and Frankfurt, and all places were practically level. Arrived at Dulag Luft station at Oberursel, which is appropriately called the Flea Center.

"Mac, Mark and I carried Nick practically all the way from the train station — a distance of about three miles. We were put in a small cell, 10-11 men, and given two slices of bread...Next morning we got two more slices of bread...Had some horrible soup for dinner, but I forced mine down... That night we got two slices of bread and some sickly tea. Shipped out next morning on two more slices and coffee. Left at 0630 arriving at Wetzlar at 1400. Here we received Red Cross Capture Parcels containing pajamas, long underwear, 3 pr socks, 4 handkerchiefs, sweater, shirt, razor and blades, soap, toothbrush, vitamin pills, toilet tissue, etc....

"Aug. 20, '44 — Went to church this morning. Wasn't much of a service but it helped us a lot as our hearts were all in it. Very thankful Jerry didn't take my prayer book, as it is sure comforting and strengthening to read prayers from it each night and to read the Mass on Sundays. Lots of the fellows are wounded and burnt. Sure wish we knew if Willie is alright. We know he got out of the ship, but don't know about after that. Got 110 loaves of bread yesterday, to last 293 men for 12 meals. Some diet!

"Sept. 1, '44 — Hope Uncle Joe is on German soil like he said. He is reported in three or four different places. All day the Jerries have been running around in dress uniforms. Heard a lot of artillery fire during the early evening and all night. Spent practically all day inside due to air alerts — 7 or 8... Jerries dug foxholes all around our fence. Two platoons moved into

the valley south of camp. Trucks, tanks, guns, etc., moving south on road east of camp — continued all night. Firing let up about daybreak. Rumor — equipment from Belgium to France??

"Dec. 25, '44 — Christmas Day!! Yesterday and today we were on parole. Lockup wasn't until one o'clock the 24th and midnight tonight. Each man got a #2 Xmas Parcel, which was very nice. Marty gave Man a can of jam and me a can of cheese. We gave him some dates I fixed up with nuts and rolled in sugar. I made some dressing — bread, pate, onions, salt and turkey, which tasted pretty good. Sang carols at midnight of the 24th...Willie gave Man and I 1/2 box of crackers each..."

The following from the diary of tail gunner Bill Campbell (846th Squadron), Ludwigshaven, 31 July 1944:

"Well, today was *the* day. If I live to be 1000 years old I'll never forget it. I still can't see how we got back. The infantry must have had it rough, but I can see the Air Forces have their troubles too. I never knew I could make myself so small. I'd tuck my legs up under me and pull my flak helmet down to my shoulders. We came in over Antwerp and picked up some medium flak there; they weren't sighted in on us, but the trail flight got the hell knocked out of it. After we passed through it was clear for a while, then when we hit the bomb run we caught hell for half an hour. The first ship to go down was in the high element to our right. One crew had 31 missions, and I saw it get a direct hit between No. 3 and No. 4 engines. The wing fell off and it went into a flat spin; then the tail broke off and it disappeared into the clouds. No one got out.

"The PFF lead ship had a smoke bomb on fire in the bomb bay and one man bailed out; his chute caught onto the ship and he broke loose and fell 22,000 feet. What a drop! He wasn't 50 feet from our right wing, and I could see it just like a picture show. The thing happened so fast a man just can't imagine how tragic it is. Three ships went down and some are still missing.

"I can't understand how I can possibly make 35 missions without going nuts, even if I don't go down. The sky was black as far as the eye could see; little black puffs that look harmless as hell but creep up as silent as the wind. It appears as if you can reach out and touch each puff. But when you can hear it is when it's really bad. The whole ship shakes and rocks like it has hit a pocket. We picked up a few holes, and I can't for the life of me understand why it didn't look like a sieve. This mission today was the toughest they've had for a long time, and it had to be our first. But it sure as hell won't be our last, as we are alerted tonight again. Today we went to Ludwigshaven, and if that's the target for tomorrow I'll stay home. I'm so tired I can hardly move. I sat in the tail without moving for 7 hours and 30 minutes — six hours on oxygen. Four hours till it's time to get up again."

Mission With a Surprise Ending

by Robert W. "Bob" Lambert (453rd)

How many of you old-timers from the 453rd Bomb Group remember a B-24 plane named the "Lonesome Polecat?" As a replacement crew we inherited this wonderful plane in May 1944. After many successful missions, with a number of close calls, we flew its last mission with Jimmy Woolley as our pilot and I was the radio man. Our crew picture with this plane and some formation missions are in the book *In Search of Peace*.

I am not sure, but I believe this mission was over Hamburg, Germany; if not it was another large city where the sky was black with flak. During our bombing run (bombs dropped) we were hit several times and lost an engine. As we pulled away from the formation, a second engine on the opposite wing began to cough and act up. A short time later we lost the second engine and gradually began to lose altitude. We stayed aloft, continuing to lose altitude, but since we were over enemy territory our pilot felt it was best to see how far we could go.

After what seemed like an eternity, we finally could see the English Channel. I was immediately told to send an S.O.S., as we probably could not make it across the Channel. I pressed so hard on the key (thinking the signal would go farther) that it broke off; I had to quickly jury-rig an alternative and

kept on sending S.O.S.s until I received a response. Then I continued a signal so they could obtain a fix on our location.

While doing this, the crew was ordered to throw everything out of the plane into the Channel that was not fastened down. Out went the guns, ammunition, equipment, etc. In the excitement even a gunner's parachute was tossed out — what a shock — plans were quickly made that if we were to jump, Barney Feeney (a waist gunner) would take Jack Day with him and the two would go down together on one chute.

Even with the loss of weight, we were still losing altitude and getting closer to the water. Jump or ditch??? As we got even closer to water we prepared to ditch. We then saw the coast of England in the distance and counted our blessings. Maybe we could reach shore and land somewhere on the beach area. However, it was felt that it would be safer to ditch and then swim ashore.

As we were thinking "ditch," our pilot saw a patch of grass he thought we could make and headed for that. We barely cleared the surrounding trees and our pilot was able to land our shot-up B-24 on the grassy area. We all climbed out and kissed the ground. When we looked up we found we were

surrounded by British troops with Tommy-guns and rifles pointed right at us. They stated in English and in German that we were under arrest. Naturally we were surprised and spoke to them in English. They paid no attention; ordered us to put our hands behind our heads and marched us to a hidden building. As we did this we saw many strange planes strategically placed under the umbrella of trees with camouflage netting over some of them. We were ushered into a room and they asked for the commander of our aircraft. They took our pilot away while we were still being guarded by British troops.

After what seemed like hours, our pilot came in saying that we had landed on a very secret British Royal Air Force experimental aircraft base. They thought we were German spies flying in on a captured American plane. Our 2nd Air Division Headquarters cleared us as Americans returning from a mission.

The British then became friendly and furnished us with tea and crumpets. Later we were led to a waiting bus that returned us to our base at Old Buckenham for debriefing, food and bed. We all *counted our blessings*, being very thankful we were alive and "home." We then finished our tour of missions in a plane called "Dolly" or "Dolly's Sister."

California, One-Way!

by Ralph Elliott (467th)

It's April 29, 1993, and forty-eight years have passed since I landed my B-24 Liberator bomber, 591, at Bradley Field, Connecticut after a seven day flight from England at the close of World War II. Unbelievably, I am again sitting in the pilot's seat, flying the last combat-ready B-24 in existence on a four hour flight from Tucson, Arizona to Santa Monica, California. Slowly, the old skills come back, the altitude settles down on 5000 feet, and the compass heading stays on 270 degrees. Was it always this much work? No power steering here — just the cables from the controls out to the ailerons and back to the elevator and rudders. Trim tabs help to take some of the pressure off the wheel; but then reality sets in — it really was work. I just didn't know it then. The physical difference is in the age, 23 versus 71, but age has done nothing to diminish the thrill of flying the Liberator again.

Only, did they downsize her when she was rebuilt? The catwalk through the bomb bay seems narrower now, and surely four men and all their gear didn't share this little space in the rear with the guns, the flak jackets, the Mae Wests, the parachutes and sand bags. No wonder the bombardier, navigator, and nose turret gunner had a constant fight for room up front, and five men couldn't possibly fit on the flight deck. Even the pilot's seat seems smaller. What does come back are the noise of the engines that make normal conversation impossible, the smell of high-octane gasoline, and the feeling in the pit of the stomach that goes with an air-



The B-24 "All American" starts engines for the flight to California.

pocket and a "rapid change of altitude."

The desert air is rough at low altitude and the thermals catch me as we go over a low mountain ridge into California. The other two passengers get airsick, and I'm glad I'm doing the flying — not bouncing around in the back. It's drafty back there with the side windows open for the guns, and it was hell for the gunners at 45 below zero, when to touch the guns without gloves meant you'd lose your fingers. Memories ride with me on the flight, and the years fall off in the sights and sounds and smells, but I finally realize that the real wonder is the set of circumstances that have put me up here again after an absence of 48 years.

On April 27th, the "All American" arrived at the Avra Valley Airport, north of Tucson, on a cross-country tour sponsored by the Collings Foundation of Stow, Massa-

chusetts. During WWII, the B-24 dropped more bombs and flew more missions than any other aircraft; it was the most produced aircraft of all time — over 18,000 planes. The cost to reconstruct the "All American" was over \$1,300,000.00, but money can't buy the feelings of nostalgia and the tears the old bomber generates as the veterans stand on the ramp and cheer as she taxis in.

Unbeknownst to me, as a 50th wedding anniversary present (August 28), Yvonne had contacted the organizers of the Avra Valley stop and had made arrangements for me to fly in the plane on the next leg of her flight to California. While the kids joke about "Mom giving Dad a one-way ticket to California for an anniversary present," they were as thrilled as I was about the flight. No surprise in our 50 years together ever topped this one.

Division Headquarters

by Ray Strong

I have been digging around in some of my old files, and I have found some of the very early notices and correspondence relating to the birth of the Second Air Division Association. I will be publishing some of the items in both the HQ Newsletter and in the *Journal*. In fact, by the time you read this in the *Spring Journal*, you may have already seen some of these items in the HQ Newsletter.

The first notice that was sent out about the first meeting of the Association (not counting the one at Howard and Gladys Moore's apartment) is quoted below:

"To All HQ Alumni: We have made arrangements to meet at the Hotel Sherman, Chicago, Friday and Saturday nights, October 1st and 2nd, 1948 for the purpose of having a general bull session and a 'few' refreshments. We are bringing our wives and/or sweethearts and are looking forward to having a 'wizard' time. We would like to have you join us. If you would like reservations at the Hotel Sherman, notify Howard W. Moore, 3341 N. Hoyne Ave., Chicago 18, Ill. The deadline for room reservation notification is August 15, 1948. If you plan to be present but would prefer to arrange your own accommodations, so state. (Signed) The Ketteringham Refugees, Howard W. Moore, Raymond E. Strong, Clemens F. Kowalczyk, Henry W. Brandt."

This first notice was written by Howie Moore and went out to a list of officers — which was the only roster that we had. It was done using the old "spirit stencil" which, if you remember, was purple in color. It is faded so badly now that I can hardly read it. And, of course, it had not occurred to us that this would evolve into the Second Air Division Association as it is known today.

* * * * *

Here are a few more of the mini biographies and reflections of some of you. If you still have that form which I sent to you about a year ago, it is not too late to send it in and I will eventually publish it. Or just write out something and send it to me.

William (Bill) Lauer, after the war, worked as a materials engineer on a liquid propelled rocket system, and later with Johnson & Johnson making and designing medical products. Patents were issued on some of his designs. He is semi-retired, doing some consulting. A battle with polio in 1952 causes some limitations, but he is doing well. At HQ he worked in Engineering in A-4 under James Wims and Colonel Bookwalter on B-24 armament modifications. He remembers that the visits to Norwich were great. He says, "I recall one evening seeing a guy changing clothes in the hotel men's room where he was putting on a uniform. I called the MPs, and it turned out that he was one of them doing some posing as a civilian." Also, Bill remembers a trip to Northern Ireland was a great experience.

Lyle E. Carbaugh, upon returning from the ETO, went to Texas to work for Ralph A. Johnston, an independent oil operator and rancher, and has worked for him and his son for 47 years with no end in sight. He married a Texan, and has three children and five grandchildren. After living 20 years in Houston, they moved to the country near Burton, Texas. He has great memories that, as a Tech/Sergeant, he came from HQ 8th Air Force to 2AD at Horsham. He was Chief Clerk of the Statistical Section and remained there until being transferred to the First Provisional Air Force in France. He says, "This job was probably one of the most diverse in HQ, with never a dull moment with Lida B. and the other WACS, along with a great group of Officers and GIs."

Marilynn "Fritzie" Hughes stayed in the Air Force with duty at such places as Chicago, New York, Washington D.C., Germany, and Washington D.C. again. Her personal travel took her to such places as Norway, Vietnam, Europe, the Orient, Australia & New Zealand, Russia, Africa, Scandinavia, and England. At HQ, she was in the AG Section and was the Top Secret Control Officer responsible for knowing who had each of those highly classified documents, along with other duties. Her memorable incidents include a flight in a P-51 (or maybe it was a P-47) on the pilot's seat (under the pilot) to a dance at a base where Glenn Miller last played before his disappearance over the Channel. She also remembers that, out of necessity, she learned to ride a bicycle for the first time while at HQ!

Thomas S. Love, Jr. was discharged in September 1945 and returned to SMU where he was when the war broke out. After graduating and a year in law school, he joined the family-owned pharmaceutical company, the Rhinopto Co., where he became president of the company and stayed there until the company was merged by Nestle of Switzerland. He was married and divorced twice from his first wife. They had three sons, one of whom is deceased (1986). He has two granddaughters, both in college. In 1977, he married a girl he had known in high school and college, and they are very happy! He says the following about his military service: "I joined the Air Corps after Pearl Harbor, desperately wanting to be a pilot. I was turned down three times because of my eyes. I have worn glasses since I was 7, and still wear them and have glaucoma. By the end of the war they took anyone that had warm blood, but I was sent to Savannah, Georgia. At the time I enlisted I was a student at SMU. In July 1942, sailed to England. First stationed in Bedford, then in August I was sent to Horsham St. Faith. We worked in Old Catton but lived at Horsham. I remember Christmas 1942 was spent at Old Catton. In early 1943, I think, we moved our offices to Horsham. Then we moved to Ketteringham Hall, where I stayed until the end of the

war. I was in England three years. I hate to say this, but I loved every minute of it. I remember the parties Major Paul and Captain Strong gave us at some local pubs. As I look back, I was so young and innocent then. Today I am 73 years old. Those were good parties! I went to Edinburgh on leave three times. I have been back several times and to Ketteringham Hall once. I almost got married to a girl from London. She was in the RAF. I often wonder what happened to her." Tommy worked in the Files Section of the Division Adjutant General.

* * * * *

That's about it for this time. You should have received, by now, HQ Newsletter #13. If you have suggestions for either my column in the *Journal* or the HQ Newsletter, let me know. In the meantime, I hope that, if you haven't already done so, you will seriously consider making a contribution to the HQ Endowment Fund. I hope that we can at least double the 1000 pounds now in this fund.

Hope to see all of you in Kansas City, May 28-31. Very best regards.

The United Flying Octogenarians

Of course, none of us is eligible — yet — but if you know a pilot who's 80 or older and has a current flight physical, he/she is eligible to join the UFOs — the United Flying Octogenarians. The UFOs meet annually in conjunction with the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) and members include ex-barnstormers, ex-military and ex-airline pilots, and, of course, ex- and current civilian pilots in the United States, Canada, Europe, and South America.

The President is ex-barnstormer and autogiro test pilot John Miller; the Vice President is ex-490th Bomb Group member Jim Pargoe, and the Secretary/Treasurer is my neighbor, Al Boileau, an ex-Navy pilot who was carrier qualified on Aircraft Carrier #1, the Langley. One member, Evelyn Johnson, is working on her second 50,000 hours as pilot.

For additional information, contact me at the address below. Al Boileau and I are good friends and, in addition to being their Secretary/Treasurer, he puts out their very interesting monthly newsletter (assisted by my computer). So, I can get you the ungarbled word from the head shed.

John E. Stevens
3526 Larga Circle
San Diego, CA 92110
Tel. (619) 222-4639

The 445th Reporting

by Ray Pytel

Chuck Walker's shoe size is 8; Frank DiMola's shoe size is 10. Mine's 8½, so you can see I will have a hard time "filling the shoes" of both of my illustrious predecessors.

At the Hilton Head reunion last November, someone asked me why I agreed to take on the Group V.P. job. The only answer I have is the same as some cadet's answer to a frustrated instructor who could not make the Junior Birdman understand his orders. "Why did you join the Air Force?" the instructor asked in desperation. "Temporary insanity," said the cadet, "temporary insanity, Sir!"

Well, for better or for worse, the 445th has me as their Group V.P.; wrong shoe size, "temporary insanity" and everything else; so to put things in order and start with the "first things first," let me introduce myself and my wife: Ray Pytel and Twyla Kieffer.

Both of us had "grown" families when we got married, so we decided to keep our own established identities (i.e., to keep our own names). Twyla's professional licenses would also be cumbersome to change without causing considerable confusion within the field. Keeping our pre-marriage names makes for some raised eyebrows at motels and conventions, but in all our travels, both in the U.S. as well as many other countries, no one has asked for any "proof" or any other identification.

Between the two of us we have five children: I have one son, and Twyla has one son and three daughters, ten grandchildren and one great-grandson. (My son and Twyla's grandson are Heritage League members.)

Twyla graduated with a degree from the University of Wisconsin, spent 36 years in teaching, specializing in the "cognitively disabled." This with a 10 year leave to raise a family! (My 33 combat missions pale in comparison.) After passing several college entrance exams (I did not attend high school) I was admitted to the University of Idaho, and obtained a degree in Business Administration with an Accounting major. I have worked for the State of Wisconsin investigating and auditing various unfair trade practices, and during the Vietnam War took the position of Budgets and Cost Accounting with the Olin Corporation. Finally, I ended up with the University of Wisconsin as an accounting manager for the Parking and Transportation Department.

Most of my combat missions were flown with my original crew, led by "Smiling Jack Pelton." Two other members of the original crew are still alive and are members of the 2ADA: Tom Hart, the cheerful "Radio Person" and never lost (for words) Jim Withey as the "dependable" Navigator. Mary Beth Barnard, our capable Group Historian, is the daughter of another original Pelton crew member, the now

deceased Gunner and Assistant Engineer, Harold Kennedy.

You could call the Pelton crew "well balanced:" five of us were from what you would normally consider "northern states" and five from the traditionally accepted "South" — five of us were married and five single. But everyone drank the allotted "Shot of Scotch" after each mission. (Unlike some other crews, where some lucky members "had to" drink two or three more to balance out the allotted quota.)

I have several inquiries about the group's position in the "Sorties Per Loss" list mentioned in the "Poop from Group 467" column by Ralph Elliott in the Winter 1993 edition of the 2ADA Journal. In his column Ralph mentioned that the 467th was the second "safest" in sorties per aircraft loss, as listed in an article I sent him. The article originally appeared in the October 1987 issue of the 8AF NEWS, and was written by Eugene H. Lansford of the 95th Bomb Group, using data in Roger Freeman's *The Mighty Eighth*. Lansford determined that the ten "safest" Groups in the 8AF were all B-24s — five of which were converted to B-17s in the fall of 1944.

The safest Group was the 490th with 230 sorties per loss, and the "most dangerous" was the 492nd with 30 sorties per loss. The 445th was 22nd with 66 sorties per loss out of 40 groups listed.

A study of "Wound Ballistics" prepared by the Medical Department, U.S. Army Office of the Surgeon General, Washington D.C. (Library of Congress Catalog Card #62-600002) indicates that in a study of a total of 69,682 8AF sorties, the battle casualty rate (MIAs and those returned to the U.K.) results in a 33% greater loss for the B-17 crews over the B-24 crews.

Our former Group V.P. Chuck Walker is now officially a Texan, and his "official address" is now 9824 Crest Meadow, Dallas, TX 75230. By the way, Chuck asked if I knew of any other medals or awards that the 445th or the other Groups were entitled to, as some of our members want to fill up their "medal cases" for display and posterity. First, although we are "entitled" to some of the medals, they are no longer furnished "free," and the cost runs from \$15 to \$50 or even more! The 445th members who qualify for the French Croix de Guerre and are members of the American Order, may obtain appropriate medals and medallions issued by various French, Belgian and Luxembourg cities, as well as their Republics or Kingdoms. Those qualified for the French Croix de Guerre may also obtain the 1939-1945 WWII medal for \$35 from Pieces of History, P.O. Box 4470, Cave Creek, AZ 85331.

Most 8AF flyers are entitled to the Polish "Victory Medal" as well as one or possibly two British medals — a "Victory Award" and a medal for D-Day participation. If you are interested, drop me a line and I will dig

up all the information I have on how to go about it. Just remember they are no longer issued "free."

Several of our members asked if I could recall the "corn field fire" (British for Grain) just over the fence from the 701st Squadron's enlisted barracks; where several of our air crew members became "firemen" after apparently causing the fire with Very pistols carried "home" from the aircraft. I recall something about it — it happened in the summer of 1944 — but that's about it, anyone out there who can fill us in?

"The AFN on the Road to Berlin" (G.I. Radio) featured a young disc jockey named Dinah Shore, the theme was "In the Mood" by Glenn Miller — and it featured records of many of the top bands of the era. Can anyone fill us in on how the "selections" and "dedications" were made? Apparently one of our group was involved in compiling requests and dedications since a mention was made and a 445th dedication was heard by one of our members.

A hearty welcome to our new 445th members, including Gene Fippinger, a member of Lt. Victor Smith's crew as a radio operator. Flying the "Gremlin's Roost" they came over as an original 703rd Squadron crew on November 24, 1943, and were shot down on their 5th mission over Kiel, Germany on January 5, 1944. Three officers and one enlisted man survived, and spent the rest of their tour as "guests" of the Luftwaffe. Mighty short stay at Tibenham.

Other new members include Frank Aaronson of the 701st, Chester L. Smith (700th) from Lt. Don Baumler's crew; Elze W. Surratt of the 703rd; Robert Honeycutt of the 700th, and Roland Woods of the 703rd. Also welcome to Burr Miller, who did not indicate his Squadron affiliation.

That's about all for this issue; I hope to "improve" as time goes on. See "you all," as the Southerners say, in Kansas City over the Memorial Day weekend.

Need a 2ADA Roster?

Your Executive Committee authorized the publication of a "poor boy" roster for use by the committee, Group Vice Presidents, directors and committee chairs. An economical run of 100 copies was produced, which left a surplus. At Hilton Head, the Executive Committee authorized these for sale to 2ADA members at \$5.00 each. Surprisingly, when their availability was announced, the rosters sold out within minutes, leaving many waiting in line for a copy. Since then, another run of 100 has been made. While they last, orders may be sent to C.N. "Bud" Chamberlain at the address in the page two Directory. Make checks out to Bud for \$5.00 plus \$2.00 for postage and handling.

The 448th Speaks

by Cater Lee

As you may know by now, our 448th 1994 grand reunion will be in the Boston area, September 1-5 at the Sheraton Tara Hotel and Resort at Danvers, just a few miles north and easily accessible from Logan Airport or by car if you are driving.

I personally visited the Boston area and looked over several hotels that Leroy Engdahl had it narrowed down to after much correspondence. I felt the location, facilities and eagerness to have us were determining factors. Our room will be \$65.05/day single/double, and this price will be good three days before and after our reunion for any who may wish to stay longer and visit this historical area where our great country had its beginning.

Those 448th people who attended our group reunion at Seattle/Bellevue last July, please send a snap of yourself and spouse to Leroy Engdahl at 1785 Wexford Drive, Vidor, Texas 77662 so you can be included in the reunion album he will have on display in the Memorabilia Room at Boston. Please don't forget — you may send a couple if you like, but please identify who, what, where, etc. — and your name.

Leroy Engdahl is working again with the "Convention to Visitor's Bureau" of San Diego for our 1995 group reunion. Those of you who were at Bellevue/Seattle will recall the vote for our 1994 reunion between Boston and San Diego was very close, with Boston winning out.

Since 1995 is the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII, no doubt several of you may be thinking of returning to England to celebrate with our British friends the end of six years of domination by Hitler's brutal military machine.

Please think over just what *you* would prefer to do for 1995. If the majority of our Boston attendees prefer San Diego, that's where we will go. If we prefer England, we will go at a time not to interfere with other large groups so we will have more time to visit with our many British friends from Seething and surrounding villages. Leroy and I will be in touch with Pat Everson and Jim Turner and see what they might have in mind if anything, and we will have all the poop to present at our Boston reunion. Thanks for giving this your sincere attention, as we will take a vote at Boston to see what your preference is. Thanks!

Now let's think about 1996: In all probability the 8th A.F. Heritage Center being established at Savannah, Georgia will be ready to go, and if so, this will be of worldwide significance, as you know Savannah was where the greatest Air Force ever known was organized in 1942.

We have mentioned previously that the 8th A.F. Heritage Foundation has asked each group of the 8th A.F. to pledge \$25,000 toward financing this wonderful project which will be open to the world.

At Seattle the 448th members attending voted for all who could, to send a check of \$100.00 made out to 448th B.G. "8th A.F.

Heritage Center" to Cater Lee at P.O. Box 850, Foley, AL 36536. Your donation is of course not limited to \$100.00, and some have already given \$500.00, but any amount will be welcome and is needed — so sit down right now and send in *your* donation.

As of January 12th, we had a total of \$10,765.00 from 103 contributors. If you are in touch with our members who may not have contributed, ask them to do so. We need help on this in 1994. Thanks very much. Let's have the 448th be one of the first groups to reach their \$25,000 goal!

I'm sure all of you wish Bob Harper, our loyal and dedicated group artist, a speedy recovery from his illness which has still not been identified.

Leroy Engdahl continues to do well in his therapy on the right shoulder injured in that accident in Seattle. He and Barbara are looking forward to being at Boston where they will also visit with their eldest daughter and her family who live nearby.

I still have a good supply of 448th Group insignia patches with holder and clip in stock, and also a new item which first appeared at Seattle, a 448th tail insignia of our checkerboard (yellow and black) with an (I) in a white circle above and 448th Bomb Group lettering above. This can be used as a tie tac or a lapel ornament, and will be an eye-catcher. These are \$5.00 each plus \$1.00 for postage. Send order to Cater Lee at P.O. Box 850, Foley, AL 36536.

William "Bill" Lantz of 4533 Laura, Wichita, Kansas 67216 has a supply of leather squadron hand painted insignia that are ideal to put on your coat or jacket. These are approximately 4 inches by 5 inches and sell for \$15.00 each plus \$1.00 for postage. He has all four squadrons.

Ben Johnson of 399 15th, Port Arthur, Texas 77642 has a stock of new design 448th caps, each having all four squadrons in addition to 448th and of course the B-24. These are \$6.00 plus \$1.00 postage.

Charles Bonner of 750 E. Oak Hill Road, Porter, IN 46304 has in stock very attractive T-shirts in small, medium and large — blue with gold lettering, with a B-24 across the top and all four squadron emblems with their numbers below and a brief history of the 448th group. These are a real bargain and an eye catcher at only \$10.00 each plus \$1.00 for shipping. He also has squadron caps for \$6.00 plus \$1.00 shipping.

Leroy Engdahl has in stock for any B-24 veterans pewter B-24 tie tacs, \$6.00 each; smaller silver plated B-24 lapel pins, \$7.00 each; same plane but as a ladies charm, \$7.00 each; and still same plane but as ladies earrings at \$12.00 a pair — be sure to specify if for pierced ears. Also has round with gold trim 8th A.F. lapel pins at \$4.00 and small U.S. flag lapel pins at \$4.00. Please send three stamps to help on mailing with your order to 1785 Wexford Drive, Vidor, TX 77662.

Thanks, and best wishes for good health and happiness to you all.

The Wayside Chapel

From 8th Air Force Historical Society
New Jersey Chapter "New Jersey News"

An English lady, while visiting Switzerland, was looking for a room, and she asked the school master if he could recommend a place to stay. He took her to see several rooms, and when everything was settled, the lady returned home to make final arrangements to move. When she arrived home, the thought occurred that she had not seen a W.C. (water closet, an English term for the toilet) around the place. She immediately wrote a note to the school master asking him if there was a W.C. The school master was a very poor English student, and so asked the Parish Priest if he could help him in the matter. Together they tried to discover the meaning of the letters, "W.C.," and the only solution that they could find was Wayside Chapel, which they took to mean a local church. The school master then wrote the following letter:

Dear Madame,

I take great pleasure in informing you that the W.C. is situated nine miles from the house, in the center of a small clearing surrounded by lovely grounds.

It is capable of holding 200 people and it is open on Sundays and Thursdays. As there are a great number of people expected during the summer months, I would suggest that you come early, although there is plenty of standing room. This is an unfortunate situation particularly if you are in the habit of going regularly and sitting.

You will no doubt be glad to hear that a good number of people bring their lunch and make a day of it, while others, who can afford to go by car, arrive just in time. I would recommend that your Ladyship go on Thursday, when there is an organ accompaniment. The acoustics are excellent, and even the most delicate sounds can be heard everywhere.

It may interest you to know that my daughter was married in the W.C., and it was there that she met her husband. I can remember the rush for seats. There were ten people to a seat usually occupied by one. It was wonderful to see the expressions on their faces.

The newest attraction is a bell donated by a wealthy resident of the district. It rings each time a person enters. A bazaar is to be held to provide plush seats for all, since people feel that it is a long felt need.

My wife is rather delicate, so she cannot attend regularly. It is almost a year since she last went. Naturally, it pains her very much not to be able to go more often.

Hoping I have been of some service to you, I remain,

The School Master



392nd B.G.

by Oak Mackey

An octogenarian was walking in the park where he met a frog. The frog said, "Kiss my lips; I'll turn into a beautiful woman, and do anything you want." He picked up the frog, and again the frog said, "Kiss my lips; I'll turn into a beautiful woman, and do anything you want." He put the frog in his pocket, saying, "At my age, I'd rather have a talking frog."

* * * * *

There were fifty-six 392nd B.G. folk at the 46th Convention of the Second Air Division Association at Hilton Head, SC, November 4-7. Of course the best event at the Convention is always the Group Dinner where we all sit down together for good food and drink. After dinner, the members are asked to introduce their wife, guests, or girlfriend, tell where they are from, what they do or did for a living, and tell a story, anecdote or joke. After all have had their turn, new friends are made and we all know a bit more about each other. As always, the 392nd has the outstanding Hospitality Room. Ernie Barber, our Group Historian, brings a truck load of albums, a VCR and tapes, and other memorabilia; including the American flag which was flying over Wendling Air Base the day the base was closed in June 1945. Need I mention the bar; it was well stocked and well attended.

We had a Prisoner of War Symposium on November 6, and it was an outstanding success in every way. The P.O.W.s were Cliff Peterson, Lou Stephens, and Bill Riddleberger. Cliff related his story first. He was shot down by fighters at Fredrichshafen on March 18, 1944. He tells of the difficulties of bailing out of a spinning B-24, his capture upon reaching the ground, interrogation by the German Luftwaffe, transport by train to Stalag Luft III in Poland, his life there for the next 13 months, the January march to avoid the approaching Russians, then a train ride to Moosburg prison in West Germany and the poor conditions and poor food there. Finally, liberation by the American army in April 1945. Lou Stephens' and Bill Riddleberger's stories were somewhat alike, for they were pilot and co-pilot on the same crew. The target on September 9, 1944 was the marshalling yards near Wiesbaden. They took a direct flak hit and the airplane exploded. Somehow they managed to get out of the airplane and parachute to the ground. There were no other survivors. They were captured right away, and because their

faces were badly burned, they were sent to a German hospital. After treatment, they went to Stalag Luft I in Poland. Riddleberger's eyelids wouldn't close, and he was sent to a hospital somewhere near Frankfurt where he was treated by an English doctor. The treatment was successful and he stayed there in the hospital until liberated by American troops. Meanwhile, Lou also marched across Poland in January to avoid the Russians, and was put on a train to Moosburg until liberation by the Americans.

This is a very abbreviated account, and I hope I haven't made any glaring errors. Ernest Barber recorded the whole symposium with his camcorder and the tape runs about an hour and a half. The quality and detail of the stories these three told is amazing, and they told it all for our benefit. There is no way we can thank them enough. The tape is a masterpiece, and I'm sure Ernie will bring it to Kansas City for the 2ADA Convention May 28-31. An interesting side note: Lou and Bill were flying "Ja Jaw Boy" that September 9, in 1944. Ernest Barber was the "Ja Jaw Boy" Crew Chief.

The B-24 "All American" flew into Hilton Head Island Airport, Friday, November 5. What a beautiful sight; the one and only flying B-24 in the whole universe. The exterior and interior are spotless and complete. You are permitted to go inside the airplane via the camera hatch, inspect the waist section, the tail turret, the waist guns and the yellow oxygen bottles, then forward through the bomb bay, look into the flight deck and cockpit, and exit the airplane through the forward bomb bay. Cockpit visitors are generally not allowed for reasons of safety and security. If you have not seen the "All American" and it comes to your area, please go see it — you will not be sorry.

* * * * *

Many, many of you attended the 392nd B.G. Memorial Association Convention in Albuquerque last May. You will recall that the Hospitality Room bar was very well stocked; so well that a considerable quantity remained after the Convention. Somehow, at the 8th Air Force Historical Society Convention in September, this quantity of bar supplies resurfaced in the 392nd Hospitality Room. Now there were only fifteen 392nd people there, and they didn't even put a dent in it. I have been told the remainder was transported to a secret hiding place in Georgia, where it stayed until the 2ADA Convention at Hilton Head. There the Hospitality Room was well stocked again, and though those there made a valiant effort, there was yet a considerable quantity remaining. There is a rumor that it was smuggled to Florida. Will it resurface

again? We don't really know. Only the Shadow knows!

* * * * *

The 1994 2ADA Convention will be at Kansas City, Missouri, May 28-31 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Time is short. If you plan to go, Evelyn Cohen needs your full payment by April 1st. The reservation cut-off date is April 28. Again, do not delay — time is short.

On Group Day, Sunday, May 29, we will have a short business meeting. If there are willing ex-P.O.W.s attending, we may have another P.O.W. Symposium. Evelyn has arranged two interesting tours on May 29th. If you wish to go, reservation forms are in the Winter 1993 issue of the *Journal*.

Adios, amigos — til we meet again!

Mid-West Mini Reunion

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

If you did not receive information in the mail but would like to attend, please contact the Reunion Chairman:

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

Air Force Gunners Association

The Air Force Gunners Association held its 4th Biennial Reunion in Bethesda, Maryland, July 15-19, 1993. The reunion was attended by approximately 325 members and guests, and the members in attendance voted to have the next reunion in San Antonio, Texas.

If you are not familiar with the AFGA, the group is made up of Enlisted Aerial Gunners who flew on Light, Medium or Heavy Bombers from the WWII Era up through and including those who flew on the B-52s in the Persian Gulf.

For further information, contact:

Jay E. Ingle
AFGA Membership Chairman
35469 Colossians Way
Shingletown, CA 96088
Tel. (916) 474-1632

Letters



Dear Bill:

Thanks for publishing my article on Doc Munger in the Fall 1993 *Journal*. As a result of that publication, and with the help of several former comrades of the 790th Bomb Squadron, 467th Bomb Group, I located Doc and spoke to him on the phone. He's back home now, after a lengthy stay in a convalescent hospital.

For former comrades of the 790th who would like to wish him well, his address is: Dr. John Munger, 1438 Gina Drive, Oxnard, CA 93030.

I appreciate the really professional appearance of the *Journal*.

Delbert R. Gardner
870-46 Lucas Creek Road
Newport News, VA 23602

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those 2nd A.D. friends who sent me cards and messages over Christmas. There were far too many for me to answer individually, but they were all most welcome.

As I'm writing I would also like to express my thanks to the various bomb group newsletter editors who have been good enough to include me on their mailing lists. These newsletters are of very great interest to me and a source of much enjoyment. Thank you, gentlemen!

On another subject: Phyllis DuBois, the Trust Librarian, brought back from Hilton Head a large batch of B-24 nose art photos to be added to the Trust archives which I've been trying to sort out into various Bomb Groups, etc. Most of them turned out to be either 389th or 491st B.G. aircraft, with some from the 392nd and 467th, but three of the photos have beaten me and remain as "mystery ships." They are "European Clipper," "Kansas City Kitty," and "Wynn, Our Little Lady."

If anyone has any knowledge of these aircraft and if possible a serial or last three, I would very much like to hear from them so I can sleep at night!

So you see, Bill, I haven't completely retired. If anyone is coming this way in '94, just let me know and I would be pleased to spend some time with them.

Tony North
62 Turner Road
Norwich
Norfolk NR2 4HB
England

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

Found the letter from Thomas O'Halloran on page 33 of the Winter 1993 *Journal* along with the picture of the B-24 at the Pima Air Museum in Tucson most interesting. That B-24J is the one that the 446th Bomb Group raised a fund of \$100,000 to provide for the restoration and refurbishment of same. It will bear the yellow with black horizontal stripe tail colors of the Group and, by vote at the Group's Denver reunion, will be named "Bungay Buckaroo" with nose art of the donkey riding on a bomb.

The Liberator that led the D-Day Invasion was "Red Ass" of the 446th with Col. Jacob Brogger as Command Pilot, but had been renamed "Bungay Buckaroo" for that one day since the powers that be thought its real name would be too insensitive for reports back home. The Pima Museum curator and staff have the same feeling, so by a motion made by Mike Paczan, who was the Lead Navigator on June 6, 1944, the Group resurrected "Bungay Buckaroo" as being the most appropriate.

As you know, the Group's members are also known as the "The Bungay Buckaroos." We will be dedicating it, along with installing our Group History and Roll of Honor at the Pima Air Museum on May 14, 1994 when we hold our reunion there. I will send a full report with pictures once it's over.

Marvin Speidel
446th Group V.P.
708 Dianne Court
Rahway, NJ 07065-2612

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

Here is a picture of my Crew 41 from the 448th Bomb Group, 714th Squadron. The picture was taken at Topeka, Kansas, prior to flight to Ireland and England, April 1944. Hope you can use this in the *Journal*.

Joseph Hollywood
5 Mystic Lane
Norwalk, CT 06850



Standing (l-r): William George, waist gunner; Joseph Hollywood, engineer, top turret; Gerald Yoquelet, ball gunner; William Brown, radio man; Raymond Duran, tail gunner. Kneeling (l-r): John Polashek, bombardier; Raymond Bearden, navigator; Vito Scorrano, co-pilot; Gaylord Felton, pilot.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

I am an Associate member of the 2ADA, the 392nd BGMA, and the 44th HMG. For the past several years I have been trying to learn more about the death of my brother, 2nd Lt. Douglas N. Franke, who was a Navigator in the 579th Squadron, 392nd Bomb Group at Wendling.

His plane, No. 42-7510 (identified as C Bar and "El Lobo"), crashed near Dinklage, Germany (southwest of Oldenburg) at 1345 hours, 29 April 1944, while returning from one of the early large scale U.S. raids on Berlin. All crew members died in the crash. At that time, planes of the 392nd B.G. were still identified with the big, black letter "D" on a white, circular background, so far as I can determine.

I would also like to hear from anyone who participated in that mission, and I will answer all responses. I am trying to reconstruct as many details as possible, including the weather over England, the Channel, and Germany; flak and enemy fighter attacks enroute to the target, over the target, and returning from the target; recollections of passing slower moving stragglers on the way back to England; sightings of planes going down on the way back to England, etc. I would also like to determine the planned and/or the actual formation as the divisions, combat wings, and groups assembled for the mission, and whether there were any particular problems associated with forming up that day.

I understand that a book was written about the March 6, 1944 raid on Berlin. Does anyone know whether a book or article was ever published about the April 29 raid? Can anyone tell me where records pertaining to that raid might still be available?

On the April 29 mission, my brother's plane (Wyatt) and three other planes from the 392nd B.G. (Fryman, Prell, and Shere) were detailed to fly with the 44th B.G. Was this a common practice? Did the pilots of the 392nd and the 44th receive special instructions regarding this four plane section? Would they have taken off as a separate group from the rest of the 392nd? So far, I have not been able to locate anyone from either the 392nd or the 44th who remembers anything about this special assignment or the practice of detailing planes from one group to fly with another group.

Does anyone have information or an address for an association of former German fighter pilots? Through such an association, I might be able to determine the actual circumstances of the air battle.

Finally, can anyone identify the location of the personnel records which would still be on file for aviation cadets and commissioned Army Air Force officers of the World War II era? Thank you in advance for any help you can give.

Robert H. Franke
Route 1, Box 81
Winterville, NC 28590
Tel. (919) 756-2335

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Dear Bill:

I am a member of the 56th Fighter Group. We went back to England in July 1992 as part of the "Return to England" 1942-1992.

Bill Billings gave me your name re the 50th anniversary of D-Day in England. The 56th Fighter Group has no plans that I am aware of to participate in this reunion, but I and several others that I know of would like to attend.

Please provide me with any information you have and I will pass it on. We had a great time in 1992, and look forward to 1994.

Urban J. Sweeney
6209 Somerset Way
Cambria, CA 93428
Tel. (805) 927-8025

+ + + +



Officers from 93rd Bomb Group — photo submitted by Charles E. Aton.

Dear Bill:

I shared a hut with these officers of the 93rd Bomb Group in the spring of 1944, and just recently found this picture. The names I remember were (reading from left to right): Chatningy - Fallanski - Checker - Monte, Jack Burke.

If any of them wish a copy of the photo, please write and I will send one. I hope each of them made it through the war and through the last 49 years. Gratefully, I did.

Charles E. Aton
500 Altagate Road
Louisville, Kentucky 40206

+ + + +

Dear Evelyn:

What a great group of people you have in the Second Air Division Association.

Thank you for letting Betty and me share the meeting at Hilton Head — your expertise in managing such a large group and so many fine activities — and you never showed any sign of distress. What a Gal.

I look forward to us working together and making the Second Air Division part of the Heritage Center the best.

Thanks for letting an old B-17 pilot enjoy.

Lew Lyle
Blue-J-Industries, Inc.
207 Ridge One
Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

The 5 November 1943 mission to Munster described in Richard Hoffman's fine account on page 6 of the *Winter Journal* was my first mission, and I remember it clearly even fifty years later.

I was a new member of a crew flying with the 44th Bomb Group that day and saw my first flak on that mission. I can tell you that it is no surprise that the flak found its mark, because it was very thick going into and over the target. I too was on that mission in the tail turret position and had volunteered to fly with another crew. Munster was a major target noted for its flak defenses.

Hoffman's account is well written and is among the best written of any accounts I have read about flying missions. But even more so is his account of parachuting from the crippled bomber. I too had to parachute, and I lived my experience again in his account. I salute him for being able after fifty years to tell it like it was.

Forrest S. Clark
703 Duffer Lane
Kissimmee, FL 34759

+ + + +

Dear Mr. [Will] Lundy [44th]:

I am General Leon Johnson's daughter, Sue, and am writing to tell you how much Dad loved the marvelous B-24 print. He and I tried to call you while I was visiting him, but never found you home. I'll try to contact you again the next time I go to Virginia. He loves to visit on the phone.

He is fine mentally except for memory. This is a real problem. *But*, he is 89! And very healthy.

I am enclosing a photo from the luncheon we had on August 1, 1993. Those present connected with Ploesti were Dad, Barrett Taylor, Ed Mikoloski, Chuck & June Merrill, and Lew & Betty Ellis.

Thank you so very much for giving Dad such a wonderful print. Would you please give my thanks to all who participated. This is not really a proper way to give thanks for such a lovely gift, but I don't have any addresses!

Very sincerely,
Sue J. Vandenberg



General Leon Johnson with Ed Mikoloski (44th Bomb Group).

+ + + +

Dear Hap [Chandler]:

I read your column in the *Journal* and have a question to ask you. You said that the 491st Group was activated at Pueblo Air Base fifty years ago. That would make it in 1943. I was stationed at Pueblo Oct-Nov 1942, with the 302nd Group. We ended up as a training group.

During 1943 (most of the year) we were at Clovis N.M. Air Base. During this time I got a cross country flight to Pueblo. I called a girlfriend, picked her up and we went downtown to go to a movie. On the way to the theater, I ran into a man named Francisco. I had just finished teaching him to engineer a B-24 at Clovis and then he shipped to Pueblo. I didn't introduce him to my girlfriend because I couldn't remember his name (how do you forget a name like Francisco?).

This brings up my question: Would you know if others in the 491st received their first phase training at Clovis? It would be quite a coincidence if some of your group received their first phase training in my old outfit.

Clifford "Dusty" Rhodes
453rd Bomb Group
2310 Lorina Avenue
Corcoran, CA 93212

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I corresponded with you early last year concerning an article that appeared in the British press about the possibility of David Tallichet selling his B-24 (Delectable Doris/Joe) to Britain. Here is another news article, again from the British "Fly Past" magazine. I think that "Delectable Doris/Joe's" flying days may be finished and there is a very good possibility of this aircraft going out of the country.

There are precious few 24's in this country either flying or on static display. To the best of my knowledge there are only two flying anywhere in the world — "All American" and "Diamond Lil" (let's not go into that controversy again). David Tallichet's aircraft was flying but I believe it is now grounded. Of the aircraft on static display, one B-24D is at Air Force Museum; a B-24J is at Pima County Air Museum, Tucson, AZ; another B-24J at Barksdale AFB, Shreveport, LA; and a B-24M at Lackland AFB, San Antonio, TX. Out of the U.S., there is one at RCAF Museum, Toronto, Canada; and a B-24L at RAF Cosford near Wolverhampton, England.

Perhaps your readers know of others, but out of 18,500 Libs built, I think that's it!

I think David Tallichet's aircraft would fit in real nice if it could somehow go to the new 8th Air Force Heritage Center at Savannah, Georgia. If not, at least somewhere here in the USA!

Alex F. Birnie
237 Brickling Road
Irmo, SC 29063

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PLOESTI VIDEO WRAP-UP:

Dear Friends,

The holiday season found us finally tying up all the loose ends on *Wing and a Prayer* and moving on to the next project. We've decided to tell another story of courage and devotion by telling the story of the battle of Okinawa. If the men we interview for this are half as candid as those who helped us with *Wing and a Prayer*, it's sure to be a compelling piece. The American Programming Service, an adjunct PBS programming service, has picked up *Wing and a Prayer* and will be offering it to PBS affiliates across the country, so look for the program in your market this year. Video tapes are also available; you can call KBYU at 1-800-298-5298 for a copy.

It has been a long haul and we couldn't have done it without the help of all of you wonderful folks. Thank you very much. We have made a lot of friends that we will always cherish and we look forward to hearing from you just for kicks. So, let us know how you all are... You are all very special to us.

Mike Sanches
and Susie Barker

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I am very pleased to send you the latest picture of the "Witchcraft" with the P-47 "Little Pete," flying together. This is a photo of the original painting by Mr. James C. "Jake" Perryman.

Jake was the nose gunner of Lt. Crump's crew, who flew several missions on the Witch. After separation Jake took flying lessons. He qualified for Commercial - Instructor - Instrument papers. He worked as a geologist for an oil company in South America, Australia and Indonesia. He logged 18,000 hours flying DC-3s and Martin 404s until he retired in 1986.

Upon retirement Jake started oil paintings of aircraft. Over the years he has created about 150 different paintings.



Painting of B-24 "Witchcraft" with P-47 "Little Pete," by James C. Perryman.

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

In September 1993 my wife and I met Mr. & Mrs. Guy Pannell of Toccoa, Georgia, at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Vogrinc in Rockford, Illinois. We all travelled to Dodgeville, Wisconsin and met Ray and Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Sedlack of Cadott, Wisconsin.

The men were members of Ted's Flying Circus, 93rd Bomb Group, 329th Squadron. It was the first time that Guy or I had seen the Sedlacks since May of 1945 when we left England.

Kendrick Williams
P.O. Box 122
Cranberry, Pennsylvania



Guy Pannell, Frank Vogrinc, Ken Williams, Ray & Lawrence Sedlack (September 1993).

+ + + +

Last March (1993) Jake surprised me with an oil painting 2½ x 3 feet of "Witchcraft." He requested information as to the correct colors and markings when the Witch came home. I sent him some color photos, as did Vince Re from Cincinnati, Ohio. Vince Re is a professional photographer who flew on the "Witchcraft" also.

The first painting Jake sent me is on display at the V.F.W. Hall in Santa Fe Springs, California. The photo enclosed reflects the second painting. I hope you enjoy.

Joe R. Ramirez (467th)
("Witchcraft" Crew Chief)
13727 Cornishcrest Road
Whittier, CA 90605

Dear Bill:

Here at the Yankee Air Force Library we are trying to make a complete collection of the Second Air Division Association *Journal*. To assist us perhaps you would run a notice requesting that anyone wishing to dispose of back issues of the *Journal* donate them to us. Below is a listing of our needs:

Vols. 1 through 22, 1961-1983; Vol. 23, No. 1 (March 1984); Vol. 27, No. 4 (Winter 1988); Vol. 28, No. 1 (Spring 1989); Vol. 28, No. 2 (Summer 1989); Vol. 29, No. 2 (Summer 1990); Vol. 29, No. 4 (Winter 1990); Vol. 30, No. 2 (Summer 1991); Vol. 30, No. 4 (Winter 1991); Vol. 31, Nos. 1, 2 & 3, 1992; Vol. 32, Nos. 3 & 4, 1993.

Anyone wishing to donate any of the above issues may send them to the address below and indicate whether or not they desire a tax deduction acknowledgement. Of course, all donations will be gratefully received. Thanks for your assistance.

Harold W. Sherman
Yankee Air Force Library
P.O. Box 590
Belleville, MI 48112-0590

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Enclosed please find a picture of an air crew which I have had in my collection for a long time. They are a crew I trained with, a good group of boys. The picture was taken in the States — I believe it was Casper, Wyoming?

I would like to give the picture to a member of the crew if they were lucky enough to get through their missions. I can't remember their names, as it has been a long time. If someone from the crew recognizes it, please contact me.

I was with the 44th Bomb Group, 506th Squadron. Walter J. Scott was our pilot.

Thomas D. Muff
5105 W 6th Ave Dr
Bradenton, FL 34209



Photo of air crew submitted by Thomas D. Muff. Does anyone recognize it?

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

When I looked at my local newspaper [last fall], I had to read the small announcement several times to make sure I had read it correctly. The article said that the "All American" B-24 was coming to the local airport for a static display and that it was possible that some lucky person or persons might get to take a short flight! After all the efforts I had made to see the old girl, I couldn't let this opportunity pass for anything.

Early the next morning I grabbed my camera even though it was raining and cool and took off for the airport. When I arrived I asked where the "Lib" was. Mr. Art McKinley, the pilot, pointed to the end of the runway about a mile away. I was informed that the nose wheel axle broke after

landing. Near catastrophe! The only fully restored B-24, and it was nearly wiped out at my airport.

A makeshift nose wheel was obtained and the old girl was pulled backward down the runway to the ramp. Because of the time taken to make repairs I didn't get to see much of the inside, but did get some pictures of the repairs being made, and I did get to see and touch the "All American," even if I didn't get a ride.

I'm sending a photo you can use in the *Journal*. Happy that no serious damage was done and that she was repaired and flying again.

Ben Hooker
Lufkin, Texas



The B-24 "All American" at Angelina County Airport, Texas.

+ + + +

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

BILL ROBERTIE

P.O. BOX 627

IPSWICH, MASSACHUSETTS 01938



DUES WARNING

For those of you who have received second notices and have not paid your dues, this will be the **LAST JOURNAL** you will receive.

Wanted: 5 Million Names for Wall of Liberty

U.S. veterans who served in Europe in World War II will receive a special honor on June 6, the 50th anniversary of D-Day. A Wall of Liberty with the names of those five million men and women will be dedicated in Caen, capital of Normandy.

It's being sponsored by the nonprofit Battle of Normandy Foundation. Pierre Salinger, a World War II vet who was JFK's press secretary, is volunteer chairman of the effort to gather names for the wall. One problem: In 1973, a fire in St. Louis destroyed the records of millions of veterans who left the Army before 1960 or the Air Force before 1964 and who have last names from Hubbard to Z.

The foundation is asking for \$40 for each name inscribed. A fundraising effort is being made so the names of those who can't afford to donate — or who can't be found — will not be omitted. For information, call 1-800-992-8387 or write: The Battle of Normandy Foundation, Dept. P, 1730 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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