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Living in the Shadows of Giants

What the men and women who fought World War II and built the peace could teach us about elevating the tone of the times. BY TOM BROKAW

FROM NEWSWEEK, DECEMBER 7, 1998. ©1998 NEWSWEEK, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRINTED BY PERMISSION.

In the spring of 1984, I went to Normandy to prepare an NBC documentary on the 40th anniversary of D-Day. I knew the history; what I didn't realize was how the experience would rekindle my earliest memories of childhood. Between the ages of 3 and 5, I lived on an Army base in western South Dakota and spent a good deal of my time outdoors in a tiny helmet, shooting stick guns at imaginary German and Japanese soldiers. My father, Red Brokaw, then in his early 30s, was an all-purpose Mr. Fixit and operator of snowplows and construction machinery, part of a crew that kept the base functioning. When he was drafted, the base commander called him back, reasoning he was more valuable in the job he had. When Dad returned home, it was the first time I saw my mother cry. These were powerful images for an impressionable youngster.

The war effort was all around us. Ammunition was tested on the South Dakota sagebrush prairie before being shipped out to battlefront positions. I seem to remember that one Fourth of July the base commander staged a particularly large firing exercise as a wartime substitute for fireworks. Neighbors always seemed to be going to or coming home from the war.

Yet when I arrived in the northwest of France 40 years later, my personal memories of World War II had receded and been replaced by growing up in the '50s, Vietnam, Watergate and the cold war. As I walked the beaches with American veterans who had fought there, however, I was deeply moved. I realized that they had been all around me as I was growing up and that I had failed to appreciate what they had been through.

Now, as this tawdry year of scandal staggers to a close, many Americans are wondering whether we'll ever again find such greatness in a single generation. In the World War II generation, ordinary people found common cause, made extraordinary sacrifices and never whined or whimpered. Their offspring, the baby boomers, seem to have forgotten the example of their parents. We should be reflecting more on what we can learn from the men and women who came of age in the Great

Depression, were called to duty at home and abroad and, after great sacrifice, gave us the world we have today. Their lessons may help all of us move to higher ground.

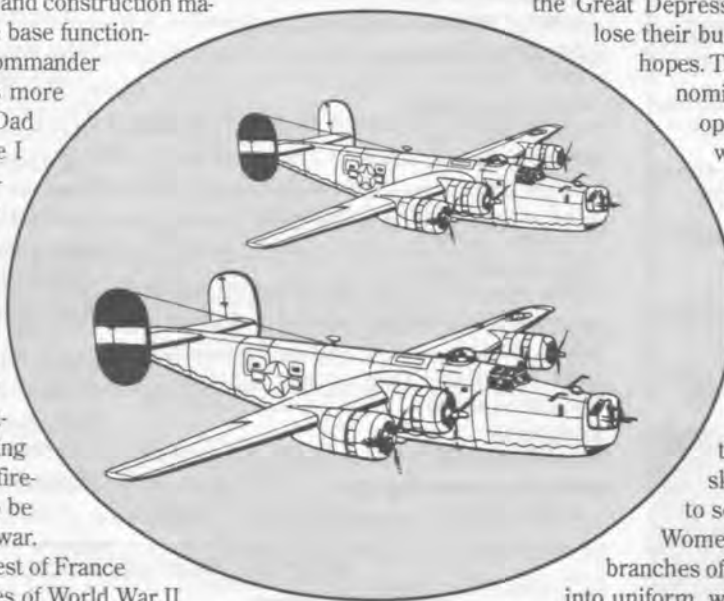
True, those men and women, now in their 70s and 80s, were not perfect. They allowed McCarthyism and Jim Crow to go unchallenged for too long. They were slow to acknowledge the rights of women. But on balance, they led lives of breathtaking achievement and scope. During the Great Depression they had watched their parents lose their businesses, their farms, their jobs, their hopes. Then, just as there was a glimmer of economic recovery, war exploded across Europe and Asia. After Pearl Harbor, they were told to report to the parade ground and prepare for battle.

They faced great odds and a late start, but they did not protest. At a time in their lives when their days and nights should have been filled with innocent adventure, love and the lessons of the workaday world, they were fighting, often hand in hand, in the most primitive conditions possible. They were in the air, in skies filled with terror, and they went to sea on hostile waters.

Women's roles changed forever, too. New branches of the services were formed to get them into uniform, working at tasks that would free more men for combat. Other women went to work in the laboratories and in the factories, developing new medicines; building ships, planes and tanks; and raising the families that had been left behind. When the war was over, they joined in joyous and short-lived celebrations, then went to work. They built the most powerful peacetime economy in history. They helped restore their former enemies and stood fast against their former allies the Russians. Many of them hated the long hair, the free love, the desecration of the flag. But they didn't give up on their kids.

For those of us who came after them, the challenges are much different, but equally important. There is no world war to fight today, no

(continued on page 14)



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JOURNAL



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KEEPING IN FOCUS

BY EARL WASSOM, 2ADA PRESIDENT (466TH BG)

Thousands of veterans, when they returned from the scene of war, were no longer boys but men. They were overjoyed to be home, but combat had left all of them with emotional scars, and countless others had permanent physical scars as well. Surgery and therapy were unable to take away the constant memory of their experiences. The marks of wartime conflict affected their personal outlook on life and left them with doubts as to their worth and their ability to be husbands, fathers and productive citizens.

One veteran who had many of the criteria just described above passed muster in his courtship and his fiancée accepted his proposal without reservation. Wishing to hide nothing and with a desire to be straightforward and absolutely honest, he approached his future mother-in-law. He presented himself to her one morning in the kitchen with a towel over his right shoulder. He called her by name and said, "I think you ought to see my problem." He pulled back the towel, revealing his battle scars. With a quick glimpse she called him by name and responded, "That's not a problem, that's a badge of honor."



What a privilege to be counted among so many who possess a "badge of honor." Our generation, which had its birthdate around the 1920s, was born in a volatile world. Europe, Asia, and the Far East were all under the grip of fascist rulers who had powerful machines and weapons of war under their control. People throughout the world were in slavery and faced almost certain death. The United

States watched and waited; then the Pearl Harbor attack came on December 7, 1941 and made it clear that we were no longer an island fortress. Our generation went from school to newly developed military camps, answering the call to help save the world. All of us went; some did not return, some did but were handicapped for life. But all of us possess this priceless "badge of honor." Individually, we were ordinary people whose lives have been honored with greatness. Throughout our almost four score years, we have been a part of challenges and accomplishments never before achieved in the history of the world.

From the whirlwind experiences of war, we forged our "badges of honor." We are not ashamed to expose them for the scrutiny of anyone. We learned to respect authority, sought to perfect honor and patriotism and love our country. This is not to say that we were perfect, but we were always embarrassed when we missed the high mark we set for ourselves. To brag or try to cover up our misdeeds with lies was unthinkable. Some judged our high standards which we could not always reach as hypocrisy. But these high goals and aspirations served us well, and history proves we were successful beyond any previous generation. We fostered the qualities which made us eternal optimists and learned through the school of hard knocks to be family-oriented, reliable and trustworthy citizens. Our integrity was genuine, and our goals and motives were driven by a passion for doing what was right.

Most of us fall between the ages of 75-85. Some are a little younger, some slightly older. Our age is a privilege and a "badge of honor." Going for us is the fact that we are and always have been a people-oriented organization. We have developed a memorial library, erected other memorials throughout the United States, England and the European continent, and supported museums to preserve our legacy and to keep alive the memory of those who died in battle. This is excellent and this is what we should have done. What about our future? Statistics tell us that by 1944, there were twelve million Americans in uniform. Statistics also tell us that thirty-two hundred World War II veterans die every month. Perhaps now our focus should be on relationships, "in honor, preferring one another." In May, we will be coming together once again, this time in Austin, Texas for the 60th anniversary of the B-24 and the 52nd annual convention of the Second Air Division Association. A lot of time has passed, and we have used it very well! Our weapon of war was the B-24 Liberator which certainly lived up to its name. The people coming to Austin maintained and flew this wonderful aircraft. It will be a time for remembering and honoring the "Lib." A great convention and program is being planned. It will be people-oriented. When you come, you will be wearing your "badge of honor." Come and wear your decoration with pride. ■



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



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 January, April, July, or October.

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. ■

2nd Air Division Association ANNUAL CONVENTION

May 29 – June 1, 1999

See pages 33 & 34 of the
Winter Journal, or contact
EVELYN COHEN
(address on page 2).

Executive Vice President's Message

BY F.C. "HAP" CHANDLER (491ST)

1998 - A YEAR TO REMEMBER

For volunteers, there is always work to be done!

Recently I began to put pictures of the Honor Court B-24 sculpture, dedicated September 25, 1998, in my latest photo album. This was but one of the events of 1998 for the Second Air Division Association. After celebrating the second anniversary of the opening of the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum in Savannah in April, we were off to Oakbrook in May to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of our Association. In November we flew to England for the beginning of our participation in the Second Air Division Memorial Library fund drive. While there we spent the better part of a day reviewing plans for the rebuilt Norwich library. We were all pleased to note that there will be a 2AD Memorial Library (not Memorial Room) — twice the size of our old memorial room.

On January 21st I participated in a strategic planning workshop at the 8th AF Heritage Museum. This was an opportunity to explore possibilities for the Association to enhance our memorial and improve the display of our World War II accomplishments. The Savannah museum continues to improve, and attendance is accelerating as it becomes better known — over 108,000 in 1998.

In February we went to Pompano Beach, Florida for a "Gathering of Eagles." Led by Bill Eagleson (453rd) and Abe Wilen (453rd), this stellar event featured the B-24 "All American" and another, less well-known, aircraft, "707," whose nomenclature escapes me. (There is a rumor it was called the "Flying Fortress" and carried an eleven-man crew — the eleventh crew member being a public relations officer who distributed press releases enroute, and he also papered every pub in London.)

Also in February, Bill and Dottie Eagleson brought Bill's crew to Savannah to serve as volunteers. They were accompanied by Wiley Noble of the 3rd Strategic Air Depot, who brought a collection of nose art and other memorabilia for museum display.

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Joe Bonana of the 392nd BG arrived by motor home the week of February 1st to inaugurate our 1999 volunteer participation at the Mighty 8th AF Heritage Museum. The Eaglesons arrived February 22nd, and on March 1st, Earl Wassom and your correspondent attended the Jimmy Stewart Memorial Dinner honoring General Michael Ryan, Chief of Staff of the Air Force. The Stewart award is presented annually to the year's outstanding aerospace leader.

Andy Van Slot (466th) will be our volunteer



THE PROPOSED 8TH AIR FORCE MEMORIAL CHAPEL

the week of March 15th, followed by Jim and Mary Lorenz with Dick and Margaret Baynes in April. Colonel Jack Prescott, Director of Volunteers, reports that our 2nd Air Division volunteers are doing a magnificent job. His only complaint is that he needs more of them!

"THE MIGHTY EIGHTH"

The Mighty Eighth, written by Gerald Astor in 1997 and published by Bantam Books, is the definitive story of the 8th Air Force's World War II experience (not to be confused with Roger Freeman's earlier *Mighty Eighth*, published in 1970). Stephen Ambrose in *Citizen Soldiers* refers to the oral histories in Astor's book as the best description of the air war extant. There were 350,000 Army Air Force airmen who served with the Eighth Air Force in England. Of these, 26,000 were killed, or 7.42%. Compare this number to the percentages of the other branches — the Marines 3.29%, the Army 2.25%, and the Navy .41%. By restricting the mortality rate to the 210,000 air crewmen the rate soars to 12.38%. In addition, 21,000 from the 8th wound up on POW camps. A typical bomber lasted only 147 days in combat. The 8th lost 6,537 B-17s and B-24s, and another 3,337 fighters.

The scope of the wartime Eighth Air Force staggers the imagination even today.

RETURN TO GETTYSBURG

My grandfather served in the Civil War unit that entered the village of Gettysburg in July 1863 in search of shoes. They encountered a Union Army patrol, and thus began the Battle of Gettysburg — until the Battle of the Bulge, the deadliest engagement of American arms. With our good friends June and Joe

Flagler we visited the battlefield in early December, my first visit to this historic site.

Our guide was unusually knowledgeable about the details of the battle, and took me to the memorial marker of my grandfather's unit. Emotionally I stood in spirit with him. Probably barefoot and gaunt from hunger, he nevertheless, with his comrades, fought for three days in this horrendous blood-letting. I tried to understand what he wrote years later, that "Gettysburg (sic) was the toughest fight I was ever in!"

Thanks to the efforts of many individuals and the National Park Service, Gettysburg's battlefield remains much the same since its rendezvous with history in July 1864. It is a searing emotional experience to visit this "hallowed" site.

Our grandchildren will some day wonder what it was like to depart East Anglia for Berlin, Magdeburg, Dresden, or The Ruhr. There are now only new and shining cities where once we rained destruction from the skies. No high ground exists for the bomber force we flew with.

The lesson I learned on that December day was that our legacy will be chronicled by the memorials and museums we are leaving behind — Norwich, Savannah, Dayton, Duxford, and a dozen other sites. For this reason I propose the year 2000 — the year of the millennium — as "The Year of the Museum."

"In all likelihood the world will never see another organization like the Mighty Eighth, which at its zenith blotted out the sky with aircraft."

MEMORIAL CHAPEL

The memorial chapel at the Mighty 8th AF Heritage Museum recently received a grant of \$25,000 from the Francis Wood Wilson Foundation. This grant was obtained by an Association member's personal contact with an acquaintance on the board of the foundation.

Foundations are becoming increasingly involved with the museum. Your personal contacts with charitable foundations or philanthropists can be of great assistance to the museum. The Association has discussed establishing a goal to be raised by our members to support our Savannah museum. Please contact Judy W. Walker, Director of Development, 8th Air Force Heritage Museum, Savannah, GA 31402, phone (912) 748-8888, ext. 123. Judy can be of assistance in preparing proposals/information needed to assist you in contacting charitable organizations.

The Memorial Chapel will closely resemble chapels that were located on or near our bases in East Anglia. Roger Freeman, noted 8th Air Force historian and member of the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust, was involved

(continued on page 7)

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

Several books and a magazine article need to be reviewed and commented on; some favorable, others questionable, and some just plain disgusting and detestable.

Several of our readers and members of the Executive Committee sent in magazine and newspaper articles by Tom Brokaw or about Tom Brokaw's new book dedicated to World War II veterans, entitled *The Greatest Generation*, and his subsequent TV special, "The Greatest Generation Ever," which was on the regular NBC network January 15th and later on the "All Monica - All The Time" MSNBC Internet network, which I caught and taped on January 17th.

Brokaw admits that his claim is purposely provocative when he argues that "these men and women overshadow even the Founding (fondling?) Fathers and Abraham Lincoln's generation." Wow!

The TV special had a B-24 8th AF pilot and a bombardier from the 445th Bomb Group as "hero examples," and there was no mention of that other 4-engine bomber, the B-17! This I feel is Brokaw's greatest achievement . . . not giving all the credit to the B-17s. This guy knows a little bit about history. Congratulations to James Dowling (445th BG) and his wife Dorothy, who were the guests of honor at Brokaw's book party.

Random House is the publisher of the book. You may inquire about it and the subsequently mentioned book to see if the KMMA is handling it. Write to KMMA, Box 413, Birmingham, MI 48012.

The next book published by Random House is by that great WWII aircraft expert Andy Rooney. On page 75 of his epic tome *My War*, Andy boldly states: "The people who flew the B-24 Liberators were fiercely loyal to their aircraft and always argued that it was the better of the two. I don't like further angering them here now, but it wasn't. The B-24 was never the bomber the B-17 was . . . If you had to go to Berlin or Schweinfurt, take a B-17 and your chances of getting home were vastly improved." He gave no statistics or facts to back up this claim; apparently it is unnecessary to prove the "obvious!"

Those of you who have the time, a computer, and Roger Freeman's *Mighty Eighth War Diary*, can easily determine if it was really true that the chances of getting home were greatly improved in a B-17 as Rooney claims. You will have to ignore the time the B-24s were in Africa to bomb Ploesti, while the B-17s went on to bomb Schweinfurt twice, August 17th and October 14th, each time losing 60 B-17s; while the B-24s lost 54 on the August 1, 1943 Ploesti raid from Libya. It would be hard to "compare" these.

It is best to start with the fall of 1943 B-24 build-up and the return of the B-24s to England's 2nd Air Division. Compare whenever both bombers went out to the same or near-



The Editor caught in a "flash" during a school lecture on World War II.

by targets — get the numbers dispatched, the number that failed to return, and the percentage "missing" for each plane. Berlin and Schweinfurt especially, whenever both planes went out. Finally, get the totals dispatched, totals missing, and the overall percentage of each. This might be interesting.

If you intend to discuss the book with Rooney, don't send your letters to the editor, address them to Andy Rooney at Random House. To those of you who will say Rooney has a perfect "right" to have said what he did, I say that being left-handed, I also have a perfect "left" to do whatever I want with it.

Submit your data to the *Journal*, to see who objects to what was used for comparison. Good luck!

In 1977 Martin Bowman published a book entitled *Fields of Little America*. In the introduction it was described by the late well-known, long-time *Journal* Editor William Robertie as "both the official and unofficial history of the men and planes of the Second Air Division."

Recently we have received a number of newspaper articles by Mike Nichols of the Universal Press Syndicate, entitled "A Little America in England." This article has noth-

ing but high praise for all the B-17s that flew out of what he described as "Little America." The B-24 is only mentioned in the list of planes that English farmers had to avoid in plowing their fields, and in a reference to Joseph Kennedy Jr.'s "doomed B-24" (which was not even a part of the 8th Air Force, but a Navy PB4Y-1 flown by a naval aviator). I have been asked to print this article, but we all know how great the B-17 was, and that it almost won WWII all by itself as Andy Rooney puts it, so what's new in this article? Besides, Bill Robertie would be spinning at 780,000 rpm in his grave if he saw the new "Little America" story in the 2ADA *Journal*. He was a B-24 man!

ANSWERS TO WINTER QUIZ

1. ANDY ROONEY (see my comments above)
2. JOHN F. KENNEDY, President, quizzed by school children.
3. THE BRITISH in 1780 upon complaints that King George III did not welcome Benedict Arnold as a great hero.
4. Members of the 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne, upon hearing that they were surrounded.
5. General Patton, upon hearing of McAuliffe's reply of "Nuts" to German surrender demand.
6. U.S. troops at the liberation of Monte Cassino - Liri Valley in Italy, late May 1944.
7. Any "pro" athletic team sport players vs. owners. Basketball, football or baseball in question.

SPRING QUIZ

We were in the European-African Theatre; some of us even got caught in the "American Theatre" of war. But let's ask a few questions about that other war . . . the war in the Pacific:

1. Name the first U.S. Army air base attacked by the Japs.
2. What was the name of the airfield in Manila?
3. Who was the first Medal of Honor recipient?
4. Name the location and the battle generally referred to as "the turning point" of that war.
5. Where were the B-29s first based, and where did they finally "end" the war?
6. What were the two important "values" of Iwo Jima?
7. Describe the demise of Admiral Yamamoto.
8. How many U.S. "Army Air Forces" took part in the Pacific war? ■

"When I was forty, my doctor advised me that a man in his forties shouldn't play tennis. I heeded his advice carefully, and could hardly wait until I reached fifty to start again."

— JUSTICE HUGO BLACK



NEWS FROM ACROSS the Pond

BY DAVID J. HASTINGS
VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Hilary Hammond was awarded the O.B.E. in the New Year's Honors List. It was wonderful to see all of his hard work for Norwich and the Memorial Library recognized.

Former Governor Alfred Jenner's wife died on Christmas eve after a hard fight with cancer.

On the Bure Railway we had a record Christmas, with every seat on the Santa Specials sold. The locomotive "2nd Air Division USAAF" was allocated to the prime task of driving Santa's sleigh and her paint work and caused much comment. I was lucky enough to be rostered to drive her on four of the Specials. ■



David Hastings poses at the 2nd Air Division train with Evelyn Cohen's great-nephew, Shane Wolf, son of Neil Wolf, who went to England with Evelyn in November.

Report from the 2ADA Representative on the Board of Governors

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

The news begins with the announcement that Governor Robin Berrington, Cultural Attaché, U.S. Embassy, has resigned, as he has retired from government service effective 1 February 1999 and is returning to the United States. Mr. Berrington has been a strong supporter of our Memorial Library and was responsible for the successful 2ADA/Fulbright program for the past four years. His dedication to the Trust Governors and the library will be missed. We wish him Godspeed and happiness in his future endeavors. His replacement is rumored to be a T.J. Dowling, whom we are all anxious to meet.

All 2ADA bomb groups have now established \$1,000 endowments for the purchase of books. These generous contributions will assure book purchases in perpetuity.

Trust Governor Chairman Paul King reports that the archaeological digs at the library building site are progressing on schedule, with no surprises to date. Paul enclosed an *Eastern Daily Press* article dated 7 January 1999 that I quote in part:

Top architects have given their seal of approval to the Millennium Project replacement for Norwich's fire ravaged Central Library. The

Royal Fine Art Commission said it "warmly supports" the horseshoe shaped proposal currently on schedule for construction to begin in the spring. Fresh backing came as project managers, the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Company, said the scheme remains on target for full operation by March 2001.

In a letter to the development's architects, Lord St John of Fawsley, Chairman of the RFAC, describes the planned new square in front of St. Peter Mancroft and the Forum space inside the horseshoe as "a great gift to Norwich." Lord St. John was further quoted as saying "if a brick of sufficiently high quality is used" for the multi-function library's exterior, it will be an "appropriate and worthy addition to the varied palette of materials which makes up Norwich city centre."

The shell of the Millennium Project, replacement for the Norwich Central Library... should be completed by May 2000 with much of the building open by December of that year. Full operation is expected to follow three months later.

The same *Press* reported on the digs thusly:

If archaeologists excavating the site of the soon-to-be-built Norwich Millennium Library are to be believed, medieval dustmen (trash disposal people) may have been hard at work keep-

ing the homes of the city's rich free of rubbish. For the area around St. Peter Mancroft was once home of an enclave of wealthy Norman residents and, unlike poorer areas, the archaeologists have found no evidence of refuse pits.

Project manager Andy Hutcheson said: "It may be because the wealthy residents had people taking away their rubbish." That is not to say the dig site in Bethel Street is not pockmarked with holes, but these are medieval cesspits, which are another matter entirely. Among finds made during the excavation is part of a 13th century Grimston Ware Jug. The first part of the dig will be completed on Friday next week (15 January) and the site will be opened to the public on Saturday the 16th from 10 am to 2 pm.

Trust Governors meetings are scheduled for 27 January, 22 April, 8 July and 28 October. At this time your representative plans to attend the 8 July and 28 October meetings. This will provide an opportunity to keep our members up to date on the construction progress of the new library.

The funds appeal is going well, according to Chairman King. Have you done your bit?

I look forward to seeing many of you in Austin in May. Cheers! ■

2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL LIBRARY BUILDING APPEAL

BY JORDAN R. UTTAL, 2ADA HONORARY PRESIDENT

On page 14 of the Winter *Journal* I had the privilege of describing to you the events of the 1998 2ADA Executive Committee meeting in Norwich, as it pertained to the official launching of the £125,000 fund raising drive initiated by the Board of Governors.

They determined that the doubling of the size of our Memorial Library would involve additional expenses, many of which were described in my previous article on the subject. We had knowledge of their plans last May at our Oak Brook convention, and decisions were made there to help them get started with \$50,000.00. These funds were taken from the separate Memorial Library Fund made possible by our member contributions with their dues over a period of the last few years.

When our British friends announced that they had already raised over half of the £125,000 (\$212,500.00 in our currency) we volunteered to make up the other half (\$106,000.00), and having already handed over \$50,000.00, we came up with a target of \$56,000.00. All of this was described in the Winter *Journal*.

I am happy to advise you that even though the Winter *Journal* was delayed, we have on hand more than \$13,000.00 from fifteen donors, specifically for this appeal. Especially noteworthy were two gifts of \$5,000.00 each, one from the 467th Bomb Group, and (since we do not name individuals) one from an American living in the Norwich area. The other thirteen donations have ranged from \$5.00 to \$500.00!

For your further information, any funds over and above our agreed share in the appeal, and the British share will be added to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust Capital Fund.

Dear friends, whatever you can afford will be gratefully appreciated. If you have not already responded as a result of the Winter *Journal* arti-

cle, how about showing your ongoing support by filling in the form below and getting it on the way to us. Many thanks in advance for your interest in our outstanding, UNIQUE, memorial to those who gave their lives in combat, to all of us who served, and to our strong friendship with the people of East Anglia. ■

2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL LIBRARY BUILDING APPEAL

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

2nd Air Division Unit: _____

Amount: \$ _____

Please make check out to **2nd Air Division Association** and mail it with this form to:

Jordan R. Uttal
7824 Meadow Park Drive #101
Dallas, TX 75230-4939

EXECUTIVE V.P. (continued from page 4)

in the design and planning for the chapel. It will be located in the north section of the Memorial Gardens and provide, as does the chapel at Madingley Cemetery, a place of peace where visitors can reflect on those who gave their lives in the service of our country.

"CITIZEN SOLDIER" AND "THE GREATEST GENERATION"

Citizen Soldier, authored by Stephen Ambrose, narrates the ground forces' advance from D-Day to VE Day. It is a compelling and moving account of the rigors suffered by our ground troops during the cruel winter of 1944-45. It is the companion volume to *The Mighty Eighth* reviewed above.

Tom Brokaw's best-seller, *The Greatest Generation*, is the fastest seller in Atlanta. The interest accorded "Saving Private Ryan" and these recent publications is focusing attention on our generation unlike anything since WWII.

How about an 8th Air Force story of the caliber of "Private Ryan"? There are many of them out there.

Editor's Note: Like Tom Hanks with neon captain's bars — something for snipers to aim at? Real schmart, ya? ■

Folded Wings

HDQ

Clifford A. Bertagnoli (453)
Charles K. Marlatt

44th

Carl W. Appelin
James W. Coddington
George W. Folland
Hal Pendleton
Clarence W. Thompson

93rd

Warren K. Boerner (389)
Howard C. Busse
G.W. Fraser
Kurt Harris
Lawrence Hemmel
Edward S. Powell
John J. Rosenow
Lee R. Stepp
Raymond C. Weir

389th

George J. DeGraff
James E. Fitzgerald
Willis W. Marshall, Jr.
Leo R. McBrian

392nd

Henry K. Johnson

445th

Charles A. Huddleston

446th

Harry J. Astley
John F. Verdeschi

448th

Samuel T. Anguish
Charles H. Carn
Merle S. Morris

453rd

Nicholas Bordnick
Z.W. Frausto

458th

George L. Eifel, Jr.
Newell R. Gibson
Lewis R. Jacobus
Roland W. Johnson
Melvin H. Keim
Harold W. Markle
William E. Moran
Charles W. Quirk
Charles W. Stilson
Charles C. Wright

466th

Lester S. Leiterman
Bernard Massing
Thomas F. Reto
Jaret A. Walker

467th

Jack U. Murray
Ray E. Sloan

489th

Raywood H. Blanchard
Louis A. Duke
Walter E. Findley

491st

George B. Gosney
Alanson L. Irish
John Mesarch

492nd

Norman E. Burns (389, 44)
Frank R. Green (467)
Derald A. Simonis

SM

B.H. Hardin



389th Green Dragon Flares

BY BARNEY DRISCOLL

Things are going well for the 389th Bomb Group. I have forwarded a number of applications for membership in the 2nd Air Division Association. If anyone has the names and addresses of any members of their crew who do not belong to the 2ADA, or if any of the ground personnel have a friend or person they worked with who does not belong, please let me know.

We are all aware that the B-24 Liberator was a great airplane. It did a magnificent job on all battlefronts during World War II, probably more so than any other airplane. In many areas it did not receive the recognition it deserved. As a matter of fact, the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian is barely aware that a B-24 even existed.

During World War II most of the news correspondents made their headquarters in London, because that was where the ladies and liquor were most plentiful. And most of the 8th Air Force bases closest to London happened to be 1st Air Division B-17 bases. As the correspondents hated to get too far away from their recreation, most of the news stories concerned the B-17 Flying Fortress.

When asked what made the B-24 a great flying machine, some might mention the larger bomb load it carried, or that it was faster and had a longer range than some of its contemporaries. Often the Davis wing will be mentioned, which was truly an engineering breakthrough at the time. Seldom does anyone mention those good old Pratt & Whitney R-1830 radial engines.

The Pratt & Whitney R-1830 twin row wasp, 14 cylinder radial engine, 5.5 inch bore and 5.5 inch stroke, 1200 hp at 2700 rpm, was an engine tried and true, designed by some truly brilliant engineers, a good many of whom had previously worked for Wright Aeronautical.

The Wright Aircraft Engine Company was founded in 1916 and was known as the Wright Martin Company. During World War One they manufactured under license the Hispano Suisa V-8 water-cooled engine. They continued to build this engine up through 1922.

A number of the best engineers at Wright became disenchanted with their engine program. Among this group was a gentleman named Frederick Rentschler, who had been president of Wright Aeronautical but the board of directors would not support him in a program of developing improved air-cooled radial aircraft engines, so he and the best engineers left Wright Aeronautical to form their own company.

Since they were short on capital, it took a little time to form a new company. Fortunately they had some friends who had money who put them in touch with the Pratt & Whitney Company, who were precision machine tool manufacturers.

The Pratt & Whitney Co. had enjoyed some lucrative contracts during World War One and enjoyed some good profits. It was now well capitalized and had factory space not being utilized. So in 1925 the Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Engine Co. was established.

One of the first engines they produced was the R-1340, a nine-cylinder single row "wasp" air-cooled radial engine. There were a number of innovations built into this engine, not the least of which was a forged aluminum crankcase. Heretofore most aircraft engines used a cast aluminum crankcase. The forged aluminum provided superior mechanical strength and rigidity and provided for less distortion under stress.

The R-1340 engine was very successful, and at 2250 rpm developed 600 horsepower. Probably the plane using this engine that would be familiar to most people would be the North American AT6, SNJ or the Harvard, depending if you were AAF, Navy or British.

The Pratt & Whitney R-1830, 14-cylinder twin row wasp, was designed and engineered during the early 1930s. At that time it was the largest radial aircraft engine under development. The Pratt & Whitney engineers developed precision balance in the R-1830, that in conjunction with a very sophisticated engine mounting system that tended to dampen vibrations and iron out harmonics that could cause stress and fatigue on an airframe.

In addition to the B-24, the R-1830 was used successfully in many other aircraft, such as the DC3/C47 cargo plane, the Consolidated PB5 Catalina flying boat, and some of the Grumman F4F Wildcat Navy fighters. During World War II the R-1830 engine was manufactured not only by Pratt & Whitney but also by the Chevrolet and Buick divisions of General Motors. During the years it was manufactured, there were more R-1830 engines built than any other aircraft engine in history, something in excess of 178,000.

The first R-1830 engines were rated at only 750 hp at 2300 rpm. At that time, 80 octane gasoline was the best available. As time progressed and higher octane gasoline became available, in conjunction with superchargers the horsepower increased. Using two-stage superchargers and 100 octane gasoline, B-24 engines were rated at 1200 hp at 2700 rpm. The highest horsepower rating listed for an R-1830 was 1350 hp on engines used on the Navy PB4Y2 single tail patrol bomber. This was at sea level and was turning up at 2800 rpm.

A spin-off of the R-1830 was the R-2000, which was basically the same engine except that the cylinder bore was increased .25", from 5.5 to 5.75 inches. The stroke remained the same at 5.5 inches. The engine was rated at 1450 hp at 2800 rpm. The R-2000 was used on only one plane, the DC4/C54 cargo plane.

Even though the Pratt & Whitney R-1830 did an outstanding job during World War II, it did not receive the publicity of its big brother, the Pratt & Whitney R-2800. This was truly a remarkable and very rugged engine, 18 cylinder, two rows of nine cylinders each, 5.75" bore and 6" stroke, developing 2000 hp at 2700 rpm.

In the European Theater, probably the plane using this engine that most 8th AF personnel would recognize would be the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt. The engine was also used in the Martin B-26, the Douglas A-26, the Northrup P-61, the Curtis C-46 cargo plane, the Vought F4U Corsair, the Grumman F6F Hellcat, the Grumman twin-engine F7F Tigercat, and the F8F Bearcat. The F7F and F8F arrived too late to see action in WWII, but were outstanding performers and were retained in use by the Navy for several years.

The other bomber used in the 8th Air Force, the B-17, was known in some circles as that tail-dragging 4-engine glider. This plane also used 1200 hp engines, Wright R-1820 nine cylinder single row, which I understand performed fairly well except for overheating and oil leakage.

The folks who really had a ball were those who were involved with flying the B-29s in the Pacific Theater. The B-29 was plagued with an inordinate number of mechanical bugs. The B-29 used the Wright R-3350 radial engine, which was an 18 cylinder twin row configuration, 6.125 bore and 6.3125 stroke, rated at 2200 hp at 2800 rpm.

The development of this engine started back in 1936, and it had some troublesome problems from the beginning, such as excessive vibration and uneven fuel distribution. Some of the difficulties experienced in combat were faulty ignition, overheating, excessive oil consumption, leakage, faulty fuel transfer systems, snapping off valves, blowing cylinder heads, and fire.

I understand there were more B-29s lost due to mechanical failure than were lost to enemy action. It gives you cause to stop and appreciate the B-24 and those good old Pratt & Whitney R-1830s, droning on and on hour after hour.

It is unfortunate that Pratt & Whitney did not build an engine the size and horsepower of the Wright R-3350. Pratt & Whitney at that time were bending their efforts toward developing a larger radial engine, the R-4360. This engine had 28 cylinders, four rows of seven cylinders each, using the same bore and stroke as the R-2800 and develop-

(continued on page 14)



392nd B.G.

BY J. FRED THOMAS

The song says it's a long way from May to December, but from November 20 to January 11, ain't no big deal, bruddah; especially when you throw a Christmas season into it. If things get back on schedule with the *Journal*, it will be March before you read this, but thinking back, we hope you all had a happy and morale-lifting holiday season. It was a quiet season here, but a great many Christmas cards and notes from you and others made it more special. We thank you for that.

I have little, but I would have abbreviated my report to a degree, since I have sent an article to the editor in which we say some things we hope will be of interest to you (see page 31). Read it and think on it, will you? We have a job that needs finishing, and we hope you will furnish help and any suggestions you have.

Now, for what we do have to report. There were considerable communications between our station and the several other places and persons who have mutual interests in our operations. We have kept your top officers of the 392nd BGMA advised of our actions. Further, we exchanged letters with Chairman of the Trust, Paul King, in re the Library Rebuilding Fund. Along with the Fund matter, he reports that the "dig" goes on. Exchanges were made with our good friend, Phyllis DuBois, about several matters. We in the 392nd, and others, have considered a database of our members, preferably at the 2AD Memorial Library. Phyllis has a great deal of experience in that area, and she points out the costs and the great amount of research and other work that would be required to complete such a task. She has worked with Mary Beth Barnard at the Heritage Museum in Savannah and knows the chore from that angle. Also, she has done considerable work with a noted Dutch archivist in researching records of airmen lost over Europe in WWII. Her advice in the coming months will be of great worth to the 392nd.

Regarding a database, we were speaking with Dick Butler, VP of the 44th BG. His group is working on a database through the offices of Arlo F. Bartsch of the Historical Record Center in Milwaukee. Dick had Mr. Bartsch send me a CD program for my computer. Mr. Bartsch walked me through the program set-up, and I am going through the many options offered in his computer ware. We will soon know much more about the feasibility of such a program.

We had a very nice letter from our friends, the Rowlands, near our old Wendling base. Many of our members have visited their place with Denis Duffield to see the old Nissen huts and the bomb shelter. Things are well at Wend-

ling, except Keith is having a hip replacement soon. We wish him well. A card from you would probably be appreciated. There was one sour note in Edor's letter. As many of us know, the Rowlands have had a foot locker with the name THOMAS stenciled on it. Not mine, so all these years they have looked for an owner to show. Finally, Edor saw the name of Charles P. Thomas in the 392nd BGMA News. She went out and got a neighbor to come and take pictures of the locker, which she sent to members here in the States. Unfortunately, she never heard anything. Naturally she was disappointed.

Evidently, the person receiving the pictures didn't follow up with any acknowledgement. We have apologized for the error. Remember, "We always hurt the ones we love." Jim Goar is following up on the matter.

I know you have all paid your yearly dues by now, so if you aren't sure already, please join us at Austin, Texas on Memorial Day weekend. The days dwindle, and we need you there with us. We expect Roland Sabourin to be there with his new hip. Do watch your step. There are maniacs among us, especially on the roads. bomberb24@aol.com ■

What Happened to Jack Moffat?

BY J. FRED THOMAS (392ND)

As Group VP of the 392nd, I have given some attention to the Bill McGinley material (see page 18 of the Winter *Journal*). One of Bill's concerns was the fate of the crew's copilot, John Moffat, taken by the Germans. Later on, the Germans allowed Moffat to make a short wave broadcast to his wife (one of the few allowed). The poser for Bill is the fate of Moffat thereafter. Bill shows him as killed. By whom, we wonder? Moffat's name is not on the Roll of Honor of the 392nd BG or 2ADA. Seems Moffat's wife now lives in the Southern California area. We don't know what her name might be as of now. If anyone has any information in re the above, Bill and I will certainly be happy to receive it. Here is the text of the WWII article that appeared in Moffat's hometown newspaper:



NAZIS PERMIT LT. JACK MOFFAT TO BROADCAST VIA SHORT WAVE TO HIS WIFE

Intercepted by government monitors, the text of a message to his wife and family broadcast by Lieut. John E. (Jack) Moffat, a prisoner of war in Germany, was received today in Colusa by Mrs. Carol Cook Moffat from the acting provost marshal general, Washington, D.C.

So far as is known, this is the first time that a Colusa boy taken prisoner by the Germans has broadcast a message to his family. However, it is the second such instance in World War II as far as this country is concerned. Colusans will recall that Major R.D. Scholes, taken prisoner by the Japanese in the fall of Bataan, was permitted to make a similar broadcast, which was recorded in San Francisco.

The radio broadcast message was the first direct word that Mrs. Cook had received from her husband — and Mrs. Clair Williams from her son — since they received a card stating that he was a prisoner of war, was safe and well, and not to worry.

The provost marshal general in Washington, D.C., upon receiving the report of the broadcast, telegraphed as follows to Mrs. Cook:

"The following unofficial short wave broadcast from Germany has been intercepted: *'My darling, I am well and safe and receiving good treatment. Please give all the family my address and have them write. Please send candy and nuts and preserved fruits.*

You can contact the Red Cross regarding mail and packages. Help them all you can. You can telegraph through the Red Cross when the baby comes. I love you, darling. Keep your chin up. JOHN E. MOFFAT.'

"This broadcast supplements previous, official reports received from International Red Cross. LERCH, Acting Provost Marshal General."

Obviously, from the above, Lieut. Moffat at the time of his broadcast did not know that their second child was born recently. However, Mrs. Moffat sent him this news through the Red Cross.

Mrs. Moffat and Mrs. Williams were, needless to say, made very happy when the text of Jack's radio broadcast was received here this morning.

But there is more to the story. It is learned that one member of the crew, engineer Mattson, apparently escaped via the underground and has returned to action with the

(continued on page 10)

458th BOMB GROUP



BY RICK ROKICKI

I'm at a bit of a disadvantage in preparing this column. We left for Coronado in mid-December, planning to return shortly after the New Year — not so. The result is that this is being done in mid-January all from notes and memory of an earlier preparation.

I'm sure that most group vice presidents receive letters — perhaps many letters — requesting more information on a particular aircraft, air crew, photographs, crash sites, etc. There is always someone investigating an incident that occurred some time in 1943-1945. If it is a 458th aircraft, it eventually comes to me as a result of an Internet listing, 8th Air Force, 458th Bomb Group Vice President. For the most part, I have used George Reynolds' *458th History IV*, Roger Freeman's *The Mighty Eighth*, Martin Bowman's *Fields of Little America*, Jeff Ethell's many books on bomber and fighter aircraft of "our war" and other lesser known works. When I need further help, I contact one of the crew (if a 2ADA member) and send a copy of the original letter from the person or institution making the request. A most recent one was from a Las Vegas "baby boomer" who wanted everything I had on file (including photos) of "Heavenly Hideaway" and/or "Miss Used." Both had the same aircraft serial number. I knew that associate member LARRY VAN KURAN had researched this particular aircraft because his dad was a crew member and could help.

In connection with this subject, it would be a great benefit to me and our group if you could send me a 3 x 5 card with your name, telephone number, squadron, air crew members, aircraft name/number, etc. This can be of great help and would add to the preservation of some personal history for posterity. Take a few minutes to send me that card.

BYRON CHAPMAN's daughter, TERESA, recently wrote to advise me of her dad's passing and wondered if I could help her in finding which missions he flew. Byron was in the 752nd. Teresa gave me three names she was aware of from his crew: pilot Ray Gulick (Goolick), copilot John French, and flight engineer Angelo Caletti (Caletti). The aircraft name "Flying Circus" was also in his papers. I wasn't able to help, but I gave her the proper government agency to write to. Anyone who can help, please write to Teresa Chapman Abshire, 6721 NW 29th Street, Bethany, OK 73008, phone (405) 789-8622, fax (405) 789-3717, e-mail: virgosrgt@aol.com.

BOB & BERNICE LOWRY attended the B-24 dedication and took WALT BAGLEY with them to the Pueblo Air Museum. Bob and Walt were members of Crew 7, 752nd Squadron. The museum is dedicated to a single aircraft, the Consolidated B-24 (Navy PB4Y-1.) Although as much is from the Eighth and Fifteenth Air Forces, there is no information from the 458th BG. Anyone interested and wishing to help should write to the Fred E. Weisbrod International B-234 Memorial Museum, 31001 Magnuson Avenue, Pueblo, CO 81001.

I've had a request from the Lincolnshire Aircraft Recovery Group of Lincolnshire County, England for help involving the crash of 42-50907, believed to be a 458th aircraft with the nose art of "Lili Marlene." I was working on this earlier, but was unable to get it all together before leaving for the holidays.

JOHN DEACON, builder of the 1/6 scale, radio-controlled B-24 "Hookem Cow," presented his aircraft to the inspector for certification. Everything except the wing flap extension/retraction system passed.

Disappointed, John is doing a complete re-work of the servo and "push-pull" rods that activate the system. No possibility of getting into the air before late spring. Those of you who attended the B-24 dedication at Colorado Springs can relate to this size — exactly the same as the bronze sculpture. It weighs approximately 120 pounds, with 26 servos to operate all systems, and, as previously mentioned, it requires a co-pilot to fly. Best wishes for a successful flight, John.

The latest information I have from CHRISTINE ARMES, our 458th "B.C.", is that she has left Norwich and returned to the United States, planning to tour our country before settling somewhere on the West Coast. She still intends to continue the type of research she has done in the past, and will keep us posted on the library progress. Original completion date: "possibly by Christmas, Year 2000."

Perhaps some of you might remember the TV series "Banacek." George Peppard played the role of a "private eye." As such, he had a knack of quoting proverbs, many of which are from Polish history. Now, I'm of Polish extraction as almost everybody knows, and my own "Book of Proverbs" involves aircraft of the 30's "Golden Age" era.

My father, in partnership with a former German WWI aviator, owned a 1929 OX-5 Travelaire biplane. Many of the following thoughts are a combination of both cultures and "Barnstormer" wisdoms. These are just a few proverbs — more to come in a future *Journal*. ■

- The second greatest thrill is flying. The first is landing.
- A good landing is one you can walk away from. A great landing lets you use the airplane later that day.
- Keep flying the aircraft until the last part stops moving.
- Remember, regardless of the flying hours you might have, you are always a student.
- An airplane will fly a "little over gross," but it will not fly without fuel.
- The only time you can have too much fuel is if you are on fire.
- Learn from other pilots' mistakes. You will not live long enough to make them all.

WHAT HAPPENED TO JACK MOFFAT (continued from page 9) 8th Air Force in England.

Lieut. Moffat was the copilot of a four-engined Liberator bomber which went down in the massive operations against Frankfurt on January 29, 1944. Until recently it was believed that the bomber had been shot down, but latest advices are that it did not crash, but landed in Belgium, probably out of gasoline or disabled so badly that it could not get back to its base.

How such word was relayed to this country was told today by Mrs. Williams, who said that a woman in England who had checked all details of the forced landing in Belgium, sent a lengthy letter to a woman in Arkansas, the home state of the bomber's engineer.

The letter, Mrs. Williams said, contained the news that engineer Mattson was back in England. A copy of this interesting letter is being forwarded to Mrs. Williams.

Mrs. Mattson wrote a letter to the Colusans stating that there were 11 in the crew at the time the plane landed in Belgium. However, eight members of the crew have not yet been accounted for. Lieut. Moffat apparently was one of the three known to have been taken prisoner.

Word that Moffat had been taken prisoner by the Germans was received here on February 12, 1944.

The pilot of the bomber was Lieut. John Stukens, and in a picture published in the Sun-Herald he was shown holding the crew's mascot, a black cat which they had named "Katie." ■

Attlebridge Tales



by Jim Lorenz

Some of us who attended the 2ADA Executive Committee meeting in Norwich last November are just now getting over the coughs, as it was rainy, blustery weather. However, this did not dampen our enthusiasm, and all events went as planned. Our visit to the Attlebridge area was on Sunday, November 8. With the help of Ted Clarke, Digby Horner, Rev. Paul Illingworth, and others, our 466th contingent — Earl & Cynthia Wassom, Bill & Lue Nothstein, Everett Jones, and Mary & I — chartered a small van and driver and set out in the rain. As Rev. Illingworth, the All Saints Church pastor, also serves three other churches in the area, he was scheduled to be at Swannington Church, several miles from All Saints, on November 8. The British Remembrance Day (like our Veteran's Day) is also on November 11; the church service on November 8 was their special "Remembrance Day" at Swannington. We were invited to attend and participate, which we did, with Everett Jones reading the scripture. He did a professional job. The sermon was by a special guest, the Archdeacon of Norfolk, the Venerable Michael Handley, assisted by Rev. Illingworth. The Archdeacon was most gracious, and specially greeted us before the sermon and in his message. Many of our local Attlebridge friends and guides also attended this service. We were delighted that the Archdeacon asked if he could attend our services at All Saints. We all then drove to All Saints Church, where Rev. Illingworth conducted a short memorial service for us and about thirty local friends, noting our Book of Honor for the 333 men of the 466th Bomb Group who gave their lives. For those who haven't been there for a while, we noted the new handmade kneeling pads — very attractive.

We all then participated in the laying of a wreath at their WWI memorial on the church grounds. Most everyone then braved the misty weather, as we assembled at the 466th Memorial at Fran's Green. Here, I gave a short talk, Digby presented the colors, Everett laid the wreath, and Rev. Illingworth read a prayer. It was a very low ceiling, but Digby's friend, Jim Avis, did a fly-over in his Starman for us. I do want to note that the turkey farm workers have now stopped maintaining our memorial area. Our base guides, led by the Thomsons, now keep it all in trim shape, and we thank them. The turkey farm was closed on Sunday (the turkeys were working), so we drove the perimeters of the base with Ted Clarke pointing



Laying of the wreath on November 8, 1998 at the 466th BG Memorial at the end of Attlebridge runway 09. Left to right: Rev. Paul Illingworth, All Saints Church; Everett Jones; Jim Lorenz; Bill Nothstein; Earl Wassom; and the Archdeacon of Norfolk, the Venerable Michael Handley.

PHOTO BY MARY LORENZ

out the areas. He even found the area where our esteemed President Earl's plane was kept. We never did find out why his plane was sort of isolated from the main area. Yes, we did sneak over the fence to get on the runway for the photo! You can note that the concrete is in bad shape after 55 years! Then it was back to the Parson Woodford Pub (across the road from All Saints) for lunch. They had a delightful "carvery buffet" set up. Since the "local Brits" have always treated us to a great luncheon, we 466ers bought the lunch this time. We had some 23 attend, including Phyllis Dubois, a former Memorial Room librarian; base guides Ted & Joyce Clarke, Donald & Cathy Thomson and their daughter's family, Brian & Barbara Youngs; Rev. Illingworth; Archdeacon Handley; and Eddie & Vera Brighty. Donald Thomson's latest test reports looked good; he will continue on three month check-ups. Eddie Brighty was the lad who took laundry for our barracks (Earl and I were in the same barracks) to his mother's farm just outside our main gate. It was a short day and we only had a short time to chat, but all appreciated the visit.

MAIL

Luc Dewez keeps in touch, and he and his wife Sophie and baby Marie seem to be doing well now. Luc has completed a draft of his article "Cruel Sky," in which he details the Kassel Mission of September 27, 1944, and sent copies to some of us to proofread. He expects to be with us in Austin on Memorial Day weekend. Letters were also received and answered from a historian in Poland, one in The Hague, and author Robin Neillands in England.

John Dienst, curator of the Stillwater Airport Memorial Museum, Oklahoma, requests information and photos of some 475 combat

aircraft that were stored at Stillwater Airport (Searcy Field) and later scrapped. There were 228 B-24 type Liberators; consisting of 144 B-24s, 2 F-7s, and 82 PB4Ys. Twenty of the B-24s were 2AD aircraft. The only 466th B-24 listed was #42-51154, "Silver Dollar." I could only confirm that this plane did see combat action in our group. Anybody have any photos or information on "Silver Dollar"? Give me a call if you have anything.

IT'S ABOUT TIME

Remember our mission pre-dawn briefings, which always ended with a "Time Hack"? We all stopped our watches and restarted them on the briefer's "Hack." This got our group at least approximately within a minute or so of being together on the time.

A recent article by Linda Shiner, in the December 98/January 99 issue of the *Air & Space* Smithsonian magazine, gives us the deal on a far more accurate system, using the cesium atom. I quote:

"It just so happens, because of the arrangement of its little orbiting electrons, that when an atom of this 55th element of the periodic table is heated just a tad by microwave, it radiates energy at 9,192,631,770 Hertz or cycles per second. In 1967, the 13th General Assembly on Weights & Measures decided to use this transition frequency of cesium as the basis for defining the unit of time known as the second. A second became the length of time it takes light emitted by an irradiated cesium atom to cycle the 9 billion plus times . . . think of each one of those cycles as a single unit of time, you get the idea of the accuracy with which time can be measured by a cesium atomic clock . . . these clocks have an error of only one second every 1,400,000 years! Thus . . . at the Nation-

(continued on page 18)



NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY JULIAN K. WILSON

Hello, my hopefully understanding friends! With the change in the issue date of the last issue of the *Journal*, coupled with the production of our 453rd Group Spring Newsletter, I have been caught with less than the usual amount of news to report that has not been previously covered.

I would like to commend **ODO OLIVO** for giving me his support as he has been doing. Before assuming this position, we had never even met. Odo has written to me on several key points during the year, offering his opinion and often providing me with information, including articles and other items he has clipped out of his local newspaper. They have helped me at times when the silence from the rest of you left me guessing as to your reception of what was currently happening. This world could use a whole lot more Odo Olivos!

Some of our folks who have not been faring as well as might be hoped include **WENDELL JESKE**, on the mend from a stroke, and **RALPH McCLURE**, looking less and less like a Scottish plaid each day as his body bruises fade away. His car was demolished with him inside! And **PETER STEBER**, 735th armament shop clerk, has certainly felt better.

There have to be more of us out there who could benefit from our get-well wishes and prayers, even if we have no specifics on them. May you all have a speedy recovery.

Next, I do believe it is essential that I make an effort to clarify what has happened, and what is going to happen, in Austin during the annual elections of our 453rd BG Association officers.

Please, do not think that the slate for the election of your 453rd Group Association officers has already been finalized, regardless of what you may have received in the mail. In my column for our Spring Group Newsletter, I have intentionally spelled it out for you as to why I felt that you would not want me to continue as your chairman. Unfortunately I do not know which you are going to read first, this article, or the one in the Newsletter. Regardless of sequence, I ask that you please read your Newsletter carefully. If I had intended that you would not have a chance to provide input and nominations for our elected offices BEFORE the business meeting in Austin is opened, I would not have written what I did for you in the Spring Newsletter, nor would I be writing this.

This past December, a time I now know was more than a little premature, I copied just that portion of my column that appears in the Spring Newsletter that pertained to the end of my agreed-upon tenure as your chairman for the 1998-1999 year. I sent copies to the elec-

ted group officers in order that they would not be confronted with any last-minute activity to consider who they wanted to nominate for each elected office.

Under the leadership of **BILL GARRETT**, our longstanding and capable nominations committee chairperson, each existing elected officer was contacted, and a slate was arrived at. This slate was in turn mailed out in January to most of the people named in the listing on the inside front cover of the Newsletter of the 453rd "greater" Executive Committee, some fourteen persons.

The slate of elected officers looks like a done deal. It does not have to be! You should feel free to submit the name or names of persons you feel would enhance the leadership of your organization. See that Bill Garrett receives them in time for him to include them with others received prior to Memorial Day.

I can hear some of you saying, "Get real, Willie!" but I can be criticized for not providing members with an opportunity to participate in our election, but will escape scathing remarks if I do provide for everyone's opportunity to participate in democracy's greatest asset. And of course, opportunity will be provided for those in attendance at the group business meeting to make any nominations they wish from the floor. Nominations are open!

This is becoming an especially trying time for the officers who make up the 2ADA Executive Committee, especially for those who must plan future conventions. It is not so much a shortage of convention sites, it is a shortage of the kind of site we can afford that will have

the necessary drawing power to induce you and I to attend.

It appears that we have entered the era of "we hope to break even on this one," quite a sudden switch from all of these conventions we have enjoyed in the past. **EVELYN COHEN** is forced to try all of the tricks she has learned to drive the best bargain for us. We can't compare what we are getting today for a dollar with what we were getting ten years ago for a dollar. We owe it to Evelyn to be understanding, and she most certainly needs and deserves our support. *Let her know of your appreciation.*

I recently read an issue of the Heritage League's newsletter. It was well done, including some interesting stories. President **CRAIG BEASLEY** is deserving of our recognition and support. You may have noted the presence of Heritage League members at our 2ADA functions, where they are serving as observers, getting "on-the-job" experience and information that will later serve them well as we ourselves become less and less active in 2ADA affairs.

Craig was present and recognized during the last 2ADA Executive Committee meetings held in Norwich. This organization, our "future," is coming into its own reason for existence.

I suspect that, for some of us, actively supporting the Heritage League has been like our regularly receiving solicitations, along with our junk mail, from the Neptune Society. And as most of us have been doing, we cast it and the implications aside 'cause that is a matter for tomorrow. Hello! Today is now tomorrow!

It is most important that each one of us provide both the monetary (negligible) and moral support needed by the Heritage League at this point in time. Let's see a surge in new memberships this year! Our everlasting fame is in their hands.

Got to go help pull through the props! Cheers! ■

SENIORS IN SPACE

SUBMITTED BY JULIAN K. WILSON (453RD)

JOHN GLENN returned safely from his space shuttle flight, duly heralded in all of the media. While we of his age and generation have basked in John's limelight, I think little is known of the extent to which NASA went to accommodate John aboard the shuttle. This insight was received by me from a physicist employed by Cal Tech's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, which runs many of NASA's programs. Consider these:

- (1) All important devices could be made to operate by the Clapper.
- (2) The shuttle's thermostat was set at 80 degrees.
- (3) Little bowls of candy were scattered randomly about the shuttle.
- (4) The top speed of the shuttle was set at 25 miles per hour.
- (5) Space pants now go up to the armpits.
- (6) "Early bird" specials were included on the menus.
- (7) The left-blinker turn signal was left on for the entire mission.

Just kidding! I know you join me in extending our congratulations to John Glenn for demonstrating to the world that we seniors can still function quite well in today's high-tech world. ■



492nd BOMB GROUP HAPPY WARRIOR HAPPENINGS

BY W.H. "BILL" BEASLEY

I owe Editor Ray Pytel a thank you for writing an explanation in the *Journal* regarding my non-article for the Winter issue. Although some of the news may seem old, I'd like to begin with the dedication of the Bronze B-24 at the Air Force Academy on September 25, 1998. Fifty-three members of the 492nd BG attended the dedication: Dick Bastien; Bill, Norma, Janette, Kevin and Madeline Beasley; Allen, Grant and Chris Blue; Warren & Lee Branch; Robert & Betty Carter; Bob & Dorothy Cash; Tom & Margaret Floyd; Andy & Mary Gall; Henry Gendreizig; Paul & Eleanor Gidel; Vernie & Quilva Honberger; Howard Heckmann and daughter Margaret; Harry & Marta Loper; Patricia, Alex, Brian, Kevin and Whitney Mattson; Sam & Edith Miceli; Jake & Helen Mink; Don Miller, John L. Moore; Harry L. Orthman; Ellis & Edna Seaton; Bill & Molly Sparks; Elvern & Hazel Seitzinger; Walter & Joye White; and Wes Williams with daughter Kerrin Schultz, her husband Doug, and grandchildren Kelsey, Donovan, and Derrick.

On the evening of September 24, Norma and I hosted a picnic supper for the 492nd BG members, consisting of southern fried chicken, corn on the cob, potato salad, ranch beans, biscuits with honey butter, apple cobbler, and iced tea. The following members of other groups staying at the Hampton Inn joined us: Hap Chandler; Chuck Walker; the J.R. Lemons; James Berrys; Andrew Haleys; Willis Millers; Russell Neatrous; Don Adams; David Adams; Andy & Jim Cumming. The food was delicious and the camaraderie was excellent. Following supper, Andy Gall showed a video he made of the B-24.

The following members were first-timers: Warren & Lee Branch; Vernie & Quilva Honberger (same crew); Harry & Marta Loper; Don Miller; and Walter & Joye White. Everyone who went to the "Flying W" on Saturday night, the 26th, had a great time.

The dedication of the Bronze B-24 at the Air Force Academy was inspiring. It has been described in full detail in the Winter *Journal* as well as other publications. I was pleased to be a part of the team removing the shroud at the dedication. I want to add my compliments to Neal Sorensen and Norma Beasley who helped organize this memorable dedication; to Al Asch for writing the excellent history book of the B-24; to Ray Pytel for getting the articles of incorporation for the B-24 Groups; and to the late Jay Jeffries for his dream of having a bronze B-24 sculpture permanently displayed in the Honor Court of the United States Air Force Academy.

When Jay Jeffries passed away, it left his position as president of the B-24 Groups vacant. The other members of the board have met and

elected Al Asch as president and me as vice president. Neal Sorensen will continue as the treasurer, and Ray Pytel as the secretary. I was honored to accept this office.

On November 1, we (Bill, Norma and Craig) left Denver for Norwich, England, arriving 5,000 miles later at Gatwick Airport, London the morning of November 2. After a cup of coffee with the other 2ADA Executive Committee members, we boarded coaches for Norwich. After lunch at the Hotel Nelson upon arrival we were happy to get unpacked.

Tuesday morning, November 3, we were up early and on our way to the library on Ber Street. It was rather cool, and although we arrived early, Leslie and Christine invited us to come in out of the cold. They escorted us upstairs to the Memorial Room where we met Derek Hills and Judith Jerome. We were immediately impressed by the warmth and hospitality extended to us. We examined the alcove containing the Roll of Honor and other memorabilia, and noted the tail fins mounted over the stacks. After spending two hours browsing through the books and talking with the library personnel, the Wassoms, the Thomas's, Hap Chandler, and the Beasleys made their way to the Adam and Eve Pub for lunch. It is the oldest pub in town, quaint and with excellent food. We did get a good walk! We accused Keith of taking us on a "walk about." A trip to Coltishall after lunch and dinner with Keith and Iris Thomas closed a perfect day before total exhaustion set in.

We attended the memorial service at Cambridge AMBC and the trip to Duxford with lunch in the Officer's Club. The American Air Museum at Duxford is very impressive. There was not a complete B-24 on display, but they have now acquired one, so after restoration their collection will be nearly complete. Then it was on to Wymondham College for tea before returning to the hotel.

Dedication of the 2ADA engine at Aylsham and subsequent seven-mile trip to Wroxham was also fun. We had a stop at the coffee shop courtesy of David Hastings. Another fun experience.

Russell Ives, Allan Sirrell, John and Norman Winterbottom, and Judith Jerome met us at the Hotel Nelson on Sunday morning in order for Russell to present Judith with a copy of his book, *89 Days*, about the 492nd BG. Judy was on her way to church, so Norma, Craig and I joined the fellows and went to North Pickenham for a look around. Russell provided a wreath for me to lay at the 491st-492nd memorial. It is always a solemn occasion. Then it was back to the Blue Lion Pub for the most delicious shepherd's pie in the country. Too soon, we had to return to the hotel.

Monday, November 9 seemed to come earlier than we had anticipated. We were up at 4:30 AM. After coffee and danish, we boarded a coach at 5:30 AM and headed for London Gatwick. Three and a half hours later we were at the airport catching the train into London.

After lunch with the Leetons we took a cab to our hotel in Earl's Court. Craig and Norma took the underground to Harrod's. I opted to stay at the hotel and watch the airline tickets and passports. Good move! Somewhere between Harrod's and Earl's Court, Norma had her wallet taken. That began another adventure of canceling credit cards, buying another train ticket to Gatwick, and securing a theater voucher to see "Art." We had hoped to go to Portsmouth to check out the Mary Rose, but there wasn't time. Three days after arriving home, I came down with a viral infection. I coughed for a month, but with antibiotics and a potent cough syrup, I was finally virus-free.

ENRICO SCHWARTZ

In the Fall issue of the *Journal* I wrote about Enrico Schwartz having found the wreckage of the Lloyd Herbert crew. To bring you up to date, Brenda Gainey, who was searching for details of her grandfather Lawrence Nursall (KIA on May 19, 1944 on the mission to Brunswick, Germany) and her husband Mike did meet with Enrico and his fiancée Svetlana Reimer in August. Along with many of the townspeople in the area, they were able to do further excavation. The United States Mortuary and Casualty detail stationed in Europe joined them, along with an anthropologist and some fifteen of the forensic personnel from Hawaii. They were able to retrieve two complete skeletons and many bones, as well as dog tags and other items. Final disposition of this case has not yet been made.

BED AND BREAKFAST

Iris and Keith Thomas, members of the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial and base contacts for the 491st/492nd, have a bed and breakfast. Iris is a terrific cook, and you won't find better hospitality. If you are planning a trip to Norwich, contact them at Cannels Farm, Bow Street, GT, Ellingham Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 1JA, England.

"89 DAYS"

As mentioned above, Russell Ives has written this new book about the 492nd BG and its 89 days of existence. If you want a copy, write to him at 38 Millmoor Road, Meltham Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD73JY, England for details.

SWEDEN, AFTER THE FLAK

Karen Branch Cline, daughter of Warren Branch, is researching her dad's internment in Sweden during World War II. Warren was a member of the 492nd BG, 856th BS, and was shot down on the May 29, 1944, mission to Politz, Germany. He and his crew were interned in Sweden until October, 1944. Karen is publishing a newsletter for and about internees in Sweden in honor of her father. If you would like to be on her mailing list, you may contact her at 813 East Cawson Street, Hopewell, VA 23860. ■

Since I have run out of things to write about for the Headquarters page in the *Journal*, I will have to see what I can find that might be of interest to you. As I write this in January, Chapel Hill has just lucked out, as the big snow all went north of here. But we did get a lot of rain, and the temperature this morning was 18 degrees. By the time you receive this Spring *Journal*, the groundhog will, I hope, have seen his shadow and the weather will begin to warm up. And all of you should have sent in your registration for the big Memorial Day weekend convention of the 2nd Air Division Association in Austin, Texas, May 29-31. If not, I feel certain that Evelyn can still find a room for you if you will just give her a call.

At the behest of my daughter and grandchildren, I have gotten rid of my old word processor and bought a real computer! Now, I can not only receive their e-mail messages and send them my reply, but I can get on the Web and review the 2nd Air Division home page with all of its information as well as information from the Heritage League and the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial. The web site is very well done, even though much of it is information that us old-timers are familiar with. I am glad to know that the site is used by lots of people.

I did not get a fax machine with my computer, although I may add one later. Anyone who would like to contact me by e-mail can do so at strongra@bellsouth.net. My telephone number is 919-967-2301.

I just finished Tom Brokaw's new book,

DIVISION



BY RAY STRONG

The Greatest Generation. He tells, through the stories of individual men and women, the story of a generation. We who came of age during the Depression and WWII will recognize how we too changed as a result of living at this time. Each chapter is short and is about one individual. A couple of them are about people in B-24 bomb groups in England. This generation was united not only by a common purpose, but also by common values — duty, honor, economy, courage, service, love of family and country, and above all, responsibility for oneself. I think you would enjoy reading it.

In rummaging through some of my old papers the other day, I came across a copy of a report that I made to the membership in 1952 when I was president of the 2ADA. I quote one short paragraph as follows:

"As you know, our Association has been very interested in the Second Air Division Memorial Project in Norwich and in the progress being made toward its completion. *[At this time no decision had been made as to what the memorial would be.]* At the reunion last year, a special committee was appointed to study the question and to report its findings at the re-

union in Chicago. This report will also be published in our newsletter after the meeting."

Thus, for at least the last 47 years, the major interest of this Association has been the support of this Memorial to those who gave their lives that the rest of us could live in peace. We have seen the original library and our Memorial Room built and supported by us all. We have also lived through its destruction by fire and now the imminent rebuilding of an even larger library and a larger Memorial Room. We need to ensure that this new Memorial is furnished with not only books and other library material, but the very best in furniture, computers, and whatever else is needed to make it the finest memorial anywhere. I urge that all of us do our utmost to contribute to the funds needed to ensure that the Memorial will last in perpetuity, as we have all intended for so long. I urge that all of us from HQ support, to the best of our ability, the efforts now being made to raise \$125,000 to be used for furnishing and equipping our new Memorial. We only have a few years left. Let's do it!

Once again I am asking each of you to write me with your reflections on your experiences while serving with the 2nd Air Division. Some of you have things that need to be documented and published in the *Journal* for use by historians and others doing research about the 2AD. What was interesting about your job? Experiences during your off-duty time? What have you been doing during the last 50+ years? I need things I can put into the *Journal* and the HQ Newsletter.

That's all for this time. ■

LIVING IN THE SHADOWS OF GIANTS (continued from front cover)

prospect of another Great Depression, no overarching national crisis. But there are unresolved challenges such as racism, the quality of public education and the equality of economic opportunity. How can we rise to the occasion? For one, we must restore the World War II generation's sense of national purpose, not merely of individual needs. They saw so much horror and deprivation in their formative years that they rarely engage in self-pity. No one would ever say that of the Me Generation. One man I interviewed for my book, Tom Broderick, was blinded by a shot to the head in Europe. Back home he learned Braille, built a life, had seven children and now, in the twilight of his life, says only, "It was my fault for getting too high in the foxhole." Again and again, I heard similarly self-deprecating expressions of how to handle adversity.

I also heard a longing for a time well described by Sen. Daniel Inouye, who lost an arm and won a chest full of medals in World War II. "The one time the nation got together was during World War II," Inouye recalled. "We stood as one, we clenched our fists as one and that was a rare moment for all of us." Our greatest tribute to the greatest generation would be to reclaim that spirit for the present and the future rather than treat it as a relic of the past.

Brokaw, managing editor of "NBC Nightly News," is the author of "The Greatest Generation," published by Random House. ■

389TH GREEN DRAGON FLARES (continued from page 8)

ing 3000 hp at 2700 rpm. They experimented with this engine in the Republic P-47 and also in the Vought F4U Corsair, but those planes never saw combat with these engines.

Boeing did develop a fighter plane for the Navy using this R-4360 engine. It was called the XF8B, and was quite large for a fighter plane, having a wing span of 54 feet and a maximum take-off weight of 20,500 pounds. It was armed with six 50 cal. machine guns and six 20 mm cannon. There were only three of these planes built when the Japanese surrendered.

The Boeing B-50, which was essentially a B-29 with a new wing design and stronger landing gear, used the Pratt & Whitney R-4360 engine, which was by this time rated at 3500 hp. The engine was also used in the Boeing C-97 cargo plane and the KC-97 tanker plane.

The Convair B-36 used six of the Pratt & Whitney R-4360 engines rated at 3800 hp. On later variants these engines were assisted by two pair of J47-G.E.-19 turbo jet engines mounted outboard of the propeller engines. This was to be the trend of the future, large piston engines being replaced by turbo props and jet engines. More powerful and more efficient, but not nearly as interesting.

There are probably hundreds of people from the 2nd Air Division who know a lot more about radial engines than I do, but I still think it makes an interesting subject. ■

"WING IT" AGAIN OVER BRITAIN, AND LONDON TOO!

BY BILL BURCHELL • REPRINTED FROM *IN BRITAIN*, AUGUST 1998

Hanging upside down with only slender straps and half a mile of fresh air between me and the ground could have been frightening, but such were the skills of the pilot behind me that the loop we performed was simply exhilarating. There is just nothing to beat the thrill of an open cockpit.

As the aircraft levels out I feel like I'm flying through a time warp, reality and imagination merge for a moment and I'm a pilot in World War I — a sensation further enhanced by the Biggles-style flying jacket, helmet and goggles I was loaned as I climbed aboard. The biplane's bespoke construction adds to the illusion, its wooden struts and upper wing framing my view forward through a tiny windscreen. Above and to the sides, however, is nothing but the sky, and the sense of freedom is intoxicating. Forget wind in your hair, this is wind everywhere, with the odd whiff of oil and exhaust.

On this fine spring day, who cares? I'm fulfilling an ambition — to fly a historic biplane. Quite why such machines should have this effect I don't know — after all, I've flown many times in a vast mix of aircraft — but I'm far from alone in my passion.

According to my pilot, Trevor Butcher, who part-owns the 56-year-old De Havilland Tiger Moth we're flying in, a biplane touches the heart like no other aircraft. It's simply inspiring. As a dyed-in-the-wool enthusiast with more than 7,000 hours on tail-wheel types, he *would* say that, but his thriving business proves his point. Classic Wings is one of the few companies in Britain to offer flights in historic biplanes, and it attracts people from around the world.

Like me, many customers booking Tiger Moth flights are already private pilots and yearn to experience a biplane. For some, it's a trip down memory lane for retired RAF veterans reliving the time when they first trained on the type in readiness for World War II — so demand for these flights remains high. To accommodate such enthusiasts, Classic Wings employs highly experienced instructors who are qualified teachers and can allow their passengers to "have a go."

To aviation buffs, the De Havilland Tiger Moth is a legend and still wins plaudits as a real "pilot's aeroplane." Designed in the early 1930s as a basic RAF trainer, it's still a challenge to handle, for only a good pilot flies it well. Such are its qualities that those who first trained on it often progressed to Spitfires and Hurricanes and later fought in the Battle of



Classic Wings, operating out of Duxford, offers flights over the sights of London and other scenic destinations. Above: The classic De Havilland Tiger Moth.

Britain.

Taking control of one is unforgettable. Unlike any other type I've flown, the Tiger demands attention. Merely think a small movement and the aircraft responds — it's as if the machine is alive. Coax and caress and she'll fly like a dream, but mistreat her at your peril!

Flights can last from 15 to 45 minutes, according to price, with anyone who wants to trying their hand at flying it. It gives you a feel for the aircraft, explains Trevor Butcher, but whatever your previous experience, few are prepared for the landing. He's not wrong. As we slow on approach, the Tiger's nose rises to obscure the runway. I find that the only way to see it is to crab the aircraft sideways and, just before the wheels touch, kick it straight for touch down.

In Trevor's hands the Tiger is a kitten, and we purr to a halt on the airfield. Classic Wings operates from Duxford, a former Battle of Britain fighter station near Cambridge, home to the Imperial War Museum's extensive collection of vintage aircraft and military vehicles — an unmissable attraction to add to your flight. A special package combines both.

Surrounded by other historic types spanning decades of development, it's sobering to note that just 95 years have passed since the Wright Brothers took to the air. Most of us feel that the golden days of aviation occurred between the World Wars, when transport of every mechanised kind turned travel into a global industry. In those days flying was still romantic, when airliners flew only in daylight and pilots dined with their passengers.

In Britain, what was then Imperial Airways (forerunner of today's British Airways) was quick off the mark to broaden its appeal and

market aviation to the less well-healed. As a result, "afternoon tea" flights over London rapidly became the fashionable thing. Sixty years later, when flying has become more impersonal, you can now recapture that 1930s spirit with a leisurely flight over London. The two Dragon Rapides used are classic examples of the 1930s airliner and are among the very few twin-engined biplanes still flying. Meticulously restored to comply with modern regulations, they seat eight in a style that few air travellers can remember.

In its day, the Dragon Rapide was known for its grace and reliability. As such, it was a favourite of the rich and famous, including Edward VIII, who, as Prince of Wales, always kept one at his disposal. Today, it remains one of the best-loved pre-war aircraft among historic enthusiasts.

The aerial tour of London's landmarks is undoubtedly among the most popular flights available. Given good weather, the flights are run from Duxford on most weekends between March and October.

Approaching London from the northeast, the city tour begins over London's highest building, the Tower at Canary Warf, then flies west along the Thames at a leisurely 80 knots. Cruising at just 2,000 feet, the Rapide becomes a spectacular sightseeing platform, her big square windows affording stunning panoramas framed between silver wings.

The route takes in St. Paul's Cathedral, Tower Bridge, the Tower of London, Trafalgar Square, the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace and other great houses before turning north at Chelsea Bridge. Total flight time is around an hour and a quarter. "I can't

(continued on page 16)

"WING IT AGAIN" (continued from page 15)

remember anyone who hasn't got off the flight without being impressed," said Trevor Butcher.

Some cheaper sightseeing options include flights over Cambridge, with its ancient colleges, courtyards and spires, then onwards to the magnificent Romanesque cathedral at Ely and over the famous racetrack at Newmarket — very different, very stately, and very English.

For those looking for more excitement, Red Letter Days offer a vast range of aerial experience, including a fast ride in a vintage jet trainer. A 30-minute flight in a 400 mph De Havilland Vampire, which once used to train RAF pilots, can be had for £495. The package includes a pre-flight briefing, champagne to celebrate the occasion, membership in the De Havilland Supporters Club, and a tour of the "Wings over Wales" aircraft collection.

At the cheaper end of the market, many centres across the UK offer inexpensive flights in microlight craft where, under expert tuition, you can try your hand at flying from £49 for a 30-minute flight.

Whatever your tastes and wherever you stay, there are aerial experiences to suit across the UK. As well as various aviation museums to explore, you can book one- or two-day packages that offer a choice of gliding, hang-gliding, paragliding, hot-air ballooning, parachuting, stunt flying, helicopter flights, and, if you prefer to keep your feet on the ground, you could try a "flight" in a real flight simulator. Getting airborne couldn't be simpler. ■

Another Way to See London — Soon!



Visitors to London will soon be able to enjoy an exciting new attraction. The LONDON EYE (above), near Westminster Bridge, is the world's largest observation wheel and will start turning toward the end of the year.

Passengers will be able to board enclosed capsules on the wheel, for a 30-minute, 360-degree rotation, complete with commentary. Built to mark the millennium, the wheel will be 450 feet tall and offer stunning views over a 30-mile radius, including St. Paul's Cathedral, the Houses of Parliament, and the Millennium Dome. ■

BUZZ BOMBS: D-DAY WAS TOO LATE!

BY GRAHAM HEATHCOTE, ASSOCIATED PRESS

(The writer, a schoolboy at the time, was there when the German V-1s and V-2s began falling. These are his memories.)

LONDON — In the early morning darkness of June 13, 1944, we heard a noise different from anything we had known through five years of air battles and bombs.

A far-off rumbling in the sky became louder and louder, turning into a roar that shook the house in Kent and filled the fields with shattering sound.

With a deafening rattle, whatever it was passed low over the house. The reflection of a red flame climbed up the bedroom wall and across the ceiling. Then the roar became a rumbling again, dying away as the thing flew on in the direction of London.

I lay in bed petrified. My mother ran into my room in her nightdress crying, "Graham, Graham, what is it?"

The government did not tell us immediately, but the assault of Hitler's secret weapons had

begun with the V-1 flying bomb.

Just one week earlier, the Allied had invaded Normandy, giving us confidence that peace in the air would come.

It did not happen. The third of the four V-1s on that first night killed three people in London's Bethnal Green area.

On September 8, another secret weapon arrived. The first V-1 supersonic rocket killed three people in Chiswick, west London. The V-2 was more terrifying because it could not be seen or detected.

In the closing months of World War II, Britain became the first nation to suffer attack by ballistic missiles from beyond its borders. The bombardment lasted nine months. The target was London, but the flying bombs and rockets fell all over southeast England, where American GIs waited to ship out for the continent.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme Allied commander, ordered more bombing of the launch sites in France and the Netherlands.

By March 1945, when the attacks ended, 5,823 flying bombs and 1,054 rockets had fallen on England, killing 8,300 people, badly wounding at least twice that number, destroying 23,000 homes and damaging many more.

Another 2,771 people were killed in Belgium and France and 2,900 Allied airmen died in raids on launch sites and production plants.

Both V-1 and V-2 were brilliant scientific and engineering achievements that might have enabled Germany to defeat Britain if they had come earlier. But after D-Day, they were militarily irrelevant.

Together, the flying bomb and the rocket created terror in London, which still bears scars from the attacks.

One million people fled the capital to seek safety in the countryside. Another 250,000 mothers and children were evacuated by the government. Despite the terror, Britons managed a joke: They called the flying bombs "doodle-bugs." ■

THEY WERE BORING, DIRTY JOBS THAT HAD TO BE DONE. THIS ENGLISHMAN DID THEM!

BY TOM WHOLLEY JR. (458TH)

Every night, he stood regular watch duties at the top of the old water tower, spotting for planes, buzz bombs, and the like.

During the day he worked as a plumber's helper to his father at Horsham St. Faith, home of the 458th Bomb Group in England near the city of Norwich.

I don't think our acquaintance was anything more than a casual hello or similar greeting, but I remember him as a typical jolly young boy who had more responsibilities than the average boy of his age should have had.

The 2016th Eng. Avn. F/F Pltn. was housed in a building we shared with the MPs and the detention cells which was located directly across from the Administration HQ building. I was the NCO Fire Chief of the airfield.

My friend was Pete Alden of Norwich.

I first met Pete when he was a young boy of 14, doing both jobs well at Horsham St. Faith. After the war I went home, and nearly forgot about Pete.

Nearly fifty years had passed and I had never heard of or from him until I wrote an article in the Fall 1992 issue of the 2ADA *Journal* in which I described a particular instant involving a plane fire accidentally started by a burst of shots into the bomb bay of a nearby plane loaded with incendiaries, to which my crash crew responded. The incident occurred in March of 1945, and we narrowly escaped with our lives.

I was surprised by the number of respon-



PETE ALDEN IN HIS "WAR ROOM"

ses that resulted from this publication. One of those answering was Pete Alden, who now of course was an adult, still living in Norwich, England.

That was the beginning of a pen pal relationship, more regularly on his part than on mine, that has lasted for the last six years.

Pete has sent me countless pictures of various places in and around Norwich, newspaper clippings and photos of some crash sites

to which my outfit had responded.

This past summer he was concerned because I had not responded to his most recent letter, so he contacted our *Journal* editor, Ray Pytel. Ray called me (thank you, Ray) and apprised me of the situation. I finally wrote Pete and gave him my phone number, and he called me soon afterwards.

Ever since that time he has called me nearly every morning around 7:45 EST, lets the phone ring once and hangs up. It's his way of saying "good morning." He tells me I am one of several people he contacts daily.

Pete is a very unusual fellow. Whenever former American GIs visit the Norwich area, Pete acts as a guide and takes them out to their old air bases.

He draws a picture for them as a souvenir and is a great host. His so-called "war room" is a mass collection of memorabilia of all the bomb groups that served in East Anglia.

I think Pete is a very special person, and I'm sure that those who have also experienced his friendship think so too. He is now in his 70s and suffering from arthritis and other complications, but it hasn't changed his enthusiasm nor lowered his spirits. Anyone wishing to contact Peter can write him at: Pete Alden, 72 Earham House, Norwich NR2 3PF, Norfolk, England.

Thank you, Pete Alden. You did your "jobs" well, and you continue to do well — thank God for people like you! ■

WATER OVER THE DAM? NOT REALLY

AN OPEN LETTER FROM ED WANNER (445TH)

There are some guys who can't leave well enough alone. And when it comes to the 445th's "Asbestos Alice" (may she rest in peace), this survivor of her adventures just has to raise some doubts. The Summer 1998 article by my buddy Dick Gelvin ("Who Was Asbestos Alice — Really??") although beautifully written, just doesn't completely jibe with this cockpit occupant's memory.

The ship came along after the Kassel raid, which by accident my crew wasn't on. Remember, we got a lot of new replacement ships? "Asbestos Alice" was silver and sleek. And after checking with those of my crew whom I could get in touch with, I've come to the following conclusion. She wasn't an "Asbestos Alice" clone with a bunch of other 700th birds with the same nose art sitting on the hardstands. At least unless this duplicating of a logo happened after our last mission in February 1945.

Dick seems absolutely certain that the 700th emblem was on a bunch of Libs, but at that time my eyes weren't dim (plus our bombardier's and navigator's eyes), and we don't recall any other "Asbestos Alice"s. Dick is a buddy now, but at the time he wasn't a good enough friend to share that extra medicinal bourbon that he must have gotten at debriefing. The stuff must have encouraged multiple vision. I'll get him to share some, sooner or later.

As for the origin of the name, I am puzzled if 700th Squadron C.O. Captain James Burke said that the name was "unanimously accepted by all present squadron members." Our crew didn't hear anything about any contest, though Burke lived in our hut until he made Squadron C.O. So much for being consulted about the organizational insignia. Anyhow, our crew ordered the A2 jacket patch with the name printed across the bomb, which I still have. But, did we see a bunch of 700th planes having the same nose art? Nope! And I didn't have many senior moments in those days. Not really! ■

489TH NOTES

BY
JAMES M. DAVIS

I wish for each of you very special people a really great 1999. Each year seems to pass much faster than the previous one . . . I guess that is the way it is supposed to be. Most of us were born and grew up as a child in the booming twenties, existed and barely survived during the Great Depression of the thirties, only to face the greatest conflict the world has ever known in the forties. We gave several prime time years of our lives to be a part of the air war over Europe which some of us were fortunate to survive. I guess it could be said that we lived a lifetime the first twenty-five years of our lives. Then we helped build the greatest country and greatest way of life the world has ever known. We are fortunate to have had the privilege to have lived in the best and worst of all times.

Ms. Lois Harrington, who handles all the oral histories for the Confederate Air Force, will be at the 2ADA convention in Austin to record oral histories of our members' experiences in World War II. I have also invited Mr. Gary Evans, executive producer of the Military Channel, Inc., to attend with a television crew and do some interviews to be aired at a later date. I am sure he will be there if at all possible.

I have not read Tom Brokaw's new book *The Greatest Generation*. I am glad that there are those in our younger generations who realize what the world was like in the twenties, thirties, forties and fifties. I was amused to read one of the younger journalists' reaction to the book. Geneva Overholster referred to it as "Tom Brokaw's naive view of yesterday" that we were something less than great because we tolerated McCarthyism and did not deal fully with racism. I guess that it is impossible to please everyone.

We will have our Second Air Division Association annual convention in Austin, Texas, May 28-31. It will be at the Hyatt Hotel which is located in downtown Austin next to the Colorado River. Austin is a beautiful city located in the beautiful Hill Country of central Texas. It is not only the capital of Texas but it is one of the major technology centers of the United States. A drive around the beautiful city of Austin and the surrounding countryside will be well worth your time. The last two reunions we have had, Irvine, California and Oakbrook, Illinois, have been really good, and we expect this one to be equally as good. The 489th BG usually has one of the largest number attending 2ADA conventions, but for some unknown reason our attendance dropped off last year

in Oakbrook.

Neal Sorensen, Bud Chamberlain, and Charles Freudenthal have been reviewing our group reunion. They have spent a lot of time and effort trying to find the right place and time to have our annual reunion. We can all rest assured that they will come up with a good one. They will let us know when all arrangements have been finalized. We have been in touch with the Confederate Air Force and the Collings Foundation in an effort to try and have one or both of the only flying B-24s make a visit to Austin during our reunion. We hope to have at least one of them there.

During the last CAF annual air show in Midland, there were five B-17s present and they all had their guns and turrets and looked like real war planes. "Diamond Lil," the CAF B-24 (LB-30) looked like a toothless tiger next to them, so I have started a campaign to bring "Diamond Lil" to look like the warplane that she was. I have suggested that they put up a bomb bay as well as turrets and guns so that it would look like the real thing. Parts and pieces are available from several places in England. The cost and the fact that "Lil" flies so much that the extra cost of gas and maintenance would present a problem. It was also suggested that her landing gear might not

support the added weight. I assured them that I had put the B-24 through enough landings that the gear would be no problem. I will probably lose the campaign, but I felt it was worth the effort.

I would like to suggest that those who are planning to attend the reunion in Austin please bring any records of their experience during WWII. Lois Harrington, who handles all the oral histories for the Confederate Air Force, will be there and available to put it on tape. She was present at our convention in Irvine in 1997 and collected many oral histories. She was unable to collect all the histories at that time, so please be prepared to give it to her now. I have also invited Mr. Gary Evans, executive producer of the Military Channel, Inc., Louisville, Kentucky, to attend our convention. He and his television crews conduct two- and three-hour long interviews to be aired at some later date. They do an excellent job. I have not received a confirmation yet, but I am sure he will be there if at all possible. I suggested it to him last October, and he was most interested in coming.

I don't usually guarantee anything, but I will stick my neck out and guarantee you will really have a great time and we will miss you if you don't come to Austin. ■

ATTLEBRIDGE TALES (continued)

at Air & Space Museum, you will know precisely what time it is, as the telephone voice says it is "exactly" . . . a computer connected to an antenna . . . receives data from the cesium clocks carried aboard the satellites of the Global Positioning System, which in conjunction with microprocessors in receivers on the ground, can pinpoint positions anywhere on Earth . . . the Global Positioning system was primarily military technology . . . the satellites are funded, launched and operated by the U.S. Air Force . . . a receiver determines position by measuring the amount of time it takes for a radio signal to reach it from each of four of the 26 satellites now in orbit . . . Since radio waves travel at the speed of light (186,000 miles per second), if the receiver knows the precise time a signal left the satellite, it can divide the signal's travel time by the speed of light to determine its distance from the satellite . . . and thus it knows your exact latitude and longitude . . ." (Author's Note: Have you guessed I'm a retired chemist?)

IS THERE A HK-1 FLYING BOAT?

Of course there is — better known as Howard Hughes' "Spruce Goose." An article in the October 1998 issue of *Air & Space* by Beth Dickey brings us up to date on where it is:

"Voters in the town of McMinnville, Oregon, about 40 miles southwest of Portland, recently blessed plans for a \$20 million museum to house the world's largest seaplane . . . The mammoth (320 foot wing span, wing tip chord 19 ft. 7 3/4 in., length 218 ft., 6 1/4 inches, height 30 ft., tail span 113 ft., vertical stabilizer 53 ft. (which makes the top 10 stories high), gross weight 300,000 lbs., 8 engines — Pratt & Whitney 28 cylinder/3000 hp, props 17 ft., 2 in. diameter; fuel capacity 14,000 gallons) military transport will be the centerpiece of the Captain Michael King Smith Evergreen Aviation Educational Center at Minnville Municipal Airport. The museum is named after its founder (Michael Smith was a local boy and fighter pilot) who was killed in an auto accident in 1995. Smith won the right to display the "Spruce Goose" in 1992 after the Walt Disney Company gave up trying to lure tourists to see it in Long Beach, CA. Crew members from the wooden aircraft's sole flight — a 70 second one-mile hop on November 2, 1947 — were rounded up to help dismantle and shrink-wrap it in plastic for the 1,127 mile journey up the Pacific coast on an ocean barge. It remains in pieces, as shipped. Restoration of the flight deck and its maze of gauges was already underway last June . . . the museum will try again to round up flight crew members to supervise [reconstruction] . . . There is virtually no metal in the HK-1. It's made of birch that was laminated with a phenol-formaldehyde epoxy that has crystallized with age. Want to see a photo of the plane taxiing, or more data on the museum? Try 1-888-9SPRUCE or www.sprucegoose.org.

See you all in Austin, as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of our B-24 Liberator! ■

93rd BG Flier Finds Life Is Just a Slalom...After Combat.

BY LINDA GODFREY

THIS STORY FIRST APPEARED JANUARY 31, 1999 IN "THE WEEK," A NEWSPAPER SERVING WALWORTH COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Once upon a time, when the Grand Geneva Resort was known as the Playboy Club, head ski instructor Charlie Rice would strap rockets to his feet and hands, then zoom through a flaming hoop to entertain customers in the lodge below. He and several comrades would next don dresses and wigs, swoosh to a special berm near the bottom, and double-flip into a splash landing in the club pool which used to lie between the hill and the lodge.

The crowd always went wild.

Thirty years have passed since Charlie started that gig, and he still schusses the snowy Grand Geneva slope every season, teaching new batches of skiers to make it down the hill in one piece. The zany stunts went away with the Playboy Club, though, and few of the celebrities Charlie used to instruct (like Suzanne Sommers and Dick Van Dyke) still make their way to Lake Geneva to ski.

But at 73, Charlie has had an intriguing slalom through life. His decades as ski instructor to the stars took him from Lake Geneva to Colorado's chic ski resorts, with a few side trips to Beverly Hills, Alaska and many ski points in between.

Looking about 20 years younger than his actual age, with a short, grizzled beard to protect his chin from the elements and a pin representing the National Ski Academy embellishing his black baseball cap, Charlie has a treasure trove of stories from those busy years. And he still bears traces of the protectiveness that endeared him to the privacy-loving jet set.

"They're all super persons, I think, if you get to know them. But people impose themselves on celebrities too much by walking up to them and asking for autographs. If I saw anyone approaching I'd stop them. When we went out socially to clubs, they had bodyguards, except for Britt Eklund. I was her bodyguard."

Charlie's ski career actually began in the military, though, long before he ever met a Hollywood celeb. He started in 1942 while stationed in Colorado with the Air Force. A native of Racine, Charlie said he'd always wanted to learn how to ski, but this was his first opportunity. The Air Force sponsored a ski recreation program, borrowing equipment from the nearby Army 10th Mountain Division. "A lift ticket was \$3," Charlie remembered.

Charlie's newfound pastime was cut short by the war, however, and he pulled 37 missions serving with the 93rd Bomb Group in Norwich, England. Charlie also returned to active duty for the Korean War.

"I went skiing in the interim," he said, "but I got married and had two small children so I took them skiing." The marriage eventually floundered, and Charlie heard about a new place opening up in Lake Geneva — a branch of Hugh Hefner's Playboy Club that would include a ski hill.

"They went out soliciting business," said Charlie, "and one of the instructors came with some bunnies and their chaperone and had a presentation in Racine." The instructor, whose last name was (coincidentally) also Rice, told Charlie to come on out. "They all laughed at me," said Charlie, "because I had wood skis and lace-up boots, but I've been here ever since."

The Playboy Club recruited an elite corps of instructors, said Charlie, with three from the U.S. and three from Europe. They affiliated with the Professional Ski Instructors of America, an association they've kept to this day, and began using the educational materials put out by that organization. "In the beginning I was a specialist in children, see," said Charlie, "then I started to teach the mothers of the children. Then I became VIP instructor, and it was my job to teach most of the celebrities that came here."

Most of those celebrities were in Lake Geneva as Playboy Club entertainment; people like Dick Van Dyke and Vic Damone. "So we put them incognito in hats, goggles and ski masks," said Charlie, "and no one would ever know in a million years who they were."

During the winter, Charlie met people who would contract with him to come out West and give private ski lessons in his off-season. "I used to leave here in March and go West," he said. He eventually established a home in Alaska for when it grew too warm everywhere else.



"You can ski as long as you can stand up," said Charlie Rice. "In fact, it's easier for me to ski than walk. I never thought of quitting; never entered my mind. There's always something new out there to learn."

PHOTO BY TERRY MAYER

Teaching at places like Keystone, CA and Heavenly Valley, CO, Charlie soon found himself surrounded by the likes of Suzanne Sommers, Linda Gray (remember Sue Ellen on Dallas?) and Nell Carter. "I wasn't romantically involved with any of them, really," he insisted. His first contacts spread word of the amiable new instructor they'd found, and he soon met Britt Eklund, an actress formerly married to Peter Sellers.

"I knew her for seven years," said Charlie. "She's one of the finest ladies I ever met in my life, and an excellent skier."

Charlie was also invited to stay as a guest at the home of Donna Summers in Heavenly Valley. "Also very wonderful," said Charlie. "A super person."

And far from being the difficult people celebrities are usually painted as in the media, Charlie says they were probably the easiest group to teach. "What I found with those people," he said, "those people wanted to learn and expected you to have the ability to teach them. They were thinkers and learners; they really wanted to know what was going on. You couldn't be superfluous with them."

In another twist of fate, it was one of Charlie's children who kept his Hollywood connection fresh. While his son ended up as an engineer in Alaska, his daughter headed for Los Angeles to try for an acting career after coming in second in the Miss Wisconsin pageant the year Terry Meeuwsen took first place. And while movie stardom never happened for her, she did become a successful therapist, with a group of famous clients of her own.

Whenever she'd hear one of them complain that they couldn't find a competent ski instructor, said Charlie, she'd tell them about her dad. Word got around.

Besides being quick learners, most of the stars Charlie taught were naturally graceful, too, he said. Very few klutzes. None of them ever broke a bone under his tutelage, he said, although he remembers one close call.

"There was an episode in Heavenly Valley on what they called the Gun Barrel Run," said Charlie. He was teaching a woman named Susan who was Nell Carter's press agent. "I got her coming down the hill, and I wasn't familiar with that run," said Charlie. They accidentally turned down the toughest part of the run, "marked with a skull and crossbones — you don't go there," he said. "She worked so hard to get down that hill and was scared to death. She sat down and said she wasn't going to do it. I told her it was a long hill, and she had to."

They did eventually make it down, but once at the bottom, Charlie said Susan tore into him with a severe tongue-lashing for taking her down that slope. "But she apologized later to me at Wayne Newton's party. I was ashamed of my professionalism to put her in such a bad situation so soon."

(continued on page 20)

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
BY AUD RISLEY



If our holiday mail was any indication of interest in the meeting of the 446th planned for Tucson, May 19-23, we will have a record crowd. To mention a few folks I heard from this year who are not regular recent attendees: Andy Hay and friend Shirley Weaver, Alan & Joyce Senior, and George & Peg Ridler hope to make it; Harold & Lil Maslyn and Ralph Peters have it on their calendars. With their names in print, this makes it a hard commitment to break.

Along with the holiday mail came news from John White that his lovely wife, Mignon, had a fall, and John is doing some homemaking. Our best to Mignon. We wish her a full recovery so that the Whites, too, will be in Tucson. Nancy Longstreth also said she will see us in the spring, as did Ken & Carol Johnson, Kirke Walker, Robert & Margaret Neuman, and Walt & Juanita Toronjo, who rarely miss a meeting.

One of the highlights of the November 1998 trip to Norwich was the opportunity to sit down with Alan Hague of the Norfolk-Suffolk Aviation Museum at Flixton. We talked for most of a Sunday afternoon about the 446th, the war, and the museum plans. His final comments were "now to get on with enlarging the 446th display with more photos, uniforms . . . ready for the Easter opening." Wouldn't it be great if we could get Alan and his wife Beryl to Tucson?

New 2ADA members are 446ers William Lester of Lake Worth, Florida, who was with the 706th Squadron, and A. Pete Petaros of the 704th Squadron, who lives in Kennesaw, Georgia.

Fred Breuninger, always generous with his photographs and articles of interest, writes that he was so impressed with the 8th AF Heritage Museum in Savannah that he donated six paintings for them to

display. Most of you know of Mike Bailey's paintings, and Fred has donated the "Red Ass" and "Fearless Freddie," as well as four others: "Welcome Home Yank" by Bill Phillips, "Thundering Home" by Nicholas Trudgian, "Checkmate" by Heinz Krebs, and "Mighty Eighth - Outward Bound" by Robert Taylor. When you visit the museum, keep your eyes peeled for the two 446 aircraft: "Red Ass," which was the lead aircraft of D-Day; and the orange forming aircraft, "Fearless Freddie." Fred is emphatic in wanting the world to know that there was another bomber in World War II.

While you are in Savannah, remember that volunteers are needed to staff the museum. This is an ongoing effort to get more 2ADA members involved. Help if you can.

During our Norwich visit, we delivered some tourism information about Chicago, Elgin, and other places of interest in Illinois. They are grateful for this kind of information. If you wish to send maps, brochures and other publications from your state tourism department, they will be well received and are always in demand.

In a recent newspaper from the 392nd BG Memorial Association appeared an article about memorials to fallen Americans in sites throughout Europe. Many of you remember the memorial dedication some of us attended in Holland on a 446th BG trip in 1990. French villagers near Schoeneck have erected a monument to a 446th crew that crashed near there on August 26, 1944; as reported by Doug Willies of Sheringham, in Norfolk.

Folded Wings: Eugene Freed (June 1998), James W. March (December 1997), and Kenneth P. Underwood (November 1998). Our numbers grow smaller as the days pass.

NOTE: We have a new e-mail address. It is Aud446@aol.com. We enjoy getting your news. Share your experiences and news via Bungay Bull. If e-mail isn't your communication mode, letters work. Our U.S. mail address has not changed: 682 Slade Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120.

Trust the rest of your year will be the best. Like I always say, any day that I wake up is a good one. ■

93RD BG FLIER FINDS LIFE IS JUST A SLALOM

(continued from page 19)

Charlie also recalled another experience that probably wouldn't happen with the average ski student, while skiing with Britt Eklund at High Country in Colorado. "We ski for about an hour," he said, "and she goes back to the car and changes outfits. Then we ski for another hour and she goes back to the car again and changes to another outfit. She changed four times in three and a half hours of skiing to different outfits, and each one was prettier than the last. She just wanted to try on all her new ski clothes, I guess."

Then there was the time when he had his daughter, Nell Carter's agent, and Suzanne Sommers all together. Before skiing, the women went to the ski shop and bought complete new outfits, skis, and boots and all. "Then I had to come and approve them," said Charlie. In awe, the shop clerk asked Charlie who he was. "I said I'm their instructor," said Charlie. "The clerk just said, 'Holy Cats.'"

Although he still occasionally does favors for his daughter, Charlie said he got out of the "celebrity race" around seven years ago. "I'm more of a free lance person. I'd rather ski with friends. There are business people who hire me as their instructor and that's what I do."

Charlie still has the home he built in Alaska 18 years ago, too. And every November when the Grand Geneva reopens its hill, Charlie flies back to supervise the 104 instructors who now work there. "The years go by and you're having a good time and you don't realize it," he said. "The monetary part becomes immaterial. How many people have fun in what they do? They go to work, and they're miserable. I go to work and I'm happy."

Charlie finds huge satisfaction in the sheer number of people, young and old, he's taught to ski successfully. "I can't tell you the thousands I've taught; probably 30,000. Oodles of people." And those numbers have greatly increased since area schools began sending large groups of students. "You get 10 in a class, 700 kids in a week, and multiply that by 13 weeks."

He's learned a lot by watching the students ski, too, Charlie said. "It's why I've stayed here all these years. I used to sit here in the lodge with a piece of paper and watch the kids come down, and if they fell

I'd figure out why, and if someone was doing well I'd go out on the slope and emulate them. A learning experience keeps you thinking all the time, and when you're thinking, you're happy."

"I'd see some little kid doing something," Charlie continued, "and I'd perfect it and take it to the Education Board and they'd say, 'Wow!' and it becomes universal. The 'up-pole plant' came right off this hill," he added, showing with his arms how planting the pole with an upward motion allows nice, smooth turns.

"Can you see how this is a complete lab for me?" he asked, gesturing to include the entire hill with its flocks of skiers riding up and then dispersing to make their own ways down. "I see little kids 4 and 5 years old and ask, 'How do they control their speed?' It's revolutionary what's occurred here."

And while many Wisconsinites travel out West to ski, Charlie says this is as good a place to learn as any. "Kids can go straight down a hill without turning," he said. "If they tried that out West they might go off a cliff."

And besides, he added, "You make one turn at a time no matter where you ski."

Charlie did meet with one small mishap last year, breaking one of his legs on the Grand Geneva hill. "It was my first time in all my years of skiing," he said. "Someone had changed my bindings and I didn't know it." He's still skiing this year, but not as much. "For the time being, I'm still getting well."

And he definitely does not plan to let a minor incident like that stop his ski career. "I've got friends in their 80s and 90s that are still skiing," he said. "I've got one that races. We'll race against young kids if we have to," he added, grinning.

"You can ski as long as you can stand up," said Charlie. "In fact it's easier for me to ski than walk. I never thought of quitting; never entered my mind. There's always something new out there to learn."

In fact, it's a safe bet that as long as there are people to teach at Grand Geneva's hill, while Charlie still has a breath of life in him, he'll be there. "When you're doing something that's fun, you just keep doing it," said Charlie.

And the lifelong ski lesson glides on. ■

THE MAN WHO LOVES LIBERATORS

BY STEVE SNELLING • REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE EASTERN DAILY PRESS, OCTOBER 31, 1998

Aviation artist Mike Bailey has returned to his first love with a new book devoted to an American bomber he first saw as a schoolboy in Norfolk. Steve Snelling reports on an enduring passion.

Mike Bailey has no trouble tracing the roots of his love affair with a pot-bellied aircraft ugly enough to be derisively nicknamed the Flying Banana Boat. With the instant recall born of grand obsession, he bridges more than half a century with a single leap of the imagination to paint a vivid, mind's-eye picture of a wartime childhood in "Liberator country."

"It was just a part of our growing up," he says nonchalantly. "On Saturdays and school holidays me and a friend used to tramp up to Horsham St. Faith's airfield to see the Liberators."

"It meant trespassing on a farmer's field, or maybe two, climbing over a gate and cutting along a hedgerow which brought us out on to the dispersal area of the 754th Squadron. The first time we did it, I remember expecting to be chased away."

"But much to our surprise, the ground crews seemed to welcome us. They showed us around the aircraft, even let us clamber around inside, and to a 10-year-old boy who was aeroplane crazy, believe me, that was heaven on earth..."

These words are being spoken by a 64-year-old man, but the gleam in the eye and sheer, unadulterated enthusiasm is pure schoolboy.

"We'd been used to seeing light bombers, Blenheims, Mosquitos and so on, around here, but those Liberators were something special. They seemed like giants, enormous great things, and suddenly they were here in their hundreds."

"They seemed big enough in the air, but



Mike Bailey, the Norfolk artist renowned for his aviation paintings, has brought out a new book devoted to his favourite aircraft, the Liberator. PHOTO BY SIMON FINLAY

close up on the ground I remember being almost overwhelmed by the size as I walked the whole length, underneath the wing and clambered up through the bomb bay and found my way into the cockpit..."

He pauses for a moment, wallowing in nostalgia, as though reliving some blissful dream. "You know," he continues wistfully, "I can still smell the distinctive odour of high octane and hot metal that the Liberators gave off. It never leaves you."

Bailey is something of a conundrum. A

genial bear of a man with the arms and build of the heavyweight boxer he once was, his name has become synonymous over the past 25 years with finely-executed and delicately-detailed works of aviation art that have won favour on both sides of the Atlantic.

Not that it has been an easy path. From the schoolboy sketches that first excited his art teachers, the trail has been nothing if not circuitous. There have been flirtations with speedway and boxing, a spell of national service (in the army, of all things), and, of course, a full-time career with Jarrolds, first as apprentice bookbinder and then as a lithographic artist.

It wasn't until the late 1950s that he returned to his first love. Ironically, however, the first painting was not of a Liberator, but of a German flying boat. A quest for photo records of the aircraft he knew as a boy drew him inexorably along the course for which he has become noted. One of the first pictures to arrive from America was of a Liberator he remembered.

"It was called the Shack," he says, and then at my urging he begins to reel off a list of other aircraft nicknames which he recalls with the ease that others might trot out the names of sporting heroes from their youth. For Stanley Matthews and Denis Compton read Old Doc's Yacht and I'll Be Back.

All of this is related with genuine affection in his studio, a converted bedroom in the Norwich house he has lived in all his life. The room is a shrine to his passion. Behind him, shelves heave with weighty tomes packed with the mi-

(continued on page 22)



FAREWELL: A posed photograph of local people waving away the Liberators from Horsham St. Faith, the base where Mike Bailey made first contact as a schoolboy with the aircraft that helped to inspire an enduring passion.

MAN WHO LOVES LIBERATORS (continued)

nutiae of aviation history. One wall is all but hidden by a store of memorabilia, neatly-boxed photographs, magazine articles and contemporary accounts. And everywhere you look, there are paintings, adorning the walls and stacked, four or five deep in places, along the skirting board.

The canvasses feature a surprisingly wide spectrum of aircraft — from RAF Coastal Command Hudsons to USAAF Marauders and fragile biplanes to mighty four-engined bombers. Surprising, because to many aviation enthusiasts the name Mike Bailey conjures only one image — Liberators and Norfolk-based 2nd Air Division Liberators at that.

"It's just one of those things," he says with a resigned shrug of his broad shoulders. "I've done all sorts of aircraft. I've just finished that painting of Fortresses over there," he adds with a wave of the arm. "But over the years I've got a name for the Liberator, and people wrongly think that's all I do."

It's hardly surprising. Since his painting of the 458th Bomb Group, Horsham Liberator *Hokum Cow* was presented to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in 1974, he has lost count of the number of paintings he has completed featuring B-24s in various guises.

Together, they reflect an enduring fascination with an aircraft which to many people who grew up in Norfolk during the war years has become a potent symbol of a special relationship and a vanished epoch, a part of their childhood that shimmers with excitement and extraordinary sights.

For Bailey it has come to represent something of a personal odyssey which has culminated in his latest and, arguably, most ambitious project — a full-scale, 'nuts and bolts' illustrated history of his favourite aircraft. *Liberator Album: B-24s of the 2nd Air Division USAAF* is not so much a book as a labour of love spanning more than two decades.

With one of his own paintings decorating the cover and a clutch of full-colour Liberator profiles featured inside, the book is both an amalgam and an extension of his long and fruitful collaboration with fellow aviation buff Tony North which spans three previously published books on B-24 formations stretching back to the 1970s.

Its arrival on the bookshelves coincides with the publication of two other works on the aircraft published by local writers — a wide-ranging operational history by the prolific Norwich author Martin Bowman, which leans heavily on graphic first-hand accounts from former aircrew, and Richard Clements' compelling investigation into the tragic loss of a single Liberator, the ill-starred *Lady Jane* which crashed in Heigham Street, Norwich.

Interestingly, Bailey has links with both projects, having contributed the cover painting for one and photographic assistance for the other. The connections with the *Lady Jane*, however, went even deeper. Not only has he produced no fewer than three different portraits of the aircraft, but more than 50 years earlier, on a damp November day in 1944, he had actually been a witness to her destruction.

"I had just come home from school and was laying the fire for my mum when I heard an aircraft in trouble," he recalls. "The engines were racing and one of my neighbours called out, 'Look at that aircraft!'"

"I ran into the back garden and leaped onto an ornamental flowerpot to get a clearer view. This was the only house standing at this end of the road. All the others had been flattened, and I just caught a glimpse of the last seconds of its flight."

"It was going down, over on its side, and then disappeared, followed by a ball of flame which shot up into the air. Us kids all ran down the road to the end of Barker Street, where a wall and fence bordered on the Corporation

"But that's just the way I am. I always try to create a sense of atmosphere in my paintings while at the same time making sure that the aircraft is accurate in every detail. You see, I feel very strongly that a painted image of an inanimate object such as an aircraft, a ship or a tank, is either correct or incorrect."

"With landscapes, it doesn't matter whether you put three branches on one side of a tree and two on the other, but with aircraft they have to be right."

He is equally unforgiving of printers who fail to reproduce his artwork faithfully and of his own work for which he remains the staunchest critic. "I don't think I've ever done anything which I can look at and feel satisfied,"

LIBERATOR ALBUM: B-24s OF THE 2nd AIR DIVISION USAAF is a 192-page hard-bound coffee-table sized book loaded with 540 black and white photographs, honoring the courageous men and the legendary aircraft of the 2nd Air Division. Your order for \$39.95 plus \$3 shipping and handling (total \$42.95) includes a tax-deductible contribution of \$18 to the Kassel Mission Memorial Association. Send check or money order to KMMA, Inc., P.O. Box 413, Birmingham, MI 48012.

yard. We were there before the firemen, and I got my pals to pump me up the wall. I got my hands on top and lifted my face over but I could only look at it for about half a second. The heat was so intense . . ."

All nine men aboard the Liberator were killed, their names remembered on a plaque later unveiled in the terraced street. Such painful memories, however, are uncommon. "When you're a 10-year-old," he says, "all the horrors of war seem to bypass you. All you see is the exciting side of it, and the friendships that you made."

Yet in acknowledging the emotional inspiration, he is at pains to point out that his own experiences have limited bearing on his latest project. "There are a lot of books which concentrate on the human aspect of the war waged by Liberator crews flying out of East Anglia," he explains. "There are also quite a few covering the operational side of it, but we wanted to focus on the aeroplane itself."

"The Liberator was a complex aircraft with a fascinating story of its own. There were more than 18,000 of them built in five different factories, with each plant producing aircraft which were slightly different from the others, from the nose turrets, waist windows down to its colouring. Even the size of the national insignia varied."

Liberator Album, with its carefully annotated pictorial survey of the 2nd, 14th, 20th and 96th Combat Wing B-24s, is an aviation enthusiast's dream, a statistical treasure chest and a monument to diligent and dogged research.

But such virtues are scarcely a surprise to anyone who knows Mike Bailey or his work. Attention to detail is second nature to him. "I think I was always a bit of a perfectionist. I still am," he says almost apologetically. "When things aren't right, whether it's in a painting, a book, or even going to the cinema to watch a film, it irks me . . . My wife thinks I take things too seriously."

he says candidly.

"I'm always looking at the painting and thinking I could have done something better. But then, there's a part of me that believes it's fatal to be satisfied, because that leads to complacency and if you become complacent you never improve . . ."

Fortunately, the veterans who actually flew the aircraft do not appear to share his doubts. They remain his most loyal patrons and provide him with the kind of gratification he could never have imagined all those years ago when as a schoolboy he wandered on to the fringes of Horsham St. Faith's. "It means a lot to get letters of thanks from people like that," he admits. "Sometimes, I get them from the widows of former aircrew who commissioned works."

"They write saying that looking at the painting over the mantelpiece makes them feel closer to their husbands. It sounds a bit mawkish, but it almost brings tears to your eyes."

Pride of place in his own living room is reserved, naturally enough, for a painting of a Liberator. Not just any old one, but probably the most famous Norfolk-based B-24 of them all, *Witchcraft*, a Rackheath veteran of more than 100 missions. The portrait stands out as a striking piece of aviation art, even in a room where the aircraft from a Gloster Gladiator to a Wellington bomber rear up from all directions. But a thing of beauty?

In an echo of the wartime arguments between Liberator and Flying Fortress crews, Mike Bailey considered their rival virtues. "If you see the Liberator banked over so that you can see the full sweep of its wing, it does look quite graceful," he says. "But if I'm honest, aesthetically, the Fortress is the better looking of the two. The Fort looks good from any angle . . ."

There is a momentary pause. Then, as though conscious of a kind of sacrilege, he adds: "It's not really a question of looks. The Liberator is my favourite aircraft, purely because of the past. We go back a long way . . ." ■

I would like to know what was the most difficult thing you cadets had to do during flight training. For me there were a clear-cut number one and number two. No doubt about what the first hardest was. It was walking out to that PT-19 and climbing in. I could smell the engine oil from about 100 feet away and was almost airsick before I could clamber into the open cockpit.

What could have been more embarrassing and degrading than that? After a lazy eight or hammer-head stall my greatest fear was that I might live! My saint-like instructor nobly tolerated my landing and taxiing to the hangar to hose off the side of the plane. He must have cringed in that rear cockpit and prayed I'd get over the nausea. Well, I did — after what seemed a lifetime of torture.

The next thing on my list of hard things to do was flying inverted. That first time is so vivid I can still see those farms down below when I tilted my head back and looked down. The worst part was my feet came off of the rudders and were practically dangling in front of my face. Although the instructor had told me to follow him through on the controls, I just couldn't keep my feet on the pedals. I let go of the stick, the throttle and was hanging onto the rim of the cockpit with both hands in a mighty death grip. If Mr. Brewer could have seen my predicament he would have been convulsed with laughter. But I never felt like sharing that moment of humor with him.

Our creator hadn't intended us to be viewing the world upside down or he would have given us feet where our ears are! My hard-earned coke nickels had fallen out of my flight suit pockets and were tumbling down past

INVERTED? HOLD TIGHT!

BY ED WANNER (445TH)

my head — admittedly, the financial loss was the least of my worries.

Days later my instructor was emphasizing that I use more top rudder when I rolled into inverted flight or a slow roll, and by that time I could actually pay attention to him while keeping my feet on the rudders and a hand on the stick. If you think I had conquered my fear of flying upside down, you are wrong. But, I felt that I would have to get over this stupid fear, so I developed a plan.

Every time I flew solo, I always made a point to fly upside down. My daughter thinks it affected my personality by putting too much blood in the brain when I was young. Anyway, I used top rudder when I rolled over, just like I had been told. It became easy to hold the PT-19 steady when inverted and I was actually getting used to it. I'd sing, "Roll me over in the clover, roll me..." But I'd stop singing when the engine would quit, and it always did. It had a gravity fuel feed and just plain starved for gas when upside down for very long. By this time I was getting pretty smug while flying inverted and hanging firm and snug on that wide safety belt. I used a little back pressure now and then if I felt the plane was close to a stall (just the opposite reaction of when

the plane had been upright). The nose would come down a little and I was ready to roll back over. It almost seemed like I was getting better at making smooth gliding turns upside down than when right side up.

For now, my two big hurdles were over and I could sneak off over the countryside for relaxation with my buddy Vozzy, who was in another plane. We'd buzz an old cabin out in the pine woods and a bunch of little kids living there would come out and wave towels at us. A couple of real hot pilots, flying those forgiving PT-19s. Never dreamed I would be flying a B-24 someday!

One time that plane almost didn't forgive me. Vozzy had just buzzed the cabin and I was just behind and to the right (our version of formation flying). Suddenly, just ahead was a tall tree trunk — I'd never have been able to pull up over it! The tree was dead, and all of its branches were off, so it was almost invisible. I rolled a quarter turn. My wheels must have almost touched the trunk. After passing the tree I rolled back to level and pulled up. I was just starting to realize what a dumb thing that had been, when the engine started coughing! By then the plane couldn't have been much over 300 feet above the ground. Ahead there was only a sea of big green pines — and any cadet knew that wasn't the spot to pick for a forced landing.

Mercifully, the Ryan's motor caught and smoothed out like a kitten. When my legs stopped shaking, all I wanted to think about was getting back up to 2000 feet and heading for Pine Bluff. Enough was enough. What a sweet airplane, though — and to think, she never had an affectionate nickname! ■

THE ARMY AIR FORCES RESTRICTED MY CIVILIAN CAREER CHOICES!

BY IRA WELLS (448TH)

Today's recruiting advertisements often emphasize that Air Force training and job experiences will frequently open the door to rewarding employment opportunities after discharge from military service.

Of course, during WWII, those of us who volunteered for aviation cadet enlistment were probably motivated by more patriotic feelings.

However, in my case, I was guided AWAY from a particular peacetime profession because of two unfortunate events.

I had already received my gunner's wings when I washed out from a bombardier school in Texas (a lucrative civilian profession nowadays). During the week before my orders to join a combat crew for overseas training were cut, meaningful work had to be found for me.

Imagine my amazement when I was assigned to help a prisoner (with large white "P"s painted on his fatigues) load and unload a garbage truck. Of course, I was assured that the armed guard who rode with us was to keep an eye on my new companion, not on me.

How embarrassing it was, when, as we passed my former buddies marching to class, I heard them call to me, "How's the air up there, Ira?"

The second event happened several months later, after my crew had already completed our fifteenth mission over Germany. Our group's colonel announced that a high-ranking officer was scheduled to visit our base at Seething, and that all personnel had to take part in "policing" all areas.

I convinced two of my crewmates (and myself) that, after all, since each one of us had already been awarded an Air Medal, we could hardly be expected to participate in such a menial task. Consequently, we showered while others stooped.

The next day, our squadron's commanding officer summoned our insubordinate trio to his office and stated that only three men (all on one crew!) among the several thousand ground and flying personnel at Seething were absent from the ordered detail.

As he stressed the importance of discipline and obedience, I remembered that I had once dreamed of bringing Hitler to his knees, and here I was being chastised for not being on my own knees, picking up cigarette butts. (I was not even a smoker!)

Each of us was immediately reduced to the grade of private, with the promise that our

stripes would be completely restored before we completed our required tour of duty. We each, in turn, promised to be on our best behavior from then on.

(My parents were very proud of *Sergeant* Ira. Suppose they had to receive a telegram from the War Department that *Private* Ira had been shot down!)

From that time on, we flew almost every day, and although some of our stripes were restored, we had flown our final mission before we could be made "whole" again.

Our squadron commander did express his regrets, but we were all sent home at our lower grades.

The three of us crossed the Atlantic back to the States on the same troop ship. We decided that its captain was too busy dodging torpedoes to hear our tale of woe.

I returned to my home in the "Big Apple" and searched in vain for prospective employers seeking to hire former Emerson nose turret gunners/bomb-release togglers. Not a nibble.

But, in view of the first part of this story, I never did submit an application for employment with the New York City Department of Sanitation. ■

The 448th Speaks



BY CATER LEE

Well, here we are in 1999, less than one year until the year 2000 AD, and most of us are still around — some not in too good of health but nevertheless still around. Most of us are now aged between 77 and 81, with some a little younger and some a little older. We are thankful we are still around and able to read all these articles in the 2ADA *Journal* by its many contributors.

Did you ever stop to wonder how in the world these writers find something to write about all this time that would be of interest to the readers? Sometimes the writers wonder themselves, "what will I write about this time," and when it's time to send in their articles, somehow words come out from the end of the pen. I'm sure most of you find most articles of interest, but one cannot please "all the people all the time," we just try!

We hope that where you live has not been hit the many bad things nature has thrust upon us. We have had earthquakes, floods, mudslides, fires, hurricanes, and whatever else could happen. I'm sure some of you have

been hit, and we send our condolences and best wishes for your recovery back to normal just as quickly as possible.

We (the 448th) recently conducted a membership drive, hoping to bring back into the fold some who for one reason or another dropped out for a year or so. Some just simply forget and are embarrassed when they receive these notices — believe me, it is not our intent to embarrass; we all forget things at times, and I'm happy to say that at this writing we have 29 on the latest 448th membership roster who were not on the September 1998 roster sent out by the 2ADA. Hopefully we will have others come back by the time the next roster is sent out.

For you who are and have been members for several years — maybe you have a crew member or good friend who for some reason or another hasn't joined the "448th Bomb Group Association." You might consider paying their dues for 1999 as a good friend. You and the recipient will be happy you did. Just try it once — thanks!

If you have ever been back to our WWII air base at Seething and seen what our British friends have done keeping those WWII memories alive, you can't help but have a deep feeling of gratitude for what all these wonderful people have done. Not only did they furnish the labor free to rebuild our Seething control tower, but they have a very active "Station 146 Tower Association" with several hundred members, British friends and 448th veterans alike. They lay a wreath in honor of the 448th at an annual memorial service at the 8th Air Force Cemetery at Madingley on Memorial Day —

this is done by a representative of the 448th when available. They have "Open House" starting in the spring when good weather arrives, and continue on up until fall when weather is not cooperative. All this time they are honoring the 448th with movies, guest speakers, banquets, etc. to raise money to perpetuate the memories of Seething Airfield and our airmen who were there in World War II.

If you do not belong to the "Station 146 Tower Association," you might consider joining this wonderful organization honoring us. It costs only \$10.00 a year, and you will receive several interesting journals throughout the year letting you know what's going on. This money is used not only to offset the cost of the journals but to perpetuate the memories of we who once called Seething our home. To join, simply send your check or cash of \$10.00 to: Jim Turner, The Beeches, Station 146 Tower Association, Brooke Road, Seething, Norwich, Norfolk, England NR151DJ or to me. You'll be glad you did!

If you haven't already, it's time to make plans about what you are going to do in 1999 when the weather gets better, and we hope you include in those plans attending our annual group reunion, June 30 – July 3 at Dayton, Ohio (Wright-Patterson AFB Museum). The 448th held its second group reunion there in 1986 and dedicated a living oak tree and a bronze plaque on the museum grounds. You should receive all the details regarding the reunion in your mail so you can finalize your plans to attend.

In the meanwhile, good health and much happiness to all readers in 1999. ■



HARDWICK

Open Letter to the 93rd

BY ALFRED ASCH

Each year, the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum gives an award to outstanding airmen in recognition of distinguished contributions to the United States civilian or military aviation or for exceptional airman-ship involving aerial flight. The Heritage Museum established this award some two years ago in honor of the late B/G Jimmy Stewart. The Board of Trustees, chaired by Lt. Gen. E.G. (Buck) Shuler, Jr., USAF Ret., selects the individual or organization to receive the award.

Last year, the award was given to Colonel John H. Bead, USAF, for outstanding airman-ship. Col. Bead flew the longest non-stop mission in a B-52 in the history of aviation. This was accomplished during the Gulf War, "Desert Storm," in January, 1991 on a combat mission from Barksdale AFB, Louisiana to launch conventional cruise missiles against targets in Iraq and return. The total flight time was some

35 hours.

The 1998 recipient of the prestigious award honoring Gen. Stewart and his distinguished service to our nation is General Michael E. Ryan, Chief of Staff, United States Air Force. General Ryan is being recognized for his extraordinary leadership of the United States Air Force during a period of great transition and turbulence. He will deliver an address to the assembled guests during the evening festivities to take place on March 1, 1999. There will be a cocktail reception prior to the dinner and the address by General Ryan.

Naomi and I have been invited to attend in recognition of our strong support of the Heritage Museum. Insofar as I know, the 93rd continues to have a display in the museum to tell our history. We plan to arrive a few days early to act as guides and do other tasks in the volunteer program that Hap Chandler has estab-

lished with the museum. We will feel as though we will be representing the 93rd in this activity, as February is the month that Hap scheduled the 93rd.

The Heritage Museum is indeed a worthwhile legacy for the airmen who served in the Eighth Air Force during WWII. If you are not a member of the museum, please join. The address is: P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31407. Also, donations are needed to continue to cover operating fund requirements and debt retirement. The museum staff continues to work hard making improvements. The public interest is outstanding.

There is not much other news since my last Open Letter. I have been made president of the B-24 Groups Memorial to replace Jay Jeffries, who passed away last year. I sent two copies of the hard copy "Book of Remembrance" to the Heritage Museum for display next to the wood model of the B-24 hanging from the ceiling. Hopefully, this will build up a small display with the book and material from the 467th near the model.

Don't forget the 2ADA reunion in Texas in May. I hope to see you in Austin! ■

HELP WANTED

Does anyone in the 445th Bomb Group remember a Ralph F. McGraw who was in the 700th Bomb Squadron and completed 35 missions from December 11, 1944 to April 9, 1945. He passed away August 15, 1998 and the family has found a diary of his missions. They want to find out more about his tour of duty in England and the crew he flew with. If you can help, contact Olivia Voyles, 1074 Hampton Road, Harrah, OK 73045.

MODEL BUILDER NEEDS HELP

Do you remember what each base had? It was the wildly painted B-24 that took off first on every mission and the planes going on that mission were to locate in a given area and assemble on. The 445th Bomb Group Assembly Ship was painted orange with black stripes. On take-off, each plane was to go to a certain heading and in a circle climb to an altitude or break out of the overcast and look for the orange and black assembly ship. The planes would circle in a designated area to an altitude and in formation then go on their assigned mission, the assembly ship returning to base.

This week I received a letter from George Wright from England. He is the person who is making models of the B-24s that were assembly ships used by the bomb groups of the 2nd Air Division. He visited me in Norwich during the 2ADA Executive Committee meet-



BY FRED A. DALE

ing there, November 2-9, 1998. He brought four of his completed models and displayed them in the lobby of our hotel. He had offers to purchase them, and everyone marveled at his workmanship and research on each model. What was he going to do with them when he completed his project?

I suggested that a display of the models be in the new Memorial Library in a prominent spot in a display case. George was receptive to the idea, and I discussed it with other members of the Executive Committee, Governors of the Trust, and library staff members. They thought it was an excellent idea.

In his letter of January 13, 1999 George states: "I confirm that it is my intention to

donate my models of 'Assembly Ships' to the Memorial Library on a permanent loan basis should the 2ADA wish to have them. Nothing, repeat, nothing, would give me greater pleasure, and I am honoured in the proposal."

George needs help with three models left to complete. Can you or anyone you know be of assistance with the following:

(1) 392nd Bomb Group (Wendling): Still in search of more reliable information regarding color scheme.

(2) 466th Bomb Group (Attlebridge): Still require photo or more information regarding "zig-zag" red stripes on wings.

(3) 492nd Bomb Group (North Pickenham): Still in search of more reliable information regarding color scheme.

If you can help George in completing these last three models, write to him with your information: George Wright, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B75 5NA, England. Help is really needed.

BOOK PURCHASES

The following books have been purchased on behalf of the 445th Bomb Group for the Memorial Library under the 1997-98 endowment program: *In Search of Lady Jane* by Richard Clements (story of B-24 crash in Norwich on November 24, 1944), and *Mardi Gras: New Orleans* by Henri Schindler. ■



The 445th Bomb Group "JONES BOYS" played on base and in nearby villages circa 1944-45. Can anyone tell us the names of the "guys in the band"? What's the story?

What Was It Called Before The Jet Stream?

BY DICK GELVIN (445TH)

There were the good things and the bad things about being part of a lead crew in the 8th Air Force in 1943 and early 1944. One of the good things was that the position also brought rank. Since making lead crew after my second mission, I was promoted to 1st Lieutenant ten days before Joe Salisbury, pilot of the crew I had flown overseas with, and he had been 22 months in grade as a second lieutenant.

His story was, after graduating from college and ROTC, he received a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant Field Artillery Officer, but then volunteered for Aviation Cadets "because for an enemy looking for something to shoot at, a field artillery cannon and its crew were always a prime target." Well, the part about not being an artillery officer worked anyway. Was a B-24 bigger than a cannon?

One of the bad things about being in a lead crew position was that when (not if) jumped by enemy fighters, you found yourself out in front and the #1 target. Some of the other negatives: (1) We were expected to always be in clear weather. (2) The bombardier was expected to always put his bombs in the pickle barrel. (3) The navigator had to do his thing and always make rendezvous (turning) points on time so fighters wouldn't waste gas looking for us. Probably the very worst part, however, was having to get up an hour early for lead crew briefing.

At least when we walked into S-2, we didn't have to wait for the drama imposed by pulling up the curtain and looking at the target map. We just walked in, closed the blackout curtains, and *voila!* BERLIN!!! Jesus!!! That happened to me on June 21, 1944, my 8th mission.

After catching my breath and taking a closer look at the map through the coverage outline of an estimated 180 flak guns, I noted the distance from the IP (Initial Point) to the target was 78 miles. Whopping Al K. Carlisle (our bombardier) on the back, I made some bright remark about the brass wanting him to have plenty of time to line up for "bombs away." I can't recall his reply because it was somewhat garbled.

When we asked the briefing officer about the 25% increase in the length of the bomb run, he assured us that the HQ planners had reviewed all recent photos carefully and found the straight north heading to target presented the lowest total number of guns within range. He also added that they had even taken our concerns to heart and listed the over-target altitude to be 24,500 feet, which was 1,000 higher than normal. The weather officer also quickly pointed out that on such a course, the prevailing winds were from the south, so we would probably have tail winds of 65 to 70 knots. Oh, hot damn! The target was the Daimler-Benz engine factory, so our load consisted of twelve 500 lb. GPs.

After getting all of the special mission info, we proceeded to the general briefing to learn the "rest of the story." Here we were given all the general information: takeoff time, times to cross the bomber line, time at turning points, etc. By some rotation and other strokes of luck, we also learned that our formation altitude was to be 13,500 feet. In case some of you have forgotten, we were supposed to go on oxygen at 10M. Getting each squadron into formation and properly positioned to cross the bomb line in group formation usually took just over an hour, so all told, with a projected total flight time of seven hours, this meant at least five and a half of them would be on oxygen.

Everything took place on schedule through takeoff, getting into formation and crossing the bomber line. Because we now had fighter cover all the way in (and out), no enemy fighters were expected to show themselves. We always knew they were around just waiting for a mistake or someone to drop out of formation with a dead engine(s). Our routing was planned well enough that we shouldn't even see any flak until we turned on the bomb run.

My personal practice was, while staying on the planned course, asking for slight adjustments in airspeed, taking drift readings along the way, and getting visual positions from my nose turret pilotage navigator. I could then calculate the drift and ground speed on the bomb run. With this information, I could give the pilot a time to the IP, a magnetic heading for initial bombsight/autopilot lock, and an ETA to the target. My final cross-check of my own calculations was done by checking the drift angle just as we leveled off on the bomb run to the target.

As we completed our turn, I checked and found the drift angle to be zero, as expected. I commented to Lew Merrill, our pilot, that at least the weather officer had been correct. My calculations were giving us a 66-knot tail wind on the bomb run.

At that point I sat back and let Al K. and Lew go into their seance. Pilot: "Center the PDI." Bombardier: "PDI centered." Pilot: "You have the airplane. Waist, start throwing chaff." And now the bombsight was controlling the flight path as directed by the bombardier through his bombsight.

Gazing out my window, several things got my attention. Though chaff was already being launched, very shortly after we turned into the target, flak began coming up. Al said he was having trouble picking up the target and called my pilotage navigator for some reference points. The reply came back that he too was having trouble.

I pulled out my area maps while at the same time stating, "We hit the IP on the nose and my drift is as projected." Looking down, though, I had to agree that there sure were a hell of

a lot more clouds than there was landscape. Clear back at our briefing I had noticed railroad tracks entering Berlin from the south and was sure that would give us some help. Al was trying to find something through his bombsight and I was now looking over his shoulder, holding the pilotage map.

The flak was getting thicker, Lew was getting pretty ticked off (I use these words for publication purposes), and our estimated time to "bombs away" was running out! The tail turret gunner announced that Salisbury had just dropped out of the low left element but showed no apparent damage. I took time to glance out my left window, and there he was, just dropping down and turning west. There was no time to worry about Joe and his crew right then.

Finally I saw an *autobahn* cross some railroad tracks which I was sure I could find on the map. When I did, it was a shock to see that we were only about halfway down the bomb run and already past my ETA to drop. While Al and Lew argued about what to do, I frantically went back over my calculations to find where I had made a mistake!

Al finally sounded off that he had visual on a rail yard and had enough time to line up for a drop. Lew agreed to the target of opportunity and advised our deputy of the change. We dropped a minute and a half later and took off on a heading of 270 until I could figure out where we were and get back into the bomber stream. None of our crew saw any of our fighters or other bomb groups, though I told everyone that if they were to see any friendlies, they would be off to our right. In the meantime I was frantically trying to pinpoint our location.

Lew had the crew scanning the surrounding sky for friendlies or, worse, enemy fighters. Since there was so little terrain to see with about 80% cover, I had to look almost straight down to see anything. At least the flak was gone, so the view was a little more pleasant. Working back and forth from ground to map to ground, attempting to pinpoint our location and frantically looking for a railroad, *autobahn* or river, I inched my finger further down the map and found it over a large city. Now in panic, I glanced outside at the same time I grabbed my mike button. TURN!!! DON'T CARE WHICH WAY, JUST TURN!!! And three things happened: (1) Lew started a left turn; (2) tracking flak started going off all around us (no one was throwing chaff), and (3) the cloud cover that had given us so much trouble stopped as abruptly as flying from over water to "feet dry."

I literally stopped breathing when I noticed a track of flak about 100 feet directly below us and getting closer. The battery officer was sure enough of his target that, on the receiving end, I knew exactly where to look for the next round to go off. When we began our turn I

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In a September 1976 ceremony at High Wycombe, England, commemorating the World War II cooperation of RAF Bomber Command and the U.S. Eighth Air Force, the wartime chief of Bomber Command presented a new interpretation of the results of the Combined Bomber Offensive. Through the good offices of retired USAF Lt. Gen. Ira Eaker, who headed the Eighth Air Force in 1942-43 and who was present at the ceremony, the RAF's "Bomber" Harris agreed to set down the substance of his remarks for AIR FORCE Magazine.



In cooperation with the Royal Air Force bombers, the United States Strategic Bomber Force (8AF) issued the plans and orders which sent the gallant aircrews on their forays deep into the enemy's heartland. The combined bomber forces achieved decisive results towards the defeat of the enemy, although those crews — who faced and overcame desperate odds such as few warriors in the whole history of warfare have seldom if ever been called upon to face — are only now beginning to receive recognition of their major contribution to the final victory.

Herr Albert Speer, Hitler's armament production chief and for much of the war Hitler's close confidant, has kindly sent me both his books. In his second book he inscribed the flyleaf with the words *inter alia*, that the effect of the strategic bomber offensive "has always been underestimated." He went on to say that it was in fact "the greatest lost battle for Germany" and he thereafter elaborated these statements with reasons expanded in these books, which prove incontrovertibly that the strategic bombers:

(a) Won by far the greatest Land Victory of the war.

(b) Won by far the greatest Air Victory of the war.

(c) Won by far the greatest Naval Victory of the war.

With regard to (a): Herr Speer says that the bombers opened a "gigantic second front," long before our invasion of France, because, owing to the unpredictability of where attacks would strike next, defenses had to be spread out to cover every city or important factory in Germany and German-occupied territory.

This meant that 20,000 of their best dual-purpose antitank/antiaircraft guns had to be kept away from their armies on the fronts and stationed all over German territory together with vast stockpiles of ammunition and "hundreds of thousands" of soldiers to man those guns.

General Field Marshal Erhard Milch, who commanded the antiaircraft defenses, said he had in his command 900,000 "fit" soldiers, and to that one must add at least another 100,000, probably vastly more, retained as expert skilled men for the repair of such essential services as electricity, water, and gas supplies, sewage works, war material, machine tools, oil plants, railways, etc., damaged by air attacks, in all depriving the hard-pressed German armies in

The Three Victories of the Bomber Offensive

By The Late
SIR ARTHUR T. HARRIS (RET.)
Marshal of the Royal Air Force
Excerpted from
Air Force Magazine, Dec. 1976

the field of well over a million men, and in Speer's opinion reducing the German armies' antitank capability by half.

As any successful advance by any of the armies depended in the first place on an initial breakthrough by the armored force vanguard, this deprivation of antitank guns and the million men who manned the AA defenses was beyond a doubt a major cause of German defeats on land.

Speer sums up the results of the Allied strategic bombing as causing Germany losses "greater than all the losses in their retreats in Russia and their surrender at Stalingrad." In addition to the above, the Germans had to keep back in Germany for air defense 26,000 heavy automatic guns — what our bombers called "light flak" — together with their million rounds of ammunition.

Finally, Speer also says that, even as early as 1943, when the bomber forces were only really getting built up and into their stride, the bombing had already deprived the German army on the eastern front of 10,000 heavy guns of 7.5 cms caliber and over, and 6,000 medium-heavy and heavy tanks.

Now one can add to all the above that the bombers deprived the enemy of movement by rail to the front during our invasion of France, and finally of enough petrol to move their forces by road or across country. Furthermore, whenever our armies got stuck, mass bombing was called for and never failed to shift the defending Germans.

Field Marshal Rommel told his superiors, "If you can't stop the bombing we cannot win, and all we can get by going on is to lose another city every night."

General Sepp Dietrich, commanding the armored spearhead of the enemy's so-nearly-successful attempt to break through the Allied line in the Ardennes (held up, as legend holds, by a mild four-letter word fired at them by the Allied commander at Bastogne), rounded on Speer, who had personally delivered to him Hitler's order "to go on at all costs," with the brusque retort: "Go on! How can we go on! We have no ammunition and all our supply lines have been cut by air attack." A potent

reason indeed for the hold-up and defeat of that offensive.

Speer also relates that in his subsequent talk that night with Sepp Dietrich, with the constant "roar of heavy four-engine bombers overhead," Dietrich remarked that "people do not understand that not even the best troops can stand this heavy bombing. After experiencing it they lose all their fighting spirit." That bombing, during those vital days and nights, was done by the strategic bombers alone, because the Allied air bases on the Continent were closed by fog. Tedder described that bombing as "beyond praise," Eisenhower described it as "achieving the impossible," and the final accolade was from "Monty," who repeatedly took opportunity publicly to state that the bombers "did more than anybody towards winning the war."

So much for the bombers' victory on land.

With regard to (b): The strategic bombers won the greatest air victory of the war:

Ever increasingly, during the last three years of the war, Germany was forced to turn more and more of her aircraft manufacturing resources and her pilot training and her air force as a whole over to the defenses of the homeland against the increasingly devastating attacks of the strategic bombers. That led necessarily to the increasing deprivation of her armies in the field of those air resources upon which her initial victories had so largely depended.

The major cause of our success in the Allied invasion was the absolute air supremacy of the air forces working with our invading forces. That supremacy was, in the first place, due to the enemy's absorption of airmen and air material in ever-increasing numbers in a despairing attempt — which failed — to overcome the strategic bomber forces which were wreaking more and more vital injuries to his entire economic and military systems. Past experience in World War I led soldiers to conclude that the attacker in modern war needed at least a two-to-one advantage in men and material over the defender at the chosen point of impact to have a reasonable chance of success.

Yet what happened? In the invasion of France, *thirty-seven* Allied divisions containing a large proportion of green, untried, and inexperienced troops, swept *sixty-one* German defending divisions clean across Europe from the Atlantic to the Elbe, destroyed the German Seventh Army of half a million men, captured hundreds of thousands of prisoners and all their material, and beat them down to total defeat and surrender. Why? In the main, that victory was due to the Allies' absolute air supremacy and the enemy's lack of antitank essentials and of men and material, both factors due to the facts and effects of strategic bombing of the German homeland.

Meanwhile, the consequent concentration on fighter aircraft to the virtual abandonment of bomber production in Germany had put a complete stop to the enemy's air bombardment of the United Kingdom and of all the

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You Never Know Who You'll Meet In The Dark

BY PETE HENRY (44TH)

After enlisting in the Army Air Forces on 20 January '42, I spent almost ten months in aviation cadet training before graduating on 10 November '42 as a second lieutenant/pilot. Selected as a basic flying instructor and, following a month or so of instructor training, I was transferred to Bainbridge Army Air Field in Bainbridge, Georgia to instruct cadets arriving from primary training.

Also transferred to Bainbridge, while I was there, was a British pilot, an officer named Geoffrey Smith (died 24 February '97) who had just completed the same pilot training that I had received. "Smitty" and I became very good friends before he was called back to England to fight WWII from there.

A few months after he left, I was transferred to B-24 Liberator pilot training and subsequently shipped to Shipdham, England (near Norwich), the home of the 44th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force.

One night, on leave in Norwich, while walking down the street with some friends during a black-out, I heard this fellow laughing down one of the side streets. His "a-haw, a-haw, a-haw" was absolutely unmistakable, and I hollered "SMITTY!" He immediately yelled back at me — "HENRY!" and we had a wonderful reunion for a couple of hours.

A few weeks later, I travelled to his home in Kings Lynn to visit his family, and my wife and I visited him and his wife on subsequent trips to England in 1975 and 1979.

A recent letter from his wife revealed that, at my request, she examined her husband's log books for the first time. She reports that Geoffrey was a flight lieutenant at Bainbridge after he qualified as an instructor. He first trained in England (November '41) in a Tiger Moth, flew a Stearman PT-17 in the USA in February '42, Vultee BT 13A in May '42, Cessna AT-17 in Advanced, and went to Central Instructor School, Maxwell Field, AL on 28 September '42, after which he became an instructor at Bainbridge. (I followed the same pattern, but at different times.) He finished instructing at Bainbridge on 25 June '43 and returned to England where he was an instructor in the Oxford plane until the end of the war. ■

THE THREE VICTORIES . . . (continued)

Allied rear areas. German rocket warfare was no more than a feeble and totally ineffective gesture. For example, according to Speer, the maximum production of the V-2 rocket was 5,000 a month. Five thousand V-2 rockets carried less explosive power than one raid by the Allied strategic bomber forces.

With regard to (c): The strategic bombers won by far the greatest naval victory in the war in Europe:

The Navy continually demanded the turnover of large numbers of our bombers to aid in the antisubmarine war in the wide wastes of the Atlantic. We said that would be looking for needles in a haystack and would provide, in addition, the best of all anti-aircraft defenses for Germany. The place to tackle the submarine was where it came from and not where it went or where it was going to or coming from. Who was right?

One simple sentence in Speer's first book — and Speer was responsible for all war production: "We would have kept our promised delivery of submarines to Admiral Doenitz if the bombers had not destroyed a third of them in the ports."

In an effort, which failed, to avoid or reduce those losses in the ports, the Germans started to prefabricate submarines in sections inland.

But those sections were too big to go by rail or road; they could only go by canal to the ports, which was why the strategic bomber forces repeatedly wrecked the two canals — the Mittelland and the Dortmund Ems — thus reducing the delivery of prefabricated sections of submarines to the ports from a maximum of 130 a month to a handful, and to zero.

In addition, the bombers laid 30,000 tons of sea mines in enemy waters, which caused the German admiral in charge of submarine crew training to inform his superiors: "Without trained U-boat crews you cannot have a U-boat offensive, and I cannot train crews unless my training grounds are kept clear of these air-laid mines."

Moreover, those mines created the biggest strain of the war on such Germany naval manpower and material as mine sweepers, etc.

The bombing and air mining also almost annihilated the German merchant marine on which they depended for essential imports of ores from Scandinavia, and, when the German pistol in the back of their necks no longer posed a serious threat to Sweden, the Swedes withdrew the remains of their merchant marine fleet from those trades sooner than accept further losses of ships and men.

Finally, the German High Seas Fleet of some sixteen to eighteen top-quality major vessels, ship for ship more modern and better than we possessed. What happened to them? Corporal Hitler, that great Naval strategist, decided on uses which frittered them away in twos and threes; and who was it that bagged them?

The Navy bagged three and frightened one into committing suicide in Montevideo harbor sooner than come out and face the music.

The U.S. Army Air Forces bagged one.

The Fleet Air Arm bagged one.

The Norwegian land batteries bagged one.

The Soviet Navy heavily damaged one.

RAF Bomber Command bagged six.

Bomber Command repeatedly put two out of action for long periods.

Bomber Command would certainly have bagged the last two — *Prince Eugen* and *Nurnberg* — where they lay unprotected by anything except their own guns, off Copenhagen, toward the end of the war. Just as the bombers, with the big Wallis bombs that had blown 120 feet out of the side of *Tirpitz* and turned her upside down, were drawing a bead on *Eugen* and *Nurnberg* — who had no hope for survival under those conditions — the Admiralty called off the raid and have never given the reason why.

Consequently those ships bombarded Copenhagen, did a great deal of damage, and caused a number of casualties.

But it saved *Eugen* and *Nurnberg* being numbered seventeen and eighteen in the demise of the German main fleet ships and being the final example of the hopelessness of pitting surface ships, uncovered by airpower, against airpower, a lesson which will be utilized in any next war. ■

BEFORE THE JET STREAM (continued)

started to breathe again, thinking we would be turning away from it. It was getting very audible. I did confirm to Lew that we were directly over the center of Magdeburg as I watched that flak battery track us right around the turn! They had anticipated that we would turn, and guessed right on the direction!

For the first time, I got really scared! I found that being sweaty-scared and dry-mouth-scared were two different things. This was the worst I had experienced up until then, or even up until now (fifty years later), for that matter. A burst went off low on the copilot's side that was a "bang" and not a "whump." Then it sounded like it was raining. A piece of flak glanced off the left pitot mast, came through the fuselage and landed on my desk. It was still hot enough to singe my chart.

And then we were out of it! Even though we were still deep in Germany, the rest of the mission must have been a piece of cake. At least I don't remember anything else except pure euphoria and laughing out loud as we touched down at Tibenham, even though we were a half hour behind schedule and looking into a lot of worried faces.

Following our debriefing I talked to some of the other navigators who said they had had the same trouble at the IP that I had experienced — a 180-degree shift in the "winds aloft," which was the only description we had in those days for the jet stream phenomena. ■

8TH AIR FORCE NOMADS

By SGT. EARL ANDERSON, Yank Magazine Staff Correspondent

Reprinted from 3D Strategic Air Depot Association Newsletter (First published in Yank Magazine, circa 1944).

As the men of the Eighth Air Force started to pack for the long trek home or to the Pacific, many of the ground force men are probably reflecting that, being based in England, they really didn't see a lot of country. But there was one group that followed close behind the advancing armies and whose trails crisscrossed every part of four Continental countries, and then led into Germany. Their shop trucks rattled over the transport-cluttered roads of France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and Germany, and often, following their map coordinates, the men left the main highways to come upon secluded regions where the sight of American GIs brought curious natives into the village street to see their "liberators."

These men made up the mobile crews of the Eighth Air Force Service Command on the Continent. In groups of ten, headed by a sergeant, they left their home bases for weeks at a time, either to repair or salvage Eighth Air Force planes that had been forced down on the Continent and were unable to reach any one of three emergency landing fields.

The mobile crews were part of the Continental operations of the 8th AFSC that sent back almost 1,300 bombers and fighters before V-E Day. Summing up the accomplishments, Col. J.M. McCullough, the C.O., said, "Prior to D-Day all planes that could not get back to England were either lost to the enemy or the English Channel. But since the first beachhead was secured, of 1,288 planes, valued at about \$300,000,000, which were forced down in repairable condition, all but 67 were returned to England and made airworthy. Critical parts were also recovered from 422 unrepairable planes which crashed on the Continent."

The first man to reach France after D-Day was John R. Campbell. He was then a master sergeant, but later earned a field commission. Campbell flew into the beachhead on D-plus-11 to count the planes that were down and run a quick inspection on them to see if they could be repaired. The first group of men — 13 of them — landed seven days later with only hand tools, and, of course, field equipment and arms. They tackled the planes with what they had, and with what they could "beg, borrow, steal or invent." One month after D-Day, two B-17s and one P-47 took off from the landing strips in France and headed for the depots in England.

Then began the race to satisfy the insatiable demands from the United Kingdom for planes to keep the divisions at full strength, and for parts that could be used to repair the dam-



YANKS IN BRITAIN

T/Sgt. N.E. Luedeman of Indianapolis studies map to locate plane near Wurzburg, Germany. aged planes that had made their way home.

The "13 men and a jeep" grew into a full-blown Strategic Air Depot, and three landing fields were established on the Continent, where pilots were briefed in land in an emergency. The mobile crews went after those ships which had to land quickly on any old spot.

The crews were stocked with 10-in-1 rations. Sometimes they lived on those. Sometimes they scrounged. Sometimes they put up with other outfits near the plane they were repairing. Inspectors went ahead of them, finding the planes, putting guards on them, and marking them for "salvage" or for "repair." The crew would pile into their 6 x 6 shop truck as soon as one job was done and head for the next one, maybe miles away. They became the nomads of the Eighth Air Force.

When the pressure was on, as it was for months following D-Day, they started work at the crack of dawn, and finished at night using flashlights. They had to know every

plane in the Eighth Air Force. No man could specialize. They took on Lightnings, Thunderbolts, Mustangs, Libs and Forts as they came. Hangars to protect them from the winter blasts were an unknown luxury.

"During those months it seemed like there wasn't anything between us and the North Pole but a bush," one of them said. "We'd keep a five or ten gallon can of oil burning near the plane to numb our hands."

As our armies pushed the Germans back, the Service Command men followed in their wake, and their shop trucks were familiar sights to the men in the ground forces.

They tell a story about one crew working on a plane in the Ardennes in the latter part of December. "Where's the front?" they called to a couple of infantry Joes. The men came over and watched the mechanics for a moment, then replied, "The front! If you wait a couple of hours it ought to be right here. Our outfit is regrouping a couple of miles further back." ■



BY R.D. "DICK" BUTLER

In the Fall 1998 issue of the *Journal* I described in general terms the demonstration at the Oak Brook, Illinois convention of an electronic database program developed by Arlo Bartsch which can contain the complete records of a bomb group. This can include names and duties of assigned personnel, their voices and pictures, missions and targets, aircraft and crews, biographies and memories, personal stories, and much more. Arlo's demonstration was based on information from the group which he had served in — a group equipped with that "other airplane." He also attended our 44th reunion in Savannah last October and again demonstrated his program, this time with some 44th Bomb Group information included. His database program was enthusiastically received, and it was decided to proceed with putting into the program as much data as exists or can be obtained about our group and its people during World War II.

Our 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association President, Roy Owen, has appointed Tom Shepherd as head of an implementation team to, as Roy stated, "see this great program brought to life as the living history of the 44th." In the Winter 1998 issue of *8 Ball Tails*, the journal of the 44th BGVA, Tom has outlined an Ops Plan covering three phases for the management and operation of the database project. Briefly, Phase One: (a) Input of all available mission interrogation reports (sortie by sortie), (b) Input all available personal biography material furnished by members, (c) Input all collectible material of the deceased, and (d) Input the Lundy Roll of Honor and other similar documents. Phase Two: (a) Input all available mission summaries, and (b) Statistics. Phase Three: (a) major events, (b) awards and decorations — group, (c) enemy attacks on Shipdham AF, (d) photographs, and (e) potpourri.

As of this writing, Will Lundy has provided Arlo with the interrogation reports on all 44th Bomb Group sorties through April 1944. A sortie equals one plane on one mission with one crew. Arlo has entered about 1500 of these sortie reports into the database. He has also entered some 180 pages of Will's Roll of Honor and Casualties Book.

In the last two issues of *8 Ball Tails* there has been a biographical form for 44thers to complete and send in for inclusion in the database. It is hoped that everyone will do so expeditiously. The effort to enter all this information will be very costly. Most of the labor to enter the data must be done by hired help, although much of the biographical information can be done by some volunteers. While a

"start up" fund was collected at the Savannah reunion from some of those in attendance, several thousand more dollars will be needed to continue this project to, as Tom says, "record electronically" our WWII history. It is hoped that our members will recognize the importance of this project and generously support it with their donations. Your donations should be sent to our 44th BGVA Treasurer, Gerald Folsom, 3582 East Dover Hill Road, Salt Lake City, UT 84121-5527. Please mark your check "44th Database Program."

Most of the foregoing information has already appeared in issues of *8 Ball Tails*, which members of the 44th BGVA receive. It is given here in hopes that it may arouse some interest in members of other 2ADA groups in getting their group's history into the 8th Air Force Military History Database. A copy of each group's history in this multimedia database would be a most valuable resource in our Second Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich and in the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, as well as at colleges and universities and on the Internet. For more information, contact Arlo Bartsch, 8605 Servite Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53223-2540. For those of you who have a computer or access to one, a demonstration of the program on the Internet is available at www.8thairforce.com. The demonstration has been defaulted to show data from the 379th Bomb Group only.

Many of our Second Air Division aircrews and ground support personnel trained at Pueblo Army Air Base during WWII. Today, located at the former base is a splendid museum known as the International B-24 Memorial Museum. This museum is of special importance to the citizens of Pueblo and Pueblo County, as it is a reminder of Pueblo's military heritage and its place in military history. The museum is also a reminder that thousands of aircrew members trained here and then went to military assignments in all the various theaters of operations. The main purpose of the museum is to honor all those involved in the design, production and military deployment of the B-24 Liberator. It is unique in that it is the only known museum dedicated to a specific airplane.

One of our 44thers, Mark Morris, is one of the most active volunteers at the museum. He joined the 506th Squadron and was a gunner on McAtee's crew in England and North Africa. The 506th was the first squadron, albeit assigned to the 308th Bomb Group, to train at Pueblo. Mark informs us that the 491st Bomb Group was the last group to train as a complete group at the base prior to it being redesignated as a combat crew replacement training center.

Mark came up with the idea of creating a display to depict the history of the 506th Squadron and Pueblo Army Air Base. He decided to place the display on a two-thirds scale replica of a B-24 vertical stabilizer and rudder. Across the top of the stabilizer are the official orders forming the 308th Bomb Group including the 506th Squadron in October 1942 and then the

assignment to Wendover AAB in November 1942, then back to Pueblo in December for the "phases." There are photos of the original aircrews, aircraft, and ground support personnel. These are followed by the orders for overseas assignment, replacement crew photos, the Shipdham site 115, the North Africa tours, targets, and the 44th BG Ploesti formations from Ward's *Those Brave Crews*. On the movable rudder portion is the list of all the 506th targets and missions.

In 1986 the Pueblo Historical Aircraft Society was requested to create a number of 8 foot by 10 foot displays depicting the manufacturing and military history of the B-24 Liberator bomber of WWII fame. These panels were transported to Ft. Worth, Texas where they formed a major display at the 50th reunion of the first flight of the B-24. After the reunion the panels were returned to Pueblo, and they formed the basis for the present museum. They are to be transported to Austin, Texas in May for our 2ADA convention there. Mark is now doing the work for a "virtual tour of the museum" by placing the panel information on the Pueblo County web page. Anyone with on-line capability to browse web sites may access the site with this universal resource locator code: www.co.pueblo.co.us/pwam.

Our convention in Austin on Memorial Day weekend promises to be a good one when we celebrate the 60th anniversary of our B-24. Those of you who have not recently attended a 2ADA convention have missed some really great affairs. I urge you to attend this one. It is in a fine location and very convenient to so many who live in the central U.S. Hope to see you there. ■



**B-24 60TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION WEB SITE**
www.b24liberator.org

**2ND AIR DIVISION
MEMORIAL LIBRARY WEB SITE**
www.ecn.co.uk/memorial

**2AD HERITAGE LEAGUE
WEB SITE**
www.primenet.com/~hl-2ada

B-24 VETERANS WEB SITE
www.mach3ww.com/B24

William, you old poop, you coined many quotable phrases in your time, but you have been shot down in some cases by time, the geneticist, and the horticulturalist. In your day, a rose was a rose; but not anymore. Too many hybrids have been developed that look like a rose, but have no fragrance at all. And a name is a name. Further, it should mean something; and it will unless it is modified or bastardized by someone who has his mouth running while his brain is in neutral. Case in point: Second Air Division. There is a name that definitely means something. However, too often it is modified by some adding Association to it, which leads to misunderstanding. As we all know, the Second Air Division was a military air force which was manned by thousands of men and women whose purpose was to carry the air war to the enemy, which they did with considerable success. Not every one was a combatant, but regardless of what the assignment, it was important and contributed to the success of the operation. Sadly, war is war, and we lost nearly 7,000 airmen and several hundred noncombatants. Little consolation, but the enemy lost more.

Then came the Association. As is well known, the survivors who were on duty at war's end contributed a sum of money for the establishment of some sort of memorial in memory of the operations and the losses sustained by the Second Air Division. Some say the memorial is in memory of the combat dead. If that is so, this writer thinks it a mistake. Surely we mourn and remember our dead. I have, and most have, close friends whose names are on the Honor Roll. We visited their widows when I returned to the States. However, the dead is a part of the story. In my mind, the memorial is in the memory of all who served in the Division; survivors and dead alike. It took the efforts of a great many people to make it possible for the aviators to get where they either had the great luck to survive, or the sad luck and died. It was luck, you know. One might be the greatest aviator in the world, but without a real good crew chief and luck, one was apt to die. Another point one should make: dead is dead. Whether a private was killed by a truck while servicing the "honey buckets," or whether an airman was destroyed in combat; that man was dead, and someone, somewhere, grieved his death. While on the subject, it is thought that we have been more than negligent, since as far as I am aware, while we have the Honor Roll for the combat dead, we have no record at all in our memorial listing our noncombatant losses. If that is correct, we should make a serious attempt to get the names of those troops and list them somehow, even if it's only in a bookkeeper's ledger. One can imagine the disappointment for a relative who visits the memorial and finds no record of kin who might have been killed in an accident while on duty at his base with a group.

Now, back to the Association. We were fortunate to have people with the information, the desire, and the know-how who chartered and brought the Second Air Division Association into being. And that is a name that definitely

Snakesphere

BY J. FRED THOMAS (392ND)

means something when it is used as it should be. In addition to its many accomplishments over the past fifty years, about the most important was the matter of getting in control of the bandied-about fund which had been contributed to by those survivors at the end of the war so as to have it evolve into what today is the 2nd Air Division USAF Memorial Room.

Now, let's consider how our Association has developed and what we can do to keep alive the memory of the Second Air Division in the indefinite future. The Association grew modestly for its first fifteen or so years; then when more veterans moved toward retirement with more time, the rolls increased greatly

While the Association members have carried the ball for the most part, the Memorial belongs to everyone who served in the 2nd Air Division.

until we had over 8,000 members. Then, for several reasons, several groups saw fit to form their own independent tax-exempt organizations. Some account disenchantment with the operations of the Association; some preferred reunions of their own group; and others account costs and limited ability to attend more than one reunion per year. Some of that disenchantment was valid, but more was through misunderstanding and the thought that some people could do more for their groups outside the Association. This lowly person occupied the president's chair when the splintering began, so he knows the score. Regardless, in spite of all, every group has several hundred members in the Association. While too many no longer choose to be members of the Association, a great many of us are members of both the Association and our independent group organizations. Further, most of the "independents" are interested in keeping the Second Air Division Association alive and well. It is realized that we are a dying breed. One of these days, our numbers will dwindle until we have to come together as a Division in order to keep enough troops together to make any reunion worthwhile. It's inevitable, but we have to go out fighting. The enemy never turned us back, but time is unforgiving. We will go, but not willingly.

Now to face the future and reiterate some of the things I wrote in my 392nd BG report in the last issue of the *Journal*. The Second Air Division Memorial is *not* a Second Air Division Association Memorial. While the Association members have carried the ball for the most part, the memorial belongs to everyone who served in the Second Air Division. Although he may not have contributed a cent to its upkeep, anyone, member or not, can walk proudly into the memorial and take advantage of whatever it has to offer him.

Also, as reported before, most of our 2ADA Executive Committee went to Norwich in November for our mid-term committee meet, as

well as to meet with the Board of Governors of the 2nd Air Division Trust. Along with other business, we were brought up to date on all phases of the rebuilding of the Central Library with our Memorial Room to be about twice the size of the old room that burned. Along with that, a Rebuilding Fund was kicked off in order to raise a further £125,000 to cover the unprovided-for funds to take care of the extra space. That fund raising is well on its way toward fulfillment. That brings us to another important phase, however. The new room with its added space and equipment will require further funds in order to have added help and furnishings to carry our memorial into the future on a successful basis. I don't have the precise figures because I haven't access at this time to the latest *Journal*, but as I recall, our Capital Fund is about at the £775,000 mark. The income from the investment of those funds is taking

care of expenses at present, but it is evident that further funds will be needed to operate the memorial when the new library is opened and operating. The British point out that all their successful and long-running charities were adequately capitalized. We would expect long-term success for our memorial if that were true in our case and we increase our Capital Fund to £1,000,000.

Again, I don't have a *Journal* yet, but we are sure there will be news of a fund raising. I don't know the program, but no doubt, all groups will be asked to contribute to the effort. We know the 467th BG donated \$5,000. I don't know about the others, but I know about the 392nd BG. Earlier, I committed to donate £1,000 this year and our 392nd BGMA is matching that amount. At the coming Orlando meet, we will discuss further attempts at raising more funds. Nobody cares for continual fund raising, but this is one last chance to see that our Division and war efforts are remembered long after we are gone. I always like to make a job sound reasonable. I'm a man of modest means, so if I can ante up £1,000, I am sure we have another 200-300 members out of 7,000 with the means to do likewise or something substantial. Regardless of the amount, anything one can do will be duly acknowledged and appreciated.

We ask only that it be stressed that the memorial has been, and will continue to belong to all Second Air Division people. We will hope that some sort of database can be set up in the memorial so as to list every name possible of those who served. If so, we will need the help of everyone; member or not. Further, in order to prove the point, the officers of the independent associations should be encouraged with all others involved to see that our Memorial Room serves their groups as they would want. Offer them a part of the action. The Bronze B-24 program proved that if you give the troops a part of the action in which they are interested, it's likely they will respond. ■

OVERSEAS BRATS PLAN BIG REUNION

For most graduates, college or high school reunions are commonplace. But reunions are slightly more difficult to pull off if you are one of the estimated 4 million Americans who, since 1946, have attended an American school in such exotic locations as Vietnam, Ethiopia, or Iran.

Since 1986, the OVERSEAS BRATS organization has acted as an information clearinghouse on the activities of numerous groups representing former students of American schools worldwide.

This year, Overseas Brats is hosting HOMECOMING '99, a reunion for all overseas and military "brats." The event is scheduled for August 5-8 in Dallas. In conjunction with Homecoming '99, former students of various schools in Belgium, England, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Iceland, Iran, Italy, Turkey, and Vietnam also will be staging reunions.

For more information about Homecoming '99 and the Overseas Brats organization, please contact:

OVERSEAS BRATS
P.O. Box 29805
San Antonio, TX 78229-0805
Tel. (210) 349-1394
E-mail: osbpres@aol.com



491st BOMB GROUP POSTREMUM ET OPTIMUM

the RINGMASTER REPORTS

BY JOHN D. LEPPERT

AFB with lunch, a tour of the "Boneyard" (over 6,000 aircraft on the ground there) followed by services at the Base Chapel #1. Following services, Nancy and John Fitzgerald renewed their marriage vows with the entire group as witnesses. Nancy and John were originally married at Davis Monthan in 1944 when John returned from the ETO after completing his tour of duty.

The Pima Air Museum was outstanding. A full day in this facility would not be too much. The 446th Bomb Group's B-24 is an outstanding part of this museum. A very beautiful airplane.

Mel Mellott, our 491st BG president these past two years, retired after this reunion to become past president on the board of directors after an outstanding term of office. Mel is replaced by our new president, Ed Watson, who has several years' experience on the board of directors, which will enable him to bring us comfortably into the year 2000.

A BIG THANK YOU

To NASA astronaut Janet Kavandi, Ph.D. who carried our 491st Bomb Group flag into space on a recent shuttle mission. Janet's father, William W. Sellers, served with the 491st Bomb Group in the ETO. The flag will be publicly displayed with the 491st exhibit at the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum for all to see.

COMING EVENTS

May 1, 1999: Dedication of a memorial at Metfield (England) at the site of our first base in England in the spring of 1944.

October 12-15, 1999: Annual reunion at Williamsburg, VA.

Fall 2000 (tentative): Annual reunion at Tacoma, Washington, site of the dissolution of the 491st in September 1945.

Fall 2001 (tentative): Annual reunion at Orlando, Florida. ■

NEW MEMBERS OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

44th

Scott J. Stanton
Clarence W. Thompson
Sandra Pendleton Espey (AM)
Wayne W. Thompson (AM)

93rd

Albert L. Lee
Laura Mae Rosenow (AM)
Blanche G. Stepp (AM)
Ann D. Wier (AM)

389th

Steven Bekiesz
Paul T. Burton
Edwin P. Conrad
Ralph O. Jacobson
Robert W. Renner
James R. Steele, Jr.
Frank K. Quigley
David W. Carlson (AM)
Elbert F. Lozes, Jr. (AM)

Robert McBrien (AM)
Darrell N. McCoy (AM)
Stuart Steele (AM)
Clyde L. Vick (AM)

392nd

Carol Wilkerson (AM)

445th

William A. Boyle
John F. Hadle
Sterling Lintz
Gerald H. Scott, Sr.

448th

William D. Arnold
Emil J. Beaudry
Frank E. Carlson, Jr.
Wiley B. Christie
Hugh D. Fallin, Sr.
C. Eugene Fosmark
Darwin T. Hall

Henry M. Maggenti
Joseph N. Musuraca
Neal Pauley
William C. Payne
Anthony Ruscetta
Jerry J. Russ
William Trehal

Richard P. Tustin (389, 489)
Robert F. Whitney
Jean Crane (AM)
Lela P. Whitaker (AM)

453rd

William R. Linke
Charles H. York (93rd)
Deborah L. Dalious (AM)

458th

Wayne W. Gamble
Harvey Karlin
Mary E. Chapman (AM)
Teresa Chapman Abshier (AM)

466th

R. Dean Moushon

467th

Eleanor Sloan (AM)

489th

Thomas J. McGory
Stanley B. Weiner

491st

Ernest E. Ammons
Edward H. Johnson
Bernice F. Eisfeld (AM)

SM

Steven E. Antosiak
Frank J. Bates
Allan Buch
George H. Hoidra
Enrico Rene Schwartz



POOP from GROUP 467

BY WALTER J. MUNDY

As I reported in the Winter Journal, I was unable to attend the 2ADA Executive Committee meeting in Norwich in November 1998; however, I have received several letters concerning the donation that the 467th made to the Memorial Library. Paul King sent me a letter of appreciation, as did Earl Wassom and David Hastings. Jordan Uttal also sent me a note about the meeting and the presentation of the \$40,000 from the 2ADA and the \$5,000 from the 467th.

Al Asch sent a letter to General Shuler of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, in connection with the memory book developed for the Bronze B-24. Two copies will be available at the Heritage Museum, one at the Memorial Library in Norwich, and one will be placed with the model of "Witchcraft."

The 467th is arranging for a marker at the Mighty Eighth Museum, similar to the one that is installed at Rackheath. Several monument makers were contacted, and the prices range from \$1895.00 to \$6192.00.

We had eight additions to the Widows Roster in the last six months of 1998. We lost thirteen veterans from our group and there are still over 1100 on the Association Roster.

Vince LaRussa and Ralph Davis are continuing efforts to obtain the Presidential Unit Citation that was recommended and later lost in the relocation of the group. Senator McCain from Arizona is lending his support and help to bring this well deserved citation to official conclusion. A petition to the House National Security Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee is being prepared.

The 467th convention picture for 1999 is as follows — at this date it will be in Tucson, AZ, September 30 to October 4, 1999 at the Viscount Suites. Registration is Thursday, September 30, 1999, with an optional tour on Friday, October 1 and ranch Bar-B-Q on Friday evening. Saturday will be a visit to the Pima Air Museum, and on Sunday we will have our business meeting and banquet. Monday, October 4 — farewell and happy landings.

The 467th convention for 2000 is tentatively scheduled for September 28 through October 2, 2000 at Dayton, Ohio.

The convention committee is also looking at the 2001 convention to be in Norwich, and we hope that the new library will be open, as it is advertised to be completed by the end of 2000. We could be open for a joint convention with the 2ADA if they plan to go to Norwich in 2001. Meanwhile, options will remain open and some planning can be accomplished. ■



MIKE'S FLAG

SUBMITTED BY WALTER MUNDY (467th)
Condensed from a Speech By LEO K. THORNESS,
Recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor

You've probably seen the bumper sticker somewhere along the road. It depicts an American flag, accompanied by the words, *These colors don't run*. I'm always glad to see this, because it reminds me of an incident from my confinement in North Vietnam at the Hao Lo POW Camp, or the "Hanoi Hilton," as it became known. Then a Major in the U.S. Air Force, I had been captured and imprisoned from 1967-1973. Our treatment had frequently been brutal. After three years, however, the beatings and torture became

less frequent. During the last year, we were allowed outside most days for a couple of minutes to bathe. We showered by drawing water from a concrete tank with a homemade bucket. One day as we all stood by the tank, stripped of our clothes, a young Naval pilot named Mike Christian found the remnants of a handkerchief in a gutter that ran under the prison wall. Mike managed to sneak the grimy rag into our cell and began fashioning it into a flag. Over time we all loaned him a little soap, and he spent days cleaning the material. We helped by scrounging and stealing bits and pieces of anything he could use. At night, under his mosquito net, Mike worked on the flag. He made red and blue from ground-up roof tiles and tiny amounts of ink and painted the colors onto the cloth with watery rice glue. Using thread from his own blanket and a homemade bamboo needle, he sewed on stars. Early in the morning a few days later, when the guards were not alert, he whispered loudly from the back of our cell, "Hey gang, look here." He proudly held up this tattered piece of cloth, waving it as if in a breeze. If you used your imagination, you could tell it was supposed to be an American flag. When he raised that smudgy fabric, we automatically stood straight and saluted, our chests puffing out, and more than a few eyes had tears. About once a week the guards would strip us, run us outside and go through our clothing. During one of those shakedowns, they found Mike's flag. We all knew what would happen. That night they came for him. Night interrogations were always the worst. They opened the cell door and pulled Mike out. We could hear the beginning of the torture even before they had him in the torture cell. They beat him most of the night. About daylight they pushed what was left of him back through the cell door. He was badly broken, even his voice was gone. Within two weeks, despite the danger, Mike scrounged another piece of cloth and began another flag. The Stars and Stripes, our national symbol, was worth the sacrifice for him. Now, whenever I see a flag, I think of Mike and the morning he first waved that tattered emblem of a nation. It was then, thousands of miles from home in a lonely prison cell, that he showed us what it is to be truly free.

— THIS IS WHAT OUR FLAG AND FREEDOM ARE ALL ABOUT! —

2ADA FILM LIBRARY — REVISED 1/99

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

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

Produced by
Joe Dzenowagis

American Patriots (Series)
"The Story of the Second Air Division Memorial Room"
featuring Jordan Uttal

Produced by
Joe Dzenowagis

"PARADE" — 2ADA in England, V-E Day 1995

Produced by Joe Dzenowagis

"Royal Air Force Tribute to the Second Air Division,
8th USAAF, by Royal Air Force Coltishall Honor Guard
and Royal Air Force Wyton Military Band"
43rd Annual 2ADA Convention, July 1990

Produced by
Joe Dzenowagis

"24's Get Back"
"B-24 Liberators in the ETO" } Order together
"Aerial Gunner"

Donated by
Hugh McLaren

"World War II" with Walter Cronkite
10 Volumes

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Roy Jonasson

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"Ploesti! B-24s at War — Series I"
"Flying the Bombers — B-24 Liberator"
"B-24s at War — Series II"
"The B-24 Story"
"Diamond Lil"
"Start Engines Plus 50 Years"
"Behind the Wire"

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

Order from: H.C. "Pete" Henry, 164-B Portland Lane, Jamesburg, NJ 08831.



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IN RETROSPECT

FORT PILOT LEARNS DEATH REPORTS OF CREW GREATLY EXAGGERATED

REPRINTED FROM "STARS & STRIPES," AUGUST 16, 1943

A USAAF BOMBER STATION, AUGUST 15 (UP) — Lack of oxygen on the Fort, "Tinker Toy," as she was returning from a raid on Hamburg, caused three imaginary "deaths" and a lot of confusion which is still being straightened out here. It all happened like this.

On the way back from Hamburg, Lt. Frank Chapman (388th BG), of Old Orchard, Maine, pilot of the "Tinker Toy," heard the grim voice of the radio operator announce over the intercom: "Waist gunners Pope and Bang are dead."

Chapman shook his head sadly as he continued the flight. Then came Pope's voice over the intercom: "Radio operator Myers and Bang are dead."

As Chapman puzzled over that, a third message came: "This is Bang. Pope and Myers are dead." Chapman sent the copilot, Lt. Melvin R. Hecker of Chicago, back to find out just what was going on. It turned out that all three were alive, but very confused.

Later, it developed that the radio operator, T/Sgt. Edwin R. Myers of Leavittsburg, Ohio, thought that one waist gunner, S/Sgt. Charles F. Bang of Arlington, Virginia, was dead twice. Bang thought Myers was dead, and had actually seen icicles forming on the eyelids of the other waist gunner, S/Sgt. Edward J. Pope of Kittery, Maine, who meanwhile reported that Bang was dead.

Here are their stories:

Myers said: "Bang came into the radio room with the walk-around bottle and started making motions with his hands. I finally decided I'd better look around. I'd just gotten into the waist when I found Bang lying on the ball turret, stretched out cold, and I knew he was a goner. Pope, the other waist gunner, was out cold, too. I was out of oxygen but plugged Bang in on the emergency, and went back to the radio room."

Bang said: "Pope passed out from lack of oxygen, but was lying there with his chest heaving, so I knew he was alive. I plugged him in on the emergency oxygen, and then I must have passed out. I came to later and went into the radio room. Myers wasn't there, so I thought he was out. Then I heard guns firing and ran out to the waist, and found Myers at work."

"In the meantime, Myers, who was out of oxygen and had the bends, fixed up Pope. We looked down at Pope and saw his chest heaving and ice forming on his eyelashes, so we shook our heads and went on about our work."

Myers said: "I went back to the radio room and sat down and couldn't get up because of the bends. I must have passed out. Pope came in later, found me, and reported me dead. I don't know what Lt. Chapman thought about it."

Chapman said: "It was very confusing, and we're still unable to figure out the sequence in which they passed out and revived."

"Fortunately we had only one attack. The ball turret gunner, S/Sgt. John J. "Snuffy" Wardell of Providence, Rhode Island got him. It must have been at about 1,300 yards, which I believe is some sort of record."

Other members of the "Tinker Toy" were Lt. Sidney Novell, Norristown, PA, navigator; Lt. Wilson W. Cupp, Newark, NJ, bombardier; T/Sgt. Otha H. Frost, Denver, engineer; and S/Sgt. Robert S. Guggenheim, Syracuse, NY, tail gunner. ■

World War II Flying Ace Dies at 78

by Wendy Goodman, Staff Writer • Reprinted from The Charlotte Observer, December 28, 1998

Growing up a little boy in Oklahoma, Bob Johnson had one dream — he wanted to fly.

Back then, Johnson had no idea he would become America's No. 1 flying ace and a national hero during World War II.

Flying was his love and his passion.

Johnson, of Lake Wylie, SC, died Sunday morning in a Tulsa, OK hospital. He was 78.

"This morning, the nurse came out of his room and said, 'He just took his last flight,'" said Sue Roth, Johnson's niece. "All I could think was how beautiful that was."

Johnson was America's No. 1 flying ace at about the war's midpoint. He shot down 28 Nazi planes during the war to break the record of his hero, the original ace, Eddie Rickenbacker.

His success made him a war hero. He was even welcomed home by Franklin Roosevelt at the White House.

Much of Johnson's life was still tied to his days during the war.

He met his late wife, Barbara, and married her during his training. During more than 50 years together, they lived a beautiful love story, Roth said. The couple had no children.

His home was filled with mementos of his P-47 Thunderbolt and his 61st Tactical Fighter



Bob Johnson of Lake Wylie, SC in September 1997, with a picture of himself from WWII.

PHOTO BY LAYNE BAILEY

Squadron. He wrote a book of his war exploits titled *Thunderbolt!* which was published last year in paperback.

And Johnson had hundreds of stories.

Several times a year Johnson and a group of about 25 other World War II pilots in the River Hills neighborhood of Lake Wylie would get together "to talk and tell lies," said Ed Hardy, a B-17 pilot during the war.

"None of us knew each other during the war, but we all got here somehow," Hardy said. "Bob was a one of a kind, something special."

"He was always telling stories, but could

never bore me with them. We could all listen to him for hours."

Johnson never turned down the chance to speak to groups or students. He spent many afternoons reliving his memories and teaching others about the war.

"He was always glad to talk about the war because he had very firsthand stories," said the Rev. Russ Brown of River Hills Community Church, where Johnson was a member.

"World War II was a big era in this nation's history, and Bob made it more real to many children who didn't have access to those firsthand stories."

For Johnson's nieces and nephews, their uncle's return to Oklahoma for the holidays is bittersweet. Johnson had not been to Oklahoma in nearly two years, and surprised his family when he decided to spend Christmas with them.

"He was here with most of his family when he died, and that is very special to us," Roth said. "He was a wonderful person, and we loved it when he came to visit."

"He had amazing World War II feats, but there was a lot more to this man that we were very proud of, and we're going to miss him." ■



To the editor:

Here is our new Web site for the 60th Anniversary of the B-24 Liberator Celebration. There are seven pages at the site and more will be added as the stories come in. Most important is for all interested to know the URL (uniform resource locator) which is the coded address of our site, and it is:

www.b24liberator.org

It has no spaces, no dashes, no capital letters.

So far we have had over 500 "hits" (visitors) to our site, which is encouraging. The hits have come from England, Germany, Australia, and, of course, the USA!

Jack Pelton (445th)
150 Aspen Way
Rolling Hills Est., CA 90274



To the editor:

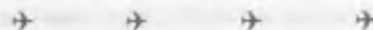
The article "A Viking in the 8th Air Force" on page 11 of the Fall *Journal* was excellent. However, I would like to remind readers that Norwegians of all kinds, civilians and military, did a valiant job during WWII under harsh conditions.

There is a memorial to the Second Air Division bomb groups at Oslo-Kjeller Airport. This memorial honors the 62 aircrew members killed in action on bombing raids on Nazi-occupied Norway, 16-18 November '43. There were many Germans killed, and the base was 80 percent destroyed by the bombing force.

This memorial can be seen by taking the train from Oslo main station for about 20 minutes to the town of Lillestrom and taking a taxi from the station to the airbase on the edge of town. Also there is a monument to the brave Norwegians who died in the war.

The 93rd, 389th, 392nd, and 44th Bomb Groups of the 2AD were in the bombing force. The crews killed were shot down and their bodies and planes never found.

Forrest S. Clark (44th)
703 Duffer Lane
Kissimmee, FL 34759
e-mail: b24vet@aol.com



This "D" model looks like it was at Ploesti — note a horizontal bomb on 7th mission. Questions: With what group? Was it a formation ship? Contact EARL ZIMMERMAN (389th BG), 8922 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis, IN 46240-2039.

To the editor:

I recently received a letter from Mr. Peter Loncke in Belgium, who is researching the history of a 392nd Bomb Group B-24 which crashed near his home after completing its mission to Wesel, Germany, on March 24, 1945. The ship was "Gashouse Gus," in which our crew from the 576th Squadron, piloted by 1st Lt. Robert Harcus, flew several missions. We were not on the Wesel mission.

According to Bob Vickers' *The Liberators from Wendling*, 1977 edition, page 88, the only plane lost that day by the 392nd was #709 from the 576th, piloted by a Lt. Hummel. "Gashouse Gus" must have been #709.

Perhaps some readers will be able to supply information to the researcher. Peter Loncke's address is: Sint-Franciscusstraat 54, B-3920 Lommel, BELGIUM.

John E. Rosenberg (392nd)
15905 Sky Cliff Drive
Brookfield, WI 53005



To the editor:

You may be aware of the story "Baptism of Fire: The RAF and the Flying Fortress" (it wasn't), 1941 in the Summer 1998, Vol. 45, No. 2 of "Air Power History" published by the Air Force Historical Foundation, 1535 Command Drive - Suite A122, Andrews AFB, MD 20762-7002, phone (301) 981-2139. It is absolutely must reading for all B-24 crewmen.

Bob Vincent (458th)
2724 Saddle Rock Lane
Stillwater, OK 74074



To the editor:

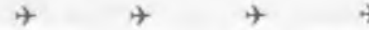
I want all surviving members of the 564th Squadron, 389th Group to know some of its recent history. As the first C.O. of the 564th, organized 31 December '42, I held command from that date until 1 January '44 when I became 389th Group Operations Officer.

I was proud to lead the 564th to Ploesti, 1 August '43, on its successful smashing of the Staua Romana refinery. The pilot who flew on my right wing was Lt. Lloyd D. "Pete" Hughes. I wrote Hughes' citation for the Congressional Medal of Honor because of his heroism performing a suicide mission in order to accurately delivery his bombs. Hughes got the Congressional Medal posthumously. The details of his heroism appear in the chapter on Ploesti in *Bomber Pilot*, a book I wrote which was published several years ago and is still available.

All 564th folk should be proud to know that the 564th, having been deactivated and reactivated several times, has been chosen for its last, and perhaps final, reactivation. As reactivated it has now become the 564th Missile Squadron, Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana. The new 564th is equipped with the most modern weapons system in the USAF arsenal.

My wife Anne and I have been honored on two recent visits to the 564th. The present C.O. is Lt. Col. Christian L. Daehnick. I know Col. Daehnick would be glad to hear from any old 564th guys. Tell him Phil Ardery suggested you write to him, and congratulate him on his assignment to a great command.

Maj. Gen. Philip P. Ardery (389th)
USA. Res. Ret.



To the editor:

Here is a picture of our Crew #76, 392nd Bomb Group, Wendling, 1943-1944. We trained on B-17s and transferred to B-24s in Kansas before going overseas. I know Harold Abraham is deceased — but where are the rest of you??

After returning to the States I was assigned to towing gliders at Fort Bragg (Pope Field) with B-17s and B-24s.

Emilian W. Larue (392nd)
10 View Avenue
Cumberland, RI 02864-1732

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To the editor:

In the Summer 1998 *Journal* you published a picture of a 458th BG softball team from Horsham St. Faith. I'm including a picture of our Headquarters team from Horsham. I am the first guy from the left in the front row with the peak of my hat turned up and hands folded. Our pitcher was Simmons, the guy on the far right in the front row.

I haven't tried to write in a long time, but I feel good for an old guy of 83.

Dean E. Moyer (HQ)
549 E. Main Street
Evans City, PA 16033

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the editor:

In my continuing research on USAAF losses in France during WWII, I'm still looking for survivors downed in my country to get their stories. I wish to honor their sacrifice for freedom here, and the result will be a book containing their POW or evader experiences. Last September I received here in Normandy the daughter of a B-24 copilot from the 448th BG shot down near Dieppe, and I gave her a picture of her dad's plane after we went to the crash site.

I'll be most grateful if you could help me in tracing the following 445th BG survivors:

B-24 #41-28666, 703rd BS, was lost near Rouen, shot down on March 18, 1944. Crew members: R.A. Parker (POW), R.F. Jones (POW), J.C. Watson (POW), J.P. Cass (POW), N.A. Daugherty, K.F. Bradford (POW).

B-24 #42-95088, 701st BS, was lost north of Rouen, shot down on June 20, 1944. Crew members: H.M. Jones (escaped), J. Fetterly (POW), H.P. Edmonds (POW), R.C. Brotherton, J.L. McGarry. I know that C.H. Thornton and B.D. MacDonald are now deceased.

It would be wonderful to have addresses for any of the above, or any other correspondence regarding 2nd Air Division losses in France.

Laurent Viton
La Poste
76110 Goderville
FRANCE

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Standing (left to right): Sgt. William Rachell, tail gunner; Sgt. Jean Whited, 2nd radio man; Sgt. Lucian Keller, armorer gunner; S/Sgt. Harold Abraham, 1st radio man; S/Sgt. Nick Branciforte, 2nd engineer; S/Sgt. E.W. Larue, 1st engineer. **Kneeling (left to right):** Lt. James McGough, navigator; Lt. James Clifford, copilot; Lt. George Brauer, pilot.



HEADQUARTERS SOFTBALL TEAM AT HORSHAM ST. FAITH. ARE YOU IN THIS PICTURE?

What's in a Name?

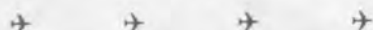
Will you help find data on these Liberators? Liberators of World War II, that carried the name of your city, state, or USA. Are these Liberators and their aircrews being recognized today? Are your city or state officials aware that there may be a Liberator that carried the city or state name into battle in WWII and helped to preserve freedom in our country's darkest hour? With your help we must find the information on these B-24 Liberators and their aircrews and inform the appropriate city and state officials and their archives of their past existence so that the present and future generations will know of the deeds of these B-24s and will never forget. Every effort possible must be made before it is too late for us to keep the memories alive of this Great B-24 called the Liberator. **THE NAME SAYS IT ALL!** Send available data, photos, etc. of B-24s that carried city, state or USA names to:

Second Air Division, 8th Air Force
Year of the B-24 Liberator Committee
C.N. Chamberlain, Chairman
21055 George Brown Avenue • Riverside, CA 92518-2815

To the editor:

During the 2ADA Executive Committee's visit to Norwich in November, we had an occasion to visit RAF Coltishall to inspect the Jaguar aircraft stationed there. We were welcomed most genuinely, and upon arrival were greeted by a battery of photographers, including the local press and the RAF photo section. The RAF has presented us with a number of copies of a group photo (*at right*) to be distributed to attendees at the next Executive Committee meeting, in Austin this May.

Geoff Gregory (467th)
3110 Sheridan
Garland, TX 75041-4400



To the editor:

I represent the Stillwater Airport Memorial Museum of Stillwater, Oklahoma. Over the past seven years, I have been writing a book about the 475 combat aircraft that were stored and later scrapped at our airport from 1945 through 1948. Please be informed that 228 of these aircraft were Consolidated B-24 Liberator heavy bombers. This number includes: 144 B-24s, 2 F-7s, and 82 PB4Y-1s. Approximately twenty of the Army Liberator aircraft served with the Second Air Division during World War Two.

I am writing in regards to acquiring photographs of these aircraft. I'm, also, interested in obtaining additional information concerning their individual operational histories and establishing contact with former crew members. Below is a brief breakdown of the 2nd Air Division '24s that saw action during the war and were later stored at Searcy Field:

41-28770 (44th Bomb Group)
42-7492 "The Hell Wagon" (392nd BG)
42-7502 "Bakadori" (392nd BG)
42-50335 (44th Bomb Group)
42-50515 "Dye's Dynamiters" (467th BG)
42-50541 "Satin's Sister" (491st BG)
42-50622 "Bama Bound" - 801st BG (P)
"Lovely Libba" - 801st BG (P)
"This Is It Men" - 801st BG (P)
42-51154 "Silver Dollar" (466th BG)
42-94765 (446th Bomb Group)
42-94819 "Buckshot Annie" (489th BG)
42-94831 "The Sack" (489th BG)
42-94892 "Battlin' Baby" (44th BG)
44-40142 "Sknappy" (492nd BG)

Any help you can give my organization will be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

John L. Dienst
Curator, S.A.M.M.A.
P.O. Box 6042, Enid, Ok 73702
Tel. (580) 242-0191



The Royal Air Force at Coltishall Air Base welcomes the 2ADA Executive Committee, their wives, guests, and English friends. RAF-COLTISHALL PHOTO STAFF

The Past Is In Good Hands – For The Future!

On a visit to the United States last year I had the chance to tour The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia at the kind invitation of Buck Shuler. During a recent tidy-up I came across some photographs from that visit, and knowing that Second Air Division Association members have always taken a great interest in both The Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum and in Duxford and our American Air Museum, I thought they might like to be reassured about the very cordial relations between our two organisations, which the photograph below illustrates.

Ted Inman, Director, Imperial War Museum – Duxford, Cambridge CB2 4QR, England



Museum directors Buck Shuler of the Mighty Eighth AF Heritage Museum (left) and Ted Inman of the American Air Museum, Duxford, met in Savannah last year.

To the editor:

The 453rd Bomb Group Newsletter talks about the "Unsung Mechs." I was one of those and spent more time at "Old Buck" than anyone. Part of the original group to open the field, I was an electrician. The shop's electric wiring was not complete, so I got the job. My crew were all English — I even had a tea lady.

We finished about the time of the first B-24. The first job the hangar got was a badly damaged B-24 nose because the nose wheel collapsed. I replaced the wiring and was in charge of all bomber electric wiring repair brought to the depot for the duration.

I was involved in all the "trouble." The flak damage, nose trouble, the Patton gas lift, trips to pick up planes at other field, etc.

I think I had the most interesting job on the field.

I helped close the base, gathered the tools and packed up. Wondered what happened to all that stuff. Been back twice — no answer.

Merle R. Spring (453rd)
5021 Elberta Ave. NW
Canton, OH 44709-1970



MERLE R. SPRING, 453RD ELECTRICIAN

2nd AIR DIVISION - HOMEWARD BOUND GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR - JUNE 1945



ARKANSAS TRAVELER - 446th Bomb Gp.

Fred Mahnken, 705 Ord., July 1943 - August 1945
Passenger w/ Lt. Bogen Gist and crew, A/C 250618, B-24J,
#17 of 18 705th aircraft.
200 Libs at one time and place — a never-to-be-forgotten sight!
Next stop this afternoon: Bradley Field, Connecticut.

To the editor:

My father, William Bentley dePutron, was a navigator in the 446th in 1944. Dad died about 15 years ago after a long career that included air-sea rescue in Korea, Hurricane Hunters out of Bermuda, and two tours in combat areas with the Red Cross in Vietnam. I have numerous photos taken, mostly by him, while he was stationed at Bungay, but these only whet the appetite for more information.

Through the Internet, I've discovered that he was apparently with the 705th Squadron, and flew a B-24 called "Minnie." His squadron leader was Lt. Col. Hugh C. Arnold and group leader was Col. Jacob J. Brogger. Dad arrived at Bungay in time for the D-Day operations after training in Topeka. His crew at that time included Hirschell Cordell, pilot (deceased); "Willie" Harris, copilot (last known address in Jackson, Miss.); William "Bill" dePutron, navigator; and Seymour "Alex" Alexander, bombardier (POW, deceased Nov. 1997). The rest of the crew I know only by last name: Kreibel, engineer; Ananian (or Onanian), radio man (this may be Paul D. Ananian, Tujunga, CA); and Gunners Lane: Synfelt, Umphrees, and Henderson.

Recent information identifies one of the gunners as S/Sgt. Leon Synfelt, nose gunner. Cordell never flew combat and was reassigned, and of the others only Alexander continued to fly with Dad. The interesting sideline about "Alex" was that he flew just one mission with another crew, and was shot down and spent the rest of the war as a POW. Dad's last pilot was Alfred Knopf, Jr.

I'm hoping the members might help me out in locating surviving crew members or anyone who recalls Dad.

Gareth B. dePutron
2207 S. Bagdad Road
Leander, TX 78641
E-mail: rayder@io.com

ATTENTION GOLFERS

The 18th Annual Golf Tournament of the 2nd Air Division Association will be held the morning of Saturday, May 29, 1999, in conjunction with the 2ADA convention in Austin, Texas. Anyone interested, please contact:

Kurt Warning
2736A North Dayton
Chicago, IL 60614
Tel. 773-549-3546



LIBERATOR – THE NAME SAYS IT ALL.

Come Join The Celebration!

“The B-24 Liberator 60th Anniversary Year”

at the Second Air Division Association

Annual Convention – May 29-31, 1999

Hyatt Regency Hotel on Town Lake • Austin, Texas

(See the Winter 1998-99 Journal for more convention details.)

SOME ATTRACTIONS IN STORE FOR YOU:

Giant Logo Banners • B-24 Video Theater • Special B-24 PX • Bronze B-24 Story
Surprise Speakers • Planned B-24 Simulator • Photo Contest • Bumper Stickers •
Planned Military Interviews • Planned B-24 Fly-Ins

For further information contact: C.N. “Bud” Chamberlain, 21055 George Brown Avenue, Riverside, CA 92518-2815,
Tel. (909) 697-2644, Fax (909) 697-2232, or James M. Davis, 2519 Shell, Midland, TX 79765-8421, Tel. (915) 683-2443.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS — 2ADA PHOTO CONTEST!!!

Bring your old black and white snapshots to the 2ADA convention in Austin.

Anything goes!!! (persons, vehicles, buildings, scenery, war photos, etc.)

5" x 7" or larger prints will be appreciated (our eyesight is not as good as it once was)

Each photo must have your name and address, necessary for judging and recognition of winners. In judging the entries, the following will be considered:

uniqueness • interesting subject • quality of picture • depicting the times

An imminent panel of adjudicators will judge the entries. Submit your pictures at the Registration Table in Austin.

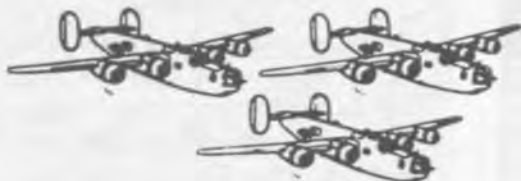
NOTE: Bud Chamberlain and The Year of the B-24 Liberator Committee are looking for pictures and information about Liberators that carried the name of a city, a state, or the USA. Please see page 37 for details.

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

EIGHTH AIR FORCE

RAY PYTEL, JOURNAL EDITOR

P.O. BOX 484, ELKHORN, WI 53121-0484



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6410 Delaire Landing Road

Philadelphia, PA 19114-4157