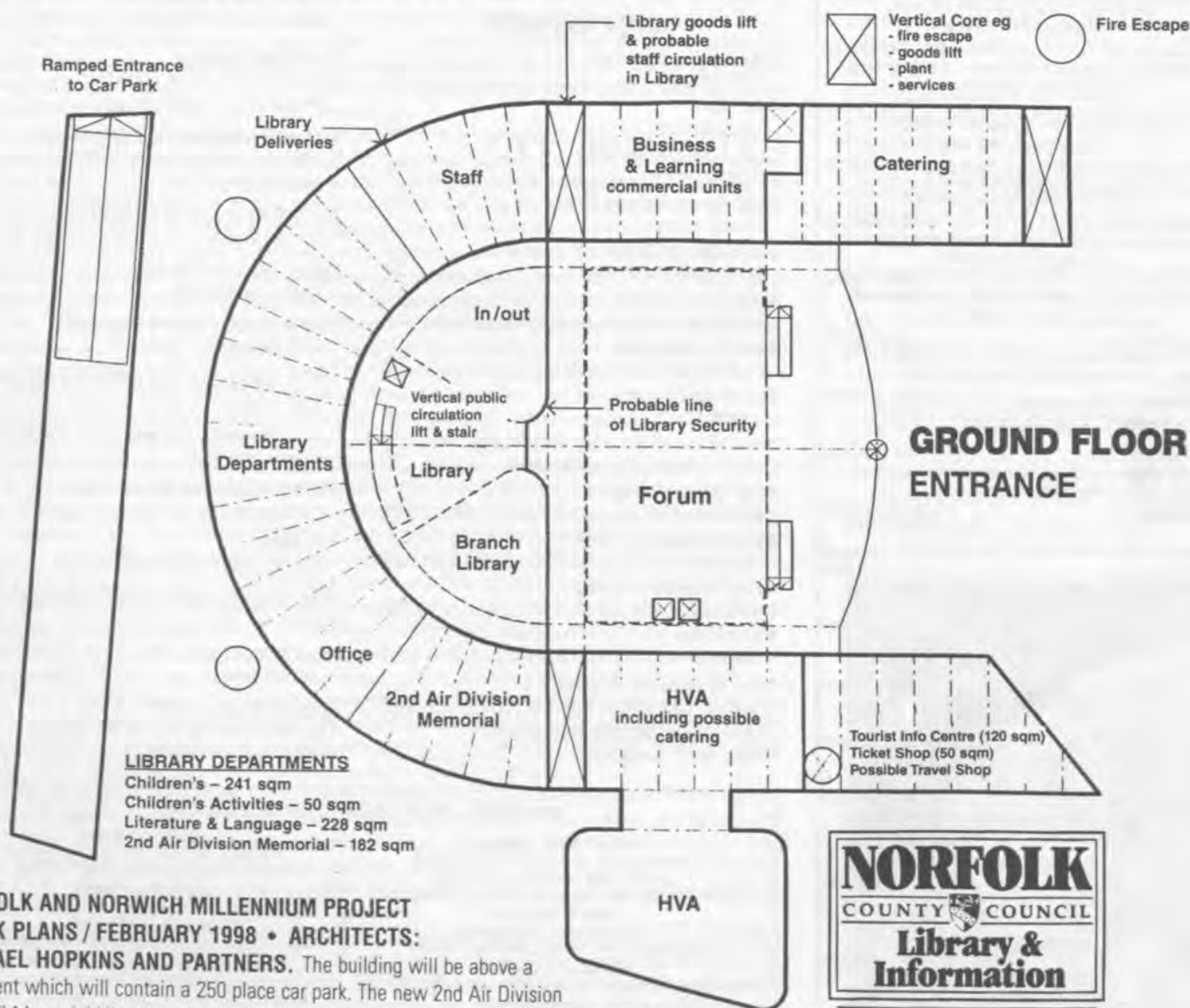




Volume 37 Number 2

Summer 1998

NEW MEMORIAL LIBRARY FLOOR PLAN RELEASED



NORFOLK AND NORWICH MILLENNIUM PROJECT BLOCK PLANS / FEBRUARY 1998 • ARCHITECTS:

MICHAEL HOPKINS AND PARTNERS. The building will be above a basement which will contain a 250 place car park. The new 2nd Air Division

(USAAF) Memorial Library on the ground floor will overlook a garden which will include the memorial fountain base as a feature of some sort. It is about opposite Paul King's office on Theatre Street. The Memorial Library's neighbours will be the Branch Library, which as a popular collection of books and audio-visual material will be heavily used, and either the Children's Library or the Literature and Language Department, which will contain adult fiction books for loan and will also be very popular. The HVA is the Heritage Visitor Attraction, which will attract tourists to the building, so the 2AD Memorial Library will be well placed to attract these visitors. **FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE SEE PAGE 4.**

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2ADA Fulbright American Trust Librarian LINDA J. BERUBE
(Judith A. Jerome begins her term in October 1998)
SECOND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL ROOM
71 Ber Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 3AD, England

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



JOURNAL



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President's Message

BY OAK MACKEY (392ND)

You have all read the various articles in the 2ADA *Journals* and other publications praising Linda Berube for the wonderful job she has done as Fulbright Librarian at the Second Air Division Memorial Trust Library in Norwich. She has created a web site about the library which is available on the Internet. She has attended functions at Royal Air Force air bases, she has visited many of the 2nd Air Division WWII air bases, she has celebrated Thanksgiving Day with the Friends of the Second Air Division, an organization of English folk, mainly from the villages of Norfolk County. She has presented lectures to the students at East Anglia University. She has performed well above and beyond her assigned duties. She has served at the Memorial Library for a year and a half now, and her second annual term ends on September 30, 1998. She has volunteered to remain in Norwich through October, 1998, to instruct her successor. Linda has loved her work at the library, but has elected to pursue other interests. She will be missed by all folk with Second Air Division connections. Thank you, Linda, for a job well done.

A new 2ADA Fulbright Librarian has been selected to succeed Linda. She is Judy Jerome, a resident of Syracuse, New York. She has three degrees from Syracuse University. Her B.A. is in Religion/Philosophy; she has a Masters in Library Science, and a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Information and Media Technologies. Judy has been a librarian in various types of libraries for over 25 years. She is now the Director of the School Library System in the Onondaga-Cortland-Madison area of New York State where she supervised 113 school libraries. Her son, Nathan, is a senior at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA, majoring in Computer Engineering. Her daughter, Rachel, is a freshman at Smith College in Northampton, MA, majoring in Geology. All the above information is from a self-profile provided at my request by Judy. The opening paragraph of her profile gives such an excellent view of her attitude that I will quote it verbatim:

"My name is Judy Jerome and I have been selected to be your 2ADA Fulbright Librarian in the Memorial Library in Norwich for 1998-1999. I am most honored to have been selected and I approach my tenure in the library with hope and humility. I am somewhat in awe of the regard with which this library is held by the members of the Second Air Division Association and I will do my best to fulfill the trust you have placed in me."

You may wonder how a new 2ADA/Fulbright librarian is selected. The Fulbright Commission posts the vacancy of this position at appropriate places throughout the United States, such as libraries, universities, etc., quoting the qualifications required. From the long list of applicants, the Fulbright Commission prepares a short list of perhaps three applicants which is sent to the Second Air Division Memorial Trust Board of Governors. In the case of Judy Jerome, the final selection was made by David Hastings, Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors, and Hilary Hammond, Norfolk County Director of Arts and Libraries, and Honorary Chief Executive of the Second Air Division Memorial Trust. Both men, of course, making the selection as representatives of the Board of Governors. And that's the way it's done.

My one-year term as president of the Second Air Division Association will end this month (May) at the 50th anniversary 2ADA convention in Oak Brook, Illinois. It has been a most pleasant and fulfilling experience — let me try to tell you why. All regular members of the 2ADA are WWII veterans of the Second Air Division of the Eighth Air Force, and we are a unique organization, for our fourteen bomb groups were outfitted with the Consolidated B-24 Liberator, the 8th Air Force's superior four-engine bomber. Because of the above, we enjoy each other's company at the 2ADA annual conventions, at the various regional conventions, and at the group conventions. However, many of the 7,000 members of the 2ADA cannot attend the conventions for one reason or another. For those who cannot, the 2ADA *Journal* is the principal source of communication. When I say it is an honor without peer to serve as President of the 2ADA, you may be sure I am thinking of the entire membership, for all you people are the very best, and I think you most kindly for making my term in office such a memorable occasion. In addition, a special "thank you" to the Executive Committee for your support and respect, and for making my tasks as president as pleasant experience which I shall not forget.

Earl Wassom is the Executive Vice President of the 2ADA and there is about a 99% chance that he will succeed me as President, for that is the traditional way 2ADA presidents are elected. Earl and his wife Cynthia live in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Before his retirement, Earl taught at Bowling Green University, and I believe he also had some connection with the university library. Earl is a tall, handsome fellow who speaks well. He will be an "outstanding" president (next to his large "Classic Car" collection)!

"A little nonsense now and then is relished by the best of men" (Shakespeare, or somebody) ... The famous Dutch painter, Vincent van Gogh, had many relatives. Among them were: his obnoxious brother, Please Gogh; a dizzy aunt, Verti Gogh; a cousin from Chica Gogh; the uncle who drove a stagecoach, Wellsfar Gogh; another cousin, the magician Whereditty Gogh; a sister who loved disco, Go Gogh; and a maiden aunt who traveled in a home on wheels, Winniebay Gogh.

This is the end of my message. Take care of each other!
Adios Ami Gogh. ■



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



JOURNAL



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

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

Please submit all material for publication to the editor by the 15th of December, March, June, or September.

We make every effort to mail your *Journal* within 45 days of the deadline listed above. Your receipt of the *Journal* will be anywhere from one to four weeks later, depending on the U.S. Postal Service — especially your own post office. If you don't get your *Journal* by the next deadline, contact Evelyn Cohen immediately. ■



New 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian
JUDITH A. JEROME will succeed
Linda Berube in October 1998.

REPORT ON THE MEMORIAL TRUST

BY E. BUD KOORNDYK

The process of rebuilding the Norwich library is proceeding on schedule. The target date for completion is still December of the year 2000.

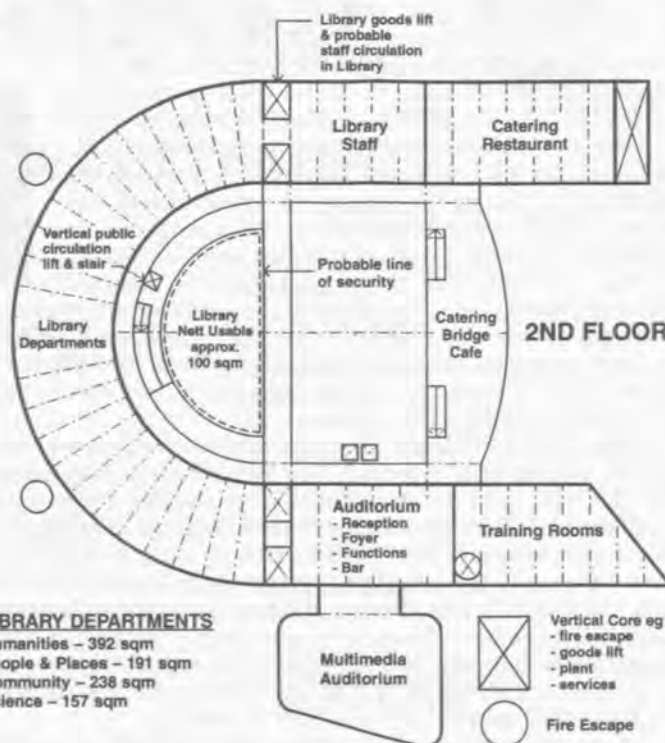
This being the last report I shall be making, serving as the 2nd Air Division (USAAF) representative on the Board of Governors, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Executive Committee and the membership of the 2ADA as a whole for the support given me during my tenure of office. The privilege of acting as liaison between the 2ADA and our English friends on the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust and Robin Berrington, Cultural Attaché from our Embassy, has been a most fulfilling experience.

An item of interest that I feel is extremely important to our Association relates to the position of our Memorial Library within the Norwich Central Library at this juncture in time, and also its permanency in the next millennium. Hilary Hammond, Norfolk County Director of Arts and Libraries, has forwarded a diagram of the ground floor of the new Norwich Central Library and the location of our 2nd Air Division (USAAF) library on this ground floor. That floor plan appears on the front cover of this *Journal*. The plans for the second and third floors are shown here.

Another important item is the new licensing agreement being drawn up between the County Council and the Board of Governors. This document will assure us of the permanency of our library into perpetuity. The original Declaration of Trust that established our library never addressed this concern in its language. Consequently the new document will spell out its long-term position within the Norwich County Library system.

Paul King has advised me that the planning for the kick-off of their drive for £125,000 is proceeding on course. I have been sent a draft copy of the brochure, which still needs some editing, and on one of the pages is a great picture of Jimmy Stewart at our library with a large glass Eighth Air Force insignia directly in front of him.

It is Paul's intention to seek support from various Charitable Trusts in Norwich, and he has high hopes of having substantial gifts in hand, prior to the public appeal in November of this year. He is in the process of putting together a "Patron List" of past Governors, local officials, etc.



Further details on the "Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division (USAAF) 1998 Development Campaign" will be shared with the 2nd Air Division Association convention in Chicago in May of this year. The Vice Chairman of the Memorial Trust, David Hastings, and his wife Jean will be attending.

A very welcome new Governor on the Trust is John Whitehouse, a local businessman specializing in the machinery manufacturing of food processing equipment. He is also involved in the exporting of same to the States.

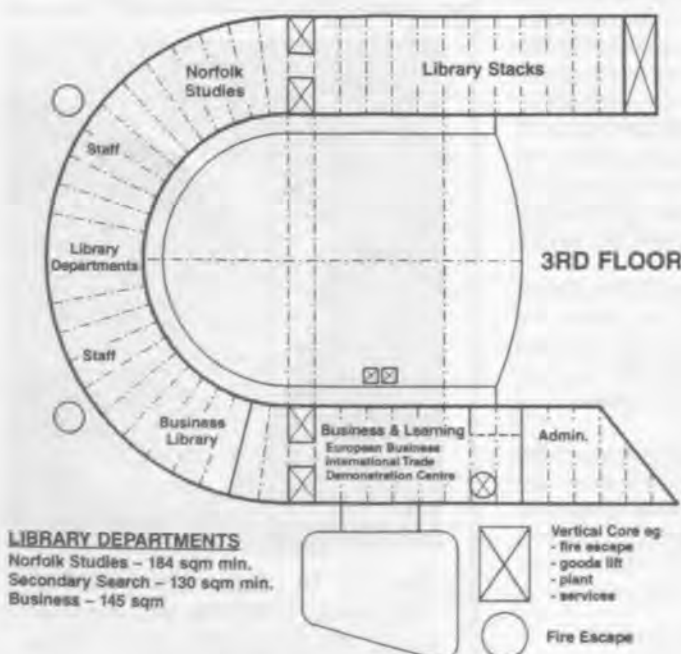
The process of rebuilding the new library is proceeding on schedule, according to Hilary's reports. The target date for completion is still December of the year 2000. We will not see any significant erection of the building proper until mid-1999. Underground foundation work, as well as underground parking, will be the first order of business. Following will be the work on the actual superstructure itself.

Derek Hills and the staff at the library report that things are running smoothly in the temporary library. Activity from the public has been at a fast pace, and since being on the Internet, our library is reaching out to areas that we never had envisioned when it was first dedicated.

Linda Berube will be completing her term in September of this year, and I would personally like to thank her for a job well done. It has been a pleasure to have had her on board these past two years, and I know that I speak for the entire 2ADA in expressing our appreciation for a job well done.

Judith Jerome, our new Fulbright appointee, will be coming on board in October. Her credentials speak well for the choice that Hilary Hammond, David Hastings, and the Fulbright Commission made in their selection for this coming year.

At our Executive Committee meeting on May 21 in Chicago, we will nominate the American Representative of the 2ADA who will represent us in the future. That person will be approved at our annual business meeting and then be subject to approval by the Board of Governors of the 2nd Air Division (USAAF) Memorial Trust. I pledge any support that I may be able to give to the duly appointed Governor. It is a position that I am sure the appointee will enjoy, and be dedicated to duly representing the 2ADA in the years that we are physically able to be represented on the Board of Governors by a 2ADA member. ■



EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT'S OBSERVATIONS

BY EARL WASSOM (466TH)

At Oak Brook, Illinois in May of 1998, warriors of the Eighth Air Force, World War II are coming together again, this time for the 50th anniversary of the Second Air Division Association. In 1946, seven former members of the Second Air Division met in Chicago to relive the experiences they had in England during the wartime years of 1943-45. These "cronies" enjoyed themselves so much that a repeat performance was called for the next year. A bigger and better "wing-ding" was planned and more of the "troops," including the Women's Army Corps (WACs) showed up. Since its formal organizational meeting in 1948, the event has become an annual ritual which ought not to be missed. Even today, fifty years later, with a membership of about 7,000, between 600-700 veterans, wives, children, and friends show up for the occasion.

Checking in at the convention hotel, registering, sharing meals together, attending meetings, banquets, etc. is a never-to-be-forgotten experience. These gatherings represent the largest number of B-24 enthusiasts anywhere in the world. The only time there were more of them was back in 1944-45 when eight hundred or more B-24 Liberator bombers jockeyed into flight formation over East Anglia. Thousands of their ground personnel watched from below as the air armada headed toward Nazi-held territory to the east and anxiously awaited their return.

Almost all of these individuals were born in the teen years or the 1920s. Considering the fact that the average age is 78 years, they have survived the depression era and the traumatic years of WWII, pursued an education and a career, courted and married, bought or built a house and furnished all the things that go along with it, fathered children and educated them, contributed to and were leaders in their communities, participated in and promoted the democratic way of life, were law-abiding and honorable citizens, when they retired they kept active and are still "kicking." Notable achievements to accomplish in a lifetime!

But, if you will, steal a furtive glance around the company of individuals you find at a typical Second Air Division convention. You will see the most remarkable people to ever inhabit the earth. These are the men and women who, within five or six decades, have increased life expectancy by approximately fifty percent, have attacked and eradicated plagues and diseases, have cut the working day by a third, and have more than doubled the national per capita output. They have built thousands of schools and staffed and strengthened colleges and universities at a cost of billions of dollars and have made education available to millions. They are the ones who established the United Nations, who defeated Hitler, contained Stalin, and made Khrushchev back down. These are the individuals who, after spending billions of



EARL AND CINDY:
RETIRED, ACTIVE, AND STILL
"KICKING"

dollars in prosecuting a worldwide war, gave billions more, not only to their friends, but even to their enemies. They recognized that it was necessary to reconstruct what had been destroyed so that the world would not plunge into an economic depression and be overwhelmed with hunger, disease, hopelessness and crime. They also hold the all-time, non-stop record for tax and tuition paying for any generation! It will take a lot to equal the patriotism and dedication of their accomplishments.

This generation soared outward into interplanetary space and inward into the atom. Their own ingenuity and creativity has made life easier. They arrive at their 2ADA conventions using one of the many routes of our massive and well-marked interstate highway system, driving a modern high-tech air conditioned car with cellular phone and power controlled gadgets of every description. Others travelled approaching the speed of sound, at 35,000 feet in comfort, their position being constantly monitored by ground-controllers aided by computers, and communication links serviced by satellites. By some miraculous high-tech means, luggage arrives on time and they approach their destination, a beautiful architectural structure (the convention hotel), with reservations which were made weeks earlier via telephone. They can locate and call friends in the building with ease. They watch an event on TV which is occurring "live" in some remote part of the world, or view a video movie of their choosing by pushing a button. They sleep in posh quarters and are awakened in the morning by an automatic machine which rings the phone. The menu items for breakfast contains things which may have been flown in overnight from some distant spot on earth via FedEx or UPS. If some important document is forgotten, someone back home can fax it in time for the business meeting. Upon departure, the bill is computed and slipped under the door. It is neatly itemized

and the credit card is correctly encumbered, and the statement, along with all of the other plastic card charges, is mailed in a few days. The bank back in hometown USA will pay the credit card or any other financial obligation assigned to them. It is taken for granted that the automatic deposit of "retirement funds" will be there to cover the encumbrances. And the list could go on and on! All of these conveniences have developed since the 1940s.

Collectively, our generation has made and adapted to innovations which have altered our lifestyle and made life easier. I say, "This is the greatest generation ever." I wouldn't want to miss the opportunity of having fellowship with such a great group. We may not have a B-24 commemorative postage stamp printed, but we all know the Liberator heavy bomber was a real 8th USAAF aircraft, we had leaders who were wise and ingenious, and daring, loyal people flying and servicing them, and we contributed greatly to the downfall of Hitler and his cohorts. We have built and are building enduring memorials and museums to verify our point. We may be 78 (more or less) years of age, but we are still around. I would suggest that a definition of success would include the idea of service and compassion to others. And here, in my opinion, is where the Second Air Division Association excels and what we as an organization are all about. ■



Appropriate articles are needed for publication in the Second Air Division Heritage League's *Heritage Herald*. Please contact the editor: Kathy Jackson, 1027 Keeler St., Maumee, OH 43537; tel. (419) 891-7335; or e-mail: kjackso@pop3.utoledo.edu. The Heritage League's web site is located at: www.primenet.com/~hl-2ada

Editor's Note: If you're sending an article to the 2ADA Journal, please send a copy to the Heritage Herald also.

The Editor's Comments

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)



TAMING "OLD TUCSON" — "Eat your hearts out, Jack Pelton [pilot] and Tom Hart [radio operator]!" exclaim 2ADA *Journal* Editor Ray Pytel [engineer] and Jim Withey [navigator] on Pelton's crew, as they carouse with Madame "Diamond Lil" and one of her "Can Can Dancers" at the Old Tucson Western Movie set on a sunny day in Arizona.



THISA AND DATA . . .

The story on page 23 entitled "The Liberalization of the Soviet Air Forces" started on December 2, 1997 at a Waukesha 8th AFHS [Milwaukee area] Wisconsin 8th Air Force dinner. At the dinner, one of the 8th AF survivors related a story he heard while in Europe or possibly even Russia.

The story is that with all the stuff the Russian Government is selling from the "leftovers" of the Cold War are a number of surplus B-24s. I could not ascertain if the story was true, but a general discussion ensued among the 8th AF survivors as to how many of the 8th AF and 15th AF crews "headed East" when they were in trouble and much nearer the Eastern Front than home, Sweden or Switzerland. We all surmised that if B-24s were for sale, they probably remained where they crashed, mainly on the plains of what is now Poland, the Ukraine, or Belarus, formerly under Russia. These grain-growing areas are similar to our "Grain Belt" and quite flat, so crash landings frequently did minor damage. It is probable that most B-24s that flew for the Soviet Air Force were salvaged and put to their "good use." It is also very probable that we never asked the Soviets for the return of our aircraft that crashed in their combat zone!

The selling price quoted was in the two million dollar range per B-24. If true, that is at least 10 times the cost of the B-24 in 1942-45. Well, at least they were our allies when our crews left the planes.

SHOULD WE INTRODUCE A WOMAN'S SECTION?

The recent survey of *Journal* readers indicated that quite a large reading audience is composed of wives, widows and daughters of our members. One of the surprises of our sur-

vey was that approximately one-half of the answers were by females, and unlike their male counterparts, they strongly indicated their preference for stories about museums, activities of crew members outside of combat, articles about the relationships with the local population, and other crews. They also wanted to read about the various more personal problems that their sweethearts, husbands, and fathers encountered while off combat duty. Also, stories by WACs were requested.

One of the women aptly stated, "Our men did not live by war alone; most of the time they did something else, yet nearly most war stories speak only of the obvious and imminent danger. We would like to see how the men coped with the rest of their time." The question is, should we dedicate space to a "Woman's Section"?

1997 SUMMER ISSUE SURVEY RESULTS

Some 260 letters and cards were received, and the answers were somewhat inconclusive, but in general members were sure they wanted LESS of poetry, convention reports, old WWII statistics, veterans' benefits, old nostalgia stories, and pictures taken at reunions and conventions. ALL HATE DUPLICATION IN GROUP REPORTS!

Members wanted MORE articles on museums, B-24 salvage activities, British contributions, unusual war stories, humorous incidents, profiles of World War II personalities, and ground personnel experiences but not limited to ground crews. Obscure historical incidents rated high, as well as historical quizzes and puzzles.

A high percentage enjoy the "Letters" section, B-24 exhibit reports on air shows, and stories about B-24s in general. Only one person

said we should limit our articles to Second Air Division experiences or combat alone. Many said we should include some current stories on subjects other than "war" which are either humorous or pertinent to the membership's current "lifestyle," whatever that may be!

THIS MONTH'S QUESTIONS:

One: It is generally accepted that the "British Islands" had been successfully "invaded" by at least five different peoples in its recorded history. Can you name at least three?

Two: Many 8th AF crews saw this copy of the Eiffel Tower somewhere in England. It's not in East Anglia or London — where is it?



ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S QUESTIONS

One: In the 8th AF during D-Day there were 21 B-17 groups and 19 B-24 groups plus a "Carpetbagger" unit. Later, five B-24 groups were reequipped with B-17s, making it 14 B-24s and 26 B-17s plus one B-24 Carpetbagger group.

Two: All of the various British Commonwealth Air Forces received 1964 B-24s and under 200 of the B-17s.

Three: The 15th AF had five B-17 groups and fifteen B-24 groups, plus a B-24 provisional unit.

Four: There were 31 B-17 groups during most of WWII, plus 66 various B-24 groups, not counting "special squadrons" and small units in all AF.

Five: A total of 19,257 various Liberators and the Navy version "Privateers" were produced as against 12,731 Flying Fortresses.

Six: Jimmy Stewart flew just about every plane listed in the Smithsonian's various tomes on "Flight" (note the B-24 does not exist in their volumes)

Seven: The 45th Air Division flew 21 B-24s. What was its purpose? Please read the article on page 23 on the B-24s in the USSR. ■

Our B-24 Bronze Memorial

BY ALFRED ASCH (93RD)

OUR GOALS ARE IN SIGHT

Thanks to many of you, the light at the end of the tunnel is shining brightly. We are rapidly meeting our goal of raising \$150,000 for the sculptured bronze model to be placed in the Honor Court at the United States Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colorado, with dedication ceremonies on September 25, 1998. We have over 180 individual names from the 2ADA and one organization shown separately, the 3rd Service Air Division, as sponsors. These will appear on the large bronze plaque to be mounted on the pedestal of the B-24 model. Names are listed under their group headings. Some groups made very generous contributions from their treasury funds. Eleven persons from other organizations, including the 15th Air Force, one Navy person and one B-29 pilot, contributed and their names will also appear on the plaque. We are receiving more contributions almost daily.

SPONSOR NAMES ON THE BRONZE PLAQUE

Fund raising is always difficult, but there are up sides to it. I took on the job of designing both plaques for the pedestal of the model with the task of arranging the names of contributors for the larger one. I had the pleasure of talking with many of you by phone and interfacing with a number of others through the postal service. We have more than 20 names for the plaque that are sponsored by others. Most of the 20 are deceased; some were killed during the war. I talked to the sponsors for these honorees and experienced the closeness, caring, and respect that continues to exist from our flying combat in our beloved B-24.

NOTABLES FOR THE PLAQUE

We have some notables for the plaque, three having received the Medal of Honor and 18 who flew the famous low-altitude raid against the Ploesti oil refineries on August 1, 1943. One of our notables, General George S. Brown, became Chief of Staff, Air Force and later served under three Presidents as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. General Leon Johnson, Medal of Honor recipient, had a distinguished Air Force career (see the outstanding article in the *Winter Journal* by Dick Butler) and B/Gen. James Stewart (Jimmy) also had a distinguished career during World War II flying with us and he subsequently carried out several important assignments for the Air Force as a reserve officer. The names of other notables having outstanding military and civilian careers are included. We are all proud that we served with these individuals. Their start in life was from our B-24 organizations and from serving with outstanding personnel who made sacrifices to win the war. The Air Force Academy cadets study military history, including Air Force leaders, as a part of their curriculum, and I know many will note the names on our plaque. The inference will be there that these notables started from our B-24 organizations during World War II.

EXCELLENT REPRESENTATION OF 2ADA MEMBERS

Dave Thompson of the 93rd has helped me organize the names and organizations for the larger plaque and has built up the database in his computer system. We made a chart, 20 x 45, with titles, organizations and names in the size print to be on the plaque. We both studied it and concluded that it has some resemblance to an operations order or a personnel movement order. A complete cross-section of grades are included; i.e. sergeants, flight officers, lieutenants, captains, majors, colonels and generals. Through my research and interfacing with some of you, I found that all skills necessary to build up a group are represented; i.e. pilots, bombardiers, navigators, pathfinder operations, gunners, aerial engineers, radio operators, radio maintenance, armament, ordnance, maintenance men, operations, intelligence, administrative and other support personnel. One viewing the plaque will quickly see that the memorial was sponsored by B-24 World War II veterans, most from the 2ADA. Not a single company which profited by building the B-24 and its components contributed. We should all be proud of this.

THE B-24 OPERATED IN ALL THEATERS

Dave Thompson and I have completed the design of the smaller plaque, 16" x 16", and sent it to the sculptor for his production work. We are using the theme that our B-24 operated in all theaters and was flown by several allied countries in addition to the United States. You will see this when you visit the Academy.

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

All names, regardless of the amounts contributed, will appear in the Book of Remembrance. Some details of the format are yet to be developed. However, names of persons and groups that sponsored others (Honorees) will be shown. We are planning to print enough books so that copies will be available for those who want one. Copies will remain at the Academy for people to read and for other uses.

DEDICATION CEREMONIES

All parts of the project are on schedule. Mark September 25, 1998 on your calendar for the dedication ceremonies. There is a registration form on this page for your easy use. My telephone number is (301) 881-1376 until May 10; thereafter: (616) 629-4056. ■

RESERVATION FORM

B-24 Groups Memorial Inc. • B-24 Sculpture Dedication Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado September 25, 1998

Name: _____

Group: _____ Air Force: _____

Spouse: _____

Nicknames: _____

Address: _____

Phone / Fax: _____

COST: \$45.00 per person, which includes registration kit, lunch at the Officer's Club, and banquet at the Radisson Hotel.

HOTELS: Blocks of rooms are being held at three hotels under "B-24 Groups" until August 24, 1998. Make your own hotel reservations.

Radisson North..... call (719) 598-5770

Hampton Inn North..... call (719) 593-9700

Best Western Palmer House call (719) 636-3108

Free airport shuttle service is available from all hotels with 24-hour notification required. Taxi is about \$35 each way. A summary of available tours will be in your registration kit. Grey Line Tours will pick up at all hotels.

Please send this form and \$45.00 per person by August 24, 1998 to:

"B-24 Groups Memorial, Inc."

c/o Neal Sorensen, Treasurer

132 Peninsula Road, Medicine Lake, MN 55441-4112

Telephone (612) 545-2698

NOTE: Colorado Springs is 6100 feet above sea level. The Academy is 7100 feet above sea level. Strenuous exercise or elbow bending may be a health risk!

The 448th Speaks



BY CATER LEE

In looking at the articles appearing in the Winter issue, we find some unintentional errors that should be corrected.

One writer claimed his group had reached \$25,000.00 in pledges to the 8th AF Heritage Foundation Museum making the group #1 in the Second Air Division and second overall in the 8th Air Force.

We wish to correct this, as the 448th was first in the 2nd Air Division to reach \$25,000.00, and currently has contributed over \$70,000.00 with an additional pledge of \$5,000.00 making our total over \$75,000.00, and we are shooting for \$100,000.00. It doesn't hurt to aim high! We (448th) feel Savannah, where the 8th got its start, is the place to leave our history for our children and their children and grandchildren to see what we veterans of the 8th AF did to preserve the freedoms we all enjoy. We realize that everybody can't be first; everybody can't be generals; everybody can't be group or squadron commanders; but that it took *all* of us, regardless of our position or duty, to get the job done.

Perhaps each group, though, has a special hero; someone who exceeded all expectations; and we of the bomber crews didn't have many Medal of Honor winners nor many Silver Star winners, as our type of combat just didn't offer many opportunities for those individual high honors.

But the 448th has one such man (now deceased) who was a tail gunner on then 1ST LT. JOHN McCUNE's crew. Lt. Col. (Ret.) McCune says "if it were not for S/Sgt. WILLARD COBB," he and his crew would not have survived the war. S/Sgt. Cobb's heroic action and superb gunmanship was during a mission on 5 March 1944 when the formation was attacked by a strong formation of enemy fighters over France. Early in the attack S/Sgt. Cobb was wounded by a 20mm cannon shell in his right leg, and his tail turret was knocked out of commission. Using the electric cord from his heated suit, he applied an emergency tourniquet around his leg and operated the turret with his hands and feet and succeeded in beating off the enemy fighters, knocking them off one by one. Willard refused to leave his post for first aid until they were safely out of enemy territory. The plane was badly dam-

aged, and had it not been for S/Sgt. Cobb's keeping his guns firing at the enemy, it is felt the plane would never have reached England.

S/Sgt. Cobb had lost a lot of blood, but kept at his post. He kept firing and saw two FW-190s fall in flames and hit the ground. By this time, three more FW-190s were coming in at his plane, which was flying the "tail end Charlie" position. He hit the center plane and watched it go down. Next the other two planes came at him in a staggered formation. Upon trying to fire his machine gun he realized something was wrong, so he started manually aiming and firing. He kept both guns blazing, but said he apparently missed the first plane, but as he switched to the second plane he scored a hit and the FW-190 began sliding sideways before diving. He watched "kill #4" hit the ground and explode, and saw no parachute. S/Sgt. Cobb realized he had been hit again as he had a sting and burning in his lower leg. He said his formations of 12 bombers were attacked by 25-30 enemy fighters and a fighter escort met them at the Channel. He did not recall much about the landing at the base, when pilot McCune brought the plane in safely in spite of its being badly damaged.

After S/Sgt. Cobb's release from the hospital, he went out to visit the plane's ground crew who told him both his ammunition boxes were empty except for just a few rounds. Besides the four FW-190s shot down on that 5 March raid, S/Sgt. Cobb also shot down a ME-109 on the Gotha raid of 24 February. S/Sgt. Willard Cobb was decorated by General Charles de Gaulle with the prestigious Croix de Guerre Avec Etoile de Bronze and he was honored by a speech by de Gaulle as his heroics had been witnessed by French civilians on the ground and reported to the underground, and his plane was verified as his crew's.

That S/Sgt. Willard Cobb was able to do all this in spite of being severely injured certainly was a credit to his crew and to his country. He was later selected as the outstanding enlisted man in the 448th Bomb Group. "No one could challenge that." Each group has their heroes, but we don't believe any can top this one. S/Sgt. Cobb died a few years ago at his Brattleboro, Massachusetts home. We are proud to pay this tribute to him.

CAPTAIN JEFF BRETT, grandson-in-law of our DOUG SKAGGS, is proceeding with our history book. He needs your help with any stories not received at this time, and the deadline is *receipt of this issue*. Send your stories to me and I will see that he gets them.

The Spring issue of the *Journal* showed that the 448th gained twelve new members, counting associate members. Some, however, had been members but had temporarily dropped out and re-joined. In addition to the seven 448th members listed in the "Folded Wings" column, we recently lost long-time ac-

tive member PAUL HOMAN, who passed away in Gainesville, Florida from an unidentified lung problem. Paul was buried back in Ohio where he lived prior to moving to Florida a few years ago. As most of you know, Paul was heading up our reunion back in England this July 29 to August 3, and he and MARY ELLEN had made all the arrangements for this forthcoming reunion. I will handle all details from now and, so please send any inquiries to me.

Also recently deceased but not yet listed in the "Folded Wings" column are RICHARD HARRINGTON, BENJAMIN H. POPPY, CARL BALDWIN, and ROY MORRIS. Time is catching up with us now, so if you ever plan to go back to England and visit our old Seething Air Field and Control Tower Museum, make this last mission of the 448th. As of this writing we have 83 signed up and hope to go over 100. ■

New "Benefits" Book Now Available

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The latest edition of "Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents" is now available from the U.S. Government Printing Office.

Published by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the handbook has been revised to include changes in laws for 1997.

The 87-page handbook describes federal benefits for veterans and family members including medical care, education, disability compensation, pension, life insurance, home loan guaranty, vocational rehabilitation, and burial assistance. It also outlines claims procedures and includes the latest information on changes in eligibility for VA medical care.

"Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents" sells for \$5.50 a copy, but is available free via the Internet at <http://www.va.gov/benefits.htm>.

Addresses and phone numbers of all VA benefits offices, medical centers, national cemeteries, counseling centers and other VA facilities are listed.

To order, ask for GPO stock number 051-000-00212-1 from:

Superintendent of Documents
P.O. Box 371954
Pittsburgh, PA 15250-76954

To order with VISA or MasterCard, call (202) 512-1800.

TIBENHAM'S



BY FRED A. DALE

JOHN E. BACH, SR. sent me the names and numbers of the Station 124 [Tibbenham] Football Team which was in the Fall 1997 issue of the *Journal*. Several wrote and wanted to know the identity of the players in the picture. The numbers of each player should now do this. The starting lineup is also given.

| NAME | NO. | POS. |
|------------------------|-----|------|
| Lt. George Cherokee | 1 | E |
| Paul Dicaccio | 2 | T |
| Sgt. Ernest Brown | 3 | E |
| Cpl. Sam DeLeo | 4 | B |
| Lt. J.H. Dickenson | 5 | T |
| Cpl. Cliff Haack | 6 | C |
| 1/Sgt. Barney Reynolds | 7 | G |
| Sgt. Art Burton | 8 | G |
| Pfc. Bob Knitter | 9 | B |
| Cpl. John Bach | 10 | G |

Betty Tucker informs me that her husband LeRoy H. Tucker died November 11, 1997. He was the engineer and top turret gunner on Henry Bussing's crew flying in the "Lady Marie" and was shot down on the Gotha raid, February 24, 1944. He was a POW for 15 months. Betty will continue membership in the 2nd Air Division Association.

We have a new member, Nolan Burdette of Grand Prairie, TX who was in the 701st Bomb Squadron. He was a ground crew chief on "Conquest Cavalier" and "Wallet-M-Mike."

BANQUET IN ILLINOIS

Bill Dewey planned a short ten-minute presentation for the 2ADA banquet in Oak Brook Hills — I think he would also have something for the 445th banquet if he is asked to do so. I'll check with him.

the younger generations can only learn something from the past if the history is the truth. In the book and in our permanent exhibition at the local museum, we try to show that, on both sides, young men were fighting, and became men only through their situation. To do so, we use the reports from witnesses, former pilots, crew members, and so on.

"Now to the main reason for my letter. It was 24.02.1944 (target Gotha) when three B-24H of the 702nd Squadron, 445th Bomb Group were shot down and crashed in our area. These three crashes should be mentioned in our book. I have some questions, and hope you can help me with the answers.

"The list of aircraft and crews are noted below. Are any of the survivors from these crashes members of the 2nd Air Division Association? If so I would like to correspond with them. Are there pictures of the different crews or their aircraft, and if so, is it possible to get copies of them?

Please contact: **Claudio Michael Becker**, Geschichtsverein Herborn e.V., Papiermühle 10, 35764 Sinn Hessen (Germany), Telephone 02772/81233, Fax (+49) 02772/81638. ■

STARTING LINEUP

| LE | LT | LG | C | RG | RT | RE |
|---------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Cherokee 1 | Dicaccio 2 | Guidry 19 | Haack 6 | Burton 8 | Dickenson 5 | Krotoszynski 11 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | LH Knitter 9 | QB King 15 | FB Schrader 22 | RH DeLeo 4 | |

| | | |
|-------------------------|----|---|
| T/Sgt. Leo Krotoszynski | 11 | E |
| Sgt. John Quinn | 12 | C |
| Pfc. Ted Sitnik | 13 | G |
| S/Sgt. George Hughes | 14 | E |
| Lt. Joseph E. King | 15 | B |
| Cpl. Joe Scaletta | 16 | T |
| Cpl. Red Shaur | 17 | B |
| Sgt. Dallas Carey | 18 | T |
| Cpl. Louis Guidry | 19 | G |
| Cpl. Don Oakley | 20 | B |
| Lt. E.T. Sullivan | 21 | B |
| Pvt. Don Schrader | 22 | G |
| Lt. C.D. Ingraham | 23 | B |
| Pvt. Jim Wilkinson | 24 | E |
| Sgt. Jess Gilbert | 25 | C |
| S/Sgt. Paul Cheverie | — | E |

FOLDED WINGS & NEW MEMBERS

Mervin E. DeShazor passed away on December 23, 1997 in Amarillo, Texas. He was a gunner on A.R. Wright's crew in the 701st Bomb Squadron.

CORRESPONDENCE

I received a letter from George Wright, a 66-year-old from England who is building 1/72 scale models of each assembly B-24 in the 2nd Air Division. He has not been able to get information about the "Assembly Aircraft" for the 445th, its colors and markings. Do you have any information on this, or know of anyone who does? Write him at: 7 Cambridge Avenue, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 5NA, England.

LETTER TO THE 445TH FROM A GERMAN HISTORIAN

"I am a member of the History Club Herborn section. At the moment we are working on a book about "The War in the Sky 1939-1945." The target of our group is to show what really happened in those years, because there are so many stories told by the older generations that the history is left unclear. We think that

24 FEBRUARY 1944 TARGET: GOTH

B-24H Serial #42-7579

Crashed near Rodenroth

2nd Lt. Robert L. Whitte, 0-673843
2nd Lt. Robert E. Baker, 0-673722
T/Sgt. Wayne E. Bryant, 19170208
S/Sgt. Kenneth R. Hohmann, 33285725
S/Sgt. Charles T. Sherd, 36418734
S/Sgt. Thomas H. Dumas, 16087852

B-24H Serial #42-7517

Crashed near

Driedorf/Mademühlen

S/Sgt. Harold W. Musbach, 37237715

B-24H Serial #42-7566

Crashed near Bechlingen

2nd Lt. Max H. Brunson 0-688414
T/Sgt. Edward N.M.I. Amari, 32498613
S/Sgt. Wayne Allen Teale, 16028606
S/Sgt. Norval W. Ashworth, 39903519

Send e-mail
to Fred Dale at:
fdale@mah-online.com

Attlebridge Tales



by Jim Lorenz

I receive a letter every ten days or so from a veteran — or more often, from his surviving family members requesting details on their veteran's 8th Air Force service. It is rewarding that we can usually supply some information and perhaps names and phone numbers of other veterans who were on that mission or event. I mention these letters in the hope that you all will be spurred on to write or record your experiences and feelings about your part in the 8th Air Force. If you need an outline or suggestions, drop me a note. Your family will appreciate your efforts!

I had a recent letter from George Wright of West Midlands, England. He is a retired history buff and has a plan to create a 1/72 scale model of each assembly B-24 of all the 2nd Air Division bomb groups. He still needs exact details of our 466th assembly plane. He has seen the photo of our B-24D in the *Liberator Album* by Tony North and Mike Bailey (and talked with Mike) — but it shows only side views. Does anyone recall — were the top (and bottom) of the fuselage and wings also painted with our red zigzag stripes? Let me know if you have a photo or a good memory. George is a real stickler for details!

All who have visited the villages at Attlebridge will remember our gracious hosts, Cathy and Donald Thomson, Conifers, Colton Road, Honingham, Norwich NR9 5BB, England. Cathy recently advised that Donald has a reoccurrence of cancer, this time affecting his liver and stomach area. He is getting radiation treatment, as this is considered inoperable. I'm sure they would appreciate a card or note from their 466th friends.

GATHERING OF THE LIBERATORS

Reviewing my scrapbooks recently, I came across the Commemorative Booklet issued by the General Dynamics Co. (successor to the original B-24 designer, Consolidated Aircraft) at their "50th Anniversary of the B-24 Liberator" convention in Fort Worth, Texas, May 17-21, 1989. They invited anyone in the world who flew or used the B-24 in WWII. The forums with the original design engineers; the 1939 CEO of Consolidated, Reuben Fleet; and commanders of the various combat units (U.S. & Allies) using the B-24 were interesting. An early question to the designers was, "Did you really get all of our field design 'flaws' re-

ports and did you use them?" Mr. Fleet assured us he read all of them. The design engineers stated that the reports were invaluable to them in making the B-24 "better, safer, and easier for your crews to fly. Why else would we have produced models A through M?"

A few more quotes of interest from the Commemorative Booklet:

"The B-24 was produced in more versions and for more purposes than any other combat warplane known. Produced in five U.S. plants, the Navy had their PB4Y-1 and -2 versions; the

article by Lance Thompson tells the story of Bob Collings and his Collings Foundation of Stowe, Massachusetts, a nonprofit group set up in 1987. It describes the B-24 (44-44052) which flew in the Pacific Theater 10/44 to 9/45 that they completely restored at a cost of \$1.3 million. The restored bomber was named "All American" after a B-24 in the 15th Air Force, which on July 25, 1944 shot down 14 enemy fighters, and on a later mission crashed in Yugoslavia. Collings also has a plane of the "other four-engine bomber type used in WWII,"

The self-contained air show of the restored B-24 and B-17 will stop in 35 states on its coast-to-coast 1998 schedule. For more information on the bombers or the tour schedule, visit the Collings Foundation web site at <http://members.aol.com/bomb1724>, or call 978-568-8924.

Army had an F-7 photo plane, the C-87 cargo type, and the C-109 which hauled fuel over the hump; the RAF's coastal patrol had BVI & GRI types. The original LB-30 designation (land bomber — the 39 was Consolidated's number for exports) was for the French, who put in the first order. Hitler took over France before the planes could be shipped, so the British Air Ministry took the order. As an historic fact, Winston Churchill chose as his personal world touring plane a specially modified single-tail, luxury outfitted B-24... As Hitler ravaged Europe, some very farsighted military men and industrial planners conceived America's urgent need for a special, advanced capability, four-engined, faster and longer range airplane than the B-17 "Flying Fortress" being built by Boeing... It [the B-24] served on every war front in every theater of WWII operations... including all Army Air Forces (in 66 various Bomb Groups), the U.S. Navy (with 18 Air Wing Squadrons), the U.S. Marines (two squadrons), and with 15 Allied nations (principally the Royal Air Force, the Royal Canadian Air Force, and the Royal Australian Air Force)... From the early anti-submarine patrol and coastal operations to the oil infernos over Ploesti; Benghazi to Balikpapan; the Himalayan 'Hump' to Hamburg; Foggia to the Philippines; Rangoon to Regensburg; Pilsen to Port Moresby; and Berlin to Okinawa, this historic airplane's enviable war record stands indelibly in tribute to the over one million men and women who built, supported, crewed, and flew it."

For a more precise, detailed report of the above facts, check Philip A. St. John's article on "Liberator Origins & Evolutions" in the 1994 edition of the 2nd Air Division book published by Turner Publishing.

"ALL AMERICAN"

The February/March 1998 issue of the Smithsonian's *Air & Space* magazine features a six-page article, "Bomberville — Catch a Hop on a WWII Bomber — Flak-Free." This

named "Nine-O-Nine." This plane (which never saw combat) was named after the original "Nine-O-Nine" which flew 140 missions without an abort or loss of crew before being scrapped. The author refers to these planes as "relics of WWII, but with vintage charm." Both of these planes are taken on national tours, partially funded by sponsors — like Schlitz for the B-24. The nose art of Schlitz' "Golden Girl" would have fit right in with the 2nd Air Division's type of nose art. The planes are flown by a team of current airline pilots on leave from their paying jobs and are maintained by two full-time mechanics who accompany the planes on tour. One American Airlines pilot volunteer commented, "I'm used to flying at 35,000 feet in a pressurized cabin from ugly airport A to ugly airport B... here you're down low enough to see the scenery." (He should have been with us on our re-supply missions for the ill-fated ground troop glider attack!) "You can slide open the window and smell the 60 weight oil burning off the engine. That's yummy."

As operating costs are \$2,000 an hour, they offer 45-minute rides at \$300 in either plane — but only if they get a minimum of six customers (maximum allowed is nine). Maintenance costs are covered by selling souvenirs, the rides, and contributions. A retail computer systems entrepreneur, Collings feels that "bringing these old airplanes back to life is one way to show appreciation to World War II veterans. We can never pay them back, but if people can get inside these planes, see them and fly in them, they'll get some idea of what these men went through."

This self-contained air show of the two bombers will stop in 137 towns in 35 states on the 1998 ten-month coast-to-coast schedule. For information on the bombers and the tour schedule, call 978-568-8924 or visit the Collings Foundation web site at:

<http://members.aol.com/bomb1724> ■



389th Green Dragon Flares

BY FELIX B. LEETON

The 389th BG prospects are looking good for 1998 and 1999. After the very successful group gathering in Savannah, we have found several new members; we are approaching our goal of placing the bronze B-24 model at the Air Force Academy; we will hang a group banner at the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah; the golden anniversary convention of the Second Air Division Association, 8th Air Force will be held in Oak Brook, Illinois in May. I have the Savannah videotape from Al Falke which gives me a chance to positively identify more of the people who showed up in the few photos I got back from the drug store; and we have a new promised delivery date for the second edition of the Second Air Division History Book!!

I hope all those with Internet access have seen the latest version of the Norwich Memorial Home Page, <<http://www.ecn.co.uk/Memorial/index.htm>>. One update I appreciate is the correction of the Liberator bomb load specification (page 5) to a max of 8000 pounds! Having

carried this amount on several missions, I always believed the old total number of 6000 pounds was a subversive trick by B-17 people who had no way of getting this many bombs in their bomb bay and shutting the doors! The update also includes links to two new features of particular interest, the *Scrapbook* and the *Spotlight*.

The *Scrapbook* is featuring a thumbnail sketch of a different group each quarter (if you missed one they are archived and can still be accessed). So far they have featured the 44th BG (A), 93rd BG (B), and the 389th BG (C). The two-page articles include photographs, details, and statistics. They print out nicely!

The *Spotlight* features articles on a range of subjects pertaining to the USAAF in Great Britain during World War II. The current piece "The B-24 Deserves Respect" is a reprint of an article from the *Air Force Times* by Robert Dorr and submitted by Jordan Uttal (see the Winter 1997 *Journal*, page 36).

The opening last year of the new Duxford Museum, with the B-24 contribution being a nose section of a ship named "Fighting Sam," has been panned, but it brought Val Conroy out fighting. She points out that "Fighting Sam" (see pic in the *Blue Book* p. 42) was flown on the first Ploesti mission by her late husband, Col. Tom Conroy (see pic in the *Blue Book* p. 11). Val notes that, "If that really is the nose of 'Fighting Sam,' the Duxford Museum has acquired more than they realize. It is probably the only remnant of a B-24 that actually flew on the Ploesti raid." I watched the Duxford TV presentation again and thought the B-24 nose looked pretty good! ■

1998 REUNIONS OF THE GROUPS OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

44th Bomb Group – October 25-29 – Savannah, Georgia

Contact: MICHAEL YUSPEH
7214 Sardonyx Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70124

392nd Bomb Group – May 23-25 – Oak Brook, Illinois

392nd BG and 392nd BGMA reunions will be in conjunction with the 2ADA reunion.

446th Bomb Group – May 3 – Savannah, Georgia

Contact: LINK VEAZEY
1938 Harbor Oaks Drive, Snellville, GA 30278 • Tel. 770-972-5883

448th Bomb Group – July 29-August 3 –

Norwich and Seething, England

Contact: CATER LEE, P.O. Box 850, Foley, AL 36536

453rd Bomb Group – Indefinite (possibly November)

Contact: JULIAN K. WILSON
18951 Castle Bay Lane, Northridge, CA 91326

466th Bomb Group – October 13-18 –

Cherry Hills, New Jersey

Contact: JIM LORENZ
5831 E. Poinsettia Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85254 • Tel. 602-951-0343

467th Bomb Group – September 22-26 –

St. Louis, Missouri

Contact: WALTER J. MUNDY
23020 Basin Harbor Ct., Tehachapi, CA 93562 • Tel. 805-821-5101

491st Bomb Group – November 2-4 – Tucson, Arizona

Contact: JOHN D. LEPPERT
4383 Live Oak Blvd., Palm Harbor, FL 34685-4204 • 813-784-1984

801-492nd Bomb Group – The Carpetbaggers –

October 14-18 – Savannah, GA

Contact: SEBASTIAN H. CORRIERE
4939 N. 89th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53225 • Tel. 414-414-8264

1998 REUNIONS OF THE 2ADA AND RELATED ASSOCIATIONS

Second Air Division Association Annual Convention:

May 23-25, Oak Brook Hills Resort, Illinois
(near Chicago O'Hare Airport)

Contact: EVELYN COHEN
6410 Delaire Landing Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114-4015
Tel. 215-632-3992

B-24 Memorials Inc. – Bronze B-24 Dedication:

September 25 – U.S. Air Force Academy,
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Contact: NEAL SORENSEN
132 Peninsula Rd., Minneapolis, MN 55441-4112 • 612-545-2698

Eighth Air Force Historical Society Convention –

October 13-18 – Hilton Hotel, Cherry Hills, New Jersey
(near Philadelphia)

Contact: JIM LORENZ
5331 E. Poinsettia Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85254-4716
Tel. 602-951-0343

55th Anniversary Ploesti Reunion – July 30, 31, Aug. 1: Mid-America Museum, Sioux City, Iowa

Contact: BILL FEDER, SR.
101 Rainbow Drive, Apt. 2475, Livingston, TX 77351-9300
Tel. 712-252-5300 or 712-943-5325

EAA-WWII Warbirds Fly-In & Convention:

July 29-August 4 – Wittman Field, Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Contact: EAA, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903
Tel. 920-426-4800

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!!

489TH NOTES

BY
JAMES M. DAVIS

Our generation has seen so many challenges and changes. We have lived in the best and worst of all times. If not the best, then the most exciting. Growing up in the Roaring Twenties, then the Great Depression of the Thirties, for those of us who grew up on the great high plains that would include the Great Dust Bowl days. During that time, if you got sick one of two things happened: You got well or you died, for there were no modern day miracle drugs available. Disease common during that period of time claimed many lives and left many others handicapped for the rest of their lives. Very little medicine or treatment was available. Few of our younger generations have ever heard of infantile paralysis, now polio. In the late thirties when our economic conditions were improving (and dust settled) we suddenly found much of the world around us at war. There was little doubt that sooner or later the United States would be drawn into that war. During this period of time a young man would have to decide if he should wait to be drafted or should he choose a branch of service to volunteer. Pearl Harbor eliminated any doubt that we would have to enter military service. For almost four years we participated in the most violent and destructive period of time that man has ever known. As a result of World War II much of Japan, China, Europe, and Russia lay in waste and rubble. During World War II it has been estimated that at least fifty-five million people or more were violently killed. Since we were a part of the air war, the estimate of one hundred and sixty thousand airplanes lost in action makes us grateful to be survivors.

From out of the violence and destruction of WWII came the jet airplane, rockets, and man's ability to control the atom. Today we enjoy so many things that were created or developed during WWII. One of the most dramatic changes during WWII was the necessity for women to enter the work force. In 1944 the United States built approximately ninety-six thousand war planes, and women were the primary source of the labor to build them. No longer were women expected to remain home to cook, raise the family, keep house and take care of the kids. As a result of women finding their place in the offices and factories during WWII, the door to the business world was opened for them. Today they share jobs at all levels of business and make careers of their own.

Since we are about to end this century we can look back at three different worlds; the

times before WWII, during WWII, and after WWII. I am grateful to have lived in such dramatic times. The younger generations have very little knowledge of what World War II was and how it dramatically changed the old world into the world we now live in.

We have a great story to tell, and the children are fascinated and anxious to learn about WWII. I have been fortunate to have been able to visit area schools, clubs and groups to tell the story. I would encourage everyone to

contact their local schools and organizations and volunteer to tell them about the story of World War II and how it changed the world. They would enjoy it and so would you.

I hope many of you will attend the 2nd Air Division Association convention in Chicago. We are one of the smallest groups, but we are always one of the largest groups in attendance, for which we can give thanks to such strong leadership from Charles Freudenthal, Bud Chamberlain, and Neal Sorensen. ■

CANADA'S NATIONAL AVIATION MUSEUM National Museum of Science and Technology Ottawa, Ontario K1G 5A3



Among the 118 various WWII aircraft on display at Canada's National Aviation Museum is the Consolidated B-24L Liberator G.R. VIII.

The Liberator bomber was a remarkable aircraft in a number of aspects. The design was only started at the beginning of 1939 and yet the prototype was first flown on December 29, 1939 — an outstanding achievement. It was placed in production at two Consolidated plants and three other plants, including the Ford plant at Willow Run, Michigan, which eventually produced a Liberator an hour. A total of 19,257 various Liberators were produced and delivered to Allied air forces, more than any other American-made aircraft. They were operated during the war by the RAAF, RAF, RCAF, USAAF, and USN.

The outstanding feature of the Liberator was its range of 2100 miles (3380 km). Its tri-cycle undercarriage was unusual for the time and the first to be fitted to a large bomber. It normally carried a crew of eight to ten and a bomb load of up to 8,000 lbs (3630 kg). Defensive armament consisted of ten 0.50 guns.

Its usual role was bombing operations against Germany, occupied Europe and Japan, in which it proved most effective. Less publicized was its role in the war against the submarine, where its range and speed were put to good use; in one instance five RAF Liberator squadrons sank six submarines in seven days. There seems little doubt that the Liberator was the single most effective aircraft weapon against the submarine.

The RCAF operated four Liberator anti-submarine squadrons, Nos. 10, 11, 422 and 423; one heavy transport squadron, No. 168; and one bomber squadron that was just re-equipped with Liberators for the war against Japan when it ended. No. 10 Squadron sank two submarines with Liberators, while No. 11 carried out eight submarine attacks. Nos. 422 and 423 were re-equipped too late to use Liberators operationally. One RCAF squadron, No. 412, used Liberators for transport duties in the postwar period.

The museum's specimen was made by the Ford Motor Co. in 1944 as USAAF 44-50154 and went to the RAF on the lease-lend program. After being abandoned in India, it was refurbished and taken on strength by the Indian Air Force in 1949 as HE773 shortly after India was granted self-government. It served with No. 6 Squadron, IAF, until June 1968, when it was given to the RCAF in appreciation for its earlier donation of a Westland Lysander. It was flown to Canada and refinished as an anti-submarine aircraft of Eastern Air Command by 6 RD, Trenton, Ontario, before being placed on display. ■

17th Annual Southern California Regional Reunion Dinner

BY DICK BAYNES (466th), REUNION CO-CHAIRMAN



Lighting the second of Eight Candles for Remembrance (L-R): George Johnson (93rd), Dick Butler (44th), Ross Rees (389th).

The 17th Annual Southern California Regional Reunion Dinner on February 28, 1998 (always the last Saturday in February) was attended by 300 members, families and friends of the 2nd Air Division. This was the thirteenth year we have held the event at the Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro Officers' Club, and the meal was up to their usual excellent standards.

Members and guests were greeted by REX TABOR (466th) and WILLIE WILSON (453rd) and directed to the registration tables where MARGARET BAYNES (466th), MIKE CHAMBERLAIN (489th), and AGNES ROWE (448th) checked them in and handed out name tags. PATTI QUINTANA (466th) and MARY JEAN WILSON (453rd) were selling raffle tickets. MARY HANSON, historian for The Debriefing Team, took pictures of the event.

C.N. "BUD" CHAMBERLAIN (489th), 2ADA past president, conducted the opening ceremonies. First was the lovely voice of MARIA GUNNARSSON, wife of FRANK CREW (448th), leading us in the National Anthem. Then the traditional lighting of 8 Candles of Remembrance with members of our bomb groups, fighter groups, and Heritage League participating. This was followed by MALCOLM "MAC" DIKE (466th), who gave the invocation. The master of ceremonies, DELBERT MANN (467th & 491st), Academy Award winning director, then took over and introduced COLONEL STEPHEN MUGG, Chief of Staff, Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, who welcomed us to the base and to the Officers' Club.

Following dinner, OAK MACKEY (392nd), president of the 2nd Air Division Association, offered greetings and reminded all of the convention of the 2ADA to be held in Oak Brook, Illinois, May 23-26, 1998.

RAY PYTEL, editor of the 2ADA Journal, brought us up to date on the progress of the bronze B-24 model at the Air Force Academy.

After a short video prepared by DICK PETERSON (389th) on the contributions of JIMMY STEWART (445th, 453rd & Wing Headquarters) to the Air Force, Delbert Mann paid tribute to Jimmy Stewart. He touched on the highlights of his life, amusing stories of his military life in the 2nd Air Division, and the qualities of his character — his strong belief in God, country and family. It was an excellent tribute.

LEO HABEL (389th) conducted a very successful raffle and thanked all who generously contributed prizes to help us raise money for both the bronze B-24 at the Air Force Academy and the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum. Assisting Leo in handing out the raffle prizes were REX TABOR and FRED GERRITZ (466th).



Jimmy Stewart Display at the 14th Annual Southern California Regional Reunion Dinner, February 28, 1998, El Toro.

Co-chairmen for the dinner were DICK BAYNES (466th) and JAY JEFFRIES (453rd). Other committee members were: FRED BROMM (445th), BUD CHAMBERLAIN (489th), MAC DIKE (466th), JULIAN ERTZ (44th), LEO HABEL (389th), DELBERT MANN (467th), JOHN ROWE (448th), and J. FRED THOMAS (392nd).

Participating in the candle lighting ceremony were the following. 1ST CANDLE: JOHN FOSTER (489th), BOB KLEINMAN (479th), JOHN LINFORD (445th). 2ND CANDLE: DICK BUTLER (44th), GEORGE JOHNSON (93rd), ROSS REES (389th). 3RD CANDLE: CARL JOHNSON (492nd), JOHN YATSKO (448th), VINCE LaRUSSA (467th). 4TH CANDLE: WENDELL JESKE (453rd), BILL DAVENPORT (446th), HARLAN OAKES (466th). 5TH CANDLE: TED MARUSCHAK (489th), WILL MILLER (392nd), BUD McDONALD (445th). 6TH CANDLE: JACK STEVENS (389th), SKIP PEASE (389th), RAY JOHN-SON (392nd). 7TH CANDLE: REX TABOR (466th), FRED FOWLER (44th), BILL SCOTT (467th). 8TH CANDLE: KEN BLACKBURN (466th — Heritage League), AMBER LINDSAY (HDQ), JOHN GATLEY (466th). MARK HOAGE provided his usual fine displays of memorabilia.

We'll meet again next year, THE LAST SATURDAY IN FEBRUARY (2-27-99). Put it on your calendar now. ■



Delbert Mann (467th & 491st), master of ceremonies and speaker

Once Upon a Time 'Neath the Eiffel Tower

BY AL CALLAHAN, 305 REPAIR SQUADRON, 3D STRATEGIC AIR DEPOT

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM 3D STRATEGIC AIR DEPOT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER, DECEMBER 1997

A 1945 display of Eighth Air Force aircraft and equipment in Paris was conceived by the United States Information Services in cooperation with the French Government. Sgt. Al Callahan, 3D SAD, a specialist in repairing B-24 wings and fuel cells, was one of the key NCOs from Griston assigned to the project, and his report follows.



The war in Europe had come to an end. The Eighth Air Force was preparing a move to the Pacific Theater, via the United States with a 30-day delay in route for all personnel, and it seemed to me that the War Department wished to have the French Air Force participate in the war against Japan. In order to convince the French government and the French public that the USAAF had sufficient power to end war in the Pacific, and to enlist French aid, the USAAF Exposition was planned.

The Army Air Force Exposition would be a display of 8th Air Force aircraft around the Eiffel Tower in Paris. There would be sixteen aircraft displayed: heavy and light bombers, fighter aircraft, recon, cargo and light aircraft. In addition there would be displays of aircraft weapons, anti-aircraft guns, simulated briefing rooms to explain 8th AF missions against Germany, flight personnel equipment, ordnance, weather, communications, air transport, photo reconnaissance, a memorial section, administration building — all aspects of the Eighth Air Force's victory over the Luftwaffe.

Special Order #150 dated 12 June 1945 was issued, placing 3D SAD personnel on 45-day TDY to render technical assistance in preparing the USAAF 4th of July Exposition in Paris.

We were transported by air to Villa Couplain, just 18 miles outside of Paris, on 13 June 1945. We made one overnight enroute stop at a transit base. I contracted the French scabies (itch) from the bunk I slept in, as living conditions there were not too sanitary.

At Villa Couplain we obtained several GMC 6x6s and went to Paris. We were quartered in a Paris hotel for the first night, but moved back to a barracks at Villa Couplain, one which had been used by German personnel, and obtained cots and bedding. That afternoon we were briefed on the job to be done. The task was to disassemble the aircraft, transport them to Paris, and reassemble them for display under and around the Eiffel Tower.

We took measurements of the aircraft and checked the route into the city. All was OK except for the B-24 Liberator. There was no way we could pass the fuselage under a railroad trestle enroute if disassembled by Tech Orders. We decided to remove the center of the wing from the fuselage so we could make it. The trestle was on a 30-degree angle to the road, and by jumping the median strip under the trestle we could pass the center of the wing underneath. The wing was not disassembled after its removal from the fuselage, thus removing the wing in one piece.



The wing was in one piece with landing gear intact. The next day we removed the brace to replace the wing, jacked up the B-24 to lower the landing gear, then added the engines, stabilizers, etc. When all sixteen aircraft were reassembled under and around the Eiffel Tower, we then started constructing the various displays and material. By the way, the B-24 Liberator was placed directly under the Tower, with other aircraft around it.

One B-17 was to remain there forever. The landing gear was cemented in 8 x 8 x 12 feet

of concrete, but was removed several years later. Had a B-24 Liberator been selected for static display, it would probably still be there!

The food at Villa Couplain was as if we were in some other army. Home cooking, pretty French girls to serve you (food, that is), ice cream and fruit for dessert. The tables were washed down after each meal. We could not have asked for more! The 3D SAD crews finished all the work at the Exposition in 18 days, and for the rest of the 45 days TDY we had a ball! Not all 'neath the Eiffel Tower! ■



**POOP
from
GROUP 467**



"WITCHCRAFT" COMPLETE AND COMING IN FOR A LANDING MAY 18TH AT SAVANNAH, SAYS SCULPTOR ROBERT HENDERSON.

We have in the past year witnessed the passing of one of America's really great citizens, Jimmy Stewart. He wasn't an actor as most people saw him, he was just himself, "Jimmy Stewart."

"The Quiet American Hero" is what the Queen of England called James Stewart in the 50th anniversary Battle of Britain Queen's Ball Brochure in London in 1990.

Jimmy Stewart was as much a success in war with the United States Army Air Force as he became on the silver screen. Jimmy Stewart rose from the ranks of private to colonel during the war years to 1945 and later to Brigadier General in 1959.

Jimmy Stewart never spoke openly or in depth about his wartime service. He once said, "Uh! I just did what everybody else did."

Yes! Stewart trained for heavy bomber service on B-17 heavy bombers at Hobbs Field with thirty others who graduated. One of those thirty was my pilot, George Wright, who was in the class with him. Stewart went on to Salt Lake City and Boise, Idaho and then became Squadron Commander on B-24 heavy bombers of the 703rd Squadron, 445th Bomb Group in Sioux City, Iowa.

Now those of us of the original B-24 703rd Squadron of 1943/44 knew of his deeds, his sincerity to win the war. He was our leader, our commander; his dedication to God and his country just rubbed off on you. Stewart felt that everyone must do his part to bring down the tyranny in this world. At the same time, the compassion and feeling that Stewart carried for each of the 120 combat air crewmen under his command made each one of us feel that he really was our big brother and at times like a mother hen looking over us, making us all feel that we would follow him through anything in this war.

My personal experience with Captain Stewart began in Sioux City, Iowa when my crew (Lt. George Wright, pilot) was transferred from Pocatello, Idaho to Sioux City, 703rd Squadron, on very short notice. We were to replace a crew that had crashed. I was the aerial engineer.

Arriving in the evening of 1 September 1943 all ten of us entered and crowded into a small office on the flight line. There sat behind a small desk a long, lanky officer in flight fatigues with lieutenant bars on his collar. (Later I understood he was a captain.) After a few words of welcoming us to the 703rd, this officer stood up halfway from his chair, rubbed his chin and stated, "Well, uh! See that water tank up there? Uh! you are replacing a crew that hit it last week; please kind-Uh! be careful and don't hit it. We just can't lose another B-24." The next statement was, "How would you fellows like to have about five days at home?" Well, that question didn't need an answer. "You can pick up your travel orders and Uh! papers at Headquarters." Then he said, "Well Uh! Fellows be sure and get back here in five days." With a quick salute, out the door we went. Stewart returned the salute but his hand didn't quite make it to his head. May-

THE QUIET AMERICAN HERO FLEW B-24s!

BY JOHN HAROLD ROBINSON (445TH)

be it was just because it was just too far up.

From that day on, being associated with Jimmy Stewart until 31 March 1944, as I look back on all the events of that time, it was really like living with Jimmy Stewart on the silver screen in one big movie.

James Stewart was one person that if his life ever touched yours, you could never forget him. Well, maybe some of the feelings that Stewart had for our crew had something to do with George Wright's father and James Stewart's father growing up together as good friends. James Stewart was always giving George Wright a fatherly talking to and flight checks to see if we knew our job and would fly as a crew. Stewart wanted and personally saw to it that each individual under his command knew how to do his job, and he expected it to be done well. That was James (Jimmy) Stewart.

There were so many events and quotes during the period that I was associated with Jimmy Stewart from 1 September 1943 to 31 March 1944 when Stewart was transferred to the 453rd as an Operation Officer. While Stewart was Squadron Commander of the 703rd, you didn't know until the last minute if Jimmy Stewart was going to fly the mission. He would just come out in combat clothes and get in one of the trucks.

After our arrival at Tibenham, England on 25 November 1943, we prepared for the group's first mission on 13 December 1943. The target was Kiel, Germany. Jimmy Stewart flew his first mission as copilot on Lt. Cook's aircraft 42-75559. My crew did not fly on this mission. Jimmy Stewart had to fly the first mission that the 703rd Squadron flew. That was Jimmy Stewart!

The following missions my crew with Lt. George Wright flew in a position either under and behind Jimmy Stewart's aircraft tail or on his left wing. George was usually lead of the second echelon with his nose within ten feet of the first echelon lead aircraft tail. Stewart would tell Wright to stay out of his tail. (Wright had the ability to put an aircraft within inches of another and stay there in flight.)

16 December 1943, Bremen, Germany: I will only say here, "What a mission."

30 December 1943, (Manheim) Ludwigshafen, Germany: One aircraft lost.

05 January 1944, Kiel, Germany: One aircraft lost.

11 January 1944, Meppin (Brunswick, Germany)

29 January 1944, Frankfurt, Germany

03 February 1944, Russelsheim, Germany: Official records show this as 04 February. Target was supposed to be Frankfurt. Stewart flew in Johnson's aircraft 42-7565. 05 February an attempt was made to bomb Emden, Germany. Weather made us return. The 3rd, 4th and 5th of February the weather was so bad everything went wrong.

08 February 1944, Watten, France: Stewart flew in Lloyd Sharrard's A/C 42-39132.

20 February 1944, Brunswick: Stewart flew as flight commander. Three aircraft lost.

25 February 1944, (Furth) Nuremberg: Stewart flew lead.

18 March 1944: Freidrickshafen, Germany: Two aircraft lost. Some records show this as the 17th, but our squadron (703rd) flew to this target on 16 March and again on 18 March [per my records]. Stewart was on the mission of the 18th of March.

James Stewart was made a major, and was transferred over to the 453rd Bomb Group as Operations Officer on March 31, 1944. At that time in the 703rd there were 71 officers and 433 enlisted men, fifteen aircraft under Jimmy Stewart's command.

All of us in the 703rd felt that we had lost a part of us with the loss of our commander Jimmy Stewart. The empty void that it left made you feel that now you were really on your own to get through this conflict.

I flew many other missions that Jimmy Stewart did not fly. One can see by the above list of enemy targets that Stewart had selected to fly missions that Headquarters was not very happy about.

They were concerned for his safety. Eventually he was transferred to an Operations Officer position in another group. But he continued to fly combat.

In 1988 I wrote a manuscript and put it into a book, *A Reason To Live*, in which many of my encounters with Jimmy Stewart are told. I received several letters from Stewart during this time, and afterward he autographed a photo of himself that I had taken with a box Brownie camera in 1943. I sent him six copies and he autographed five of the copies with a note, one for each of my three daughters and one for my son. He also autographed one for me, and he kept the other.

No book can relate all the feelings and sayings that James (Jimmy) Stewart expressed for the men he went to war with. As he said, "I was only doing the job that everyone else was doing."

Yes! James (Jimmy) Stewart was "The Quiet American Hero," and he did fly B-24s in combat — for I was there!

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

Editor's Note: John Harold (Robbie) Robinson, author of A Reason To Live, flew thirty missions officially, and four others over enemy territory that didn't count. Nine missions were missions that Stewart flew. ■

A SOUND AND COINCIDENCE

BY GEORGE A. REYNOLDS (458TH)

In 1996 American veteran Herbert Perry entered a convalescent home where he was placed in a room with Helmut Bartsch, a former German corporal and member of an AA crew in Normandy. Here is their story.

Cpl. Herbert Perry left his post in the air traffic control tower at Horsham St. Faith in June 1945 and went home to Durham, North Carolina. Now he could resume his career with the U.S. Postal Service and get on with the rest of his life. At last, the long-awaited retirement day came with visions of shade trees, rocking chairs and mint juleps for the years ahead. Unfortunately, into each life some rain does fall.

In October 1996, Herbert, 77, suffered a stroke, and after a stay in the hospital, was transferred to a convalescent home in mid-November. Here, he was placed in a room with Helmut Bartsch, 88, a former school teacher who was also recovering from a stroke. Helmut, from Stuttgart, Germany, was in NC visiting his daughter, who is married to an American, when his stroke occurred. Usually, the two men talked about their medical problems and the recovery process — their

strokes were on opposite sides.

Then in late November, Herbert's family brought him a clock with a B-17 atop, reminiscent of his high-spirited disposition in war-time days. When started, the Fort's props turn, lights blink and the engines rumble. Helmut recognized those sounds all too vividly. Both men then began discussing their roles in WWII, and Helmut revealed that he had been a corporal and member of an AA crew in Normandy, France when the invasion occurred. He had heard the roar of B-17s many times before.

Although former enemies, neither man had any animosity toward the other, and both still held high esteem for the other's country and their people. The war ended 50+ years ago for them both, and any "mental wounds" had vanished completely.

Perry says, "I put the airplanes up, and Helmut shot them down. That was just our job." Helmut says, "My time in Hitler's army was

never a political venture for me; I just felt it was my duty to serve, as most of my friends and neighbors did."

Now their discussions became more service-oriented, and several coincidences came to light. Helmut's daughter had lived in Durham since 1974, and he had visited her family often. On October 25th he suffered a stroke and went to Durham Regional Hospital, Room 7102. October 31st, Herbert had a stroke and went there to Room 7103. Next they were transferred to the convalescent center and here learned they were drafted (yes, Germany had local boards too) within a month of each other in 1942 — Helmut in August, Herbert in September.

For the remainder of November, the two families became good friends. Helmut and his daughter left for Germany in December, but they planned to maintain their friendship in the future. Their meeting reminded them all that things could have been far worse — as war casualties, for example — and they appreciate having the good memories that many stroke victims lose.

Regrettably, Herbert Perry passed away in May, 1997. ■

BOMBING EUROPE: B-24s WERE THE FIRST HEAVIES!!

BY THADDEUS C. POPRAWA (389TH)

I was happy to have selected the Air Force Museum as the site for our first reunion. It is a splendid thing to see, and you need at least two full days to do it justice. I am proud of my wife; I had secretly thought that her attention span would be about half an hour before she would be looking for the nearest shopping mall, but she was interested in the exhibits for the whole day, particularly the WAACs and the POW exhibits.

We all congregated around the B-24, and took our picture "pulling the props through," and then separated until lunch. I went through the World War I exhibit quickly, and then into the hall containing "our" planes. Nostalgia quickly emerged as I strolled among the familiar crates.

However, as I viewed a mural depicting the bombing story in Europe, I quickly came up short. The mural claimed that the B-17 mission to Royan, France in August 1942 (Paul Tibbets, who would later become world-famous as the pilot of the B-29 "Enola Gay" led this mission) was the first U.S. heavy bomber raid on Nazi-occupied Europe.

I knew this not to be true, because just two weeks prior I had finished reading a book about

It is an undeniable fact that B-24s were the first U.S. heavy bombers to raid Nazi-occupied Europe, and you can bet the farm on that.

the Ploesti mission of 1 August 1943, code named Tidal Wave. As a prelude to the story of Tidal Wave, the author told the story of how a year previous, in July 1942, a "Provisional" Squadron of B-24s, commanded by Major Hargrove, stooged over from the CBI, through India, and landed in North Africa.

Once there, someone, quite correctly, decided that the most strategic target to be hit from North Africa was the Ploesti oil field. So off they went; two aborted and ten B-24s bombed from 25,000 feet. Now, for a target as spread out as Ploesti is, one squadron of B-24s bombing from altitude did not do excessive damage (at this time in the war, heavy bombing raids were usually publicity stunts and morale boosters for the civilians; remember it was just a couple of months after Jimmy Doolittle's "30 Seconds Over Tokyo"), but what it did do was alert the Nazis to the significance of the target, and gave them time to prepare for the raids they knew were coming eventually, and as any veteran of Tidal Wave will tell

you, they did a masterful job. Realizing that the only entry was through a narrow valley, they dug out flak sites into the mountainside, and had an armored flak train ready to roll down the tracks at 60 mph in the same direction as the low flying planes, making the time on target a lot longer than a stationary battery firing at bombers at altitude. The quality of the defense was attested by the fact that 94 planes were unserviceable the next day; my hat is off to the veterans of Tidal Wave.

When I returned home from Dayton, Ohio, I wrote a letter to the director of the museum, informing him of the gaffe on the mural. To my pleasant surprise, I received an answer from the secretary, agreeing with me and promising to revise the mural, budget permitting. I don't know if they ever did that.

Now the B-17 guys won't like it, and the 8th Air Force won't like it, but it is an undeniable fact that the B-24s were the first U.S. heavy bombers to raid Nazi-occupied Europe, and you can bet the farm on that. ■



492nd BOMB GROUP HAPPY WARRIOR HAPPENINGS

BY W.H. "BILL" BEASLEY

We missed the 2ADA Southern California Dinner for the first time in several years. El Niño had wreaked so much havoc in California, we debated until the day before our flight for San Diego when we finally decided it might be wiser to stay home, much to our disappointment. Fifteen 492nd BG members attended the banquet: **Dorothy & Bob Bradley, Norman & Vera Burns, William & Marie Caplinger, Ernie Gossett, Carl & Verla Johnson, Tom & Mary Anne Nelson, Harry & Sally Orthman, and Bill & Molly Sparks.** Carl Johnson participated in the candle lighting ceremony representing the 492nd BG. Although no one in the group won a prize, they enjoyed the program and the camaraderie. I

regardless of service connection. Therefore, all veterans are urged to visit the nearest VA Hospital before September 30, 1998, and obtain a VC card. Failure to register could jeopardize future medical treatment by the VA. For example, if enough veterans fail to register, the government could assume that certain VA facilities are not needed and will, therefore, be closed. So even though you may not plan to use VA medical service, failure to register could deny such service to those who need it most. Let's not let them down. It is urgent that all veterans follow the advice to register. A phone call to the VA facility as to the best time to come in, could prevent arrival only to find long lines waiting ahead of you.

WENDOVER, UTAH

Because there are many members of the 2ADA who went through Wendover during WWII, we decided to drive to Wendover, UT to take a look at what little remains of the old base.

The Enola Gay Hangar was one of the two original hangars which did not front on the anchorages apron, but is the only one still standing. The other hangar burned to the ground in 1944 and was located just west of the maintenance hangar (building #412). The Enola Gay Hangar was built specifically for the B-29s assigned to the 509th Composite Group under the direction of **Col. Paul W. Tibbets.**

Under the guidance of the Wendover Field Foundation, as established in 1995 by the City of Wendover, Utah, the Enola Gay Hangar and the attached office buildings are to be restored with an interactive museum. It is a far cry from the base during the war. Bleak doesn't adequately describe the remains of the base. However, because the hangar is on Interstate 80 which carries heavy traffic to and from the west coast through Wendover, NV and its gambling casinos, it might spark the necessary interest to succeed.



regret not being there to meet Bill & Marie Caplinger and Bob & Dorothy Bradley, first-timers to this yearly evening of fun. Hopefully everyone will attend in 1999, including Norma and me, since it is expected to be the last dinner to be held at El Toro Marine Base. Thanks to Molly Sparks who took notes for me and provided a program and list of attendees.

The following notice which I feel should be brought to your attention was in the American Legion Advisory:

ATTENTION ALL VETERANS "REGISTER FOR VA MEDICAL CARE"

This important information is being brought to the attention of all veterans to carry out the instructions for this change in VA care. Beginning on October 1, 1997, and extending for one year, ALL VETERANS are being given the opportunity to register at their nearest VA Medical Facility for a photo-ID card called Veterans Information Card (VIC) which will entitle the bearer to future VA medical care

CAN YOU HELP?

ANTHONY CHARDELLA of the 369th FG is seeking a pin, enamel with white inlay on copper. Bottom reads "Sustineo Alas." He received this pin when he was stationed at Buckley Field. If you know where he could get one, please contact him at 511 Cresthaven Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15239.



SWISS ADVENTURE

CARL "LEW" BROWN (859th BS) wrote to me saying a friend and his wife visited Switzerland. During their stay at an inn, the innkeeper showed them a copy of the guest register that had been signed by an 8th Air Force bomber crew shot down in 1944 and somehow had made their way to this inn. The folks running the inn were most curious as to what happened to these fellows and their present whereabouts.

I contacted **BOB LONG**, president of the Swiss Internees Association. He sent the following information: B-24H #41-28737, "Meat Around The Corner," based at Horsham St. Faith, England, was bombing Epinal, France on 11 May 1944. The aircraft had been hit and feathered one engine, damaged rudder. The crew bailed out and the ship crashed at Jegenstorf. Six crewmen landed in their chutes at Lutzenfluh and Umgies. Two near Wasen, one in Suniswald, and one in Grunenmatt all landed

(continued on page 18)

Roll of Honor • Special Contributions for Books • Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial

BY JORDAN UTTAL (HDQ), 2ADA HONORARY PRESIDENT



The title page of the Roll of Honor, shown here in black and white, is done in color.

It is with great pleasure that I can advise you that the 201 hand-inscribed vellum pages of our Roll of Honor, with the names of our almost 6,700 fallen comrades, are now leather-bound, and installed in our temporary 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich!!

Also the necessary number of cloth-bound photocopies have been finished and are now in place. We have our copy (in my temporary possession). I was delighted to be able to display it on Saturday night, 7 March, to the 138 2ADA veterans and family members in attendance here in Dallas at the 14th Annual 2ADA Southwest Region Dinner. In addition to the members from the area, we were very pleased to have the Pytels, from Wisconsin, and Hap Chandler from Georgia.

I repeat my congratulations to the Board of Governors, to Hilary Hammond, to the team at the library, and to Ken Harmer, the calligrapher, for a job — a difficult job — well done!

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BOOKS

So far this year, as of 15 March, we have received 19 contributions from members (many of them repeat donors) for books in honor of dear 2nd Air Division friends or family members. I would be more than pleased to help any of you with any questions you may have. My address and phone number are on page 2.

FRIENDS OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL

Simple economics dictate the necessity for a small increase in annual dues, effective at once. The former rates of \$5.00 for single membership and \$8.00 for families no longer cut the mustard, for more reasons than the exchange rate for the pound sterling. So please be advised that the new rates are \$6.00 for single membership and \$10.00 for a family membership.

492ND HAPPY WARRIOR (continued from page 17)

safely. The status of the crew members listed on the register: **Stuart Goldsmith** and **Darrell Pulley** are deceased. **Albert V. Barney**, **Gerard B. Roland**, and **William S. Ferguson** have not been located. **Robert N. Morin** (458th BG) lives at 71 Grant Street, Manchester, NH 03104. (He intends on returning with his son and daughter-in-law in 1998. Bob is a member of the Board of the Swiss Internees Association.) I then wrote to Bob Morin, who in turn said there are only two crewmen left from his plane. He was one, and the other, named **Walter Pac**, lives in Berlin, Connecticut.

I kept everyone in the loop and ultimately received a letter from



The first page of each letter of the alphabet is headed with artwork in color.



Derek Hills, Trust Librarian, with the Roll of Honor which will be in a glass case in the future.

May I remind you again that our friends in our former area of operations feel close to us; they are emotionally, physically, and financially supportive of our Memorial, and extend warm assistance to 2AD veterans and their family members who visit East Anglia. Let's extend them the same affection and support!

Warm greetings to you all! ■

Daniel J. Leech, the fellow who visited the inn. Excerpt from his letter: "So from Bill Hall to Meadville to Carl (Lew) Brown to Bob Long and finally to Bill Beasley, we have all the right people. I thought it was a very interesting project. It turned out to be much simpler than I imagined. Just luck! I'll write to Bob Morin to get his permission to inform the Augsborgers."

THE VA RECORD CENTER CAME THROUGH AGAIN!

I have located **Arthur L. Bourdlais**, the engineer on Capt. Devon M. Davis' crew. He will be the VFW Commander for the Menominee, MI Post 1887 for the coming year of 1998-99. ■

B-17s delivered and took a punch

BY G.E. MARRION

Reprinted from *World War II Times*,
February-March 1998

General George C. Marshall said: "The B-17 has apparently demonstrated that it is the most powerful and effective bombardment airplane at this time." General H.H. Arnold's words were: "The Flying Fortress is the toughest plane in the air, as has been proved time and again in Java, the Solomons, and in Europe."

Douglas, Lockheed (Vage), and Boeing produced 12,731 Forts that carried the crews and their bomb loads to the Axis in Europe and to the Japanese throughout the Pacific.

Noted for being able to deliver and take a punch, B-17s with nicknames of "Alexander The Swoose," "Suzy-Q," "Yankee Doodle," "Madam-X," "Galloping Gus," and "Borrowed Time" literally flew around the world on uncounted missions.

From December 10, 1941 when Captain Colin Kelley and his crew bombed and sank the Japanese battleship, Haurana, in a Flying Fortress to March 23, 1942 when General Douglas MacArthur, his wife and son, President Manuel Quezon, and staff officers left in a B-17 from the Philippines to refuge in Australia, these planes proved their might and merit.

On July 21, 1942, over Rangoon, a Fort fought off 23 enemy planes after completing its bombardment mission. It destroyed four of the attacking fighters, and despite the fact that rudder controls were shot away and two engines were put out of commission, the Fortress returned to base safely.

Certainly the crew of "Flaming Jenny" will never forget October 17, 1942! She returned to her base in England with flames raging

Earl Zimmerman (389th BG), who submitted this article, sez . . . "I knew the 17s were good, but you have to check out the 'Flaming Jenny.' With the left wing gone and engaging 52 to 62 fighters . . . that's got to get the Medal of Honor for the whole crew . . ."



The editor sez: "Upon further reflection . . . This seems a little bit like a lot of bull to me."

from nose to tail, left wing and left inboard engine gone. She had flown through a thick curtain of ack-ack, fought off from 52 to 62 Nazi planes, and received more than 2,000 bullet holes!!

"Werewolf" limped home on January 23, 1942 after a raid on Brest on one engine after the other three had been knocked out by enemy flak and fighters.

More than guns, bombs, rivets, and four engines made up a B-17. Boys from Iowa farms and New York tenements passed through places named McDill Field, Randolph Field, Ellington Field, and Midland to become trained men in crews that flew into and made history.

The planes are gone now. The memories are a bit faded. But the accomplishments and sacrifices can never be forgotten nor adequately compensated.

We salute the indomitable B-17s and their air and ground crews that served us so well when we needed them most.

Editor's Note: The book biography entitled "Flying Fortress" by Edward Jablonski, page 56, states: "The fact is that the ship which was attacked was neither the HARUNA nor was it sunk . . . It was probably the heavy cruiser ASHIGARI . . . Three 600-pound bombs lurched out of the bomb bay, one fell short, a second landed in the water almost adjacent, and the third struck the aft turret. A tremendous explosion convulsed the great vessel and it was quickly enveloped in thick black smoke . . . The men . . . could not determine the actual damage." Roger Freeman's book "Mighty Eighth War Diary" states that the first B-17 mission by the 8th AF was on August 17, 1942 and no B-17s flew missions between October 10th and 20th, 1942. ■

DINING WITH THE ENEMY

BY EARL ZIMMERMAN (389TH)



During July 1943, you are dropping 500 pounders on German airfields in Crete and Italy and dining on the world's worst rations. A week later, via Ploesti, you are wearing civilian clothes and dining in the Gar Gasinosu in Ankara, Turkey. A few of the First Johns order borscht with sour cream and caviar, something too esoteric to appeal to the popular taste. Most of the other A-2 types order roast beef, sliced tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes and fresh fruit with ice cream, a true man's meal.

A few weeks later, during a gala party at Karpic's, the best restaurant in Ankara, hosted by the lads in the American Embassy, Herr Franz Von Papen, the Kraut Ambassador, and his staff were ushered into the restaurant. Pop Karpic seated them as far away as possible from the boisterous young A-2 crowd.

It seemed very strange to be eating in the same room as the enemy. The photo shows Von Papen and his staff coming out of the Turkish Parliament building during the 20th anniversary celebration of the Turkish Republic. Von Papen is in the center wearing the fancy hat.

Until my "escape" to Syria in December '43, I had the dubious pleasure of eyeballing Herr Von Papen in Karpic's on three occasions. I loaded up on pasta and dondurma (cake and ice cream) prior to getting on the midnight train to Aleppo, and burped all the way to Cairo. ■



NEWS

BY R.D. "DICK" BUTLER

We had a fine turnout of 44thers and their guests at the 2ADA's 17th Annual Southern California Regional Reunion Dinner at the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station Officers' Club on the evening of 28 February. Those attending were: Julian and Paula Ertz and their children, Beth, Scott, and Jill along with Burton Smith and Ron and Bera Dordoni; Frederick and June Fowler; John and Bernadette Gately; Robert and Shirley Schaper; William and Betty Houston Seal with their guests Jack and Phyllis Novak (Betty's brother Roland Houston was killed on the Ploesti mission); Jay Spencer and Estelle Voelker; Norm and Joyce Tillner and son Chad; Howard Walker; Morton and Ida Weinstein; my wife Ardith and I with our guests Cornell and Elena Iliescu and Roy Newton. It was a fine event, starting off with Maria Gunnarsson beautifully leading us in the singing of our National Anthem.

Although the following story does not involve one of our 44th airplanes or crews, I believe it will be of interest to all B-24 people because it is about the last known remaining aircraft of the 177 that went on the historic low level mission to Ploesti, Rumania on 1 August 1943. In the Fall 1997 issue of the *Journal*, I wrote about our Ploesti symposium that was held at the Irvine convention. One of our participants in that symposium was Roy Newton, who had been a gunner on a 98th Bomb Group plane, "Hadley's Harem," which was badly shot up on the mission and ditched 750 feet off the coast of Turkey. The moderator for the symposium was Peter Frizzell, a Ploesti mission historian. Also participating was Cornell Iliescu, who was a child in Ploesti at the time of the mission. In 1993 Roy began a search for the wreckage of the plane that he had been on when it ditched in 1943. Due to many miracles he connected with a Turkish man who had discovered the plane in 1972 while diving offshore filming sea turtles. In 1994 an underwater film was made that showed the wreckage in three separate pieces. Plans were made under Roy's sponsorship to salvage the forward structure the following summer of 1995. Roy invited Pete Frizzell to join this operation and film it. With a lot of difficulty and some damage to the nose section, it was lifted up to the surface by using large balloons. At this time, the remains of the two pilots were recovered.

More than a year later the rights to the "Harem" were purchased by the KOC Museum of Istanbul, Turkey. The nose section



The three men responsible for the recovery of the nose section of "Hadley's Harem" and its installation in the KOC Museum. Roy Newton, center; Ramili Koc, Museum Owner; and Dr. Selcuk K. Kolay, Museum Director. The man on the far left is the Assistant Director. Note that the pilot's name is still readable under the left window after 52 years on the ocean floor. Also note the condition of the upper turret.

PHOTO BY CORNELL ILIESCU



The cockpit of "Hadley's Harem." The Turkish Air Force cleaned it up by bead blasting.

PHOTO BY CORNELL ILIESCU

was taken to a Turkish Air Force repair base where it was carefully cleaned by light plastic bead blasting (similar to sand blasting) and structurally re-attached. The remaining pieces in the sea will be taken out this summer and eventually will join the forward section in the museum.

The dedication of the cleaned-up nose sec-

tion of "Hadley's Harem" took place on 9 December 1997 in the KOC Museum. Roy Newton was invited to attend the ceremony as the guest of honor. He asked Pete Frizzell to accompany him as Pete had been so involved in the recovery effort. Roy and Pete planned to visit Ploesti after the Istanbul event, so Cornell was

(continued on next page)



Above: The forward section of "HADLEY'S HAREM" as it sits in the KOC Museum. The upper turret guns are the actual ones from the aircraft. On the wall behind the aircraft is a Ploesti mission display.

PHOTO BY CORNELL ILIESCU

44TH NEWS (continued)

invited to join them to serve as a guide and interpreter. The gala dedication ceremony was attended by more than 500 Turkish dignitaries, including the Secretary of Defense, the Chief of Staff of the Turkish Air Force and his deputy, major TV stations and ten major newspapers. There were speeches, food, and cocktails. A string band added to the enjoyment of all in attendance at the event, which rivaled a most important Broadway show opening in America.

The KOC Museum is judged by Newton as the finest worldwide for industrial machinery, steam and gas engines, rare first prototype antique models, and marine artifacts. All are immaculately displayed in a restored marine casting foundry. To complement all this, an early turn of the century restaurant was purchased in Paris and moved lock, stock, and barrel to Turkey and installed in the museum. The food served is as fine as that found anywhere. The entire complex is a jewel and will be expanded next year as the museum completes restoration of an ancient ship building yard across the street which fronts on the famous Golden Horn Waterway. Currently, the KOC recovery vessel is moored in the waterway slips. This boat will be used to bring up the remainder of the "Harem" later this year.

While no American interest came forward to recover this last known aircraft that participated in one of the greatest air battles of all time, we can be grateful that Turkish interests appreciated its historic value and that the craft will be preserved in this outstanding museum.

Of the trip to Ploesti, Roy writes:

"We had planned to travel from Istanbul to Ploesti for four days, hoping to be able to film

some of the oil refineries. Prior to leaving America, I invited a film maker, screenwriter, Daphne Stacey, to help with manning more cameras. In addition, we needed a translator and guide, and found a perfect fit in Cornell Iliescu. Now an American, Cornell was a five-year-old boy and witnessed his father assisting U.S. fliers get out of a crashed B-24 during that raid.

"Rumania was full of unexpected surprises, having virtually stood still for more than fifty years. A bloody coup in 1989 expelled the Communist regime but left many in government operating the old way, so progress has not been made to better citizens' lives. As in Russia, crime and corruption still prevail. Approaching within ten miles of Ploesti, one is overwhelmed with the oil aroma. Security at the refineries is very tight, such that when we stopped to film, police appeared from nowhere to detain us. The few photos we got were from drive-bys with covered cameras. I was lucky to get a shot of Astra Romana, my target in 1943. Finally, we gained access to a courtyard where they showed us a storyboard history of the complex covering one hundred years. This was all that we could film.

"It was strange to me to have flown over it and now, fifty-four years later, to be standing on it. Taking the oil out is most important and has been since WWII. The debris is all pushed aside with some shelled-out buildings still in place. Many of the blast walls surrounding the huge storage tanks have large blown-out holes with rubble still lying where it fell. Left standing are all the tall poured concrete A-A towers minus the guns. Ploesti is strangely frozen in time but still pumping oil through leaky and patched-up piping."

In his narrative, Roy did not mention that he lost his passport and if it hadn't been for Cornell, Roy would have gone to jail in Rumania.

Roy Owen, president of our 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association, informs us that the 1998 44th BGVA reunion will be in Savannah, Georgia, 25 to 29 October of this year. During that time, the dedication of the 44th Bomb Group display in the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum will take place. The display, currently being constructed, will replicate the four-ship lead element over Ploesti Target White Five at Columbia Aquila the instant before bombs away. The four B-24 models of "Suzy Q," "Horsefly," "Buzzin' Bear," and the borrowed 376th airplane, are the work of Keith St. Aubin, freelance master modeler for the movie industry. The target area diorama is being constructed in accurate detail from photos and target plans by the Atlanta Chapter of the International Plastic Modeler's Society, who are renowned for their work. At the reunion, the 44th's remaining Ploesti veterans (101 at last count) will be honored.

We are looking forward to the installation of our bronze B-24 model in the Honor Court at the Air Force Academy on 25 September 1998. We hope that a good number of 44thers will be able to attend the ceremony. Roy Owen reports that due to the contribution by members of the 44th BGVA, it was able to contribute four thousand dollars toward the bronze B-24 project.

We were saddened to learn of the recent deaths of two long-time former members of the 2ADA, Tony Mitchell and Daniel C. Valenti. Both will be missed by all of us who knew and served with them, and our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Word has also come that Mel Trager has been having some serious medical problems. We hope that by the time of this printing he has fully recovered. ■

Government changes rules on wearing of medals

In the past, veterans were permitted to wear lapel buttons or rosettes on civilian clothing on any occasion and miniature medals on civilian clothing at formal or social functions. The policy was changed to permit veterans to wear full size or miniature medals on civilian attire on Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day. As a result of recent legislation, the Purple Heart was elevated in precedence and will be worn between the Bronze Star and Defense Meritorious Service Medals. All retirees authorized this award should rearrange their ribbons to conform to this change. ■

458th BOMB GROUP



BY RICK ROKICKI



458TH & AIR FORCE VETERANS CAPS

Finally an answer to many requests I've had over the years for a baseball cap made for the 458th BG. Thanks to **CLINTON E. "WALLY" WALLACE**, that appears to be solved. Wally sent me two caps that he advised were available to us. You can order either one or both (or a combination) from the History and Tradition Museum, 2501 George Avenue, Building 5206, Lackland AFB, Texas 78236. Costs are: 1 cap for \$9.50; two caps for \$15.75; or three caps for \$22.10. All prices include packing and postage. In addition, Wally advises that either a B-24 or 8th AF pin will be included with your order. The choice is yours. I might add that you should specify that you're ordering the 458th tail markings, red with a vertical white stripe. The B-24 cap is white with a blue bill, while the other is a deep blue. Judging from the prices I've seen for other specialized caps, this seems a bargain especially in multiple purchases. Admittedly, the cap doesn't show "458th," but it does show our tail colors. The small profit goes back into the museum. For more information you may wish to write: W/O Clinton E. Wallace, USAF Ret., 2501 Westward Drive, #1001, San Antonio, TX 78227-3554.

MEMORIAL TRUST

Derek Hills, the Trust Librarian in Norwich, advised that the following books were purchased on behalf of the 458th BG Endowment Fund Program, 1996-1997:

John Singer Sargent
by Carter Ratcliffe

*The Oxford Book of American South:
Testimony, Memory and Fiction*
by E.L. Ayers and B.C. Mittendorf

More Silver Wings, Pinks & Greens
by Jon A. Maguire

In a direct quote, Derek writes: "We continue to work towards building an even better Millennium Collection, ever mindful of General Kepner's pledge to bring a daily influence of American thoughts and ideals to the people of the Norwich community." Truly, our nearly \$3,000.00 endowment is at work, thanks to the fine efforts of the Trust.

ON FINAL

Received several letters from other groups stating that they have written letters to the Postmaster General for the failure to include our B-24 in the last stamp sheet. I'm pretty sure that by this time, they're ready to concede that we have made our point.

FRANK BECK was sent the last copy I had of our 458th BG History IV. Wouldn't you know that I've received a number of calls and faxes since?

LARRY EVERETT sent me an envelope to forward to **JOHN GALLAGHER** after seeing his name under the new listing. I believe John was the navigator on the crew, if my memory serves me correctly.

Elsewhere in this *Journal* you will read the story of the Thanet Allied Aircrew Memorial which was built and dedicated on July 18, 1997. I don't personally know of any 458th air crews that force-landed in Thanet, but I definitely remember one of our aircraft while I was in the 96th BG at Snetterton-Heath, that went in gear up at Manston. There were wounded aboard and luckily no fire, but the rescue people did a great job. The aircraft, a B-17, tail marking square "C" was 337th Bomb Squadron, side markings "QJ" was in the same squadron that I was in. As of this date in March '98, there are now three American donors. I sincerely hope that many of you who read this article will add to the Thanet Aircrew Memorial. I would suspect that they have the means to cash your American checks made out in dollars to the British pound without any great bank exchange rate loss.

Recent new member **"BUCK" BUCKLES** sent me several names from his crew, as did **TOM KRACKER (AM)**, nephew of **RALPH KRACKER**. Membership applications have been sent. **BOB & MARTY RENN** have also been helpful in this regard. Still looking for navigator **EUGENE J. SINGER** and **RAYMOND D. RICE** from Bev Ballard's crew. I'd appreciate any help I can get on anyone you may still correspond with who is not yet a 2ADA member.

IAN McLACHLAN, whose two previous books, *Night of the Intruders* (ISBN 1-85260-450-6) and *Final Flights* (ISBN 1-85260-122-1) has *USAAF Fighter Stories* now in print, and a future book, Vol. 2 of 8th AF bomber stories coming. If interested, write to Ian McLachlan, 10 All Saints Green, Worlingham, Beccles NR34 7RR, England.

Two long-time friends, **PETER KOWAL** and **TIM KINNALLY**, have made their last flight within a week of each other. Condolences have been sent to Evelyn and Annette. **VICTOR SCHOLTEN** advised that fellow crew member **KEITH CAMPBELL** recently passed on. **CHUCK MATEER's** flight engineer, **HELMUT KOTTKE**, also made his last flight. Neither were members of our 2nd Air Division Association.

I reviewed the growing list of Life Members and found that there were 54 of us from our group. If you are prone to forget your dues payment, why not take care of that with a Life Member check? If you fall into the age group of 70-79, the cost is \$120.00. 80 and up, \$90.00. Make your check out to "2ADA" and send it to Evelyn Cohen, 6410 Delaire Landing Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114-4157.

As usual, I received a list of 44 names from our group who have failed to respond to the second dues notice Evelyn recently sent. This, of course, means that I will follow up with a *third* notice. Since I've done this for the past 18 years, I should be quite used to the routine, but I can't help feeling that this is a selfish and unnecessary expense, and each year I tell myself it will be different, but it isn't. ■

I've had this information since early November 1997. But at that time, we were in the midst of a drive to fund the Bronze B-24 at the Air Force Academy. Hopefully, now our members may be able to help our friends who have honored all Allied crews who fought and died more than 50 years ago. The Thanet Air Crew Memorial was conceived by a group who wanted to honor all the air crews who force-landed, crashed, or were KIA in or near Thanet while returning to the "Island" from missions over the continent. Thanet perhaps can be best remembered by the RAF airfield at Manston or the town of Margate.

Unlike many memorials that are fully or almost fully funded before authorization to build is given, this group of at least eight members of the Appeal Committee decided to authorize sculptor Paul Seton to proceed, and borrowed the balance needed to supplement actual contributions. They received word that the memorial would be dedicated by the Queen Mother, who was 97 years old at the time. In order to have this honor, the committee had to act promptly and the program of fundraising was accelerated by appeals to 87 Army Air Force and other associations. At that time, they were titled "The Liberator Memorial Appeal." Little did they anticipate that they would run afoul of the rivalry among the 8th Air Force and other groups. As a result, letters sent to groups all over America were completely ignored, with not a single reply. There is much more to be said about the poor treatment, but suffice it to say that two Americans have

THANET ALLIED AIRCREW MEMORIAL

BY RICK ROKICKI (458TH)



since contributed. One is John Paul Getty, and the other is one of our subscribing members who was stationed at Manston in 1948. He was too young to be a part of us in 1942-45, but as a cryptographer during the Cold War was a genuine player in the post-war era.

The life-size memorial is positioned in front of the Spitfire and Hurricane Museum at RAF Manston. I must admit I knew nothing of this memorial until I visited the RAF Museum. The memorial was planned but not committed to at that time. There is much more to the memorial than this limited space will allow, but I am sure that you will receive more information from Mr. Arthur Pay, Appeal Coordinator. Please make your check payable to "Thanet Allied Air Crew Memorial," and send to: Mr. Arthur Pay, Appeal Coordinator, Payton Heights, Green Lane, East Northdown, Margate, Kent CT9 3UG, England. For those who might wish to call him, the telephone number is 01843-863484.

I do not know whether the 2ADA was one of the 87 contacted, but here's our chance to show our willingness to help this memorial appeal. ■



The "Liberalization" of the Soviet Air Forces

REPRINTED FROM THE 446TH BG'S "BEACHBELL ECHO"

This is an abstract from a Russian article in "Mir Aviatsii" (World of Aviation), Feb. 1995:

"...The history of Liberators in Soviet Air Forces began with B-24 #41-23891 which landed in emergency in the Far East. She was assigned to the 890th Air Regiment of the 45th Air Division on October 23rd, 1943. Since production of B-24s in the Soviet Union was not planned, 41-23891 was not used intensively. 30 airmen were trained on this B-24 by 1945.

As Soviet forces proceeded westward, more and more American crews chose to land their damaged aircraft in Soviet-held territory. Saving these machines for the Soviet AF was not an easy task. Some aircraft were damaged or destroyed by anti-Soviet partisans. Some were robbed by Soviet soldiers of everything which could be sold, and even guarding the aircraft did not always help. So, many aircraft were useful only for spare parts.

The first task in adopting B-24s and B-17s to Soviet service was replacing white stars with red ones. It was decided that Soviet airmen could not fly in machines with naked girls and other things painted on them, so

orders were issued to get rid of all nose art. This was a lot of work in the case of aircraft without camouflage — pictures were scrapped using acetone and sand. The camouflaged machines were easy — nose art was simply overpainted.

In June 1945 it was decided that the 203rd Guard Air Regiment would get all Russian Liberators. The regiment had an order to create manuals and regulations concerning operating a B-24. In 1945, the Soviet heavy bomber Pe-8 became obsolete. This created a need for another long-range aircraft. This role was assigned to B-17s and B-24s. They were used by the 45th Air Division during long-range mission training.

The Liberator was not liked by Soviet crews due to her low aerodynamics. With reduced engines the speed dropped quickly; take-off and landing were difficult. These reasons may explain why the only American aircraft crashed was a B-24 (#42-94800). This machine lost one engine at take-off and broke in two parts during emergency landing. All crew in the tail part perished.

In the beginning of October 1945, the 203rd Air Regiment had 21 B-24s in flying condition. The B-17s were used in the Soviet AF by the summer of 1947; the B-24s served longer due to their more durable engines. The main reason for a B-24 to be put out of service was lack of pneumatic parts for nose wheels. In 1948 three Liberators were moved to Kazan, where Tu-4s (Soviet copy of the B-29) were built. B-24s were used there for crew training since they were the only type available equipped with a nose wheel. These three aircraft were returned to the 203rd Regiment in 1949. The last Liberators in Soviet service could be found still in 1950...

That is the story. Below is the list of serial numbers of B-24s in Soviet service:

| | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| 41-23891 | 42-51929 | 44-41065 | 44-49927 |
| 41-28906 | 42-51990 | 44-48861 | 44-49937 |
| 42-40977 | 42-52016 | 44-48964 | 44-50261 |
| 42-50742 | 42-78269 | 44-48993 | 44-50382 |
| 42-51526 | 42-94800 | 44-49428 | 44-50393 |
| 42-51610 | 42-94829 | 44-49464 | 44-50414 |
| 42-51918 | 42-95342 | 44-49580 | 44-50437 ■ |

During the war, an airplane with the Davis Wing was immediately identified as a B-24. What is the nature of this wing? A lot of mysticism surrounds it.

The 2nd Air Division Association *Journal*, Fall 1992, has an article on David Davis by Allan Blue. The article describes amazement with test results expressed by Dr. Clark Millikan. Tests were carried out in 1937 at the Guggenheim Aeronautical Laboratory of the California Institute of Technology (GALCIT).

In preparing a book on my exploits as a navigator with the 467th (*The Forbidden Diary: A B-24 Navigator Remembers*) to be published by McGraw-Hill in 1998, I contacted Dr. Charles Landry, Manager, GALCIT Subsonic Wind Tunnels. He provided me with considerable data on the wing, copies of original letters authorizing the tests, and several article reprints of significance.

GALCIT tested two different wing designs by Davis, but the second one never became famous: Wind Tunnel Tests on a Davis Tapered Monoplane Wing and a Similar Consolidated Corporation Wing, Clark B. Millikan, GALCIT, Pasadena, CA (September 13, 1937); Wind Tunnel Tests on a Second Davis Wing of Unusual Plan Form, Clark B. Millikan, GALCIT, Pasadena, CA (March 9, 1938).

Plan views of these two wings are shown

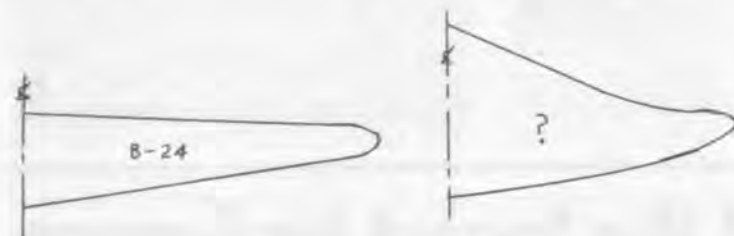


FIGURE 1. (NOT TO SCALE)

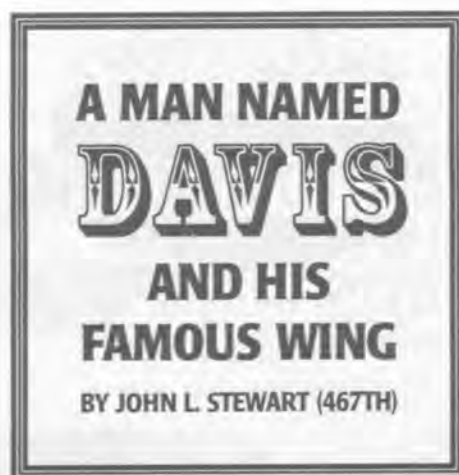
in Figure 1. Both presented remarkable performance. The one marked "?" looks quite modern and was proposed for a "bat wing" pursuit airplane.

David Davis applied for and received two patents: David Davis, Fluid Foil, patent number 1,942,688, application date May 25, 1931, issued January 9, 1934; David Davis, Fluid Foil, patent number 2,281,272, application date May 9, 1938, issued April 28, 1942.

GALCIT test reports do not reveal the cross section of the wing, namely, the "airfoil." The 1942 patent sketches this and includes a lot of trigonometry which purports to give exact numerical data for the cross section.

An excellent presentation for the hobbyist (not mathematical) appeared in 1942: Robert Lloyd Brown, "The Davis Airfoil," *Air Trails*, January 1942.

This article shows the airfoil shape taken from the 1934 patent. The article appeared about the time we were just getting over the shock of Pearl Harbor. Had it been scheduled



for publication a few months later, it might have been censored to oblivion. Because the airfoil shape changed somewhat in the later patent, its shape shown in Figure 2 is from a magazine article by W.G. Vincenti (cited later). In this figure, the Davis airfoil is compared with that for NACA 23015.

GALCIT tests found coefficients of lift, drag, and moment. The model was a scaled wing in a 10-foot wind tunnel.

The principal reason for the efficiency of the Davis wing is its large aspect ratio of somewhat over 11. The incredible smoothness of the test model no doubt contributed to its effi-

related with theories in general physics is perhaps responsible for his name not earning more than a footnote in aerodynamic history.

The Davis wing was also used (in modified form) by the B-29, where it served well. But now it no longer holds a prestigious position, partly because its efficiency decreases as speeds become higher than those that typified the period.

A most interesting study of Davis and the general relationship between theory and experiment as a technology matures is: Walter G. Vincenti, *The Davis Wing and the Problem of Airfoil Design: Uncertainty and Growth in Engineering Knowledge, Technology and Culture*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (October, 1986), Society for the History of Technology.

As commented previously, I am most indebted to Dr. Landry of Cal Tech for supplying a large volume of pertinent material which has helped in my writing. My book stresses day to day combat experiences rather than technology. (It is based on a "forbidden" diary that I kept.) As a technologist (engineer), I felt obligated to include more than casual comments on the Davis wing in my Chapter 12. After the book is published, perhaps Dr. Landry and/or I will try to gather together material on the wing and bind it for museum and general interest. ■



FIGURE 2. SOLID DAVIS. ++ NACA 23015.

ciency. (Aspect ratio is the square of length divided by area.) By comparison, the aspect ratio of the B-17 wing is less than 8.

During the 1930s, aerodynamic theory and wind tunnel tests were not always in agreement, partly because different kinds of specialists attended to these different disciplines. Although the Davis airfoil is efficient, there were other airfoils at the time (with NACA designations) that were just as good. Wings with large aspect ratios had not received careful wind tunnel tests before the Davis wing, and the theory that permitted calculating behavior of wings with different aspect ratios from results for a wing of fixed ratio was not yet familiar.

When technology was able to catch up with theory (or vice versa), the mystery of the Davis wing was resolved. Apparently, his mathematics have no direct correspondence to aerodynamic theory and have not proved to be of any subsequent value. The inability of Davis to express his ideas in a form that cor-

NEW
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please see page 33.

The Last Liberator Down Under

BY STUART GRANT

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHIC, OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1997

SUBMITTED BY BUD CHAMBERLAIN (489TH BG), WITH THANKS TO COMMANDER RICHARD JACKSON RNZN

The steel crane inched deeper into the tangle of vines, trees and corrugated iron, watched by the anxious eyes of World War II veteran, ex-bomber pilot Bob Butler. "It's strange," he said as the crane steadied to lift its load, "I feel almost as nervous now as I did before taking off on a mission."

The tension rose with the revs of the mobile crane's motor as it took the strain, wrestling the load from the jungle-like area on the Moe property, 100 kilometres southeast of Melbourne, Australia where it had lain for nearly 50 years. Then, with a final surge, the last remaining fuselage of a Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Consolidated model 32 B-24M Liberator was airborne again.

It had been a long time since Bob took to the skies in defense of Australia aboard a four-engined Liberator. With a combat crew of 11 he'd flown one of the 16-tonne American-designed and built heavy bombers into battle against Japanese forces from bases throughout Australia and islands to the north.

Bob's former crewmate, ex-wireless/radar operator and waist gunner Eric Clark, first floated the idea of trying to restore a Liberator — one of the most important aircraft in Australia's wartime history — at an annual RAAF squadron get-together almost ten years previously.

"They said we were nothing but a bunch of geriatrics who'd gone mad," said Bob, recalling the initial comments of his former flying mates. "But Australia owes a huge debt of gratitude to these aircraft, and we felt it was important to honour our mates who fought and died in them."

Bob and Eric founded the B-24 Liberator Memorial Fund Inc. in 1988, becoming its president and vice-president respectively. Now with more than 600 members, the fund has been putting the 1,200,000-part Liberator puzzle together ever since. It's a formidable challenge — especially when you can't find many of the pieces.

As eager volunteers guided the 21-metre long body of A72-176 to a perfect landing in a nearby paddock, Bob looked at me with me with slightly misted blue eyes and said: "We've waited a long time for this and now, finally, we have the major part of our jigsaw puzzle."

I'd read about the restoration efforts in a newspaper late in 1995 and my family delightedly donated some of the rarer components, including bomb sights and a pilot's seat, from my late father's vast collection of aircraft parts.

The difficult task of coordinating the restoration fell to Colin Grey, a robust, quietly spoken aviation enthusiast whose father was a fighter pilot in WWII. He became involved after donating a 90-centimetre model of a Liberator to the RAAF's 21 City of Melbourne Squadron.

According to Colin, our shores were initially protected during the war in the Pacific by planes and crews from the 380th Bomb Group of the Fifth U.S. Army Air Force. The responsibility passed to the RAAF when Australia acquired its own aircraft. Liberators operated out of bases dotted across the Top End and islands to the north from March 1943 until the war's end.

"At first, most of our blokes trained with the Americans during combat missions in

pick up the complete wing piece and tailplane, only to find they'd already been broken up.

Colin hailed George's efforts in saving as much as he did. "If it wasn't for George, this project would've been much more difficult."

Rumbling on their tracks, the cumbersome, ten-meter high doors in the old hangar rolled back, releasing a musty smell that made me feel I was stepping back in time.

"These planes and their crews helped save our bacon and were the primary factor that ensured the enemy ground forces never made it onto our shores."

Papua New Guinea (PNG) and with the 380th Bomb Group south of Darwin," Colin said. "Once we received our own planes, many trained at No. 7 Operational Training Unit at Tatum, on the New South Wales-Victoria border, which at the time was the biggest aerodrome in the Southern Hemisphere and regarded as our main rearguard base in the event of a Japanese invasion."

Colin is unequivocal about the role Liberators played as Australia's only long-range bombers. "These planes and their crews helped save our bacon and were the primary factor that ensured the enemy ground forces never made it onto our shores," he said. They could fly missions of 5100 km with a bomb load of up to 4500 kilograms — a far greater range and carrying capacity than any other RAAF aircraft of the time.

Huge olive-green trucks from the Army Reserve's No. 3 Recovery Unit at nearby Korumburra rolled out from Moe with their special freight. It was the weekend after the fuselage had been extricated from the Moe site and they were transporting it to an empty WWII hangar at Werribee, 25 km west of Melbourne.

Standing with Colin in the increasing rain I noticed that "Kingwell's Kite," as the plane has been nicknamed (after one of its postwar pilots, Air Commodore Deryck Kingwell), was in reasonably good condition. Colin said this was because it was never in combat, having been used as a training aircraft.

One of those bidding farewell to the plane was George Toye — the man who had treasured the Liberator in his backyard since he rescued it from an aluminum smelter in 1948. He'd even lived in it for a while when building his home. Another local who'd also come to see the plane off reminisced about his childhood when he played in the plane and was chased off by George.

George had bought the plane for several hundred pounds from the RAAF base at Sale, in southeast Victoria, then transported it on logging trucks to his home. He'd returned to

It was about a month after the fuselage had been taken to its Werribee hangar, and an open day for sponsors was being held. Amid benches strewn with aircraft parts, the fuselage sat enthroned on wooden cradles made especially for its removal.

Soon the 1350 sq. m hangar was alive with noise. Children ran around with outstretched arms pretending to be aeroplanes and adults shared with pride the role they played in the restoration project — whether it was baking cakes to help raise money, making special components for the plane, or knocking on farmers' doors looking for parts. Nearly 20,000 people had been involved in flying or servicing Liberators, so it wasn't surprising that most people in the hangar had some family association with the planes.

Eric, although weakened by cancer, couldn't disguise his excitement at their PNG find — a complete 33 m Liberator wing piece. "It was a bit of a fluke really," he said. "The son of an ex-Lib skipper was in PNG working on a Rotary project when he heard about an old plane wreck in the jungle at Ramu Valley, near PNG's north coast. He sent photos of it to his father, who immediately recognised it as a downed American Liberator." From the photographs, Eric, Bob, and John White, the aircraft curator at the Australian War Memorial, assessed that the wing and tail sections were salvageable, then obtained the PNG Government's approval to remove them.

Later, I watched the sea of smiling faces as Colin addressed the gathered troops. "Although we now have the main pieces, there's still a long way to go and we're leaving no stone unturned in the search," he said, grinning. "For example, we recently made a dog homeless and pilfered some workshop equipment. The dog's kennel was an engine cowl, and a month ago we found a bloke using an engine generator as an arc welder."

The jovial mood in the hangar quietened to deep respect when silver-haired Eric stood to speak. "I won't bore you with any long, flowery speech," he said, "but I thought I might

(continued on page 28)



NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY JAY H. JEFFRIES, JR. AND JULIAN K. WILSON

We have survived another winter! Those of us on the West Coast saw more rain than we hoped for, while those to the East chilled our El Niño burdened storms down to create worse havoc! To our knowledge, you have escaped the ice storms, tornados, low temps, and record snowfalls in reasonably good shape! We look forward to the year 1998 and the things it will bring; mostly good, we hope!

By the time this issue of the *Journal* gets mailed out, it should contain the good news that our dream of funding a bronze model of our B-24 was carried to a successful conclusion, and there should be all the special instructions you need to participate in the dedication of our replica on the grounds of the Air Force Academy. Information in our hands at this time shows the date for this to be September 25, 1998. Ample rooms in the Colorado Springs area have been reserved. We know of several 453rd members who will be in attendance.

Plans are underway for the 453rd stand-alone group reunion to be held this year in the Boston area. Because no contracts have as yet been signed for our housing and meals, we are not going to report any specific dates at this point. Changes always seem to be the rule rather than the exception, and we do not want a repeat of any of the inconveniences due to date changes that we have had in the past. It does seem that it is more likely that our reunion dates will involve the first week of November.

You will all be sent an invitation to participate, which will contain all of the details as soon as we can get signed contracts. FRANCIS KYLE's projections for the reunion intend to capitalize on its Greater Boston area potential as being of prime historical interest.

The end of February found fourteen 453rd members at the Southern California 2ADA Regional Dinner. This included WIB & DIANA CLINGAN, JAY & ANNA JANE JEFFRIES, WENDELL & GRETA JESKE, ALBERT &

JEANNE THOMALE, ALEX & TOOTIE WALLACE, GEORGE & HELEN WIGFIELD, AND WILLIE & MARY JEAN WILSON. We missed the company of some of our "old" regulars conspicuous by their absence. We hope to see you all at our next opportunity.

You know it is a funny, small world when, after fifty-six years, you find yourself seated at a 2ADA dinner next to a fellow who had worked just a few feet away from you on an aircraft assembly line. AL THOMALE was working on the mating jig connecting the twin booms to the center section of the P-38 at Lockheed, while I (JKW) worked at the first station after the nucleus unit had been put on the carrier that took the P-38 on down the assembly line. That was in the days before we were each inducted and ended up in the 453rd at Old Buck together. Al, with his wife, JEANNE, lives in Mira Loma. He brought and distributed some great 8 x 10 black and white photos of Jimmy Stewart in a candid pose. The theme of the evening centered on a tribute to Jimmy Stewart.

Our elder statesman, ANDY LOW, was to have been a featured speaker at the dinner along with DEL MANN. For reasons not known to us, Andy found that he could not make the journey from his winter home of ice and snow to join us in this land of sun and blue skies. We had looked forward to seeing Andy again, and hope he will be able to make it to many other 2ADA functions in the future.

HARRY GODGES reported by phone that he had a malfunctioning hip that required a recall. Got a new one around February 8th. PAT RAMM has been in touch with us. He reports the completion of two projects of our concern. The task of creating a name plate for WALTER CHAMBERS has been completed with the aid of JULIAN GOODEY, to whom we express our thanks for his help. That name plate will take its place along with the 365 others who are our honored dead, on the Roll of Honor in the

Memorial Wing of the Old Buckenham Village Hall. Pat also reports that the memorial plaque for the church wall of Carleton Rode is now completed. This commemorates the loss of the 453rd crew piloted by Lt. Rollins, all of whom perished in the mid-air collision over that area.

We continue to profit from, and be indebted to, both PAT and AGNES RAMM, who seem to be always concerned about and involved with our projects over there. Thank you two so very much!

EVELYN COHEN called to request that we submit our design to her for our group insignia to appear on a banner. This banner is to fly along with the banners of the other 2AD groups in the museum in Savannah. Because our membership voted to adopt the design that appears at the masthead of this column, we have submitted the same design to appear on our banner. It should look great!

The initial group of old 4" x 5" negatives, selected en masse, at random, have been processed for us by FRED FOWLER of the 44th BG. Fred did a great job, customizing each print as each of the negatives was placed in his enlarger. Thank you, Fred! After the "winter" in Florida ends, and DON OLDS scurries back to Rolla, MO, he will send another portion of the old negatives to Fred for enlarging/printing. The first group of 112 negatives produced some good quality 5" x 7" prints. I'm sure that you will see some of them in our newsletter, and in albums at our conventions and reunion gatherings.

I (JKW) called FRANK PARKER, who had been assigned to the 453rd Photo Section. I had hoped that he might know more about the source of these old negatives, or that he might have some himself. No luck there, but he did remind me that FRANK FLUHARTY and FRANCIS KYLE had also been photo guys. Parker is looking for CHARLEY WISE. If you have any info about Charley, please let us know so that we can get these two together.

Since our last column we have had numerous cards, notes or phone calls from our 453rd comrades and friends, but we would still like to hear from more of you. What you do is important to us! Take care! ■



Open Letter to the 93rd

HARDWICK • BY ALFRED ASCH

We were all saddened by the news of Paul Steichen's passing away on January 28, 1998. He was our Group President and did a great deal for the 93rd. My first relationship with Paul was a few years ago when he vigorously opposed the local people around our WWII base, Hardwick, England, who wanted to turn it into a refuge dump. It now has a fine museum about the 93rd Bomb Group, maintained by Paul Thrower and Bob Woodrow. Another major contribution was Paul starting our newsletter, *Ball of Fire*, which has been a great medium for holding us together. Paul was laid to rest in his hometown of Dwight,

Illinois. I was pleased that Cal and Peggy Stewart attended the funeral services from their home in Lincoln, Nebraska, as did Cal Davidson and Dick Glauner from Ohio. I received a letter from the Steichen family expressing their appreciation for the thoughtfulness, saying that it made it a little easier for the family to accept the loss of Paul. The Air Force provided military honors for the services. Let me add my thanks for his fine representation for all of us of the 93rd. Paul and I worked well together; I shall certainly miss him as all of us will.

We are making good progress with the B-24

Bronze Model for the USAF Academy and are close to having \$150,000 to meet the contract requirements for the sculptor, Robert Henderson. I have given more progress details elsewhere in this *Journal*. However, I want to add that the 93rd did exceptionally well. I have over 40 names that will be on the large plaque to be attached to the pedestal of the B-24 model. This required a contribution of \$450.00 or more for each name. There are another ten persons who contributed a lesser amount; their names will appear in the Book of Remembrance. I learned our members deeply care about each other. For example, 17 honorees were sponsored by others. We are showing two who received the Medal of Honor and 13 who were on the low altitude raid against the oil refineries at Ploesti on 1 August 1943. The 93rd has indeed made a good showing. ■

You have no doubt noticed that I have been using the HQ page in the *Journal* to reproduce some items about our time in the 2nd Air Division and some other things that have happened over the years since then. This is partly because I think these items should be on file for posterity and partly because you have not sent me enough about your own experiences to fill up both the *Journal* and the HQ Newsletter.

On April 28, 1972, **GENERAL KEPNER** wrote letters to The Lord Mayor of Norwich, the Chairman of the Board of Governors, and the Lord Bishop of Norfolk. They were handwritten and they are now in the archives of the Memorial Library. I thought you might be interested in reading them, so I am including one with this issue and plan to print the others in the future.

*The Lord Mayor of Norwich,
Norwich, Norfolk, England*

My Lord Mayor,

Once again the veterans of the 2nd Air Division, 8th USAF, are returning to Norwich, our temporary home area of World War II. I am sure all our members will experience many mixed emotions and vivid memories when the once familiar war locations are again visited.

Our months and years of contact with our English brothers in arms will always be remembered as a pleasant 'interlude' in an otherwise very grim period. The loyalty of our respective countries for each other, and the loss by the 2nd Air Division of more than six thousand American sons, must never be forgotten. Because greater love hath no one, than that one will lay down his life for others.

As the 2nd Air Division gathers in our second reunion in Norwich, we shall enjoy meeting old friends. However, let us recall that the great blessings we enjoy today were made possible by the war sacrifices of each one that participated and especially by those who did not return from battle.

It is with extreme regret that my personal situation involving family [and] health, that I cannot overcome does not permit my return with my former war command. Yet I shall be there in spirit with the 2nd Air Division in all the reunion activities.

May I again thank all concerned for the great assistance always given by Norwich and all counties where we were located, to our Second Air Division throughout our sojourn there during the war. Also for permitting our "Memorial" to occupy so prominent a place in your City Library. And for the most excellent management of our funds by that superior group, the Board of Governors, who, together with city officials, made it possible.

Moreover I am especially grateful for the privilege and high honor of being elected an Hon. Freeman of Norwich. I pray that I can always merit it, for I am —

*Sincerely,
William E. Kepner
Lt. General U.S.A.F. (Ret.)
D.S.C. C.B. D.S.M.*

DIVISION



BY RAY STRONG

Here is another of **ALLEN (JACK) NYE**'s memories which he calls *Cribbage, Anyone . . .*

"A triangle-shaped cribbage board sits upon the mantle of my fireplace, the only one of its style I've ever seen. While getting acquainted at the Horsham St. Faith officers' mess in June 1943, I observed, with pleasure, that several members played cribbage. That was a game which was taught me by my grandfather and which I played with my father, and which, a few years later, I taught my wife while we were on our honeymoon. The game was also played in many English pubs.

"No one told me what was in the envelopes, but I am quite sure they contained the special orders concerning the invasion [of Normandy] that occurred a few days later."

"During one of my first visits to the antique shops of Norwich, I found a beautiful old cribbage board made in the form of a hinged box which when unfolded into a cribbage board. It was decorated generously with mother-of-pearl inlays. Great gift for my future father-in-law. A few months later I found the triangular board which basically is three walnut pieces about one inch wide which had been joined in the form of a triangle. It was beautifully inlaid with ivory pieces and strips of light-colored woods. It enabled three people playing the game, which was impossible using the conventional board. My purchase delighted two of my friends, **ROY SINE** and **MILLER MORAN**. One night we played in Roy's quarters at Ketteringham Hall (field grade officers' quarters were furnished with a table). I kept losing, and when they were into me for fifty dollars, I quit and paid up. They laughed heartily, and Roy poured more drinks.

"The following day I mulled over the possibility that two could conspire against the third player. I concluded that it could be done easily, but decided that these two good friends surely would not do that to me. I recovered my money while playing conventional two-handed cribbage. I sent the triangular board off in the mail. It made a great gift."

And the following came from **ERWIN W. EGGLESTON** who was the Radio Engineering Officer in the Communications Section and worked under Lt. Col. James R. Clarke. He says: "I assisted the bomb groups in setting up their radio maintenance programs and in dealing with the depot. I climbed in and out of nearly every aircraft we had. Worked out the changes required to install a new in-

tercom in all of our aircraft and arranged with the depot to do the modifications. As the new groups began flying, I worked in the Combat Operations Section, preparing paragraph 5 of the Field Orders. This was in addition to my regular job of keeping track of radio maintenance. One special project was to check out and train a signal company crew to go to the continent and operate a landing aid that was used to mark the front line of the ground troops, so that the bombs would not be dropped short. This crew, from our HQ, was so close to the front that they crossed the Remagen Bridge before it collapsed.

"Memorable incident: I will mention two. I was on duty and prepared Paragraph 5 of the Field Order for the first raid on Berlin. This raid was by our own 2nd Air Division. But the most interesting assignment that I had happened a few weeks before the invasion of Normandy. I happened to be on duty in the Operations Section when we planned a special practice Field Order for support of the invasion. The targets were in the Low Countries, where the supposed landings were to take

place. After putting the targets and routes on the map, I pointed to Normandy and remarked, 'There is where the real invasion will be.' A few days later, I was called in by Lt. Col. Clarke, Head of the Communications Section, told to report to the Operations Office for a special assignment, and instructed not to mention it to anyone. I was given sealed envelopes which were addressed to the COs of each wing and group, along with a 45 cal. sidearm. I was instructed to deliver these envelopes to each CO, and to him only, in person, and guard them even if I had to use the sidearm. I was to ride in the "Mail Run" jeep. I returned to the Operations Office each morning to receive the envelopes for that day. The assignment took three days to cover all the wings and groups. I delivered all the envelopes without incident. But one morning we encountered such heavy bicycle traffic in Norwich that we had to stop. I got a little edgy when we stopped in the crowded street. No one told me what was in the envelopes, but I am quite sure they contained the special orders concerning the invasion that occurred a few days later. Why was I selected for this assignment? I don't know, except that I was one of the few people at HQ who had a Secret clearance, and I was one of the people who could travel to all the bases without raising any questions, since I traveled to the bases routinely as part of my job. I kept the secret well and it was many years after the war ended before I told anyone of this assignment."

That is all for this issue. If you can come up with some of your own experiences, I would be glad to put them in either the *Journal* or the HQ Newsletter. ■

LAST LIB DOWN UNDER (continued)

read you a postwar quote from a high-ranking officer of the defeated Japanese Air Force. It reads: 'All was going well with the Japanese war effort until one single aircraft — the Liberator — was brought into service. The capacity of these aircraft to fly the distance and carry an effective bomb-load brought the fight back to us, eventually turning the tide and forcing our ultimate withdrawal.' His passion stirring, Eric continued: "What you see before you today is testimony to a lot of guts, determination, and hard work, just like what our boys showed in those dark hours of conflict."

→ → → →

I remember my dad describing the days after the war, when he had unceremoniously hacked Liberators to pieces at Tocumwal for my grandfather's die-casting business. Most of them ended up in smelters where aluminum was recovered from the hulks. Other useful components such as wheels and tyres were sold off, mostly to farmers.

My mother also recounted tales of seeing some of the ex-servicemen wandering around the vast graveyard where the battle-weary planes sat wingtip to wingtip. She described how they searched for their old aircraft as if looking for an old mate.

For Eric, Bob, and the other fund members, the search is nearly over — they've found an old mate and, in doing so, have captured a fragment of our history among the pieces of this giant jigsaw.

→ → → →

Stuart Grant and Australian Geographic thank Michael Nemes and John White from the Military Technology Section of the Australian War Memorial, Clive Lynch and other members of the B-24 Liberator Memorial Fund Inc. for their help with this article. Stuart dedicated this article to his late father, Ken.

The search for pieces of the jigsaw goes on. Readers who believe they know where more Liberator parts may be found can write to: Eric Clark, First Floor, 88 St Kilda Rd, St Kilda, Vic. 3182, Australia; or Colin Grey, PO Box 34, Cowes, Vic. 3922, Australia. ■

VEL DUN!

"Euro-English" As She Is Spoke!

The following item was published in the *Vancouver Sun* on 7th June, 1997, sent in by reader Mrs. Joan Monteith of Armstrong, BC, Canada:

The European Union commissioners have announced that agreement has been reached to adopt English as the preferred language for European communications, rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, Her Majesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a five-year phased plan for what will be known as Euro-English ("Euro" for short).

In the first year, "s" will be used instead of the soft "c." Certainly, sivil servants will resieve this news with joy. Also, the hard "c" will be replaced with "k." Not only will this klear up konfusion, but typewriters kan have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year, when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced by "f." This will make words like "fotograf" 20 per sent shorter.

In the third year, publik akseptance of the new spelling kan be ekspekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkorage the removal of double letters, which have always been a deterrent to akurate spellimg. Also, al wil agre that the horrible mes of silent "e"s in the languag is disgrasful, and they would go.

By the fourth year, peopl will be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" by "z" and "w" by "v."

During ze fifz year, se unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou," and similar changes vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters.

After ze fifz yer, ve vil hav a reli sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubls or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech ozer.

Ze drem vil finali kum tru!

Editor's Note: When the "Plantations" won their independence, Congress in its vindictive mood voted in Latin as the official language, then found out no one could speak it; so they considered German. Spoken by a small minority, it lost out by a vote! Finally they left the tinkering of the English language to Webster and the Chicago Tribune . . . now it is the Brit's turn not to let "usage" be the guide. Will the U.S.A. and the Commonwealth Countries be the last repository of English, just as we are destined to be the last repository of the inch and the pound? ■

NEW MEMBERS OF THE SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

44th

Terrance D. Olson (AM)
Frank H. Solatka (AM)
Robert Ann Stroh (AM)

93rd

Louis E. Del Guidice
Bernard M. Haverkamp
Clarence M. Howze
Jim McMahon
Louis A. Webb
Kevin D. McLaughlin (AM)

389th

Percy E. Davies
Henry V. Eastman
Tom Foree
Max M. Hullinger
John J. Jendricks

Stanley Kupecki

Arthur L. Larrance
Albert S. Lineberry, Sr.
Val D. Mann
Norbert J. Pope
John A. Ritchie
William G. Stetson, Jr.
Vernon D. Svec
William J. Winter (44th)

392nd

George A. Hoffman
Edward G. Janak
Irwin F. Thompson
Blanche Keilman (AM)

445th

Richard J. Brandt

446th

Jane A. Reed (AM)

448th

Gerard A. Flederbacher
John B. Reynolds
Thomas S. McDaniel (AM)

458th

John A. O'Brien
Ralph H. Stowe
Frank J. Monaghan (AM)

466th

James H. Brooks
Salvatore F. Cuttitta
Michael M. Scali, Jr. (389, 453)

489th

Russell Davis
Harold C. Ingram

492nd

Warren G. Branch, Jr.
Donald A. Plunkett
William H. Garside (44th)
Joseph Grossman (AM)

SM

Roland Bridge
B.J. Hardin
Bill Holling
Maj. John Pasciutti (Ret.)
Larry Rodbard
Alfonso L. Valori

Who Was "ASBESTOS ALICE" – REALLY ???

BY DICK GELVIN (445TH)

My curiosity was first piqued by the fact that whenever I inquired of any of the guys associated with our outfit if they knew the story about where "Asbestos Alice" came from, the answer was always, "Oh, that was the 700th Squadron logo!" Since I knew there was more to the story, I set out to find answers to the questions I still had in my own mind.

My very first discovery was, that of the original Merrill crew, I seemed to be the only survivor. Items of memorabilia in my possession reached beyond my chronic suffering from "having a whole series of senior moments," to remind me of events and crucial dates.

I still have my original patch that has far outlived my A-2 jacket; my own mission history supported by my Form 5; and records of several crucial events that had taken place to those many years ago.

I was but one member of Lt. Joseph D. Salisbury's replacement crew arriving at Tihenham in late April of 1944. Having received my baptism of fire on D-Day, I completed only three missions with that crew before, through a series of circumstances, I found myself on a lead crew commanded by one Captain Lewis P. Merrill.

It took me only a very short time to discover that when on a mission, the Merrill crew was all business. When left to our own devices (with or without an airplane), events could usually be defined as "monkey business." The attitude here was, "We may not live long, but in the meantime, let's have fun and not worry about it!" I flew 17 missions (not to mention countless hours of lead aircraft testing) on the Merrill crew, and every one of them was a memorable event.

Along the way I learned that our copilot, Lt. Herbert B. Harrington, was something of a doodling artist. One of his favorite subjects was that of a very young doe (of the small deer variety). This subject would sometimes even show up on the back of a pilot's flimsy with wide eyes and coming to a screeching halt in front of the OC; or simply standing, with angel wings fluttering, a smile on the lips and coy eyes closed, waiting for its "young love" to come out and play.

I don't remember who, but one of our guys suggested Herb come up with a distinctive logo to serve as a crew member ID. Also, since lead crews were assigned their own airplane (in our case, "Displease D-Dog"), have it added thereto as new and registered "nose art." Not more than a week or ten days later, Herb came to the flight line with his original artwork and asking for the crew's opinions.

That was the original patch, a white doe with wings, coy eyes, skidding to a stop on top of a blue bomb and all on a red background, the shape of a fleecy cloud and bordered with black. I honestly cannot recall whether or not the lettering was in place at that time.



According to *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force — World War* (page 706), the logo was "approved" as the 700th Squadron insignia on 24 August 1944. This statement is in error because the approval was for a crew identification patch, also to be added in the form of "nose art" to their particular aircraft. No one, including myself, noticed that this published artwork did not have any lettering on the bomb, but copies were placed on the various squadron bulletin boards along with the notice of approval.

Sometime between this public display and the ordering of jacket patches another idea was injected into the finished product. After all these years and without other supporting evidence, we can only speculate as to how it occurred. In any case, the original order was for 11 patches. Being only a ten-man lead crew, we ordered one for the yet-to-be-assigned radar navigator. When the patches arrived, we all chipped in, paid the £5 bill and headed for the parachute repair shop to get them sewn onto our A-2s and at the same time making final arrangements to have the nose art applied to D-Dog on the very first day the group "artist" and airplane had some idle time.

The time frame in which all this took place is somewhat hazy, but one fact of importance was that Lew Merrill finished his last mission on the 13th of September and was out of there! Another story for another time. Capt. Charles L. Walker, past president of our 2ADA, sent me a photograph of the two of them outside his hut with Lew wearing his A-2 which sports the new patch, including lettering.

Just prior to the Kassel Mission Memorial Reunion in Dayton, Ohio on 27 September 1996, my letter to the editor was published in the 2ADA *Journal* wherein I asked for some help from anyone who might contribute to pumping up the now very cloudy "memory bank."

A gentleman named Harry Tachovsky called me on the telephone, sounding all out of breath and totally excited about the fact that he could "tell the whole story behind the 'Asbestos Alice' patch and where it came from." We decided to meet in Dayton and clear up the whole thing. Harry thought he had the

whole story and I hoped to put the missing pieces into place and provide the true story of how "Asbestos Alice" really came about.

When we met in Dayton, Harry explained to me that on the Kassel mission flown 27 September 1944, he had been a waist gunner on Lt. Ralph H. Pearson's crew, flying his 29th with just one more to go. He then proceeded to explain how, after seeing the logo rendition on the NCO bulletin board, he made a tracing of what was there and then adding the lettering, "Alice" being the name of his girlfriend back home. He recalls "showing it around some" at the time, but had no difficulty at all in showing me the original V-Mail letter which he mailed to Alice on September 22nd. Lt. Pearson and his crew, flying B-24J 42-10497 (Displease P-Peter) was in the lead position of the low left element of the lead squadron and became one of the casualties of that infamous mission.

Being shot down and becoming a guest of the Third Reich, while being a memorable time, happily did not prove to be Harry's demise. Following his liberation and, as he tells it, walking from Stalag Luft IV on the Baltic Sea just outside of Koszalin, Poland all the way back to the States, he married Alice on October 20, 1945. Even after fifty plus years he's still trying to explain how he associated her with a flying jackass.

Following our meeting in Dayton, we both went away scratching our respective heads and still unable to explain how "Asbestos Alice" came to be added to the artwork before the original eleven patches were made. There is, however, no doubt in my mind that the idea of the addition was, in fact, that of Harry Tachovsky!

While the nose art had not yet been added to our airplane, B-24J 42-50784 became "Alice" to the Merrill crew. In Lew's absence, on September 12th Captain John T. Burke flew the bird and its crew as a lead pilot for reasons only he and I know (Hannover/oil refineries), thereby earning the eleventh patch. The next day, Lew finished his tour with his own crew (Ulm/More refineries) which was then split up and "Alice," still without her nose art adornment, was reassigned to Lt. John E. French.

Leading the right element of the lead squadron to Kassel on September 27th, Lt. French and his crew, though heavily damaged, did manage to crash-land at a P-47 base in France. Even though none of French's crew were badly wounded, the aircraft was scrapped on the spot, and thus never did get to "show its true colors." (Note: The right waist gunner on Lt. French's crew that eventful day was S/Sgt. Charles A. Huddleston, who was an original member of the Lt. Salisbury crew along with the author. He was credited with two enemy aircraft shot down on the mission.)

(continued on page 30)



392nd B.G.

BY J. FRED THOMAS

Retired Col. Myron H. Keilman has died at age 81 after waging a valiant battle with cancer for two and a half years. In January he sent word to his close friends that he was on final approach and losing airspeed and altitude. He made his final landing and roll out at 2330 hours on February 13, 1998. The 392nd Bomb Group and the Second Air Division have taken a big hit. Retired Col. Lawrence Gilbert wrote it well. He wrote: "He was truly one of a kind and a heavy loss for the 392nd BG. He was one of our 'originals' and a more dedicated person to the best interests of the Group I would be hard pressed to name. He will be missed in many, many ways."

It was a duty and honor that Elva and I attended the rosary and funeral services for Myron at St. Lawrence Catholic Church at North Highlands near Sacramento on February 20 and 21. We joined 2ADA President, and 392nd BG member, Oak Mackey and Maxine, as well as other 392nd BG members: Don and Anne Clover, William S. and Mrs. Long, Roland Saybourn, Charles Neundorf, Harry White, and Robert Berger who attended to pay tribute. The Keilman family asked that donations be made to Mercy Hospice in Myron's name in lieu of flowers, but it was mandatory that a suitable wreath and arrangement be there from the 392nd BG members. Other beautiful arrangements were sent by Dorothy and Willis Miller, the Rothlocks, the Bill Cetins, Phyllis DuBois, and the J. Fred Thomas crew.

Myron Keilman flew 43 missions during two tours as C.O. of the 579th Squadron in the 392nd BG at Wendling. He remained in the Air Force, and later flew 50 night missions in the B-26 during the Korean War. Among his awards were four DFCs, two Bronze Stars, eight Air Medals, and two French Croix de Guerres.

No doubt, his record was outstanding. However, I choose to remember Myron as a friend and supporter. I knew Myron briefly during my tour with the 579th Squadron. I saw him last in England in August 1944 when he passed through Stone on his way home for leave before returning for his second tour. It would be at the San Diego 2ADA reunion in 1978 before we would see him again. The manner in which he greeted us, you would have thought it was only a month ago when we last saw him. Of course, it was the rare exception when Myron treated anyone otherwise. Over the years, especially after we became active in the 2ADA,

we attended several of the Sacramento area 392nd BG picnics at the Keilman home and other homes. Also, we were together at a number of 2ADA reunions and 392nd BG group dinners. Further, we saw Myron and Blanche during their annual visits to the Southern California area, but best of all, we spent four days near their summer cabin in Montana a few years back. We saw him last at the Irvine convention last May before he had to return home on account of illness. All the while, I never failed to have Myron's support in any project or fundraising involving the 2ADA or the 392nd BG. Even in his last months, he was helping us with the "Bronze B-24" collection. That support and friendship was truly appreciated. I'm not sure but that it is irreplaceable. The whole Second Air Division and its friends have suffered a great loss.

In re the Bronze B-24 project, Myron had donated \$100. As a further tribute, Willis Miller, Dick Hoover, Larry Bachman, Roland Saybourn, Oak Mackey, Cliff Peterson, Larry Gilbert, and I built Myron's contribution to over \$500 so as to have his name in the 392nd BG space on the plaque by the B-24 replica at the Air Force Academy. I'm sure many others would have donated in his name had they the opportunity. We know of no other who is more deserving of having his name on that plaque.

We have exchanged e-mail with Phyllis DuBois on several occasions. Myron had arranged with Phyllis for her to catalogue and archive his large and valuable collection of WWII records. In her last message, she asked me to mention to our members that Myron had sent his records to her, and she will be processing the information for various researchers and for the database at the 8th AF Heritage Museum in Savannah. She writes, "This is what he wanted me to do and the whole collection is full of little helpful notes that will guide me through his system when I start to work on this material." Anyone desiring to contact Phyllis about the project can reach her at: 22 Hungate St. - Aylsham - Norwich NR11 6AA - England. E-mail: dubois@netmatters.co.uk

Otherwise, as will be the case for a while yet, the world has marched on toward whatever. Our annual Southern California reunion dinner was held at El Toro MAS on February 28, another success with about 300 persons attending. We had about 28 men and ladies attend from our 392nd BG. We heard a number of toasts being given in the memory of Myron Keilman. There was a bit of humor there, although it was probably unnoticed. I was asked to get the members of the candle-lighting ceremony in proper order and sequence. When three scheduled lighters failed to show up, I pressed into service members

from the crowd and gave them an alias. I'm not sure the master of ceremonies understood, but the crowd didn't notice.

If you read what I write, you will remember my rather scathing remarks in the Winter issue of the *Journal* about the lack of B-24 articles at the Duxford PX at the time of the dedication of the American Air Museum there. Also, I had nothing good to say about the scrap of an old B-24 in the museum named "Fightin' Sam." I won't go into detail for lack of space, but there were some extenuating circumstances in both instances. I've written two letters to explain my discontent. I still don't like the scrap of the B-24 at the museum, but there really was a plane named "Fightin' Sam," from the 389th BG, I believe. Ironically, it was lost in a collision with a plane from, of all groups, the 392nd. It is very likely that there will be a letter to the editor in this issue with a picture of "Fightin' Sam" and reference to what I wrote last fall. I liked the line, "Is Fred trying to wind us up?" It's like the song "Some Days a 'Gitar' Picker Don't Know What To Pick." Some days a writer doesn't know what to write. I expect I'm in good company.

We send our deepest sympathy to the family of Joe C. Johnson, who went West last November. We had helped Joe get in touch with his crew and met him out here in 1996. Another good man missing.

On the other hand, we welcome the new members: Gerald B. Jones, George C. Player, Jr., Henry M. Propper, Anne F. Mackey, and Irwin F. Thompson. We are at your service. We will look to see you and many other 392nd BG members at Oak Brook in May. ■

"ASBESTOS ALICE" (continued)

By the end of the year all of the original Merrill lead crew members had completed their respective tours and returned to the ZOI for reassignment. At the time the group was reorganized following the Kassel disaster, Johnny Burke became the 700th Squadron C.O. In the spring of 1997, by way of a telephone conversation, John told me that a contest was held to find a suitable logo for the squadron. The "Alice" rendition surfaced and, being unanimously accepted by all present squadron members, was submitted as the Organizational Insignia of the 700th Bombardment Squadron.

At that time, it was painted on every aircraft in the squadron and, by those who didn't know the whole story, became reverently spoken of as "The 700th Squadron Logo."

AND THAT IS "THE REST OF THE STORY"!! ■



491st BOMB GROUP

POSTREMUM ET OPTIMUM

the RINGMASTER REPORTS

BY JOHN D. LEPPERT

MISSION REMEMBERED

On 9/18/44 the 2nd Air Division's primary mission was to Holland to support "Market Garden" with the dropping of supplies to the paratroops on the ground there. The 491st Bombardment Group went to the Eindhoven, Holland area. This was a low altitude mission and we had orders not to shoot so as not to endanger the Dutch citizens. The Germans hit us with everything they had, and we were an easy target. The 491st lost two B-24s in the drop zone and four more upon return to England. (41 B-24s were in the 491st mission.)

The loss of one crew in particular, Hunter, became a lasting memory for the Dutch citizens in the area. The Hunter B-24 went down with nine men KIA and one survivor, Frank DiPalma. Witnesses at the crash site observed Frank DiPalma coming out the right waist window in flames. Frank was immediately cared for by a doctor. He was severely injured with burns. The doctors managed to keep him out of German hands until the area was liberated by the British on 10/26/44. He was then flown to a hospital in Belgium and from there to Oxford in England. Frank survived the crash but could not remember whether he was thrown out by the impact or scrambled his way out. (Note: Frank died about three years ago.)

In Groesbeek (southern Holland) there is a "Liberation Museum" dedicated to the liberation of the Netherlands in October 1944. The B-24 and in particular the James Hunter crew are well remembered in this museum. In the spring of 1997 a 1/10th size model of the B-24 flown by the Hunter crew was placed in the museum. The model's history is very interesting.

Tom and Steve Fontain were young children living in Nijmegen during the war. In the early fall of 1944 their home was hit by German shells, killing their father. (Tom was nine years old.) From then on they lived in a cellar. After liberation, the Fontain brothers became interested in model airplanes. Then they became interested in the B-24 plane that went down near Udenhout. They researched the event, gaining a lot of information on the crew and the missions. They also contacted Frank DiPalma, the only survivor of the Hunter crew. Steve Fontain started the project of build-



ing a model of the 491st airplane. Steve died and Tom Fontain took up the project, even though he now lived in New Zealand. Tom completed the project in early 1997 (see the picture) and shipped it to Holland, and it should now be installed in the museum.

The *Daily Telegraph* newspaper in New Zealand carried a full page article with pictures telling about the mission and the model project. In addition, in September 1996 the "Liberation Museum" put out a booklet of 14 pages telling the full story of the James Hunter crew and its last mission. Further, they have honored the entire crew with their names on a Roll of Honor: Captain James K. Hunter, pilot; Captain Anthony B. Mitchell, copilot; Lt. Harry B. Parker, navigator; Lt. John R. Granat, bombardier; Lt. William H. Byrne, nose gunner; T/Sgt. Cecil E. Hutson, engineer; T/Sgt. Barto J. Montalbano, radio operator; S/Sgt. James L. Evers, waist gunner; and Pfc. George E. Parrish, dropmaster. (Note: The museum shows that all but the last three on the above list were buried in Margraten. The last three were returned to the U.S.)

53 YEARS LATER

Harry Stephey, former C.O. of the 853rd Bomb Squadron of the 491st Bomb Group, met with Bill Shoemaker, former squadron navigator of the 853rd. Both Harry and Bill served with the 17th Anti-Submarine Squadron in Florida and Cuba before it became a



part of the 491st. The photo below was taken when they met in Fort Myers, Florida in February for lunch and a look back. We expect to see both of them in Tucson for our group reunion in November.

THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM

During a recent visit to the museum and talking with Buck Schuler, some needs were identified. They need our continuing help.

First, they need us all to become life members. It's a very reasonable investment; only \$350.00, and that covers your family when they visit the museum with you, along with other benefits.

Also, they are starting to assemble memorabilia from veterans of the 8th after WWII; i.e. Korea, Vietnam, the Cold War. Many of you have items from these times, and the museum would like to have them on loan. You don't lose them; you just make them available to everyone. Or maybe you know some of the airline pilots of today who served in the 8th. Make them aware of our museum and invite them to join us.

Remember those "good buddy" crews that you flew with or who were on planes that you serviced? Some were shot down and never heard from again. Want to remember them? A good way to do this is to place a memorial at the Wall of Valor in the Memorial Gardens at the Heritage Museum. For about \$100.00 you can remember that crew and honor them. For example: "Dean Strain Crew, KIA, 1/17/45, Harberg, Germany."

Another way you can assist our Heritage Museum is to give of your time. Many former 8th Air Force veterans from the Savannah area do that now. You can go to Savannah and contribute your knowledge and experience to the many visitors. Call Wayne Corbett, Director of Public Relations, to arrange your visit. Of course you must pay your own way, but motels close to the museum are reasonable and lots of good restaurants are in the area. ■

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
BY AUD RISLEY



As I write this it is early March and too early for us. We just returned from two months in Florida, where the weather wasn't spectacular, but at least we didn't have to shovel it. Typically in Illinois we get our big snow just as we thought spring was sneaking up on us.

During our Florida vacation one morning as I sat on the porch (*lanai* in Florida-ese) reading the newspaper, a fellow walked up and introduced himself as **ED GORE**, a member of the 467th BG, from Westfield, New Jersey, and as luck would have it, an avid golfer. Several golf outings came about and a new friend was made, all because of the 2ADA sticker on my car. I look forward to seeing this new friend next year in Florida and also at future 2ADA meetings.

Of course it is a known fact that you meet many interesting people in bars. And it happened! Off the beaten path in Cortez, Florida, we selected a bar to rest in and figure out where we were, when a man approached us with some spectacular onion rings to share. We munched and chatted. His brother, **JACK STRICKLAND**, was a co-pilot in the 704th BS at Flixton. Jack had been a pilot on one of those other heavies over there.

We had a great visit with good food and drinks. We will go back to that place just to see him, and we have added him to our list of people we have met because of the 2nd Air Division Association.

Talking about good times reminds me of the sadness we felt when we received notification of 446ers who have died in the past months. Remember the good times we had in San Antonio last May with **JIM LONGSTRETH** and **WALT SEWITZKY**, long and active members of the 446th BG Association who sadly died shortly after the reunion? We remember them as 446ers who liked to have a good time and who were good friends to all who knew them.

Other 446ers who have died are **WILFRED FRIGGE** and **MAX E. VAN HORN**. As we lose our good friends, we realize how important our memories are to us. Don't miss a chance to make more memories to enjoy down the road as our numbers decrease.

BILL DAVENPORT and his wife **JEAN** recently attended the local California 2ADA affair. Thanks for the e-mail, Bill. He reports that more than 300 attended.

SMOE or S.M.O.E. as mentioned in the Winter issue of the *Journal*, as **ERNIE BARBER** said, stands for "SAD MEN OF EUROPE." Apparently **FRED BREUNINGER** has a different idea. He says when the 446th BG reassembled after VE Day at Sioux Falls, South Dakota, they saw SMOE for the first time . . . messages scribbled on just about anything, Fred says, such as "SMOE sat at this table," "SMOE shaved with this mirror," and more. And **FRANK "HOOT" GIBSON** says he is sure that the little figure started before we were involved in Europe. He says MHO started at radio operator mechanic school in Keesler Field in Mississippi and traveled to other ROM schools and they opened. "The symbol for the ohm (which is the measure of electrical resistance) is [based on] the Greek letter Omega . . . a physical unit of resistance is a resistor drawn thus . . . They took the ohm sign or omega and attached the symbol for the resistor before and immediately after the symbol and placed eyes on the omega. The reciprocal resistance is conductance measured in mho's (pronounced Mo). I supposed they called him MHO because the name sounded better than ohm. In radio school he was always peeking around . . . and ended up with embellishments — noses, mouths, etc. LONG LIVE MHO," says Frank "Hoot" Gibson. Any other interpretations will be noted in future issues of Bungay Bull.

Welcome to new member **BILLY J. MASSEY**, 1350 Beverly Road, McLean, VA 22101, a 446er who recently joined the 2ADA. New members are invited to send me personal information, inquiries and articles to be included in Bungay Bull. (Old members are invited, too!)

From **KEN JOONDEPH**, whose father, **JEROME JOONDEPH**, is from the 704th BS, we received by e-mail an interesting and informative article called "The History of the B-24H-20 (#42-51091) named Bangin' Lulu." The well-prepared and documented 20 page article,

too lengthy for inclusion here, may be available from him. His e-mail address is TEN@revnetx.net

Correspondence from **JIM SCHULTZ** of Mesa, Arizona, who was stationed at Bungay Station 125 from August 21, 1943 to July, 1945, included a poem of his memories of the days in England. Thanks, Jim. See you next year in Arizona.

Thanks for all the news — some via the electronic wonder of our son's e-mail, others the old fashioned way, the U.S. Mail. While I haven't yet figured out the technology of e-mail, keep it coming to rockland.raptors@msn.com; or by U.S. Mail at 682 Slade Ave., Elgin, IL 60120. Call if you like: 847-741-7757.

In closing, from our church newsletter comes this story of three sisters, well into their years, whose minds were slipping a bit:

"One called to her sister from the bathroom and said, 'Emily, I've got one leg in the tub and the other on the floor. Am I getting in or getting out?' 'Oh, for crying out loud!' exclaimed Emily as she rushed up the stairs.

"Suddenly she paused on the landing and said to herself, 'Am I going up or coming down?' The third sister, witnessing all this, said to herself, 'Thank God I am not like those two . . . knock on wood!' which is what she did. She immediately looked up and asked out loud, 'Is that the front door or the back?'"

Enjoy the happy days of spring and summer! ■

The Editor Suggests: Three More Ways To Spend Your Money!!

Buy a 2ADA Roster. A new roster is available, current as of January 22, 1998. \$5.00 includes postage and handling. Make check out to C.N. CHAMBERLAIN, 21055 George Brown Avenue, Riverside, CA 92518.

Fly on a B-24 or B-17 — \$300 per person.

THE COLLINGS FOUNDATION TOUR SCHEDULE:

| | |
|-----------|---|
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| May 13-15 | La Verne CA — Kevin Coolidge, 909-278-0204 |
| May 15-17 | Torrance CA — Nancy Clinton, 310-325-7223 |
| May 17-19 | Monterey CA — Jim Abeloe, 408-484-1492 |
| May 19-22 | San Jose CA — Kory Stendell, 408-379-4807 |
| May 22-24 | Oakland CA — Ron Sathe, 510-487-7249 |
| May 24-26 | Livermore CA — Kevin Ryan, 925-462-4371 |
| May 26-28 | Vacaville CA — Larry Smigla, 707-447-1148 |
| May 28-31 | Sacramento CA — Doug Taggart, 916-443-5684 |
| 31-June 2 | Reno NV — Brian Parise, 702-972-1621 |
| June 2-4 | Chico CA — Diane Schneeweis, 530-893-6727 |
| June 4-6 | Crescent City CA — Dan Brittain, 707-457-3491 |
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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, SEE PAGE 10.

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INTRAV.

THE PX PAGE



Personalized B-24 Prints

Your BG markings are put on the tail. Your nose art is put on the plane. Your crew or individual photo with names. Allow our customers to tell you about their personalized prints . . . The print shown here was done for Bert Betts of the 458th BG. He says, "My personalized print was so realistic that I thought I was again in England finishing my combat tour on D-Day in 'Princess Pat.' The artist has caught the experience so vividly that we gave prints to the entire crew in appreciation for the camaraderie and memories we share." And Larry Bachman of the 392nd says, "There is such realism in your work and a thousand memories for each of us who lived through those days." This is an heirloom that will be appreciated by family members for generations to come. Print is 20" x 28" in full color. Call today for a free sample 5" x 7" color print and prices: 1-800-774-0833, or write to The Peters Group, 2310 Hwy 101 N., Minneapolis, MN 55447.

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"EYES OF THE EIGHTH"

A Story of the 7th
Photographic Reconnaissance
Group 1942-1945

BY PATRICIA FUSSELL KEEN

There have been a great number of books on the subjects of the 8th Air Force bomb groups, fighter groups, and other publications. However, there has never been a book, history or otherwise, on one of the most significant combat organizations of the 8th Air Force — the 7th Photo Recon Group — which performed strategic photographic reconnaissance from early 1943 until the end of the war. Following VE Day, the 7th PRG continued photography of the continent of Europe, recording the results of the bombing campaigns. The group was formally disbanded toward the end of 1945.

This group's contribution to the war effort has never been memorialized. The fact that the very existence of the 7th PRG, and its operations, were unknown to all but a relative few involved in the intelligence aspects of the bombing campaign makes it almost imperative that the appearance of a group history be made known.

This is a massive hardbound book comprising 378 pages of text, photographs, and stories of persons and personalities. 5,693 missions flown by group aircraft are tabulated on 63 of the pages and the index is four pages. There are three full color pages, and a foreword by Roger Freeman, renowned historian of the 8th Air Force.

Publisher: CAVU Publishers, L.L.C., 16810 Boswell Boulevard, Sun City, AZ 85351, tel/fax (602) 972-3991. Price: \$49.00 + \$5.00 shipping and handling in the USA (foreign postage slightly higher).



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When I was a teenager (a long time ago), I remember reading my father's army discharge papers from World War I. Dad was in field artillery, involved in several massive artillery duels in such places as the Ardennes, the Meuse-Argonne, Verdun, Chateau Thierry. I was amazed to read that four and a half million shells had been fired into the Argonne forest, pulverizing the earth, creating mud so deep that men could drown in it when it rained! Definitely not my type of war.

Now, many years later I find myself again hearing of the Ardennes. It is 19 December 1944. It seems that this old, ravished forest is once again swarming with German soldiers and tanks. Thus begins the "Battle of the Bulge."

But, bad news — flying weather is impossible. Dense, choking fog everywhere. Regardless, 8th Air Force bombers were sent to smash the Germans. On 23 December 1944 a small force of only 423 bombers was dispatched. This was to be our fourth mission. The target was a major rail junction at Junkerath (or Junkerath), 47 statute miles west of Koblenz, Germany. We were flying a well-worn B-24H, 786th BS, 466th BG. We were carrying 12 x 500 lb. RDX bombs, 6000 pounds of very unstable explosives (developed by the British) which often exploded without fuses! Following the usual pre-dawn, black, foggy instrument take-off, we climbed to 25,000 feet and headed into Germany in a bright, clear sky. Below us, the muck was over 5,000 feet thick.

Then it started. FLAK. A lot of FLAK. More than we had ever seen before. In a word, the flak was intense! The sky was full of black puffs of smoke and German cast iron. Not much we

Perilous Penetration: The Ardennes Battle of the Bulge

BY WILLIAM E. HENDRIX, JR. (466TH)

could do except climb. This we had to do quickly. The flak was very accurate, bursting at our altitude, so close that I could see the fire in the bursting shells. Six shells exploded simultaneously immediately in front of us. Their fire was plainly visible in bright daylight — too close for comfort or safety. Time to get out of that area. We climbed 100 feet, but to no avail. Flak cutting into the airplane sounded like hailstones. This continued for 20 minutes until bombs away. Now we had to fly through the stuff to get back to our lines. No choices, no alternatives. We simply had to take everything the Germans threw at us — and hope that we could survive.

We made it back to base after five hours and forty-five minutes. We had acquired many holes. Believe it or not, a piece of flak a quarter inch thick by one and a quarter inches square penetrated our two-inch thick "bullet-proof" windshield. It hit the copilot just above his right eye (under his flak helmet), didn't break the skin, spun from him and hit me on the right elbow. I picked it up from the flight

deck. It was still warm and is still with me. The copilot was not wounded (or killed) because the flak smashed into the right-hand corner of the windshield frame before it penetrated the windshield. It was spent! We even had a silver dollar sized hole drilled through one of the propeller blades on #3 engine. Very recently, I learned from my right waist gunner that a shell had gone through the radio compartment, bottom to top, but had not exploded! I was not aware of it at that time. Mission #4 could have been to eternity! Again it can be said, "there but for the Grace of God!"

I don't know how many aircraft we lost that day. I was concentrating so hard on dodging flak that there is no memory of seeing any aircraft fall. Surely, with intense flak there had to be some losses. Recently, I saw a car parked in a store parking lot. The rear glass had a large decal which proclaimed "82nd Airborne Division." I approached the driver (a man in his seventies) and asked his status. He was in the battle! Did he see any aircraft shot down? Many, he replied. More than he had ever seen before. His unit had been encircled, but they had broken through the German lines and made it back to Belgium. He was just grateful to get out of that fracas alive.

To this day, I can't see how we got through all that flak without being blown to bits. Guardian angels? Ours had to work overtime that day.

The 466th BG went at it again on 24 December. Big mission this time. My crew and I got to sit this one out. We had already had our baptism to fire. We later heard that the Germans had brought in trainloads of 88 mm guns mounted on flat cars. Concentrated and deadly. ■

"Folded Wings" of the Second Air Division Association

HDQ

Oneta Going Hood
Charles H. Pratt

44th

Robert L. Benedict
James B. Caulfield (492nd)
Robert E. Gjestrum
Donald E. Stroh

93rd

Marion E. Cook
John B. Hurd
Dale E. McLaughlin
John E. Pace
Paul R. Steichen

389th

Robert T. Jones
Dale E. Kearns
Richard W. Scott
Harold F. Sheahan
J.L. Spooner (446th)
Edward R. Teevan
Herbert E. Trulove
Paul Vincent

392nd

Joe C. Johnson
Myron H. Keilman

445th

Carl E. Bally
Kenneth C. Baldwin
Charles L. Cooper
Jack M. Erickson
Harold F. Hartner
Joseph D. Salisbury

446th

William R. Reed
Joseph H. Soder

448th

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Paul E. Homan
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Alvin M. Lusk
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Christopher MacMichael
John M. Short
Jerry Vanerwegen (AM)

491st

George H. Freeman
Guy E. McElhany
Merlin L. Michelson
Shelton J. Wrath

492nd

Wm. H. Creech

SM

John L. Fleming
Theodore Goldfarb



To the editor:

Your Editor's Comments in the Spring *Journal* are really a jewel. If the people who read it don't get the message, they never will. I only wish that the general public would have access to it, especially the younger generation.

Your reference to reading past copies of the *Journal* brings up a thought. There are so many great items in the past issues of the *Journal* that they should be compiled into a bound book. A copy should then be presented to the Smithsonian and other key museums and college libraries or other places of learning in the USA. (Not Europe.) One of our past problems has been that we have not gotten the message out to the growing up generation in the USA. (We all didn't want to talk about it.) It would be a big undertaking at a cost, but it would be a recorded past history that should make the new Upies who run the archives think. Coming from an organization like the 2ADA, it could have some clout when done and distributed at the right time, by the right people of influence. The 2ADA should put their efforts on a PR campaign. Well, it's a thought!

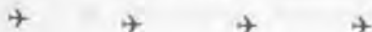
John Harold Robinson (445th)
355 Red Wolf Drive
Collierville, TN 38017-6842



To the editor:

I need information about S/Sgt. George J. LeComte (36-622-318) of the 453rd BG and 1792nd Ord. S and M Co (AVN). S/Sgt. LeComte was with the 453rd from December 1943 to October 1944 when he was transferred to the 15th AF in Italy. He was KIA on a bombing mission on 11 December 1944 over Austria. He also flew some missions from England with the 453rd. Anyone who knew him, please write or call!

Kathy LeComte Lupton
869 Columbia Avenue
Springfield, IL 62704-2342
(217) 787-6512



To the editor:

In the snapshot you can see the smiling faces of four 30-mission veterans and their wives of the Jerry Kincl crew, 389th BG, as we take a break at the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio during our first reunion 28 July 1993. This was the first time I had seen these guys since we landed at Bradley Field in June 1945 on our way home from the ETO. It was quite an experience locating them after all these years (another story for another day), but it was worth the effort. We had a great time visiting and meeting the wives. Four other surviving members of the crew were AWOL that day. The following year we had another reunion with the same people at Fort Wayne, Indiana during their Three River Festival, ably hosted by Bill & Ev Hausman. However, ill health has prevented further reunions.

Now to my complaint. Some of my comrades who have drifted away from the 2ADA complain that "it was always the same old thing in the *Journal*."

When fifteen group VPs go to a meeting,

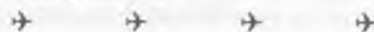
it gets to be monotonous reading each of them reporting on that meeting. I recommend that you allow one or two to detail their experiences and delete remarks from all the others.

I have another recommendation for you to consider: When I served with the 389th, we referred to the other groups by site, such as Old Buck, Attlebridge, etc. It is hard for me to associate them with the number of the group. Can you add the names of the fields in the Directory, so e.g. the entries would read "389th BG (Hethel) . . . Felix Leeton." Also, each VP's report is headed by a logo. Can you tie in the number with the site? The 389th would read "389th Green Dragon Flares from Hethel."

A small thing really, but it may help the rank and file to identify the groups better.

Thaddeus C. Poprawa (389th)
18122 N. Wind Drive
Fraser, Michigan 48026

Ed. Note: It's up to the group VPs . . . What do you think of the idea?



Four members of the Jerry Kincl crew (389th BG) and their wives gathered at the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio. L-R: Bill Hausman (radio operator), Ev Hausman, Ted Poprawa (navigator), Virginia Poprawa, Stan Kupecki (engineer), Pat Kupecki, Sis Wilttrout, Bill Wilttrout (nose gunner).

To the editor:

One of the responsibilities I hold as Deputy Chief Fire Officer of Norfolk Fire Service is a liaison role for museum purposes. In Norfolk we have a very small Fire Museum which holds a number of items related mainly to Norfolk Fire Service, but with additional items from other Fire Brigades internationally.

I have instigated a recent project to record historical memories of old firefighters within Norfolk. One of my officers suggested that it would be worthy of highlighting both the museum, but more specifically the project, in your *Journal* as there may be personnel who

are ex-members of the USAAF who were based in Norfolk before, during, or after the war.

I would be obliged if you could highlight particularly the project of recording historical memories, the contact point for which is Leading Firefighter Richard Clements, Norfolk Fire Service, Operational Area 4, Bethel Street, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 1NW, England (telephone 01603 621461).

C. McIlwhan
Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Norfolk Fire Service



Dear Evelyn [Cohen]:

Thank you for the recent donation of the Second Air Division Association Fall 1997 *Journal* to the Air Force Historical Research Agency. The Agency is interested in being added to your mailing list and acquiring the complete 20-year set of *Journals*. We would accession the *Journals* and make them available to researchers.

Again, thanks for thinking of us and we appreciate your interest in the preservation of the heritage of the United States Air Force and its predecessors.

Joseph D. Caver
Chief, Archives Section
Department of the Air Force
Air Force Historical Research Agency
Maxwell Air Force Base
Alabama

Ed. Note: Members, if you have sets or copies of old Journals, please let us know!

→ → → →

To the editor:

This is an open letter to my associates who may be in the same dilemma concerning our WWII 8th Air Force artifacts.

In short, we are now in our 70s and 80s, and, although we have not been called in for our final briefing, there are still some things to do.

What, for example, are we to do with our WWII uniforms, A-2 jackets, and in my case, copies of *Yank* magazine, including the last "Discharge" issued signed by General Eisenhower?

I have been approached to sell my A-2 jacket (no way!) but, as I said, even though I have grandchildren, I am thinking perhaps of the 8th AF Museum in Savannah, Georgia, or Dayton, Ohio, or the library in Norwich.

Since some of us have this problem, I am looking for suggestions. Start the A.P.U.

Edward J. Barton (44th)
3593 East Elma Street
Camarillo, CA 93010

→ → → →

Hi Fly Guys:

Yep, I've just discovered what I don't like about e-mail. It scares the daylights out of you! Let me explain.

We now have a communication link between many of these ol' war birds from WWII. That's great for all us dinosaurs, but there's a stinger! After you've been in touch with each other and then someone gets out of the e-mail loop for a while, it is scary. Ray Pytel has been nasty enough to give us some statistics on our longevity. Hey, I could have done without the probabilities of my being around next week.

It used to be that when I didn't hear from someone until the next Christmas card arrived, I didn't worry. I wasn't sitting around sweating about, as someone put it, folded wings! But, now, if Chuck or Dick or whoever isn't on-line every few days, doesn't reply, I'm worried.

Naturally, AOL, Prodigy, Juno, etc. crash once in a while; then no one is certain if the breakdown is their computer or their online

server, or El Nino being obstinate, or what. In the meantime, who knows how everyone else is doing? Perhaps a thermometer that measures core temperature could be attached to the computer and taped to us, so everyone will know, at any given time, how any 2ADA guy is doing. See what you did, Ray?

There is really not much reason to worry about our health because someone has wisely said, "Only the good die young." And so it is obvious what category we are in! Thank heaven!

Of course, some snide SOB survivor from a B-17 division would probably agree that we 24 fly boys are blessed with longevity. But, for me, I've always hoped that my demise would be due to a jealous husband. How about you other e-mailers?

Ed Wanner (445th)
4421 Beaconsfield Ct.
Westlake Village, CA 91361

Ed. Note: So what's your e-mail address? With the 2ADA Journal editorship I don't have time to chat on e-mail myself.

→ → → →

To The Postmaster General
Washington, DC 20268-6000

Reference my letter of 5 December 1997 concerning the omission of the B-24 bomber from the "Classic Aircraft" stamps:

Unfortunately, the reply I received from Stamp Development appears to fit the description of "rubber stamp." Further, I do not recognize the signature of the person signing the letter to be someone in the management category, other than a secretary perhaps.

Insofar as the "difficult" task of sifting through aircraft nominations is concerned, perhaps the task is made more difficult because those persons making the choices are inexperienced. For example, there is absolutely no comparison between the B-24, "America's Global Bomber" (America's *only* global bomber) and the Gee-Bee, which was selected "classic." The Gee-Bee was a one-of-a-kind, very dangerous, engine with wings. It killed the man who designed it! What made it so classic? Only a few of them were made. I personally saw the Gee-Bee several times while it was being flown in 1932. (I am 76 years old and have been flying since I was 13).

Sir, to at least partially right the wrong, the injustice, that has been done to the B-24 and her crews, I urge that a special commemorative, single issue stamp be issued depicting the wartime B-24J. The "J" built by the Ford Motor Company (in the thousands) would be the best choice in my opinion. I also urge that such a stamp be issued without further delay. The B-24 has been ignored long enough! Your support is urgently solicited — before the relatively few of the B-24 types remaining pass on to glory.

William E. Hendrix, Jr. (466th)
Major, USAF (Retired)
2467 N. Vinegate Circle
Wichita, KS 67226-3649

→ → → →



IN RETROSPECT

A LETTER TO HIS PARENTS FROM
STELL MEADOR, NAVIGATOR,
389TH BG

From The Nevada News, 2-10-44

Dear Mother and Dad,

I am getting along fine. Our crew [Major Kenneth Caldwell, pilot] had a little experience while in Africa. I guess it will be okay to tell you all about it now. We had been on a raid up in Europe and discovered that didn't have enough gas to get back across the Mediterranean to Africa. At that time we were about even with Sardinia, so we decided to make a landing there and try to escape. It was supposed that the Germans still had the island then. We found a dry lake-bed and the pilot set her down without a bump. We immediately set fire to the plane to keep the Germans from getting it and headed for the mountains to hide out. We hadn't gone but a little way when we saw some natives. Our bombardier, who speaks Italian, went over and talked to them and learned that the Germans had moved north. We went back to where we landed, and pretty soon a bunch of Italian soldiers and officers who saw us circling to land came out. They were all very glad to see us. We loaded into a bus they brought out and started for town, twenty miles away. Word spread that the Americans were there. We were the first American soldiers the people had ever seen, and they filled the room we were in. From the way they acted, I think they thought we ran the Germans off their island personally.

They fixed us a supper that night and the next morning when we came down, I think the whole city was standing in front of the hotel waiting for us. Everywhere we went, a crowd would follow. We had plenty of Italian money, so we just took in the town. Two of our gunners and I hired a carriage and driver and rode around town to look it over.

Everywhere people would line the curb and shout, "Viva la Americanos" (long live the Americans) and throw flowers at us. We were all reared back in the carriage like Mayor LaGuardia. It was all so funny to us, we laughed ourselves silly. That morning an American general who had just landed came down. He told us they would radio Africa to send a plane for us. That day we had dinner with the mayor of the city and he really laid out a dinner. That afternoon we were taken to an airfield occupied by the Italians where we spent the night. The Italians were all glad to see us. We ate with them in the officers' dining hall, and they did everything for us. The next day a plane came after us. We had been having so much fun we hated to leave.

Editor's Note: Stell Meador flew on the August 1, 1943 Ploesti raid and was awarded the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, the French Croix de Guerre, and the Presidential Unit Citation after completing 25 missions, many as a lead navigator in the 389th BG. He died on May 29, 1997. ■

To the editor:

Having received the Winter edition of the *Journal* and reading it from cover to cover, I found the letter by Rick Rokicki, the editor's article "The Smithsonian Institution Can't Find a B-24," and "The B-24 Deserves Respect" by Robert F. Dorr cause me to respond with just one more painful omission.

I went to Walden's Book Store to purchase a book, and occupying a prime location at the entrance of the store was the beautiful aviation book printed by the Smithsonian. The book was titled *Milestones of Aviation, Smithsonian Institution National Air & Space Museum, Newly Expanded Edition*. As you can see this is a very large title, but it is a very large book and a very handsome book. This book I would buy.

I stopped, glanced through the pages, and was hard pressed to locate a picture of a B-24. There were pictures of most every aircraft the Services had ever purchased. Having failed to locate the B-24, I turned to the index, and sure enough, it was listed on page 196. Turning to page 196 I found a large photo of a B-36 and in the photo was a B-24 flying wing. The 24 was so small it was an insignificant part of the picture. One had to take a second look to know it was on the page, and then I asked myself, why was it listed in the index?

It is truly a sad commentary that people hold high positions and make decisions regarding subjects that they know nothing about. Each and every one that crewed, maintained, supported, died, and were prisoners of war are diminished by the likes of those at the Postal Service, the Smithsonian, and the journalists who slight those who served. I believe it to be an absolute; they have no knowledge of what transpired with the B-24, the Second Air Division of the Eighth Air Force, and the entire part they played in the air war during World War II.

Needless to say, I did not purchase the book.

John A. McDowell (389th)
6719 Tyee Road
Everett, WA 98203

Editor's Note: We are making progress . . . In another 50 years or so, they will show a B-24 picture without the B-36.

→ → → →

To the editor:

Thank you for the fine articles on General Hap Arnold, Part I in the Summer 1997 issue and Part II in the Fall 1997 issue. These tell the story of this very outstanding man and all 2ADA members are richer for this record.

There are many others in our fine Air Force hierarchy that would be worthwhile stories for future *Journal* issues. May I suggest Eaker, Spaatz, Mitchell, Marshall, and Doolittle, as well as others you may choose.

William C. Rigg (491st)
1326 Oakdale Drive
Bartlesville, OK 74006

→ → → →

To the editor:

In the summer of '44 a few guys got together to form a softball team for the fun of it and a little relaxation. So the motley crew you see in the picture is what we came up with. Fifty years later the ole memory has slipped a bit. Faces I can remember. Yours truly is standing second from right, and the two white T-shirts in front are Crowley and Cassidy, members of my crew. The big fella in back center is Capt. Whitlow. I heard he went over to a fighter group after his missions and flew P-51s, then ended up at the Air Force Academy.

Our team pitcher is shown standing second from left, Capt. Odom (???) or Ollum, Operations Officer at the 755th Squadron. Several of the guys were from the Squadron office.

We had one other team at Horsham that we played a couple times, and I believe they were from Group Headquarters or one of the other squadrons. I remember we didn't do too well against them. Their pitcher was way too much for us.

I hope there are a few fellows who remember us.

Wesley B. Belleson (458th)
999 Jolanda Circle
Venice, FL 34292-3448

→ → → → → → → →



SOFTBALL TEAM FROM THE 458TH BOMB GROUP, 1944, HORSHAM ST. FAITH

To the editor:

Today I had e-mail from a friend in England who had found the following in an old magazine:

"As we slid to a stop, we were surrounded by a group of Russian soldiers, clad in a rather ragged attire, but with very shiny, business-like rifles and submachine guns held at the ready. Claud stuck his head out of the top hatch, pointed to the U.S. FLAG ARMBAND, and shouted, as convincingly as he could, "Ya Americanets!" as per the instructions on the ARMBAND."

This is a quote from *Air Power Magazine*. "Claud" is Lt. Claud W. Palmer, pilot of a B-24 from the 445th Bomb Group, on a mission to bomb Zossen, near Berlin, but due to flak damage, landed on a Russian airfield in Poland, March 1945.

Question: When were the armbands introduced, and were they exclusive to the 445th Bomb Group?

Maurice Rowe
The Limes
68 Junction Road
Andover SP 10 3QX
United Kingdom
Phone +44 1264 351605
E-mail: 100735.1747@compuserve.com

→ → → → → → → →



HERITAGE LEAGUE WEB SITE

www.primenet.com/~hl-2ada

2AD MEMORIAL LIBRARY

www.ecn.co.uk/memorial

B-24 VETERANS WEB SITE

www.mach3ww.com/B24

→ → → →

To the editor:

My B-24 crew and I just completed our third crew reunion since locating the whereabouts of all the crew members in 1994. We feel that we must be a "unique" crew in that the *all ten members* of the original crew are still alive and in fairly good health, considering we are all in our 70s. I am enclosing a picture of seven of us at the recent reunion, should you decide to use it.

We completed 29 missions with the 466th BG during the period October '44 through the end of hostilities. We flew "Sunshine Jane" back to the States in June '45.

I would like to propose a survey in the 2ADA *Journal* to see how many 2nd Air Division crews are all, in their entirety, still alive. Whether or not you see fit to conduct an official survey, I would personally like to hear from any crews that can boast that kind of record.

Robert E. Gordon (466th)
168 N. Corby Drive
Slidell, LA 70458
Tel. (504) 641-2084

Editor's Note: I'm not sure about the 2nd Air Division, but there's a contender from the 15th AF (see page 39).

→ → → →

To the editor:

I have worked extensively with the flying B-24 "All American" in the USA, and have also made many visits to the Imperial War Museum at Duxford. In the *Winter Journal*, Roger Freeman excellently summed up the reasons for having a B-24 at Duxford. I've seen the great numbers of people from all of Europe who visit Duxford, and I think that a B-24 there would assure that the efforts of the 2nd Air Division are seen by the greatest number of people in the region where the B-24 had its major impact. Without it, how are young people from the continent to know what role you had in Europe's history?

Certainly the Smithsonian would benefit from a B-24, though there is some question as to their priority in this matter. But I take umbrage at the *Air Classics* editorial's agenda — a B-24 at Duxford would certainly have more impact there than at Ypsilanti, and the Duxford complex is certainly what I would consider a "qualified museum" capable of "lavish restoration." I've spoken with the gentlemen who restored the B-24 nose — you can be assured they are dedicated to your memory and hope for better material to work with and display some day. And it is the people with the most interest who will keep alive the memory of your efforts.

Mick Hanou (SM)
c/o Chevron Kuwait Pouch Mail
P.O. Box 6046 C-1309
San Ramon, CA 94583-0946

→ → → →



Seated (L-R): Ondes, Arrington, Zack, Perry. Standing (L-R): Hendrickson, Gordon, Campbell. Not present: Schram, Tichnor, Rieger.

To the editor:

Anyone who was in the 8th Air Force and escaped into France in the final weeks of December 1944 may remember an isolated farmhouse about 300 meters from the Swiss-French border in the High Savoy. If anyone reading this was in a group of Americans coming out of Switzerland on or about December 20-21, 1944 and was hiding in that farmhouse, please contact me. I am seeking anyone who was in that group and who was later taken to Annecy, France, then to Lyons for transport back to his group. If you have a description of the farmhouse and anyone who was there I would like to have it. The farmhouse was near the top of a hillside just inside the border and was surrounded by fields and pasture. It was in very hilly country about 10-15 kilometers from Annecy.

Forrest S. Clark (44th)
703 Duffer Lane
Kissimmee, FL 34759-4114

→ → → → → → → →

To the editor:

I am anxious to trace the family of an airman who was very friendly with my family towards the end of the war. The person involved was a Mr. Leon L. Du Brow, 34281243, who lived in the Norwich area. He was a private in the 448th Service Squadron and was from Chattanooga, Tennessee. I wonder whether you could be of any assistance, as Paul King said that you were the best person to ask.

Paul sent me an extract of your publication showing the Jimmy Stewart memorial entry following his funeral. I had mentioned to Paul that Jimmy used to live in the house where I currently live, namely Framingham Cottage, with the previous occupant, a Colonel Lockett.

B.J. Christie
Framingham Cottage
Framingham Pigot
Norwich NR14 7PZ
Tel. 01508 493646

Letters to the Editor Policy

Please keep letters within the limit of approximately 350 words and limit the topic to one subject per letter. Write an article if you need more space! We reserve the right to edit all letters and remove redundant and not pertinent statements. This includes the right to reject letters of offensive nature. Letters must be signed, and should include the writer's group or unit, along with address and phone number. The writer may ask that his name be withheld. Send Letters to the Editor to:

RAY R. PYTEL

P.O. Box 484, Elkhorn, Wisconsin 53121-0484
Tel. (414) 723-6381 • Fax (414) 723-7981

To the editor:

I was the top turret gunner on a B-24 crew in the 826th Squadron, 484th Bomb Group, 15th Air Force in Italy. The 484th flew 208 combat missions between 4-29-44 and 4-26-45. My crew flew 24 missions between 12-27-44 and the end of the war, 19 of them aboard "Toggle Annie," serial number 4252705, including the 100th mission, 4-14-45.

I am curious as to whether any B-24 can beat Toggle Annie's record of 107 combat missions in 360 days. Or, for that matter, any time frame. I guess the thing to do is claim the record and wait for someone to prove me wrong.

My research shows that of the sixteen original planes in the 826th Squadron, only Toggle Annie and one other returned to the ZI after the war.

In response to Kenneth Johnson's letter in the Summer 1997 *Journal*, my crew is one of the few, I'm sure, that can boast of a 100% survival rate after fifty-two years. No canes. No walkers. No wheelchairs. Two and a half years ago I tracked them all down and we have held three annual reunions in Dallas, TX. Eight showed up in 1995, nine in 1996, and seven this year. Hopefully next year all ten will make it. The Good Lord isn't going to leave us all here much longer. But as long as He does, I'll keep trying.

Out of the ten we have four widowers, which is definitely against the odds. The other six have all been married fifty years or close to it.

Allan L. Davidson
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Lowell, MI 49331-1763

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B-24 "TOGGLE ANNIE," piloted by Dana Stewart, completed 107 missions in 360 days with the 484th BG, 15th Air Force in Italy. She is shown above with Danny Miller, navigator, in May of '45.



Nine members of Dana Stewart's crew of "Toggle Annie" reunited on May 26, 1996. Standing (L-R): Bob Reed, Dana Stewart, Odis Johnson, Lou Galgano. Kneeling (L-R): Darrell Johnson, Walt Nilson, J.W. Delk, Allan Davidson, Walter Menn.

I WISH I'D THOUGHT OF THIS LETTER!

The January 9, 1998 *Wall Street Journal* ran a letter with the following headline: "WWII Vets Fought for Their Special Ladies." Authored by Bud Markel, President of the 484th Bomb Group Association, it describes the pride and care with which his crew of teenagers accepted and cared for their B-24 "Roll Me Over."

They are emotions that we of the Second Air Division share in our thoughts of our war-time flying machines. The B-24J my replacement crew came to feel was our own in Topeka was, only to have it rudely snatched from us by the "scavengers" in Valley, Wales.

Later I was to feel the same pride in "Lookin' Good," which I flew on Scamahorn's crew in the 852nd Squadron.

Certainly we strongly identified with our plane. Who could not, when she took you into the dangerous skies of the Reich with aplomb and delivered her lethal load of bombs before turning for safety and England.

A special lady — you better believe!!!

Hap Chandler (491st)
18 Willow Glen NE
Atlanta, GA 30342-2023

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

WWII Vets Fought for Their Special Ladies

BY BUD MARKEL • FROM THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, JANUARY 9, 1998

John Lehman's review of the book *Citizen Soldiers* by Stephen Ambrose ("How They Fought — and Won," *Leisure & Arts*, Dec. 22) struck a warm note with this humble Army Air Force engineer-gunner. Mr. Ambrose says in the introduction to his book that the World War II citizen soldier, whether enlisted or drafted, fought not only for cause or patriotism, but for the safety of his buddies and the pride of his unit.

I would like to add something else — the strong identification with our war vehicles. As a World War II veteran tells his war stories, inevitably his ship, tank, or aircraft is mentioned. In effect, our vehicle represented all of the people in our lives. That is the reason these vehicles were humanized. One could observe mechanics and air crew members pat the side of their aircraft and talk to it. A gunner might mutter under his breath, "Old girl, don't forget your promise to bring us home today."

We decorated the slab side of our venerable B-24 Liberators with paintings of scantily clad females or with mottos that were personally important. My own ship, a Ford-built B-24L, was named "Roll Me Over," after a bawdy song of the time. We pasted a pin-up from *Esquire* magazine just below the name. This quarter-million-dollar aircraft was handed to our crew of ten mostly high school graduates in Topeka, Kansas in 1944. We were so proud of the confidence that the Army Air Force bestowed on us with this gift, it would be a matter of personal disgrace if in our inexperience we damaged the ship while in our charge. ■

THE FORBIDDEN DIARY



A B-24 Navigator Remembers

by John L. Stewart (467th)

As a WWII combat navigator, the author was the "tour guide" for a B-24 Liberator, launching from England to strike German targets. While surviving 31 missions, Stewart broke two rules: he kept an accurate diary of those missions plus some of the maps and charts issued only to navigators. His tale is not embroidered by time's passage; it's one man's thoroughly documented

exploits as he took sole responsibility for guiding his crewmates through dense enemy flak — and safely home. Includes portions of the Army Air force manual, "Navigator's Information File." Outstanding photographs complement the text.

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Best We Forget:

In his *Wartime Diaries*, the Reich Minister for Armaments and War Production, Albert Speer, second only to Adolf Hitler, Chancellor of the Third Reich, writes:

The real importance of the air war consisted in the fact that it opened a second front long before the invasion of Europe. That front was the skies over Germany. The fleets of bombers might appear at any time over any large German city or important factory. The unpredictability of the attacks made this front gigantic; every square meter of the territory we controlled was a kind of front line. Defense against air attacks required the production of thousands of anti-aircraft guns. The stockpiling of tremendous quantities of ammunition all over the country and holding in readiness hundreds of thousands of soldiers who in addition had to stay in position by their guns, often totally inactive, for months at a time.

As far as I can judge from the accounts I have read, no one has yet seen that this was the greatest lost battle on the German side. The losses from the retreats in Russia or from the surrender of Stalingrad were considerably less. Moreover, the nearly 20,000 anti-aircraft guns stationed in the homeland could almost have doubled the anti-tank defenses on the Eastern Front. In the territory of the Reich those guns were virtually useless. Over the attacked cities they did little more than provide a kind of reassuring fireworks display for the population. By that time bombers were operating from such high altitudes that the shells of the 8.8 centimeter flak guns reached the planes at too slow a speed.

Playing a distinguished role in this "Second Front" effort against the Third Reich, and its Festung Europa, was the 8th AF's 2nd Air Division!

"COMBAT HELL"

New Book by Ellis "Woody" Woodward, an 8th AF Pilot Who Flew Both B-17s and B-24s

Captain Ellis Woodward encountered the same Luftwaffe Elite STORM GROUP at Magdeburg on 12 September 1944 that hit the 445th Bomb Group fifteen days later near Kassel. Ten B-17s from his 12-ship squadron went down within five minutes that day. "Woody" Woodward only learned about the Luftwaffe "STORM GROUPS" from II. Sturm/JG4 Hauptman Werner Vorberg's article in the April 1989 "8th AF News" edition which featured the Kassel Mission.

Here is a soft-covered, 192-page book in LARGE PRINT that will intrigue everyone interested in the air war over Europe. With an introduction by Lt. General E.G. (Buck) Shuler, CEO of the Mighty 8th Heritage Museum, and a foreword by Kassel Mission survivor/ex-POW Ira Weinstein of the 445th Bomb Group, this book uncovers the mystery that plagued Woody for almost 50 years — what hit his Third Division 493rd Bomb Group at Magdeburg, September 12th, 1944?

The comparison Woody makes between the Liberator and the Flying Fortress will get fliers of both bombers talking for hours. His accounts of pilot training are given in a way that every high school student will understand. It makes for good, easy reading, and you will find *Combat Hell* a welcome addition to your air war library.

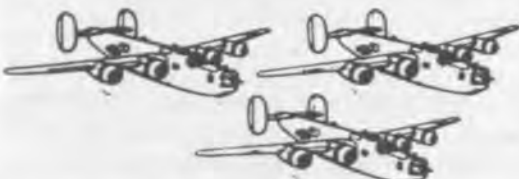
Send your order with a check for \$17 (includes \$2 shipping & handling and a tax-deductible donation of \$6.45 for the Kassel Mission Memorial Association) to KMMA Inc., P.O. Box 413, Birmingham, MI 48012.

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

EIGHTH AIR FORCE

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