

**DON'T MISS
THE TAMPA BAY
2ADA CONVENTION**

MAY 26-29

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SURE!**

THE JOURNAL

Official Publication of the



Veterans of
WORLD WAR II

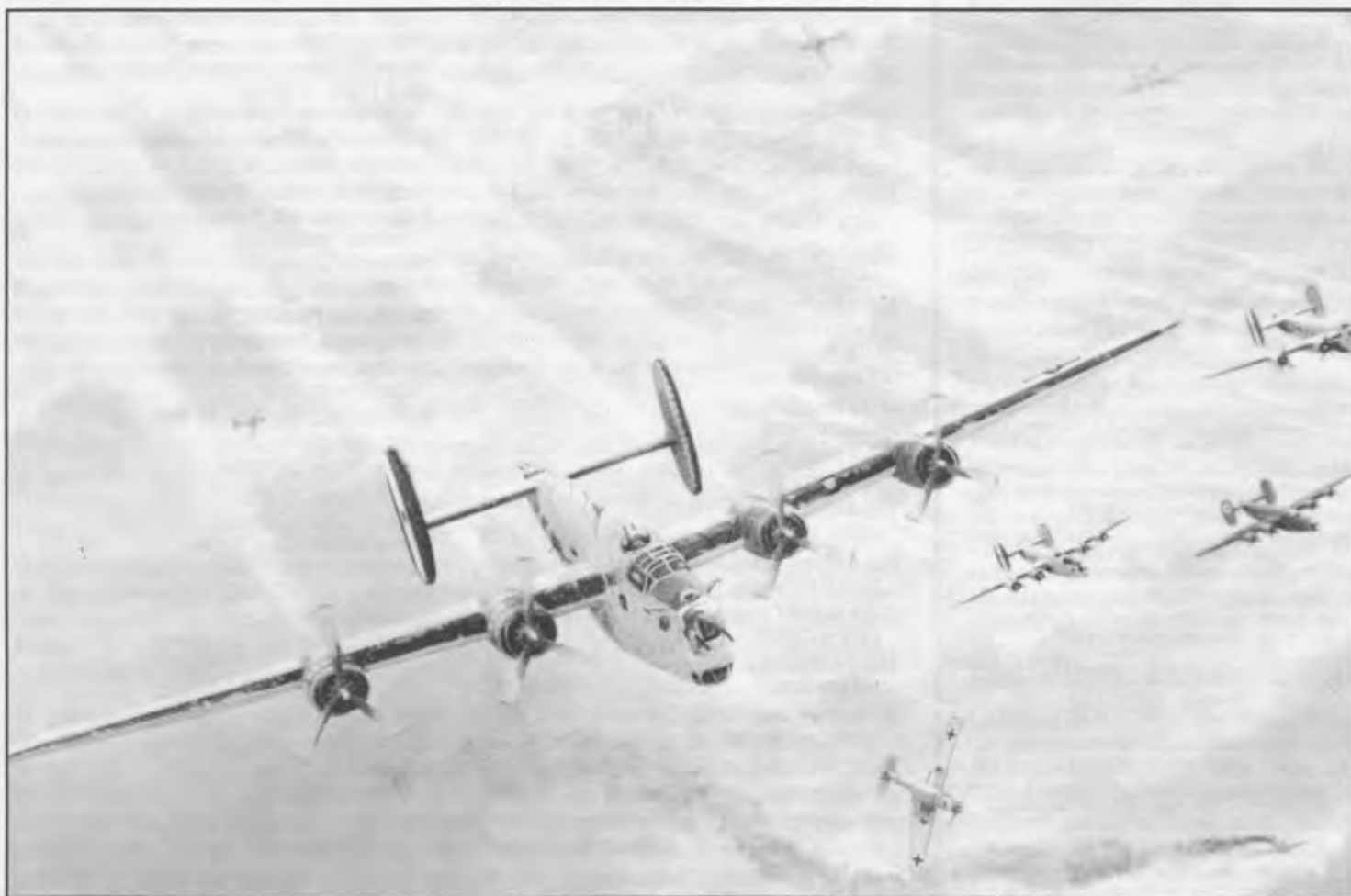


Volume 39 Number 1

Spring 2000

The Artist Who Didn't Forget Our Liberators

BY RICK ROKICKI (458TH BG)



BRITISH ARTIST FREDERICK T. SEARLE'S RENDITION OF THE 458TH BOMB GROUP LIBS OVER BERLIN.

Frederick T. Searle was born in London and moved to Wymondham with his mother during the "Blitz" of 1940. His father went into the Royal Navy at that time. As a small boy, he became interested in aircraft and had a good collection of cigarette cards and "spotter books".

The airfield at Hethel became active after the initial 389th aircraft arrived in November 1943, and naturally attracted the young boys in the area. Fred and his schoolmates often cycled to Hethel to watch the returning aircraft. He admits to being one of the "any gum chum?" lads, and says the Yanks were very generous with their candy and other sweets.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



JOURNAL



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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

MILLENNIAL REFLECTIONS

Caroline and I ended this century in Pensacola, Florida. We were guests of our good friends, Anne and Cameron Head, on their beautiful yacht, "Miss Anne." What a change from New Year's Day in 1945! We were going all out in the cold and mud, flying in some of the most horrible weather imaginable, to support our beleaguered comrades on the ground. What a difference the years have made!

While in Pensacola, we had the opportunity for our first look at the massive Naval training facility, including the Naval Air Museum. Navy airmen usually complete their training in Pensacola and proceed to flight assignments from there. I understand that all aerial navigation instructors at Pan American had learned their craft at sea. Thus, the more things change, the more they are the same. Navigators return to the sea to master the art of flying in the oceans of air.



FUTURE THOUGHTS

The morning paper's blaring headlines of January 27th proclaimed a major reorganization of Coca Cola. Coke is probably the world's most recognized brand and the pride of Atlanta's, if not the world's, business community. Their new president announced job cuts and early retirement of senior executives, stating that "the world has changed rapidly in the last two years." Coke must take drastic steps to maintain and enhance its market position. To do so, wrenching and unpopular changes must be made. This is a management challenge of considerable proportion.

Reminiscing is a principal occupation of "old soldiers," i.e. airmen. "The world has turned over many times" since we departed East Anglia in 1945. The B-24, "ugly duckling" of the 8th Air Force bomber fleet, was responsible for almost 50% of the bombs delivered on enemy targets. Its record worldwide surpasses that of the glamorous B-17. If we of the Second Air Division do not assure that history reflects our contribution and that of the plane we love, who will?

The last time I heard General Ira Eaker speak (he had been a day late arriving for a scheduled appearance) he said in effect, "I have been with the historians. You may wonder why I spend time with them. The reason is simple — I want them to get the story straight." If I can leave any legacy from my term of office I hope it would be, "He helped to get the record straight!" In order to do this, we need a stateside venue where professional expertise and attention is available.

Our challenge is to provide the tools to do the job.

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum would be ideal as our stateside repository of Second Air Division history and heritage. Of the three 8th Air Force divisions, we are the only one to be separately and distinctly represented in the museum. Our Second Air Division Wall, now four years old, is in need of refurbishment and enhanced design.

Our three pioneer groups (44th, 93rd, and 389th) participated in the most devastating mission of the European air war. The low level mission to Ploesti, now a major attraction in the museum, could be greatly enhanced. The 44th Bomb Group has donated a diorama of General Leon Johnson's plane "Susy Q" over the refineries. It captures a moment in time and could be used as a centerpiece of an expanded Division display.

By enhancing the diorama with videos of the mission, interviews with participants and route maps, etc., a more vivid portrayal is possible. There is technology available via simulators to re-fly the mission. What a living history experience! Students and aviation enthusiasts could be in the plane with our Ploesti heroes. As a classic air battle, it is an important part of our legacy. An expanded presentation emphasizing its importance would greatly enhance its educational value. There are other missions that could be duplicated by this approach; the Kassel Mission comes to mind and I am sure there are others that could be programmed into the simulation software.

AU REVOIR WITH THANKS

I want to thank all those who served with me on the Executive Committee during my term as president of the Second Air Division Association. Their patience and support during a turbulent period was exemplary. They are a highly competent group representing a cross section of our Association. Things do not always come out the way we would like, but that is the American way. My thanks to all who serve so well at their own expense, interrupting busy lives to carry the torch.

Felix Leeton of the 389th BG is nominated to succeed me at the convention in May. Felix's steady hand and judicious approach assures that our Association is in good hands. Aided by his vivacious wife Marge, Felix will do an outstanding job. We are fortunate to have him at the helm! ■

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, with the exception of the Winter issue (October deadline) which is mailed early in January. 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. ■

Last Minute Announcements

CARSON HOLLOWAY has been chosen as the new 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian to replace Judith Jerome when her term expires. He is 46 years old. His wife's name is Elaine, and they have a son, Alex, who is eight years old. Carson's address is: 3520 Freeman Road, Durham, NC 27703, phone (919) 489-9412.

KEITH THOMAS is a new Trust Governor. His wife's name is Iris, and they have two sons and one grandson. Keith's address is Cannels Farm, Bow St. GT Ellingham, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 1JA England, phone 011-44-953-4541-33.

DR. BARRY BUXTON, CEO of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, has resigned his position and will assume an administrative position with the Savannah College of Arts and Design. ■

Executive Vice President's Message

BY FELIX LEETON (389TH)

See, I told you the Y2K bug would come and go without any trouble! The holidays were hectic but wonderful. The other item mentioned in my last report, I'd just as soon forget!

We are getting into the new and potentially exciting year that should be full of promise and accomplishment. We plan to go to Dallas, Texas for the southwest regional meeting in March; the 2ADA convention and Executive Committee meeting in Tampa, Florida in May; and the 389th BG reunion in Tucson, AZ in September.

The mention of Tucson reminds me that Davis Monthan AFB was my first station as a brand new 2nd lieutenant with shiny new wings and the even shinier Gold Bars (see photo). December 1943 was the end of a most exciting year and a half since my joining the Army as an Air Force aviation cadet, and the beginning of an even wilder year to follow!

On 3 November 1943 I got my wings at Moody Field, Georgia. I married my school sweetheart in Knoxville, Tennessee on 5 November, reported to Salt Lake City for assignment on 14 November, and reported to Davis Monthan on 2 December as a new copilot. I remember my first ride in a B-24, during which I heard an instructor pilot give the best advice on the characteristics of a B-24. He said, "This airplane is just like any of the others — if you are flying along straight and level and the nose comes up — to correct, just push forward on the yoke, and if that doesn't work you try something else!" I also learned to drink tequila at the Santa Rita Hotel, tune into the local radio station on the radio compass for an aid to navigation, and fly the Link Trainer at midnight on Christmas Eve.

Shortly after the New Year, I was reassigned to Blythe, California and made Auzie Cearnal's copilot. We made it through the Phases with only the ordinary adventures. In early April, all combat crews were ordered into the base and quarantined. We were to be relocated in a secret deployment. The troop train pulled out at 2:00 AM and we spent two days slipping through the desert and sitting on isolated sidings, finally backing into Hamilton Field on the afternoon of the third day. The movement was so secret that Hamilton Field didn't know we were coming until the wives started showing up at the gate asking if the train from Blythe had arrived!

We were slated to go to the Pacific, so we did the tests, drew the tropical gear, were issued side arms (my 45 was made by the Tootsie Toy Company of Buffalo, NY!), did the Will, Allotment and other papers thing and settled down awaiting a "fly away" to start our tour to the west! Since we were not restricted to the base, our duty was to check the bulletin board where the crews who were assigned planes were listed. If you weren't on the list, you were free



until the next morning!! The wives had "holed up" in a suite at the Cliff Hotel, one of San Francisco's best. When the "fly away" crews were listed, we called in to report that we would be away for the evening, and the wives scrounged for hotel accommodations! I can tell you that this was probably the most exciting several days of WWII!! Imagine, saying goodbye to your bride of five months each morning with a good chance of not seeing her again for an entire year, then calling her at noon to report you had one more night!! Then some of us (50 crews) were suddenly restricted to the base, wives were notified to activate the emergency plans, a special train backed in, and we started upon a most special three (??) day ride into Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. There we went through another staging and were restricted to the base!!

After several days of waiting for the sun to go down so we could "slip over the fence" and meet the long line of taxis to take us into New York City, where we lived it up and never paid a check thanks to the generosity of the natives. On 2 May we were loaded onto a Staten Island ferry and transported to the Transport Billy Mitchell.

The next thirteen days were a whole new adventure. This was one of the largest convoys of the war. We were joined by more ships as we passed Boston, and a greater number as we went by Halifax. It was interesting to watch Navy planes operate off two Jeep carriers and the destroyer escorts that would almost disappear in the high seas of a typical May crossing of the North Atlantic. Closer to home we fought the Army division that was on the Mitchell! Of course the officers of our fifty crews had the choice quarters, which completely befuddled the ship commanders who couldn't understand how our room's sixteen bunks were filled around the clock while a poker game went on at our large table. They finally discov-

ered that the extra bodies were our crewmen who came up from the hole to get some sleep. They ordered us to wear some indication of rank at all times, but this didn't work out too well as we had enough clothes to keep everybody covered.

There was an emotional moment late on the twelfth evening as we rounded the north coast of Ireland. As we watched the almost surreally beautiful Green Island slip past our starboard, the convoy split as we turned south into the Irish Sea and the rest continued northeast. We knew the only logical destination in that part of the world was Murmansk!

We awoke the next morning in the port of Glasgow, Scotland. As we went on deck we saw the masts and superstructure of ships sunk in the river. It was our first real view of the destruction of war.

We were loaded on a train and headed for Stoke on Trent, where we were fed, lectured on the fact that we were restricted to the base, loaded on trucks, and dumped in front of the barracks. We went in the front door, threw our bags on the first cots we came to, and followed the leader out the rear door and over the stone wall, where a long line of cabs waited to take us into town.

Next we went to Northern Ireland for what we called "Escape School." We heard the tales of people who had walked out of the continent and had adventures beyond belief! Of course we were restricted to the base, but felt that we would be an embarrassment to the school if we didn't check out the territory. The taxis were in place, and we settled on Dungannon in County Tyrone as our choice of retreats. As usual the locals were great, including the man who was a fan of Damon Runyon and quoted freely from his stories.

At last they loaded us onto a B-24 and dumped us on the tarmac at Norwich, where we stood around in a light mist and wondered what "ablutions" meant. They called out the crews going to the various groups, and finally came to the 389th BG. The Cearnal, Hicks, and O'Steen crews were put into a 6X6 and transported the 7.5 miles to Hethel, bedded down in a casual barracks.

AND JUST THINK — OUR WAR HADN'T STARTED YET!! ■

Notice from the Membership VP

- If your year 2000 dues have not been paid, this will be your last Journal.
- We ask that family members or friends notify us if there is a change in the status of one of our members. Please contact Evelyn Cohen, 6410 Delaire Landing Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19114, telephone 215-632-3992. ■



NOW IT'S JOHN BULL'S TURN.

SURPRISE, SURPRISE . . .

Today we have a "GUEST EDITORIAL" by David Neal, editor of *Second Thoughts*, the newsletter of the British Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial. But first . . .

ANSWERS TO THE WINTER QUIZ

Pictured on the cover of the last *Journal*, starting at the left:

1. "Horse Guard" — part of the Queen's Household Lifeguard Regiment.
2. Originally "St. Stephen's Tower of the Houses of Parliament," the bell within was the

THE EDITOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

original "Big Ben," named after a very popular 19th century British boxer. Eventually, the visible tower, clock, and the hour bell became what is now commonly referred to as "Big Ben."

3. The Tower Bridge over the Thames, a "recent" (1894) London landmark (or "watermark" if you prefer), not the "Tower of London" dating back to William the Conqueror a few years earlier by British reckoning.

4. Did you see the "double decker bus" crossing the Thames on the Tower Bridge? Look again, it's there!

5. The Richard Rogers Lloyd Building, built on the spot where the coffee shop stood

and where the original "Lloyd's of London" patrons started "assuring" ships and their cargo a while ago.

6. The most overlooked "item" on the list — the Thames River!

7. In the Thames, the world-famous Short Sunderland flying boat used by the pre-WWII BOAC or British Overseas Airways and during WWII as the "air cover" for Allied shipping.

8. Behind the Tower Bridge is Harrod's big department store. Shop there lately?

9. In the window of Harrod's is a poster of a "yeoman beefeater" usually found about the Tower of London.

10. On the extreme right, the Union Jack!

11. The ferry boat in the Thames is the Joker — you name it!

SPRING QUIZ

1. Ford built "a Liberator an hour" at Willow Run — How many did Ford manufacture?
2. What other two items did Ford make for the Air Force? ■

GUEST EDITORIAL

BY DAVID NEALE, EDITOR OF "SECOND THOUGHTS," THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE 2AD MEMORIAL

With the Millennium upon us, Friends, like me, you will probably think back on some of your achievements and experiences during your part of the 20th century. I, personally, have seen three monarchs; King George V, King George VI, and Queen Elizabeth II. I have witnessed both Haleys and Hal Bop comets, and we have all just seen a nearly full eclipse of the sun. I have worked horses on the land and had to have a Bullards beer case to stand on to reach their heads to get the collars and bridles on. I progressed to tractors and spent many happy hours pulling my uncle out of the headland ditches with his old Fordson. He was not really a tractor man.

I spent sixteen years serving my King and Queen in the RN which included two and a half years in the Korean Campaign and many other more minor conflicts. In my earlier years I saw and got stuck in massive snowdrifts in Suffolk and walked up the river Bure on thick ice (even cars drove on it). I've worked for many governors, farm-hand, radio repairer, postman, factory hand, offshore oil worker, motor repairer, and lightshipman (not in that order), and my last job until retirement was as gardener and groundsman for the council.

Like all of you, I have seen, done, and experienced many things, but the big item that sticks in my mind for all time is the war years. I was shot at twice, and my school was bombed out with a direct hit; my schoolteacher was killed along with some of my school pals. The war was serious business, of course, but also to us 14-year-olds it was six years of excitement which was intensified by the coming of the Mighty Eighth.

In the new year of 1943, the 93rd Bomb Group came to Hardwick. I knew something big was about to happen because of the massive building programme that was going on in the fields beyond the silver birch woods. One day I was taking a horse and cart up one of our lokes to load up some beet, when they decided to test the tannoy system. A post with a loudspeaker perched on top, suddenly burst forth with "hot water cold water, one two three, testing testing." My horse, old Boxer, took fright and bolted, shooting me off the back of the cart. He finished up miles away.

I drank many a half-pint in the Three Horse Shoes pub — underage? Well, the pub belonged to my uncle's father. We played cribbage, darts and cards, and had many pleasant hours there.

I worked the land close to the bomb dump and surrounding area, and many times slipped through the hedge and through the trees to the nearest hardstand for a coffee with the ground crew. At night I would wait at a broken gate by the bomb dump, where the Officer of the Day regularly picked me up and deposited me wherever I felt like being. It was great, but whilst doing all this I came to realise that, as well as being exciting, this was serious. I watched the mighty Libs being bombed up, saw them take off for their mission, and saw the empty hardstands after their return. It was then that I knew that young men were being killed and some terrible things were happening out of our sight, yet this was rarely reflected in the crews I spoke to. They chose to put it to the back of their minds and carry on with the task at hand. I knew then that theirs was no easy task, losing friends and facing the mael-

strom of flak and fighters, thousands of miles from their loved ones.

The Second Air Division was a massive organisation, the biggest we shall ever see. It will never happen again; it will never be forgotten either.

So, Friends, lest we forget, the price of freedom amounted to many lost young lives. We must do our utmost to inform the younger generations on how they are able to walk free today, and try to enlist them into our organisation. A difficult task, I know, but you can all help by talking and cajoling your children and grandchildren into becoming members of the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial.

You may have some ideas on how this can best be achieved; please let me know. We intend, eventually, to tie in with the 2AD Heritage League in the United States, where many veterans' family members are deeply involved.

Finally, I dedicate the following to all those who flew the Mighty Libs:

The Terrain of the Air War

It is said that the terrain of the air war was probably the most dangerous of all terrains, due to the rapid changes in the temperatures, cloud formations, the storms and the turbulence which altered from minute to minute. Extreme cold air masses move in from the polar regions, warmer air comes in from the south; these can bring in winds of greater and lesser velocity, from light airs to howling gales. Clouds form when variable temperatures are experienced, and these can soar, from the ground as fog, to more than the ceiling of our

(continued on page 8)

More Updates from the Honorary President... and a strong personal observation

BY JORDAN R. UTTAL (HQ)

Taking up where I left off in the Winter Journal, I do hope that 2000 has started off well for each of you and that things will get even better as the years go by. This is the year when I hope to observe my 85th birthday, and I am looking forward to seeing many of you at our Tampa Bay convention, May 26-29. All that apart, let's get started!

ROLL OF HONOR

As stated in the last issue, I was hoping to resolve some of the difficulties that had cropped up as to how to add names of those killed in the line of duty other than combat. Indeed there was a consensus to set up a separate register, which does make sense. However, the appeal to the groups to furnish names that would qualify has so far produced no results. In speaking with Fred Thomas yesterday, he joins me in repeating that the group VPs should present such names as they are aware of for further research. Meanwhile two group VPs have come up with one name each of individuals who lost their lives in combat. We commend them for their diligence and devotion in tracking this information down and having it verified.

MEMORIAL LIBRARY APPEAL

Indeed, good friends, we reached our target of \$106,000, and we thank all who contributed. Actually we are still getting a few more donations, which will go to the 2AD Memorial Trust Capital Fund as announced in our previous articles on the subject. Forgive me, please, for getting more sentimental, but I offer another human interest anecdote. In speaking with one of our British Friends before Christmas, he mentioned how pleased they were with the visit of several adult children (and their spouses) of one of our late group vice presidents. Within days of that conversation, checks from two of the couples arrived at my home for the Memorial Appeal, along with further word that they were so very pleased with what they saw and learned at their dad's old base, at the Memorial Library, and in general with the warmth and affection that they received in the Norwich area.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BOOKS

I do not know if you noticed, but I am not pushing this program except to say that if the occasion arrives, anyone wishing to honor a dear one should feel free to participate. Goodness knows each of us receives too many requests for funds. However the contributions continue to come in, and I am pleased to han-

dle all such matters as they arise. Here again I feel compelled to notify you of another H.I.S. (human interest story). Just after Christmas, along comes a communication from the daughter of one of our current group vice presidents, a lady whom I met in November of 1998 when she accompanied her parents to Norwich for our Executive Committee meeting. She furnished funds for herself and four brothers and a sister, for a joint gift for all of them and an individual gift from each of them (SEVEN BOOKS!!!) in honor of their Dad. I am not spilling the beans because they notified him of that at Christmas time. I have spoken with him on another matter, and he is most pleased.

FRIENDS OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL

Yes indeed, they reached their £5,000 target for the Memorial Appeal! They presented their check (cheque) to Governors' Chairman Paul King at the Thanksgiving Dinner on 25 November. Here again is further evidence of their support for the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library, for us, and for the great Anglo-American bonds which were forged during our 1942-45 tour. How about showing our support of them in the form of a check for your dues for 2000... \$6.00 single or \$10.00 for family? Checks should be made out to me, please — for conversion into pounds.

AND NOW A FINAL, INTENSELY PERSONAL, OBSERVATION

Since my original donation of £1 in 1945 for the creation of a 2nd Air Division Memorial, I have had a great affinity for what was begun in such a humble manner. Over the years as the idea that was conceived before we came home grew into reality and became what has been described as a "unique marker in history," my personal dedication to it and appreciation for it became one of the primary forces in my life. I think of it not only as a tribute to those who sacrificed their lives, but also as the years have gone by as a salute to each of us who served. It stands there where we served, where we lost our friends, where we learned of the warm friendship of our British friends, where still (and I am sure, for all time) we will be remembered with affection and gratitude. I conclude, therefore, with sincere greetings to all of you with whom I served and your families with the recommendation that you give favorable consideration to Geoff Gregory's idea as described on page 7 of the Winter Journal. God Bless!!! ■

ARTIST WHO DIDN'T FORGET OUR LIBERATORS (continued from page 1)

When his father returned from the Navy in 1946, Fred's family moved back to London and he later entered Woolwich Art College as a full-time student of four years. After graduating, he went to work in the advertising field as a designer and illustrator. Over the years he worked for several companies including Ford Motor Company of England.

He continued to paint his favorite subjects, aircraft and birds, and I have seen some of his "still life" paintings through photographs. He joined the Guild of Aviation Artists in 1979, and many of his paintings hang in private collections in Europe and the United States. I personally have one of his oil paintings of a group of 458th aircraft enroute to Berlin; this painting hangs over my fireplace in the family room and never fails to draw comments from "first time" visitors. Fred Searle has had more than a half-dozen "one-man" shows in Norwich, and I remember the one held at the Hotel Norwich some years ago.



FREDERICK T. SEARLE

Painting aircraft of all periods, Fred specializes in all World War II aircraft and continues to paint on commissions. He recently completed an F-2 Phantom, and others include a BAC Lightning, Gloster Javelin, Tornado, and F-16 post-war aircraft. His latest painting is of a 458th B-24 on the ramp while the crew chief checks out a problem engine as the aircrew waits for the O.K.

Anyone wishing information on commissioning and pricing should write to Frederick T. Searle, 45 Stoke Road, Poringland, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 7JN, England. ■

All of you who were conscious and read your *Journal* during 1999 certainly knew that this was the 60th anniversary year of the B-24. Conception, in the form of letting the XB-24 contract, occurred on March 30, 1939 and birth, in the form of first flight, materialized almost exactly nine months later on December 29th of the same year. Celebration of the event took various forms. A special logo was designed which, in turn, was reflected on very popular envelope stickers of which over 16,000 were sold. One thousand bumper stickers containing the logo were produced. Some are still available. Special announcement sheets were designed and distributed. A determined effort to have a B-24 postage stamp was pursued — unfortunately without success, so far. A photo contest seeking pictures of Libs named for towns, cities and/or states was undertaken which produced five such aircraft. Giant-sized banners of the logo were made and prominently displayed at various events. Nearly a constant stream of consciousness was developed to highlight our old battle wagon or to Liberate the Liberator, so to speak.

In addition to the above somewhat continuous activity, the B-24 became the 2ADA annual convention theme in Austin, Texas during Memorial Day weekend of 1999, and to recognize the XB-24 March 30, 1939 kick-off date. To hype the event, large logos were displayed and a special B-24 PX was made available to all attendees, as was a continuously running B-24 video theater. A handsome B-24 Liberator sport shirt,

Happy Birthday Liberator!

BY BUD CHAMBERLAIN (489TH)

created by the daughter of a 2ADA member, was a smashing hit. Also, as a special feature, sculptor Robert Henderson, creator of the B-24 bronze at the U.S. Air Force Academy, spoke to the men's luncheon describing his efforts to create the bronze and place it in the Academy Honor Court for dedication in September 1998.

Although the 2AD may have been one of the largest B-24 outfits in the world, it is/was not the only one. Since it would have been awkward to make an international celebration out of our convention, we decided to organize an international recognition in San Diego (the B-24 home base) and celebrate the December 29th first flight date. This was done during December 9-12, 1999. A superior three day program was arranged and presented by the committee consisting of four two-hour seminars, a San Diego Aerospace Museum tour and buffet supper, a radio-controlled B-24 model flight, an attractive and educational exhibit area with PX and an enjoyable banquet with appropriate entertainment, all capped off by big band danc-

ing. Participants included representatives from the 5th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 15th, and 20th Air Forces; the U.S. Navy; the Imperial War Museum; and other distinguished people.

The team that made it work included Dick and Margaret Baynes, Allan Blue, Bob Cardenas, Mike Chamberlain, Roger Conlee, Mark Copeland, Jim Davis, Robert Dorr, William Ebner, Gene Hartley, Robert Henderson, Bill Hendrix, Fred Johnson, Jean Jordan, Jim Kieran, Dick Knoth, Herb Leopold, Dick Meads, Bob Myers, Robbie Robinson, John and Agnes Rowe, King Schultz, Jack and Lucille Stevens, the George Welsh family, Bob Myers, and Nick Rivaldo; plus the highly qualified seminar panelists, each of whom contributed valuable information from the basic B-24 design and development through operations in the various theaters and special missions such as the Carpetbaggers and Ploesti. In the latter case, our own Dick Butler presented a comprehensive but concise story of that important raid.

Sincere thanks to all participants for their professional involvement in making this the celebration year it was intended to be in honor of the great B-24 Liberator.

But the job is not over. We have a Phase III, which is intended to fully Liberate the Lib by pressing on with postage stamp recognition, installing bronze B-24 sculptures at places like the San Diego airport, and seeking other opportunities to place the Lib in its proper historical context. Stay tuned! ■

Report from the 2ADA Representative on the Board of Governors

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

I trust everyone has recovered from the Y2K episode and has become accustomed to writing dates with 00 at the end. It took some getting used to, didn't it!

Many of you know that Judy Jerome, our 2ADA/Fulbright librarian, had the unpleasant experience of spending Christmas in the hospital. She indeed spent some three weeks there and endured a series of operations to correct gall bladder problems. Fortunately her daughter had previously planned a trip to visit Judy, so she came on ahead to be with her mother. We wish Judy a speedy recovery!

The chairman of the Trust Governors, Paul King, recently wrote: "There is absolutely no reason for you to fear that the 'bombing' aspect of the history of the 2nd Air Division is not going to be represented." He again assured us that the Governors are unanimous in their approval of the depiction of a B-24 dropping bombs being a part of new library mural.

Paul King, Hilary Hammond, and John Creber recently visited the Rural Life Museum where our Memorial Fountain has been stored since it was removed from the Central Library

in 1992-93 when the courtyard area was enclosed and the library extended into the courtyard. They found it to be in a very parlous state. "Steel bars forming part of the base of the structure have corroded and the concrete is breaking up. The fountain weighs about 10 tons and really could not be moved. It would

We must always remember and appreciate the fact that this is not a British memorial, but a Second Air Division Memorial our British friends have permitted us to establish in their country, and that they have worked for years and donated vast sums to maintain it for us. There is not another memorial like it in all the world, nor are their friends as devoted as those we have in East Anglia. We thank them, one and all.

be impossible to remove the stones . . . and it would cost thousands of pounds to recreate a similar fountain, which from our previous experience was expensive to maintain." They will recommend to the Governors at their next meeting that the fountain be abandoned "as it is physically incapable of being used again." Paul is investigating the possibility of planting a garden outside our 2AD library of mature specimens of some American trees if these can be obtained.

Our chairman has also asked the designers to get together with Tom Nash, our original architect, to reproduce the "Key" given by the WAACs. Paul is also generously giving his copy of the picture "Welcome Home Yank," the original of which was given to the library by Mike Benarcik but was lost in the fire.

The 2AD Memorial Library has received a massive boost to its book fund under the Millennial stock agreement, and work on the 1998/99 endowment program is underway.

I never cease to be astounded by the support our British friends give to our Memorial Library. Yes, you are asked to donate to the support of our Memorial from time to time, but never lose sight of the cause for which it was established. A more worthy cause is hard to fathom. ■



NORTH PICKENHAM

SAN DIEGO

The 60th Anniversary of the B-24 celebration in San Diego, December 9-12, 1999, was great. The following members of the 492nd BG attended: Andy and Eileen Anderson; Bob and Dorothy Bradley; Bill, Norma and Craig Beasley; Allan and Laura Blue; Carl and Verla Johnson; Bill Moorhead; and Harry Orthman.

On Thursday night before the official opening activities of the 60th anniversary at the Town and Country Hotel, some of the 492nd members met at the Hunter's Steak House for a delicious dinner. Neal and Pat Sorensen of the 489th BG also joined us for dinner. Carl and Shirley Taylor had hoped to make it, but had to cancel.

Allan Blue was a participant in the seminars. The displays were outstanding, and of course the 492nd BG camaraderie abounded. The tour of the Aerospace Museum and the buffet that followed were excellent. It was nice to have the whole museum open only for the 60th Anniversary B-24 group. We had a group picture taken; however we are still waiting for it. A former member of the USO troops, Jean Jordan, provided terrific entertainment at the banquet. Dick Baynes announced that the 466th BG had the most attendees, but the 492nd came in mighty close. Bill Moorhead won a book at the prize drawing. The only misfortune was that the wonderful B-24 model crashed during demonstration. A wing came off, and those who attended likened it to the real thing. Dick Baynes and Bud Chamberlain did a great job of getting this event together.

B-29 AT THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Sculptor Robert Henderson and his wife Cheryl were also in attendance at the 60th anniversary celebration in San Diego. Robert sculpted the Bronze B-24 that was dedicated in September of 1998 at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. They tell us that a B-29 will be installed in the Honor Court at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs on September 8, 2000. A B-17 and a P-40 will be installed at Hickam Field, Oahu, Hawaii on Veteran's Day, November 11, 2001. We have some information on the Colorado Springs dedication; if you are interested, please contact me.

NEW MEMBERS

Harold "Curly" Stanhope, pilot in the 857th BS, has been located through contact with Allan Blue and the Internet. A fellow member of Stanhope's crew, Edward Petelle, has also been located, and coincidentally, they live in close proximity to each other in Florida and are in touch with each other. We are very pleased to have them with the 492nd Bomb Group again. Billy Sheely Johnson has located the daughter of Elmer Smiley, pilot in the 859th BS on "Super

492nd BOMB GROUP

HAPPY WARRIOR HAPPENINGS

BY W.H. "BILL" BEASLEY

Wolf" whose crew (including Billy Johnson's dad, William Sheely) were KIA on the Bernburg mission, July 7, 1944. We look forward to meeting these new members.

WORLD'S FAIR - HANOVER, GERMANY

Tom and Mary Anne Nelson will be attending the World's Fair in Hanover, Germany in June, 2000. Tom is a railroad enthusiast. You can ask him any railroad history question and he has the answer. The following story about the railroad gauge is dedicated to the Nelsons.

THE RAILROAD GAUGE

The U.S. standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and English expatriates built the U.S. railroads.

Why did the English people build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used. Why did "they" use that gauge? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Okay! Why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagons would break on some of the old, long distance roads, because that's the spacing of the old wheel ruts. So who built these old rutted roads?

Imperial Rome, for the benefit of their legions, built the first long distance roads in Europe. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts?

Roman war chariots first made the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons. Since the chariots were made for or by Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

Thus, we have the answer to the original question. The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derives from the original specification for an Imperial Roman army war chariot.

Specs and bureaucracies live forever. So, the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's behind came up with it, you may be exactly right. Because the Imperial Roman chariots were made to be just wide enough to accommodate the backends of two war horses.

Now the twist to the story:

When we see a space shuttle sitting on the launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are the solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. Thiokol makes the SRBs at a factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs would

have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line to the factory runs through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than a railroad track and the railroad track is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So a major design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined by the width of a horse's behind! ■

THE TERRAIN OF THE AIR WAR

(continued from page 5)

bombers. Icing is a present danger.

Warm air rising can lift a plane rapidly above its set course, and cold air, which drops downward, can do the same. High winds can, and often do, push the bombers well off their courses and can be difficult to read by the navigators, as these, too, can and do become variable during the long haul to the target area and have to be constantly checked. Severe turbulence can be fatal where warm and cold air mixes, and bombers have been known to break up in these conditions. Aircraft can be tossed around like corks. A plane ploughing through a strong headwind can use up an excessive amount of fuel, sometimes enough to force a bomber back to base early, and it has been known for a plane to run out of fuel in these circumstances, forcing it to land in enemy territory.

Clouds are of the following varieties: Fog and haze at ground level to about 500 feet are dangerous for takeoffs and landings. Stratus: a thin layer of hazy cloud at about 2,000 feet. Cumulus are puffy white clouds at about 5,000 feet. Also at that level are the Cumulonimbus, heavy thunder-clouds full of moisture and turbulence and rising to 20,000 feet or more. Stratocumulus: thick impenetrable cloud at about 10,000 feet. Altostratus: at about 20,000 feet is not too much of a threat and can be likened to the lower Stratus. Altocumulus are puffy white clouds similar to the lower Cumulus which occur at about 18,000 to 20,000 feet. Around the 30,000 to 40,000 foot mark come the hazy Cirrostratus and the Cirrocumulus which stretch out in line with the prevailing upper winds. Above all these are the Cirrus, which occur at 30,000 feet and more.

Given all the obstacles listed above, add flak exploding all around and shrapnel entering the plane's thin skin; fighters coming in from all directions, intent on destroying you, their bullets damaging control wires and weapons as well as the risk of injury to the crew. Is there any wonder that the crews did not expect to complete their required number of missions?

The 2nd Air Division took all this in their stride, and valiantly and bravely went into these conditions time after time to help free the world from tyranny. They did a good job, for which we are eternally grateful. ■

"Jimmy" The Quintessential Airman

REMARKS OF COLONEL STARR SMITH (AIR FORCE RESERVE, RETIRED) AT BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES MAITLAND STEWART'S MEMORIAL DEDICATION ON OCTOBER 1, 1999, AT THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM IN SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Late in September of 1945, Colonel Jimmy Stewart came home to America aboard the Queen Elizabeth. The war in Europe had been over since May of that year, and, now, the majestic British luxury liner, converted into a troop ship early in the war, was bringing the boys home. Jimmy's mother and father, Alex and Bessie, had come to New York from their Indiana, Pennsylvania family home to welcome their son. But they had to wait for a while at the St. Regis Hotel — because Colonel Stewart shook the hand and said farewell to all of his men as they stepped off the Queen Elizabeth.

Almost two years earlier, Captain Jimmy Stewart — flying a B-24 Liberator bomber — had led his squadron of the 445th Bomb Group from Sioux City, Iowa to England — by way of Florida, Puerto Rico, the islands of the Caribbean, and on to Brazil. There, they flew across the South Atlantic to Senegal in Africa, and on to Marrakesh in Morocco. From there, Captain Stewart and his crew flew out over the Atlantic — in order to avoid the German fighter planes based in that dangerous zone.

After the long over-water flight, they landed in England. The 445th's new home was at Tibenham, in East Anglia, on the North Sea, not far from London. It was then that Captain Stewart joined the 8th Air Force. It was a fortuitous encounter — with far-reaching implications — for the 8th was then emerging as the most powerful aerial war machine the world had ever known. Thus, this mighty organization became Stewart's military home for almost two years. And, actually, the 8th Air Force was Stewart's emotional home for the rest of his life. Years later, he would tell an interviewer that World War II was the greatest experience of his life. The interviewer said, "Greater than the movies?" And Stewart said, "Much greater."

In the space of time — that the Liberator landed at Tibenham, and the arrival of the Queen Elizabeth in New York — Jimmy Stewart had been in the uniform of his country, on constant combat duty with the 8th Air Force for almost two years. He had entered military service in March of 1941 as a private.

In July of 1945, he was promoted to full colonel — thus becoming one of the few men in American history to rise from private to full colonel in a little more than four years time.

The road from an induction station in California to a bomber base in England was not easy for Jimmy Stewart. In 1940, he was 32 years old. He had been turned down by the draft: "Underweight." Still, Stewart was determined. The war was not going well for England. Ed Murrow told that bleak story in his dramatic "This Is London" broadcasts, and Stewart's British friends were leaving Hollywood to go home to enlist. Stewart stood reso-



General Buck Shuler (left) and Starr Smith at the Stewart bust unveiling, 8th Air Force Heritage Museum, October 1, 1999.

lute and firm. He was determined to join the fight. He gained the necessary weight, and was accepted by the Army — almost a year before Pearl Harbor. Stewart was already a pilot, owned an airplane, and had over 300 flying hours in his log book. Now, at 33, he was too old for the Army's flying schools for younger students. But, as a private, he embarked on an intensive schedule of the old Air Corps flying instruction and ground school work. Stewart won his silver pilot's wings and second lieutenant's commission in late January of 1942.

In December of 1945, Colonel Bernie Lay, an 8th Air Force combat pilot and commander and author of *Twelve O'Clock High*, wrote a two-part series on Stewart's wartime service in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Lay stated: "... Corporal Stewart had won his commission not by pulling a string in Washington, nor on the strength of civilian prominence, but by the unspectacular method of meeting the official requirements." After Stewart's commission came through, the long, hard months of training began — checking out on twin-engine aircraft, flying bombardier students, graduating from the B-17 transitional school, and serving as an instructor pilot in B-17s. All the while, Stewart desperately wanted an overseas combat assignment. But there was a roadblock: It seemed that nobody wanted to take the responsibility of sending a famous American movie star into combat. Finally, after months of instructor flying, in dangerous weather in Idaho, he found a friend. His commanding officer, Colonel Walter "Pop" Arnold, recom-

mended him to Colonel Bob Terrill, who had his 445th group of B-24 Liberators in third phase training in Sioux City, Iowa. Terrill took Stewart, a captain, as a squadron operations officer, and within a month promoted him to squadron commander. At long last, Stewart was headed for the fighting, and after months of training and training others, he felt that he was ready.

Shortly after Stewart came to the 445th, this notation appeared in the group history: "When Captain Jimmy Stewart came to the group, we didn't know what to think about this movie star in our midst. But he turned out to be a regular guy."

Just as they had met the Queen Elizabeth in New York when Jimmy came home from the war, Alex and Bessie Stewart came to Sioux City to say goodbye when the 445th left for the ETO in the fall of 1943. As Captain Stewart boarded his B-24 bomber, his father handed him a copy of the 91st Psalm: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him I will trust.' . . . Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day. . . . For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. . . ."

The angels did indeed look after the Stewarts' beloved son as he flew his bomber missions against Nazi Germany. When he landed

(continued on page 36)

Ex-POW's Landing Is Happier This Time

BY RICHARD V. SABATINI

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A pilot who was shot down over Austria during World War II and held as a prisoner of war made another unscheduled landing yesterday — in an Upper Makefield [PA] housing development.

Bill Newbold (44th BG), 79, of Langhorne, was flying a single-engine Cessna from Twin Pines Airport, northeast of Trenton, shortly before 10 AM when, he said, the engine started to sputter.

"I had just turned south, toward Langhorne, when it began to cut out," Newbold said. "I tried turning the throttle off and on, but it didn't help. I knew I'd better start looking for a place to set it down."

He chose a string of backyards in the Bowmans Tower Farm development and guided the plane down between several luxury homes, barely missing a swing set and bouncing over two grassy mounds before the aircraft came to a halt, its nose gear digging into the ground.

Though jolted by the sudden stop, Newbold was unhurt, thanks to his seat belt. Climbing from the cockpit, he was greeted by homeowners who ran to his aid.

A swarm of rescue personnel, firefighters and news vans and helicopters followed minutes later, all looking for the plane crash.

"I didn't get this much attention when I returned from the war," quipped Newbold, a member of the Air Force who was a POW for two years after the B-24 bomber on which he was the navigator was shot down in 1943.

What he did after he returned was earn an engineering degree from Drexel University, then go to work for General Electric. He would stay for 23 years, working as a research and test engineer in the space program.



BILL NEWBOLD (44th BG) had a secret weapon: He knew the terrain. The 79-year-old Langhorne man walked away unscathed after landing his stalled single-engine Cessna near the backyards of homes in Upper Makefield.

PHOTO BY JOHN SLAVIN

Newbold, who said he has been flying regularly since the war, talked about the difficulty he had finding a place to land yesterday — and also about how the landscape has changed over the years.

"At one time, there were plenty of open fields here; it used to be one big open field," he remarked, gesturing in a sweeping motion.

His son, Mark, arrived shortly after the forced landing and comforted his father but said he would not discourage his father from continuing to fly.

"I think it's really great," Mark Newbold said. "He'll be back up soon!"

Diane Cozzarin apparently did not mind Newbold using her yard for a landing strip.

"He only made a small divot in our lawn, near the swing set," said Cozzarin, whose yard was the first of three used for the landing.

Her children, Alexandra, 5, and Isabella, 2, usually play near the swing set but were not outside at the time because Cozzarin was about to leave to play golf. "I'm happy they were inside," she said, smiling. ■

B-24 Sculpture Photo Presented to 8AF Heritage Museum



On February 18, 2000, John Leppert, Vice President of the 491st Bomb Group Association, Inc., presented a framed photo of the B-24 sculpture at the Air Force Academy Honor Court to the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum. Curator Wade Scroggins accepted the picture for the museum along with Phil Sellers and Jeffrey Bilderback. The museum already has copies of the "Book of Remembrance" which details both the story of the sculpture plus a great account of the B-24.

The brass plaque at the base of the picture states: B-24 LIBERATOR - WWII HEAVY BOMBER. U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY - HONOR COURT. 19,257 BUILT - MORE THAN ANY OTHER AIRCRAFT. SPONSOR: B-24 GROUPS MEMORIAL INC. USAAF. SCULPTOR: ROBERT HENDERSON. DEDICATED: 9-25-98. PICTURE FROM: JOHN LEPPERT, 491ST BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION.

A duplicate of the picture along with the "Book of Remembrance" was sent to David Hastings, Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors in Norwich, for consideration to be included in our new 2nd Air Division Memorial Library, and we have since been advised by Paul King, Chairman of the Board of Governors, that the picture has been accepted and will hang in the new library. We will look forward to seeing the picture in 2001! ■

458th BOMB GROUP

HORSHAM ST. FAITH



BY RICK ROKICKI

HOOK'EM COW TRANSPORTER

In my last column, I concluded the section on JOHN DEACON's radio-controlled B-24 "HOOK'EM COW" with the hope that I would receive a photo of the trailer that was specially made for transporting the aircraft to the flying sites. The photos came too late to be included in the last issue; however, they clearly show the size of the unit and the stowing method. The horizontal tail assembly complete with the fin and rudder is stowed above the fuselage and wing assemblies, but is not shown in this photo. It is obvious that the trailer design and manufacture was as well thought-out and built as the aircraft itself. Again, many thanks to CHRISTINE ARMES for the photos.



458TH BOOK ENDOWMENT PROGRAM

Received word from DEREK HILLS, Trust Librarian in Norwich, that the following books were purchased with the interest earned from our \$3,000 Book Endowment Fund:

Combat Chronology 1941-1945, U.S. Army Air Forces in WWII, by Kit Carter and Robert Mueller

A Brotherhood of Valor (Civil War), by Jeffrey D. Wert

Irving Berlin, American Troubadour, by Edward Jablonski

One Day Too Long (North Vietnam), by Timothy Castle

Encyclopedia of the American Revolution, by Mark M. Botner III

Runaway Slaves, Rebels on the Plantation, by John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger

Derek maintains that "our stock selection policy places emphasis on the following main subject areas: America, Land and People, American

Culture, 8th Air Force with particular reference to the Second Air Division, and major reference works."

The overwhelming majority of this material is purchased as a result of favorable reviews in the *American Library Journal's* "Book List" and other leading reviewing journals and is obtained directly from suppliers in America. The 458th sincerely thanks Derek and the staff for their selections.

ON FINAL

In 1994 I started a 3" x 5" index card system with all our members listed along with telephone number, squadron, spouse's name, air crew members, aircraft name and serial number, etc. It was a simple "Rolodex" system that was an easily accessible method of reuniting new members with their crew members when they first joined the Association and inquired about them. This was followed by another card file which was used when one of our members passed on or elected to be dropped from our roster. At the end of 1999, I checked the number of cards in this file and the total was 307. Currently we show 640 total addresses (this includes those members who show a second address such as summer/winter, and also includes Associate members). Each year this secondary file increases and the primary file decreases, since we lose more members than we gain. This, of course, is as expected. My purpose in the above is to somehow find and list those who have not renewed their membership — simply because they have passed on and no one has advised Evelyn Cohen or me. Over the years, many of our members have written or called to let me know of another's passing. This article is meant to thank them for their help and to advise others that this knowledge is necessary in order to properly list them in our *Journal's* "Folded Wings" column. If not a member of the 2ADA, he won't be listed there, but I will make every effort to mention his name in our 458th column. And if you have information you think I should have on your index card, don't hesitate to let me know. My address and phone number are listed on page 2 of each *Journal* under Group Vice Presidents.

As in the past, an up-to-date 458th BG roster is available from me at the same cost as before, \$4.50 pp.

GEORGE REYNOLDS advises that he has a new book coming out in late April or early May. It is NOT another 458th History, but it involves three survivors of a "ditching." GEORGE STRAND (458th), who lives in Hawaii, supplied information for this book. Hope to have more info for the next *Journal*.

At the 2ADA Executive Committee meeting in Tampa last October, it was voted that we have an Honor Roll for all men killed in the line of duty (KILOD). The present Honor Roll lists only those who were killed in combat. Any man killed as a result of being in the World War II ETO should have the honor of having his name on a separate but equal Roll of Honor in the 2AD Memorial Library in Norwich. If you know of such a KILOD person from the 458th, please send me his name and whatever information and circumstances of his death you may have.

And finally, having exhausted all the Barnstormer Polish Proverbs, I thought that those of us who are still able to pass our medicals and continue to fly for pleasure, might appreciate the following:

You May Be a Redneck Aviator If...

- Your stall warning alarm plays "Dixie".
- Your cross-country flight plan uses flea markets as checkpoints.
- You've never actually seen a Sectional Chart, but have all the Texaco road maps for your area and they're all at least 20 years old.
- There's exhaust residue on the right side of your plane and tobacco stains on the left.
- You think ZULU time has something to do with Africa.
- Your toothpick keeps poking your mike. ■

Attlebridge Tales



by Jim Lorenz

MEMBERSHIP

Our December 1999 membership rolls show a 6% loss in the past three months. We now have 316 regular and 30 associate members for a total of 346. We urge all members to get their spouses, children, and grandchildren to consider joining the 2nd Air Division Heritage League, our successor group for the future. I have the application forms!

MAIL CALL

I get six to ten communications per month, from the U.S. and Europe, usually asking for help in getting information about a relative or, in the case of Belgium or Holland, for information on a B-24 which went down in their area. It's a gratifying experience that I can usually give them some help. I'll list just three typical letters:

(1) Rick Rokicki (458th BG) recently forwarded a letter from his British friend, Fred Searle, who is interested in obtaining photos of Wymondham village for the period 1939-1945. Perhaps you may recall that Wymondham was the site of an 8th AF hospital unit, which basically served the 2nd Air Division as our version of a "MASH" unit. Badly wounded men were staged here for transport to the United States. Fred is doing a history of his former hometown and requests photos (which he will copy and return) of the town area and/or GIs in the town. He states that there was an American club in an old cinema near the Town Green area. I have written Fred that I do not have any photos, as I never even stepped into our base hospital, and I, like many others, had no idea we had a hospital at Wymondham. Anyone with data from that area and era, please write directly to Frederick T. Searle, 45 Stoke Road, Portingland, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 7NJ, England.

(2) I had a letter from Cathy Thomson stating that a U.S. Navy Lt. Christopher Thurmond has visited her. He was looking for an Air Force base called Attlebridge and could not find a listing for such a village. He was referred to Cathy, an Attlebridge guide. She told him how to find the base, where his grandfather had been stationed in World War II as a pilot. I wrote to him at his home address in Bury, St. Edmunds. Upon getting my letter, he immediately telephoned me. He is Lt. Thurmond, U.S. Navy pilot, stationed at RAF Mildenhall with a small U.S. group flying missions with the RAF for NATO. (I didn't ask and he didn't tell me any more.). His grandfather, Robert P.

Baumann, Sr., flew with the 466th BG, 786th Squadron; he stayed in the Air Force, retired as Lt. Colonel, and died in 1996 in Knoxville, Tennessee. Chris's dad is an Air Force dentist. Christopher and his wife did visit Attlebridge base and walked the runways. He told me he will be in England through the year 2001. I mentioned that the 2ADA will be in Norwich in November of that year, and he should join us for our day visit to Attlebridge. He will visit our Memorial Library and consider joining our Association as an associate member.

(3) On October 24, 1999, Peter Celis, assistant to the Mayor of Ramsel, Belgium, wrote to Evelyn Cohen about a B-24 which crashed with one dead man on board. She determined it was a 466th plane and sent his letter and request for help on to me. Peter noted that "the body of S/Sgt. Morrow was buried" in their village and "the town of Ramsel wants to erect a memorial stone for this killed American, to honour the sacrifice that he, like many others, [made] for our freedom today. The town of Ramsel would like to invite surviving members of this B-24 crew to the ceremony, as well as relatives of Sgt. Morrow. I am trying to locate these listed crew members." I was able to find addresses for two crew members and wrote to them. I soon had a call from Paul Krantz, who was the navigator on this crew. He stated that there were three other crew members still living. Krantz has written directly to Peter Celis and they will work out further details. Peter is Commander Peter Celis of the Belgian Air Force, based at Kliene-Broegel Airbase. He has been flying F-16s for eight years, with over 1500 hours. I will have further reports on how their memorial plans are shaping up.

466TH ATTBLEDGE MEMORIAL

A note from Russ McNair states that Attlebridge base guides Ted Clarke and Cathy Thomson feel that they have now set up the care of our memorial area. Cathy stated that she will be tending the garden and she has someone who will look after the grass, along with Bernard Matthews people (who own and operate a turkey farm on the base). Our thanks to Ted Clarke, who has been "filling in" and tending the area in the past year. Ted will also talk to the Broadland District Council about the moles! Ted has new medicine for his gout; his wife, Joyce, is still having tests on her condition. We owe a big debt of gratitude to our Attlebridge guides and friends, along with Rev. Illingworth, All Saints Church, and Digby Horner, British Legion, for all they do for us. These are the folks, along with many Weston Longville residents, who place our wreaths at the memorial on our U.S. Memorial Day in May and our Veterans Day (the British Remembrance Day) in November.

B-24 LIBERATOR 60TH ANNIVERSARY

This event, held in San Diego on December 9-12, 1999, was attended by some 300 former crew members, designers, manufacturers, historians, and those just curious. The B-24 had over 10 different designations and modifica-

tions — B-24 (A through M models), PB4Y-1, PB4Y-2, LB-30, C-87, RY-3, C-109, Liberator 1-V111, F-7, and AT-22. The Navy had eighteen Air Wing squadrons of their PB4Ys and most Allied forces used the B-24. Four seminars, given by the crew members who used these modifications along with historians, were very interesting. The Mayor of San Diego declared Saturday to be "The B-24 60th Anniversary Day." Fourteen exhibits featured clothing, B-24 equipment (bomb sights, radios, navigational aids, etc.), propaganda papers, an actual B-24 cockpit section, books, and photos. It was fun meeting and talking with crews from the Pacific area. They had modified engines with no turbochargers as they flew under 15,000 feet since flak was not their major problem. Another seminar was dedicated to the 8th AF unit detached to fly supplies and people to the French underground in stripped-down B-24s, at night and at only 500 feet. We never knew their secret operation code name (Carpetbaggers) until it was declassified after the war. Every unit had its problems that were unique to its operation.

By the way, at the anniversary banquet I was able to sign up three new Heritage League members!

FACTS YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW

Remember how Wheaties breakfast cereal was created in 1921 (I was not around then — but some of you were), when a diet clinician was mixing a bran gruel (a thin porridge) for patients? He accidentally spilled some of the mixture onto a hot stove, which resulted in crisp, thin wafers.

In a report in the November, 1999 issue of Air & Space, titled "Breakfast of Champions," Joshua Stoff tells the story:

"During a lunch break, Sidney Schwartz of Grumman Aircraft's Human Factors System ran out to the supermarket. At the time he was working on the Apollo lunar module, so he was looking for something — but not sure what it was. He needed one new ingredient for a foodstuff he had conceived for use on space flights. Schwartz was developing a structural material that could double as emergency rations. He dubbed the product ESM for Edible Structural Material. The Grumman Advanced Development staff was interested.

"Working in Grumman's Plant 12 that morning, Schwartz had made several batches using powdered milk, cornstarch, wheat flour, bran, and banana flakes, all baked in a press. The results were encouraging but not completely satisfactory. Then, at a supermarket he suddenly saw something of interest — hominy grits, then a popular cream-of-wheat cereal in the south. The grits would add texture to his mixture, just as gravel does to concrete. That afternoon, he baked a new batch using hominy in place of bran, and produced a workable, edible batch of ESM at \$4.00 cost.

"The foul-smelling brew was baked at 300 degrees under 3,000 pounds of pressure. The result was a dark brown crystalline structure

(continued on page 14)



HARDWICK

Open Letter to the 93rd

BY ALFRED ASCH

BRONZE BUST FOR GENERAL TIMBERLAKE

This project is moving along nicely. We have approval from the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum for the bust to be positioned in the museum with respect and admiration for General Timberlake's service to our country. The total cost is \$5,000, which will include the bust with a bronze shell over solid material, pedestal, and plaque for biographical information. I have collected and sent \$3,650 to the museum asking for work to start. This included sending specifications and pictures to sculpt the bust and a promise to provide biographical information for the pedestal plaque. I was delighted to contact the Timberlake family and we are receiving excellent support from them. Of course, the family is pleased that we remember General Timberlake by doing this. In addition to making a generous donation, they have also sent me pictures and biographical information of General Ted. Cal Stewart's son, Scott, sent me a computer disk with digitized pictures of the general which were used in the 93rd history book, *Ted's Travelling Circus*. We believe a sculptor with a computer can achieve dimensions, measurements, etc. by calling up the pictures on his computer screen and working with the information. This should be useful in the placement of such features as the eyes, ears, nose, and chin in building the bust.

The response has been great to my personal letters sent to people I remembered having served with General Ted. Fifteen donations received thus far make up the total of \$3,650. I received one generous donation from an individual who was in another group that was commanded by General Ted when he was the commanding general of the 20th Wing. He tells the story of the General's visit to the group and raising "hell" that there was a PFC flying combat and that he should be at least a staff sergeant. The General knew that anyone less than a staff sergeant could receive rather brutal treatment if he became a prisoner of war.

Every person I talked with recalled an incident about General Ted which showed his compassion and caring for his men. In addition, he pioneered the use of the B-24 in high altitude bombing, took us to Africa on three occasions, helped plan the low level Ploesti raid, and was quick to complain to higher headquarters about the deficiencies of our "D" model B-24's, e.g. the lack of fire power. Because of the many bases the 93rd operated from, it was nicknamed "Ted's Travelling Circus."

General Timberlake was a graduate of West

Point in 1931, finishing 393rd in a class of 403. His remarks were that he beat ten men and finished ahead of the class of 1932. His most enjoyable time at West Point was his participation in athletics: football, lacrosse (named All American fullback), swimming (set new records), and baseball, to name a few.

General Ted became Group Commander of the 93rd Bomb Group at Barksdale Field, Louisiana in May of 1942. The group trained that summer and entered combat from England, where the General led the 93rd on its first bombing mission against a strategic target at Lille, France in October, 1942. With the onset of World War II, General Ted received national attention for his leadership abilities. Time Magazine called him "one of the Army's hardest hitting bomber commanders, a crack pilot and specialist in the B-24." In three years he had been promoted from captain to brigadier general, and in 1943 became the youngest general officer in U.S. history since the Civil War. General Ted was 33 years old and had been out of West Point just twelve years.

Those of you who served with the General and wish to make a donation to help pay for the bronze bust, make checks payable to the Mighty 8th AF Heritage Museum with a notation on your check that it is for the General Timberlake bust. Send checks to me at 6205 Meadow Court, Rockville, MD 20852, and I will send them to the museum. All donations are exempt from federal income taxes.

A 93RD PLAQUE AT THE HERITAGE MUSEUM

We have an agreement with the Heritage Museum for the final design of the black granite 24" x 24" memorial plaque to be placed in the museum gardens. Cal Davidson, the editor of the 93rd newsletter, paid the total amount of \$2,000 from accumulated funds received for membership dues, newsletter subscriptions, and donations. Hopefully, the plaque and the bust of General Timberlake will be completed prior to the 2ADA convention this May in Tampa Bay, Florida.

A CHAPEL AT THE HERITAGE MUSEUM

The ground-breaking for the chapel at the Heritage Museum occurred just a few weeks ago. Additional funds were needed to build a bell tower and reception room. The B-24 Groups Memorial, Inc. of the Army Air Forces is donating \$25,000 for building the bell tower, and \$20,000 is becoming available from another source for the reception room. Please recall that the B-24 Groups Memorial, Inc. sponsored the Bronze B-24 at the Air Force Acad-

emy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Donor plaques have been designed and sent to the Heritage Museum for the tower and the room.

2ADA CONVENTION - MAY, 2000

Don't forget to reserve time for our next convention, this coming May, 2000. It will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Tampa Bay, an ideal hotel for a reunion and only ten minutes from the airport with shuttle bus service. I hope to see all of you there.

Best wishes for the new millennium! ■

Cheerful Greetings: "You're Not Going To Finish!"

BY BOB BEATSON (392ND BG)

We arrived at our base in East Anglia in August 1943. After we were settled, flying personnel were sent to the B-24 combat school at Cheddington. Fortress crews went to Bovington. At that time, there were only three Liberator outfits in England — the 44th, the 93rd, and the 389th. We were the first group to arrive with nose turrets.

Off to school we went. Now that we were facing combat, ground school was more important than ever. If we hoped to finish our tour, we'd better learn all we could. It was an ambitious program consisting of lectures dealing with radio procedure, air-sea rescue, escape and evasion tactics, and the all-important parachute procedure. Since we were Britain's guests, we received instructions on how to conduct ourselves with our British cousins. All in all, it was to help us survive a combat tour. At the time, a tour was 25 missions, and few made it. I had always been interested in navigation and, as a navigator, I was curious about the combat-loss ratio in a B-24 group. Engaging in conversation with an instructor who had finished his tour, I asked: "What is the combat-loss ratio here in the ETO?"

He replied in precisely these words:

"They are going to tell you 4%. Maybe it is 4%, but you have fly 25 missions and 4 x 25 equals 100%. You are not going to finish. Take your .45, go out behind the barracks and shoot yourself." That was the advice I received before my first mission. After 56 years, I still remember what that instructor — the heartless bastard — told me at Cheddington.

Editor's Note: Well, did you make it? ■

The 448th Speaks



SEETHING

BY CATER LEE

As we begin a new century, we need to take a minute and look back on the century just past. Borrowing words from NBC newsmen Tom Brokaw, we were the "The Greatest Generation."

The first few years of our lives were pretty good years, but we were so young we didn't know the difference. Then as we got into our double-digit years, the bottom fell out. Sixteen hundred and sixteen banks bit the dust; 20,000 businesses went bankrupt; and more than 25,000 Americans committed suicide, unable to face the hardships thrust upon them.

The average weekly wage in the United States in 1932 was \$17.00 a week, down from \$29.00 a week in 1929. Soup lines and bread lines were formed in most major cities; times were tough!

If you lived in rural America, you had it better; at least you could eat. Most farmers

were stock farmers with diversified sources of income and food. They had their own milk cows, had a few hogs, had their own chickens for eggs and meat, small orchards, some had small herds of sheep for the sale of wool and mutton. One thing they did not have was very much money.

Unless you lived near a college or university town, it was almost impossible for most to go to college. Jobs were scarce, and if you did have a job, it took all of it just to exist.

Then came the war clouds over Europe, and the U.S. was destined to take a vital part, first assisting Great Britain and Russia in the "Lend-Lease" plan, then after Pearl Harbor and the entering of the draft, more than sixteen million Americans saw some service in WWII.

America was never the same again. No longer did we depend on other countries for some of our needs like Swedish steel and German engineering. We became a world leader in exports of planes (airlines) as well as agriculture and engineering products.

But America had lost 407,000 killed and 747,000 injured. Veterans' hospitals were built all over the country to treat and help rehabilitate our wounded veterans. Programs to assist those veterans desiring to attend colleges and universities and special loans were made available to help them purchase homes or start a business. Many got an education who might not otherwise have been able to.

No generation since has been faced with the hardships our generation faced in our early

years. We did not ask for nor did we expect any special favors, just an equal chance to begin our families and to participate in the "American dream."

The big war did bring about some good, as many got to see parts of our country and parts of the world we might not have been able to otherwise. We got to meet fellow Americans from the North, South, East, and West; and found that we were all pretty much alike. The Yankees weren't so bad and the Southerners weren't so dumb as some may have thought. In fact, many married spouses from other regions of the country. No longer is New England the only place that can manufacture needed items we all enjoy. The war effort brought us together.

For those of us who served in the 8th Air Force based in England, we found wonderful friends and learned we needed each other real bad to thwart the evil German war machine. Many marriages took place with our servicemen taking English brides.

Thanks to James Hoseason for his book *The 1000 Day Battle* in which he honored those of the 448th Bomb Group. And thanks to all British and Americans who made possible the restoration of the WWII Seething Control Tower and our many friends of the Station 146 Tower Association. The century ends, but may our friendships carry on.

P.S. Don't forget our museum fund-raiser for presentation at our August 27 reunion in Savannah. ■

ATTLEBRIDGE TALES (continued)

that looked like (and some say tasted like) Masonite. Tests proved it could be cut, machined, drilled and threaded. It had a hardness factor of 87 — Masonite is 80. It weighed only 0.04 pounds per square inch. Grumman engineers thought ESM could be used for panels, lockers, clipboards, and partitions. And desperate astronauts could soak it for several hours and end up with something that tasted vaguely like a breakfast cereal with a hint of banana. Grumman decided to patent ESM, as they found only prior patent for an edible structure — the ice cream cone!

"In May, 1963, the New York Times got hold of the story. Fully expecting to be the subject of industry jokes, the Grumman staff was surprised that there appeared to be great interest in ESM. Both the Air Force and the Army wanted data and samples. The Canadian airline Nordair saw a use for ESM as an emergency supply for aircraft operating in the far north. But to make it structurally sound, ESM had to be compressed beyond 0.04 psi. Soon it became too heavy. Besides, we all figured [the astronauts] would probably run out of oxygen and suffocate long before they ever had to eat the stuff anyway. So we finally had to say no to the idea..."

"By the end of 1963, the edible structure idea had crumbled. It tasted awful. We couldn't even sell it to the Marines."

And to think I was happy with our little box of hard candy we had on our missions!

NORFOLK WARTIME AIRFIELDS AND THE MIGHTY EIGHTH

By Air Historian ROY BARKER,
Norwich, England; Excerpted from
8th AF News, December 1999

Norfolk's flat landscape proved ideal to accommodate airfields. In 1939 there were just five operational airfields. By the end of the war there were 37. These created a massive influx of servicemen — English and American — which dramatically changed the predominately rural area with its 700-plus villages.

This made Norwich a prime target area for the Luftwaffe air attacks. Norwich — the county capitol — suffered its first air raid on July 9, 1940 — before London or any other provincial city. Almost daily and nightly the city's sirens sounded. But in the initial attack of the 9th, no sirens sounded and bombs on the Boulton & Paul factory came without warning, resulting in 26 people killed and many more wounded. By the end of 1940 the air onslaught resulted in 260 separate raids. It was during the "Baudecker" raids of 1942 that Norwich received its heaviest bombardment. On April 27 — at a half hour before midnight — a large enemy force approached Norwich. The railway station was the first building under attack and quickly erupted into flames, making it an ideal marker for the streams of bombers.

Whole areas and streets were devastated in the raid which lasted one and a half hours, leaving 158 people dead and 161 seriously wounded. Not a single enemy aircraft was destroyed... Two nights later, the Germans bombed Norwich again, this time killing 68 people. Again two days later, the Germans returned in strength, but hoodwinked by decoy lights and fires, dropped their bombs on nearby open countryside. The city suffered its last air attack on 6 November 1943. During the raids a total of 1600 civilians had been killed or seriously wounded, with 4,700 houses destroyed or seriously damaged...

The first U.S. airmen made their appearance in late 1942, and by the following year the trickle became an avalanche. The sheer number of airfields in the country meant that Norfolk skies were hardly ever empty of aircraft. By day hundreds of American heavy bombers filled the skies, and by night there was the constant throb of RAF bombers passing overhead."

→ → → →

One can easily understand why our British friends feel that the 8th Air Force, and especially the 2nd Air Division, were largely responsible for the stopping of the bombing raids on Norwich. We and our families, in turn, cherish the friendships with the Norfolk residents which have endured for these 56-plus years.

See you all in Tampa Bay in May! ■

It was the summer of 1942, and I, as a newly assigned flight instructor at the Basic Flight School at Gardner Field, Taft, California, had just finished graduating my first class of students. Graduating myself, several months earlier, as a new second lieutenant in Class 42E, the last thing I wanted to wind up as was an instructor. For my classmates and me, our hopes of being assigned to an outfit flying the new kid on the block, the P-38 Lightning, were shattered when we received orders assigning us as flight instructors. But the Army Air Forces needed more pilots, and to get them they obviously had to increase the number of instructors. Thus, much to our disappointment, about 80% of my class wound up in the Instructor category at various bases on the West Coast.

Now, as new instructors, we obviously displayed our resentment openly at numerous times about this instructor duty, an attitude that was not appreciated by some of the senior instructors, as they too had gone through this period of disillusionment. And because the director of training realized that any "downbeat" attitude on the part of his instructors would not be beneficial to the overall training program, he established a policy whereby an entire flight of instructors who had graduated their class could take off on a ten-day cross-country during the interim period between classes. The anticipation of such a reward, following three months of grueling instructing under the 120-degree heat of Taft, California, was enough to make it worthwhile to hang in there and do our best.

So, the date for this highly anticipated cross-country finally arrived. There would be a total of thirteen BT-13s, "Vultee Vibrators" as we called them, piloted by twelve instructors and a flight leader. In this case, our flight leader would be a Captain Gordon Blood, a highly respected officer whom most of us green instructors hoped to emulate as we progressed in our flying careers.

The scenario for the flight read something like this: Captain Blood would lead, with the twelve aircraft in trail. We would climb over the Tehachapi Pass and hit the deck immediately, following the intrepid Captain Blood all the way to Tucson for our first stop at Davis-Monthan. I found out in a hurry that "hitting the deck" with Captain Blood meant not getting more than fifty feet off the ground, rolling your wheels along the open highways and dry lakes, going *under* power lines (not *over* them), and at the same time "buzzing" Farmer Brown's turkeys, pigs, cattle, or whatever moved in front of us. This was what flying was all about. As the stress of our hot and difficult days of instructing quickly faded away, we quickly became pilots of P-38s, vicariously enjoying the thrill of strafing.

Tucson, our first stop, and later enroute to Albuquerque, Denver, Salt Lake City, and finally Las Vegas, were not selected randomly as points of reckless frivolity. Previous flight leaders had long since researched these des-

Vultee Vibrators, Clouds of Dust, and A Flight of Silver!

BY R.H. "BOB" OTTMAN (445TH)

tinuations as "targets of opportunity" as it pertained to the fairer sex. The quantity and quality were guaranteed! I failed to mention that each aircraft carried a crew chief in the rear seat, which was also a reward for these "knucklebusters," and if a location provided more than the usual bounty, it was the crew chief's job to disable the aircraft, which meant a delay of the flight for another day.

The next stop was Albuquerque, which offered more than its share of tacos, tequila, margaritas and *senoritas*. In this small-town Montana boy's mind, where Tom Mix and Hoot Gibson reigned supreme, it just doesn't get any better than this. Again, quality and quantity were the name of the game.

Heading north, our destination was the mile-high city of Denver, where we found the altitude had not diminished our desire to continue this exercise in complete dissipation, it just made us breathe a little harder. Again, this Montana boy found out that you don't have to go "airborne" to become a member of the elite "Mile High Club."

Then heading west, over the mountains to Salt Lake City, we discovered that the lifestyle of the Mormons was just as good as the Catholics, Baptists, or whatever.

Las Vegas, the carrot on the stick, lay ahead, and in spite of several days of raucous behavior, the energy of this group reached a new high, as visions of long-legged showgirls and fancy hotels lit up the sky like the Aurora Borealis. This was the Las Vegas we had heard about, and nothing was going to deter the charge of these now well-seasoned airmen, all poised with bayonets "at ready"!

As was customary during the trip, Captain Blood would designate one of the junior lieutenants to lead the flight. This gave the young pilot some navigation experience and also bolstered his self-esteem, as he was ultimately in charge of getting all twelve members of the flight to their projected destination. A close friend of mine was selected to lead the flight with all other aircraft in trail, followed by Captain Blood as tail end Charley.

Now, the navigation part of this journey is where it gets really interesting. At that time, something that most modern pilots know nothing about, was a primitive navigation device of low frequency which emitted an "A - dit da," and a "N - da dit" from a transmitter somewhere along the route, like from Salt Lake

City to Las Vegas. These "A" and "N" signals were in quadrants, which when fused together made "beams" which could be directed along a route. This is where the expression "on the beam" comes from. Unfortunately, this low frequency "beam" could be disrupted by electrical storms, bend around mountains, affected by sun spots and a dozen other foreign objects or impulses. At the transmitter site where these four beams converged was a "cone of silence." Finding this elusive but silent hole in the atmosphere was like finding a needle in a haystack, which resulted in numerous fatal accidents. Many bold pilots have this epitaph inscribed on their tombstones: "I couldn't find the damn cone." So, it really wasn't too surprising that after flying for nearly two hours, our young leader, along with those of us monitoring the Las Vegas radio signal, became quite concerned that the identification signal of "LV" was getting fainter. We had an interplane frequency, so quickly but reluctantly decided to notify our illustrious leader, Captain Blood, who was now sleeping soundly while his crew chief was flying the aircraft. At this time we were also skimming the tops of some barren, rocky peaks which topped out at about 12,000 feet. When Blood awoke and saw those peaks just below his aircraft, he exploded with a string of expletives, along with the obvious question, "Where in hell are we?"

Compounding this projected disaster was a report from one of the pilots that his "low fuel" light was blinking, indicating that he had approximately 20 minutes of fuel remaining. In quick succession, reports started coming in from the other pilots that their lights too were blinking. As we skimmed the peaks and looked down into the deep rocky canyons, a bailout appeared imminent. As we all contemplated the disastrous results of such a decision, Captain Blood said, "I see a little dirt road at the bottom of the canyon. I'll try to land on it, and if I make it, you follow in, one at a time, with the last guy that had his light blinking, coming in last." We all circled as he spiraled down, leveled off, and touched down on what looked like a successful landing. Unfortunately, there was a "wash" or gully about five feet deep which he hit, and flipped over landing upside down. There was a tremendous cloud of dust, which we all assumed meant the end of our leader. But out of the dust he arose, with mike in hand, informing us not to land on the road but in the "wash" itself, which was covered with sagebrush and baseball-sized boulders. So this was the finale of what started out as a reward for being dedicated instructors. Sure didn't look that way now! But miracles do happen, and all the aircraft landed safely; although the brush had completely stripped all the fabric off the flaps, not a one flipped over!

Captain Blood had a rather severe cut on his forehead, and we later found out that the crew chief had cracked a vertebrae in his back. About that time a pickup truck came flying

(continued on page 16)

VULTEE VIBRATORS . . . (continued)

down that dusty road. It was the supervisor of a mining camp up on the side of the mountain, who had witnessed this fiasco. He put Blood and the crew chief in his truck and took them to his trailer, where he administered first aid to them as best he could. Captain Blood then called Gardner Field to report what happened.

All the aircraft were to be dismantled and shipped back to Gardner on flatbeds. I was elected to stay during the week this would take place. I bunked with the supervisor in his trailer and made one trip into the bowels of the earth to watch the mining operation. One trip was enough for me. I'd settle for being a fly boy anyway. I failed to mention that we were about 100 miles north of course, and had we flown west over the next ridge, we would have found a dry lake in the valley where we could have landed.

After getting all thirteen aircraft dismantled and shipped back to the base, I reported in to our Director of Training, a legend in the Army Air Forces by the name of Don Meade, a major at that time but formerly a colonel. Rumor had it that Meade had been up and down the ladder to colonel more than anyone in the Army Air Forces. He had a voice like a bull horn, tarnished by a lot of cheap whiskey, and he used it effectively to intimidate young guys like me. When I reported to him, he was seated at his desk with one arm extended in an airplane cast, having broken his shoulder falling off a bar stool at the officers club. He immediately scared the daylight out of me by telling me how stupid I was and that he should court-martial me and send me to the infantry. After a barrage of alternate threats to my career, he allowed that I could return to the flight and continue instructing.

Well, what about our fearless leader, Captain Blood? I was told that Meade had court-martialed him and sent him to the Pacific Theater of Operations as punishment. Personally, if that was what happened, I can see Captain Blood laughing all the way, as most of the senior instructors were chomping to get into combat. Following his career later, I found that he became squadron commander of a B-25 outfit, distinguishing himself gallantly in several operations in the South Pacific, returning to the States as a lieutenant colonel. His fame as a leader and patriot didn't end there. He retired as a major general, head of the Tactical Air Command, which I believe he headed at Bergstrom AFB, Texas. I may have missed some of the highlights of his career, and apologize for any inaccuracies, but he ended up with a distinguished career, in spite of the 13-Vultee-Vibrator debacle in Nevada. Sad but true, our determined efforts to taste the fruit of Las Vegas wound up in a cloud of dust! ■



HETHEL 389th Green Dragon Flares

BY BARNEY DRISCOLL

As I am writing this in January and you will not read it until March or April, you will just have to take my word for the fact that I am not ninety degrees out of phase with the rest of the world.

As we embark upon not only a new year but also a new millennium, let us give thanks that none of the cataclysmic catastrophes prophesied by the prognosticators occurred as the millennium rolled over. The sun still rises in the east and sets in the west.

Let me extend to all in the Second Air Division in general and to the 389th Bomb Group in particular a profound and hearty New Year greeting. We have a great deal to look forward to this coming year, such as the 2ADA convention in Tampa Bay at the end of May and the 389th BG reunion in Tucson, September 26-27-28.

There is much to be accomplished, not the least of which is the age-old process of endeavoring to corral all the previous members of the 389th and make sure that they are aware of the Second Air Division Association. Surprisingly, every now and then we run across a person who has never heard of the 2ADA.

If anyone is aware of a former crew member or friend who is not a member, please send me his name and address. Even if they are unable to attend our reunions, they can at least enjoy receiving the 389th Newsletter and the 2ADA Journal, two fine publications.

We were fortunate to have attended the 60th anniversary celebration of the B-24 Liberator at San Diego in December. There were not as many folks in attendance as I had anticipated. The 389th BG was as well represented as any group. As might be expected, a large portion of the folks attending were from California. The seminars were quite interesting, covering a variety of operations and experiences, including testimony from two of the engineers who were employed by Consolidated during the first flight testing of the Liberator.

There were others who related experiences that took place in various areas of combat, such as the 8th Air Force mission to Ploesti on August 1, 1943; the Carpetbaggers and their operation; the 7th Air Force and the great distances they had to fly over water; the 5th Air Force and their journeys over the Himalayas; the 11th Air Force and the bone-chilling cold and miserable weather conditions they had to fly in up in Alaska. These various groups all had one thing in common: They were all proud of the B-24 Liberator.

I would now like to mention an operation that we have going in our little ole town of Huntsville, Texas. This is a program that I am sure is repeated in other communities. Five years ago we started holding sessions with the local school children, usually classes that were studying American history — the idea being stressed that freedom is not free. Our first session was held at the city library, where we gathered up parts of old uniforms and some memorabilia and started setting up a program. This was done by a few men from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. The moving force behind this operation was our VFW Post #5871.

After the first session we moved directly to the schools, which would provide us with a couple of rooms. It would usually take two days to get set up, then we would spend three days with the students in small groups, visiting various stations for about 30 to 45 minutes each. Stations included the Infantry, Armored Units, Navy, Paratroopers, Marines, Air Force, and POWs, all stressing some of the things that take place in wartime. We later added Nurses, WACs, and a section on the homefront. The following Saturday we would hold open house so that the students might bring their parents to visit.

Each year we go through this procedure at three or four schools. We have experienced a great deal of support from the local citizens, who bring us pictures, uniforms, and memorabilia of all sorts. We have one lady who operates an antique store; she travels all over the country buying antiques, and when she finds anything of a military nature she buys it. She has at this point several thousand dollars invested in material for our museum.

After our 1999 Memorial Day parade, the West Hill Mall, our local shopping center, had a store space vacant and asked if we would like to set up our display in the shopping center for a week. That week extended into more than three months, and we operated it from 10 AM until 6 PM every day with volunteers working four-hour shifts. Our museum is set up in what we refer to as the time line, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm.

One of the drawbacks to this operation is that when it is not on display all the material has to go back into storage. We have been fortunate to have a local citizen who pays our storage bill.

After we left the shopping center, the owners decided that with our museum we had at-

(continued on page 18)

HALESWORTH 489TH NOTES

BY
JAMES M. DAVIS

It won't be long before our next Second Air Division Association annual convention, to be held at the Hyatt Hotel in Tampa, Florida, Memorial Day Weekend. I encourage all of our members to make plans to attend if at all possible. The hotel is a beautiful place located on the Bay near the airport. It is one of the nicest Hyatts I have ever visited.

Even though the 489th BG is one of the smallest groups in the 2ADA, we are always

one of the largest in attendance at reunions. The 489th has always been most fortunate to have had such outstanding leadership from Charles Freudenthal, Bud Chamberlain, and Neal Sorensen. Because of that leadership, our group has avoided some of the problems that others have had. Since the annual convention will be held in England next year, it will be a long time before the next one in the States. Please send your reservations in as soon as possible. We look forward to an excellent turnout in Tampa.

A few days ago I received a copy of a book that has just been published, *Monty's Folly*, the story of the Market Garden mission the Eighth Air Force flew on September 18, 1944 (see the *PX*, page 35). The Allied forces landed gliders and parachutists behind the German lines to capture bridges across the three major rivers (a movie was later made of this operation, "A Bridge Too Far"), and 252 Second Air Division B-24s were to drop necessary supplies to the airborne troops. The 489th BG had eighteen

planes assigned to the operation, and I guess I could say that I was fortunate to be in one of those eighteen, as I shall never forget the experience and I am certain that all the others who were a part of the operation will never forget it.

We were told that we would drop supplies to the ground troops that just landed, and for three days we practiced low level flying over the English countryside. We were also told that since it was a supply mission, we would not be given credit for a combat mission.

I guess everything that could go wrong that day did. Flying over the Holland countryside at treetop level was exciting until suddenly we discovered tanks with German markings; and soldiers, you could see the whites of their eyes, were shooting at us. Our 489th member Bill Berry had an unbelievable experience. Upon safely landing back at our base, the men in the rear of the plane brought me a handful of wooden bullets that we inherited through the waist windows. ■

DEDICATION AND PATIENCE DESERVE A MEDAL!

BY GEORGE A. REYNOLDS (458TH)

After 8 May 1945, thoughts of going home from "Little America" in Britain were rampant, and a lot of award recommendations were lost in the shuffle. Included in these was one for M/Sgt. John E. Miligan from Toledo, Ohio. John was a member of the Ohio National Guard when it was called to active duty in 1940. (They sang "Goodbye Dear, I'll Be Back in a Year.") When World War II began, John wound up in the Air Force as a ground crew chief servicing B-24s for the 458th Bomb Group, 754th Squadron at Horsham St. Faith.

John's plane was "Mizpah" which flew a total of 88 sorties. His ship never failed to be ready for the next flight, nor aborted a mission because of mechanical problems. The amount of overtime John and his crew spent maintaining their plane is astronomical, but it won them the admiration, gratitude, and respect of Col. Valin R. Woodward and the other flight crew personnel. The ship's nickname is a Hebrew word taken from the book of Genesis (31:49) in the Old Testament, which means "May the Lord watch over you always." Apparently, it was a great omen. "Mizpah" also brought twenty airmen home after the war ended.

More than fifty years and many generations passed before the issue of awards resurfaced. John's son brought it up while doing a family genealogy. Senator John Glenn of Ohio and Col. Woodward were contacted, and the ball was rolling at last. An award for the Bronze Star for John Miligan was approved in 1997. But urgent surgery delayed his receipt of the medal still longer. Finally, 17 March 1999 came and Col. Harry Feucht, from his old unit in the Ohio Guard, presented Miligan with his elusive medal. Now 81, John still works as a pharmacist and gets "tingly" when he thinks of his star. ■



Col. Harry Feucht (left) presented the Bronze Star to John E. Miligan (right) at his old Ohio National Guard base on 17 March 1999. The citation reads: "M/SGT. JOHN E. MILIGAN distinguished himself by meritorious service as Ground Crew Chief of the 754th BS, 458th BG, 96th BW, 8th AF, while engaged in combat against an enemy of the U.S. from Feb. 1944 to June 1945. During this period, he dedicated long hours of overtime, resulting in a record for his aircraft never having aborted a mission nor returning because of mechanical failure. His aircraft was a lead plane in the 458th BG on 50 missions. The exemplary leadership, personal endeavor and devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Miligan in this responsible position reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Army Air Corps." (EDITOR'S NOTE: HE DIDN'T DO SO BAD IN THE ARMY AIR FORCE EITHER — WHICH EVERYONE ELSE WAS IN AT THAT TIME!)



BY R.D. "DICK" BUTLER

There were several of us 44thers in San Diego on 9-12 December to enjoy the B-24 Liberator 60th Anniversary Celebration. It was a well organized and conducted event. Undoubtedly, the December timing of this anniversary precluded many B-24 veterans from attending and participating in this well-done celebration of the first B-24 flight on 29 December 1939 from San Diego's Lindbergh Field. The celebration for those who were in attendance was truly a "Gathering of Liberators" for a special remembrance program in a memorable "Salute and Recognition" to all B-24 units of World War II, U.S. and Allied Forces. 44thers who were there were Brig. Gen. Robert L. Cardenas, USAF Retired; Julian and Paula Ertz; Louis DeBlasio and Ann Natilli; Tom and Sara Parsons; Perry and Ruth Morse; John Gately; Frank Schaeffer; and myself.

The program included four very interesting panel sessions, each one devoted to some aspect of the B-24's history. The first one was dedicated to the engineering, development, building, testing, and modifications of the plane. The panel included two women who had helped to build the planes in the Consolidated plant, as well as engineering and test flight people. The second panel, chaired by Bob Cardenas, concerned B-24 operations in Europe. One of the panelists was Brig. Gen. Robert Miller, USAF Retired, who joined the 44th BG at Barksdale Army Air Field and accompanied the original 44th contingent to Shipdham. He described early B-24 operations from England. I also participated as one of the panelists in this session.

The third panel was about B-24 operations in the Pacific and Far East areas. Included were Navy Liberator and Privateer operations. This was a most interesting and informative panel, chaired by Robert F. Dorr, a well-known military aviation history author.

The fourth panel dealt with B-24 special missions such as Carpetbaggers, Snoopers, Halpro Project, and the 1 August 1943 low level Ploesti mission. I took part in this panel in regard to Ploesti. I spoke briefly about the 44th Bomb Group's participation. Then I said that I thought an excellent summary of the overall mission was contained in a poem, titled "Ode to the Men of Ploesti." I proceeded to read that splendid composition in verse, at times somewhat emotionally. When I finished the reading, the audience rose in a standing ovation as they realized what a great, expressive summation of that famous mission was contained in the poem. A copy of the poem had been given to

me several years ago, but to my knowledge it had not been read in public before. The author is Richard Allen Haft, who was a navigator in the 68th Squadron of the 44th Bomb Group. He joined the group in 1944. As soon as I returned home from San Diego, I called Dick Haft and told him that I had read his poem at the anniversary celebration and described to him the outstanding manner in which the audience had reacted. He was most overjoyed with the news and said that his Christmas season had just been made in the knowing that his work had been so well received.

Dick Haft wrote "Ode to the Men of Ploesti" in 1991. He had contemplated doing so for many years, but waited till after much of the information about the mission was declassified. His motivation for the writing was his respect for his 68th squadron commander, Bob Lehnhausen, who flew on the mission, and General Leon Johnson. Dick said that he wanted to honor the memory of the men who perished on the Ploesti mission and those who flew on it. Dick is a member of the 2ADA and the 44th BGVA. He lives in Beverly Hills, California. I told him that a number of people had requested copies of the poem and that I had sent them. With his permission, I will be glad to fulfill any other requests for copies of his "Ode to the Men of Ploesti."

One of the heroes of that Ploesti mission was David E. McCash, who was the navigator on James McAtee's crew on "Old Crow" which performed flawlessly on the mission. Dave joined the 506th Squadron on 21 January 1943 at Salina, Kansas as the squadron was departing for overseas. He arrived in England with the original members of the 506th to join the 44th BG. We were saddened to learn that Dave passed away last August after a long illness. He was a loyal member of the 2ADA and our 44th organization. A number of years ago he had carved and painted very distinctive wooden 8-Ball name tags for several of us. We still wear them at reunions, and now each time we do so we will think of Dave McCash.

Our 44th Bomb Group Master Database Program is proceeding well. All 8500 sorties flown by crews of the group have been entered. It is easy to find each crew member by name who flew on any mission, his crew position and the other crew members he flew with, as well as the identification of the plane and the target. Now our effort is directed at getting the biographical information on as many members of the 44th, both aircrew and support personnel, as possible entered into the database. We continue to plead with our members and relatives of deceased personnel to submit the biographical information. Forms for doing so have appeared in past issues of 8-Ball Tails. As funds become available, group and individual historical information that Will Lundy has accumulated over the past thirty years will be entered.

Ed Mikoloski, 44th BGVA president, has

scheduled the next meeting of our organization's board of directors to be held in conjunction with the Second Air Division Association convention in Tampa Bay, Florida, 26-29 May 2000. This promises to be a fine event in an outstanding hotel, and we would like to have a good number of you come join us. We strongly recommend this gathering to you and know that if you attend you will have a most enjoyable time. For those of you who live in the southeast U.S., particularly those who live in Florida, it should be relatively easy for you to attend this one. Come join this first reunion of the new millennium.

The ever-active Forrest Clark has asked that I include the following two announcements:

A movement is underway to find as many as possible of the Caterpillar Club members of World War II with the aim of reviving this group. There were many Caterpillar Club members in the 44th Bomb Group, and Forrest is asking that they contact him giving their names, addresses, and a brief account of the incident that was the basis for their membership. The idea is to find as many as possible to form a nucleus of a renewed group that could lead to future reunions. This group could include veterans who qualify from the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War.

Forrest is also seeking the complete story of the Pinder crew that was shot down over the Ardennes of Belgium in January 1944. He is seeking confirmation and authentic information from Belgian WWII air war historians about this incident and hoping more can be added to this tragic and heroic story of this 44th BG pilot and crew. Forrest asks that anyone in Belgium who has information to please contact him. For this notice and the foregoing one, his address is: Forrest S. Clark, 703 Duffer Lane, Kissimmee, Florida, 34759, or e-mail: B-24vet@aol.com ■

389TH GREEN DRAGON (continued)

tracted enough extra people into the shopping center that they have offered us adequate space free of charge to set up a permanent museum. This is quite an undertaking — fortunately we have the backing of the community, such as the Chamber of Commerce and a number of local citizens who have contributed from \$100 to \$1,000 to help us get set up. We hope to have this operation up and running before you read this article.

One of the advantages of having a permanent setup is that we don't have to haul all the material to a school and set it up, then take it down again and haul it to storage. This way the school district can bus the children to the museum. It is very gratifying to receive a letter from a 7th or 8th grader thanking you for giving them an insight and providing them with information they would never get in school. ■

MIDWEST-SOUTHEAST MINI-REUNION A GREAT SAVANNAH SUCCESS!

BY GEORGE COLLAR (445TH)

The 2nd Air Division Midwest-Southeast regional meet, sponsored jointly by several groups of the 2ADA and the Kassel Mission Memorial Association (KMMA), was held at the Riverfront Marriott Hotel in Savannah, Georgia, from September 30 - October 3, 1999 with 194 people in attendance.

Registration began at 10:00 AM on September 30, with a reception held in the atrium of the hotel later in the afternoon. Most of the day was spent either sightseeing up and down the restored riverfront or in the memorabilia room.

The memorabilia room was a very popular feature of the reunion, and was an ongoing event held in the Plaza Room of the hotel. A friendly and comfortable place to meet old friends and make new ones, it was just off the atrium on the ground floor and easily accessible to all. The room was large, with plenty of tables and chairs. The tables were filled with scrapbooks and photo albums, and there were sales tables for books and other items. Many of the authors were present to autograph their books. At night the hotel was locked and proved to be a safe place to leave the irreplaceable items that harked back to the days of our youth when the Second Air Division left its mark on history.

Friday began with a buffet breakfast. At 9:00 the buses departed for the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum. At the museum, the KMMA held its annual business meeting in the Arnold library. Don Whitefield gave a fascinating navigational briefing on the September 27, 1944 Kassel Mission, using blow-ups of actual mission "filmsies."

At 11:00, we all gathered in the rotunda for the unveiling of a bronze bust of Brigadier General Jimmy Stewart. The dedication ceremony was solemn and impressive, with presentation of the colors by a local cadet unit. (See "Jimmy The Quintessential Airman" on page 9.) Following the ceremony, lunch was served in the museum art gallery. The afternoon was spent touring the museum displays and browsing in the well-stocked gift shop.

Later in the evening, another reception was held in the atrium of the Marriott preceding the banquet in the Savannah Room. The featured speaker was Brig. Gen. Howard "Doc" Kreidler, wartime commander of the 701st Squadron, 445th BG, who gave a most interesting talk on the history of the 445th from its organization through the end of the war.

Following this, a series of speakers shared their literary experiences with an attentive audience. Harold Robinson, author of *A Reason to Live*, stressed that veterans must get their stories out as a way to preserve the authentic history of World War II. Adam Lynch told of researching the Kassel Mission for an upcoming article in *Aviation Today* magazine. Kitty Shore, widow of Lt. Jack Strickland who

was killed on the low level Wesel raid of March 24, 1945, spoke about writing her memoir entitled *Red Roses and Silver Wings*. Luc Dewez from Belgium reported on his book *The Cruel Sky*. Oral historian Aaron Elson updated the group on his interviews with Kassel mission veterans.

Rounding out the evening was Jim Dowling, bombardier from the 445th BG, who entertained everyone with inside stories of his experiences as a subject of Tom Brokaw's best-selling book *The Greatest Generation*. Following the benediction by Reverend Paul Dickerson (445th BG), gunner on Paul Isom's crew, the speakers remained and autographed books for an enthusiastic crowd.

On Saturday, following another fine buffet breakfast at the Marriott, an early bird bus tour of Savannah was followed by shopping and sightseeing. All day, the memorabilia room was crowded and full of reminiscing and "hangar talk" with occasional breaks to watch the ocean-going freighters and container ships passing the hotel along the riverwalk. Later, buses departed again to the Mighty 8th Heritage Museum for a reception and dinner dance in the rotunda. Music was provided by Lou Nimmer and his fourteen-piece swing band.

With some concessions to age, the airmen and their ladies took to the floor in impressive numbers. The Glenn Miller style jive hit the mark with the dancers, who were still going strong as the late buses left for the hotel at 10:30. A memorable moment occurred when Dick Eckman cut a mean rug with the band singer after losing a round of "stump the band" with a bet that the singer didn't know "On

Green Dolphin Street."

The reunion closed with farewells after breakfast on Sunday, October 3.

Among the honored guests were F.C. "Hap" Chandler, current 2ADA president, and past presidents Jim Reeves and Chuck Walker. Also attending were Fred Dale, 445th BG Association head and Ray Pytel, editor of the 2ADA *Journal*. Col. John Edwards, former president of the American Ex POWs, was present. Mary Beth Barnard, former director of history and archives for the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum, was also recognized.

It was gratifying to see so many second and third generation Second Air Division family at Savannah. The presence of so many children and grandchildren reinforces the ties of comradeship and brotherhood forged so many years ago in the dangerous skies of the ETO.

The overwhelming success of the Savannah reunion was due to the planning of Bill Dewey and his wife Marilyn, who were unfortunately unable to attend the event due to Bill's illness. Doug Collar, president of the Kassel Mission Historical Society, pinch-hit for Bill as the convention chairman. Special thanks also to Ira Weinstein, KMMA vice president, who helped defray expenses with his great array of high quality KMMA items.

The idea for a Savannah reunion originated with Reggie Kitchens, son of Alvis O. Kitchens (445th BG), at the Hershey mini-reunion in 1997. Sadly, Reggie passed away suddenly last year. The entire Savannah event was dedicated to Reggie and to Bill, who is happily well again after a long recuperation. Thanks, Bill and Marilyn, for all your work on our behalf. ■

NEW MEMBERS OF THE 2ADA

HQ

Helen F. Roberts (AM)
Jerome Walk (AM)

44th

James L. Corrigan
Roy W. Johnson
James P. Grimm (AM)

93rd

Windell H. Hart

389th

Albert V. Malone
Ronald L. Ring
Walter Sodo
Jack E. Young
Christopher S. Gregg (AM)

392nd

Priscilla Matt (AM)
Mary S. Rothrock (AM)

445th

Stephen Bolcar
John L. Durr
Gilbert S. Shawn
Evelyn L. Alexander (AM)
William J. Desmond (AM)
Ellen Gillette Swatek (AM)

446th

Scott Broder (AM)
Jacqueline Campbell (AM)

458th

Robert Baker
David V. Seaman (AM)

467th

Brian H. Mahoney (AM)

491st

Michael M. Koczan

492nd

Howard W. Eveland
Jerome F. Patten
Charles F. Brantley (AM)
James H. McCrory (AM)

SM

Daniel E. Butler
M. Philippe Canonne

THE BALLOON BOMBERS

BY C. GRAHAM

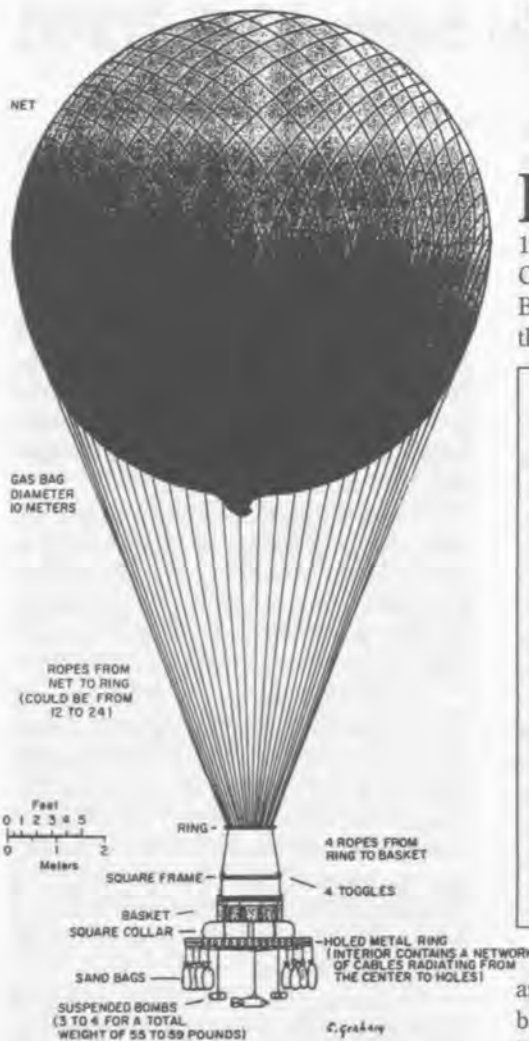
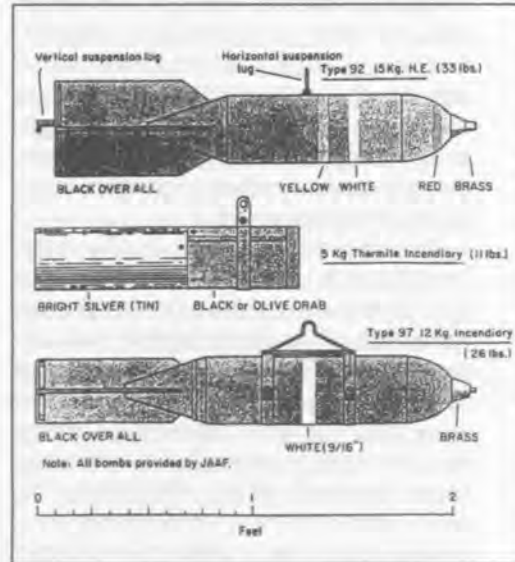
WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO "BULLETIN AIRWAR" AND TO THE FOLLOWING:
MRS. ANN DAY, JIM LONG, CALGEN PRESCOTT, AND KOKU-FAN MAGAZINE

It isn't easy anymore to startle people with little known facts about the history of World War II — the following did astonish us, however: From the period of 3 November 1944 to March 1945, an attack force of over 6,000 bombers penetrated the defenses of the North American Continent and deposited approximately 300,000 pounds of explosives from Alaska to Texas. Because of the rigid secrecy employed by the Canadian and United States Governments during the attack periods, even today, there is little evidence that it ever took place. From the little that

we know, it appears that the results were not particularly effective.

The bombers were Japanese balloons launched with a cargo of three to four incendiary or high explosive bombs suspended underneath each basket. The predominate load was undoubtedly of the incendiary type since these bombs would offer the most promising results for the propagation of the primary detonation.

The balloons could be released only when the prevailing winds were most favorable, since they had no control of the directions other than a crude altitude control device. There was only a four-month period in the winter when the winds were favorable and, fortunately for us, it was also the worst time for starting fires. Summer was considered best because of the dryness.



An instrument package in the basket was operated automatically by changes in temperature and when it became warmer, as would be the case at lower altitudes, specific quantities of sand ballast were dumped and thereby allow the balloon to maintain a proper height until it reached its general destination via the jet streams of the upper atmosphere. Eventually, the sand was exhausted and there would be a certain loss of the gas. The balloon would then descend to earth where the bombs would, hopefully, detonate.

Calgen Prescott, who has a sample of the bag, tells us that the color of it is a very pale green.

The material itself is made up of about five layers of rice paper that were glued together with a vegetable paste called Konnyaku Nori. The paste was made from a potato-like vegetable called Konnyaku. Apparently, the basket was of wicker construction common to such purposes and, if so, would be a neutral tan color.

It isn't known if the balloons ever carried national insignia or markings of some kind. We'd guess that some did.

Editor's Note: For more details, read the book "Retaliation: Japanese Attacks and Allied Countermeasures on the Pacific Coast" (1975) by Bert Webber; also read his articles in American History Magazine circa 1975-80. Another article on the subject appeared in the September 1988 issue of World War II Magazine, written by Michael E. Unsworth. ■

BALLOON LANDING LOCATIONS

3 NOVEMBER 1944 – MARCH 1945

The map shows the known locations of some of the balloon landings which were launched during the period of 3 November 1944 to March 1945. Over 6,000 were released (some with great ceremony). KOKU-FAN Magazine calls them "Paper ICBMs".

- Indicates a balloon landing in which there was a detonation of the bombs.
- Indicates a balloon landing in which there was no detonation due to some malfunction of the bombs.



WHILE WE WERE AWAY...THEY SENT
6,000 BOMBERS AGAINST AMERICA!

In the last issue of the Journal, after the "unvarnished truth" about Evelyn's visit with the Pope, I told you about the watercolor paintings done by T/Sgt. Ludwig Lund. Some of them are reproduced in the second edition of the 2nd Air Division History Book on pages 142-144. I have a set of the photographic copies made by General Hodges' grandson, James P. Hodges III. I have chosen those that were not included in the history book and will be using them in both the Journal and the Headquarters Newsletter. The first one was a painting of the

KETTERINGHAM HALL DIVISION HQ

BY RAY STRONG

space by the Boileau family from whom the space was leased. They also occupied space toward the rear of the building. I will always remember that beautiful stairway and the stained glass windows leading up to the second floor. On the third floor were sleeping rooms for the General and his staff. Sgt. John P. Karoly supervised the dining room and the cleaning of the rooms, etc. There was additional space behind the hall. It had been, among other things, the stables, but it was used by the Signal Section. HQ occupied Ketteringham Hall from Decem-



Bell Hotel that was included in Headquarters Newsletter #25.

For this issue of the Journal, I have selected the painting of the front of Ketteringham Hall. This view is very familiar to me since the Adjutant General's Office was on the second floor above the entrance. I could look out the windows at the fields and occasionally see the B-24s coming and going from Hethel. We had just one medium-sized room and it included desks for George Paul, the AG, and me; and small typing tables for Fritz, Barry Colvin, Jack Klepper, Billie Ash, and maybe someone else whose name, in my old age, I cannot remember. Out in the Nissen huts we had the Battle Casualty Section and Mail and Distribution, Couriers, etc. Most of the General and Special Staff sections were in huts to the rear of the hall.

Facing the hall, to the right of the AG, was

the Chief of Staff (first Colonel Westover, then General Griswold). Then came the offices of the secretaries to the CG and Chief of Staff (Valerie Brinegar Conroy and Mary Frances Williams Elder). Next was the office of the CG (General Hodges and then General Kepner). The two-story War Room on the end had served over many years as a chapel, dining room, banquet room, etc. But 2AD used it to plot the war, especially the targets for each day. The large plotting table occupied most of the space and the high walls were covered with maps. On the first floor, under these offices, was the office of A-3 Operations. Jim Reeves was the senior NCO in A-3. I hope to get him to tell us about things that went on while he was on duty. To the left of the entrance to the hall was a large room that was used by the A-2 Section. The space above A-2 was used as living

ber 1943 until the end of the war.

The last I heard, Ketteringham Hall was empty and was for sale. It had been occupied for several years by the Lotus racing team and Lotus sports cars. They were consolidating all of their activities at Hethel. I believe the racing team joined some other team. I hope that Ketteringham Hall gets a good tenant!

The headquarters offices of the 2nd Air Division in September 1942 occupied space at Old Catton that had been a barrage balloon base. Living quarters were at Horsham St. Faith. After a few weeks, all the offices were moved to Horsham St. Faith. When the first WACs arrived in the summer of 1943, they were quartered at Old Catton until they moved to Ketteringham Hall. In December 1943 all of the HQ moved to Ketteringham Hall until the end of the war. ■



BY WALTER J. MUNDY

The Military Heritage Database Project for the 467th Bomb Group is progressing along. Arlo Bartsch has advised that he has all of the group's roster, all of the group's aircraft by name and by number, and all of the aircrews' pilots and crew numbers. The 467th Military Database Personal Biographical Questionnaire was published in the December 1st issue of *Poop from Group*. I urge all 467th veterans and/or family members to complete the form and mail it to Kevin Coolidge, 760 Laloma Lane, Corona, CA 91719. Kevin will review all of the biographical data and fill in any missing data that can be found. All of the data collected will then be entered into the database. Although this project will take time and money, the results will provide our future generations with a wonderful insight into the accomplishments and sacrifices that all of the veterans of the 467th made during World War II. The Database Committee of the 2ADA is continuing to pursue sources of funds in the form of grants to help all the groups produce their Military Heritage Database.

I have received several inquiries from relatives of 467th veterans asking for information about their service during the war. **SCOTT PATTERSON** wrote to me asking about his Uncle Jack, **1ST LT. JOHN W. LANG**. Fortunately I was able to contact our historians who came up with the names of the crew, aircraft names and numbers, and a list of his missions. If you were on Crew #31, 789th BS, please contact me. Another inquiry was received from **GEORGE GREEN** seeking information about **CAPT. FRANK R. GREEN**. I remember Major Green when he was Operations Officer for the 788th BS. Col. Green died on December 31, 1998. He was also assigned to the 492nd BG, flew his missions as a pilot and was Operations Officer of a squadron in the 492nd. **NANCY**

HENSEN contacted Norma Beasley of the 492nd asking for help in getting information about her late husband, **WILLIAM HENSEN**, who actually served with the 467th BG. We will try to come up with William's service record. I received a letter from **RICHARD SCROXTON** who was a navigator with the 100th BG. Richard stated that on 29 April 1945 they flew from Italy back to England and delivered a 467th crew back to Rackheath before returning to their base. Richard would like to contact any member of that crew. If anyone has any information about them and/or where they had been and how they got to Italy, please contact me and I will pass it on. It is easy to see that when we have our database complete, or nearly complete, it will be much quicker and easier to respond to questions about our group and its veterans.

All 467th BG Association members, mark your calendars! The 467th BG Association convention will be held in downtown Dayton, Ohio at the Crown Plaza Hotel, September 28 - October 2, 2000. It is shaping up to be another great one!

The 467th BG monument was dedicated at the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia on October 23, 1999. A plaque honoring **COL. AL SHOWER** was installed on the Wall of Valor. The monument is a near-replica of the monument that is installed at Rackheath to mark the air base.

It is time again for a friendly reminder for all 467th BG veterans to join the 2ADA if you are not already a member, and to complete and incorporate the Bequest Pledge and Codicil in your will or living trust. The pledge form was on page 7 of the last *Journal*, or you can have your estate manager, attorney or accountant prepare a pledge and codicil. The pledge must be mailed to E.W. "Bill" Nothstein, 2ADA Treasurer, 40 Meadow Drive, Spencerport, NY 14559-1142. Your bequest will extend your legacy of service and help ensure for perpetuity the operation of the 2AD Memorial Library that honors all of those who paid for the freedom the world enjoys. It is my hope that the 467th will lead the 2nd Air Division Association in response to this program.

May you all enjoy the last year of the 20th century, and look forward to the 21st century with the knowledge that we are The Greatest Generation. ■



The 21st century dawned and it was exciting. My only regret is that I have a large supply of batteries, bottled water, and other items that K-Mart won't let me return. I am happy that I didn't need them and that Y2K was a happy celebration with no disruptions at all. We couldn't help but think that this is a first for us — welcoming a new century — an event that won't happen again in our lifetimes.

The holiday greetings were filled with news — some good and some bad. I guess at our age illness and sadness are normal parts of our lives. Our cards included some beautiful ones with Norfolk scenes, B-24s, and families celebrating. We enjoyed them all, especially the news that came with them.

If your comments are any indication, many of you plan to come to Washington, D.C. in May, and those we heard from who missed joining the group in Tucson due to inability to get reservations — sorry about that. Be sure to get your Washington reservations in early so that you are not one who will be missed.

In news from the 446th Bomb Group Museum at the Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum at Flixton, Alan Hague reports another addition to the 446 displays. A new photographic display is being installed, Alan says, which will include over 200 photos that were not on display previously. He says that he just received a superb photo from Pat Eversen of the 448th Collection at Seething. The photo was given to her by one of her friends whose father, S/Sgt. Phil Hemsted, was a member

of the 446th at Flixton. The photo was taken in front of a hangar near the technical site and contains 216 members (with a full list of all names), dated September 1944. Also enclosed in Alan Hague's letter was a color brochure that tells about the museum: how to get there with a map of the area, the hours of opening, places to eat (Remember the Buck Public House?), places to stay, etc. Admission is free.

As I have said before, if you haven't been there, put the Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum at Flixton on your itinerary for your next trip to Norwich. It is a total volunteer effort and contains an amazing collection of aircraft and memorabilia. Alan also invites you to send any photos or other things you may wish to give to the museum. If you would like further information, you may contact me or write to Alan himself at 29, Water Lane, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 2NH, England.

Welcome to these new 446ers who recently became members of the Second Air Division Association: Joseph W. Burkhard, Daytona Beach, Florida; Donald Cheney, Aiken, South Carolina (707th BS); and Doris Mitchell, Linthicum, Maryland (associate member).

Sadly news has been received of the deaths of the following 2ADA members who are 446ers: Haskell Bull of Blackwell, New Mexico, T/T gunner, 705th; Arnold Jarvinen, Bellevue, Washington, 706th; and Nathan M. Jacobson, 82, of the 707th, in Dallas, Texas on November 16, 1999.

The 2ADA roster of 446ers numbers 286 as of the year end. If you haven't paid your year 2000 dues, they are payable to Evelyn Cohen, VP Membership. Dues have been raised to \$20.

Keep current with your 446 dues, now payable to Frank Bigos, 2135 S. Adams, Denver, CO 80210. Dues for the 446 are \$15. To remain on the mailing lists for the 2ADA *Journal* and the 446's *Beachbell Echo*, be sure your dues to each organization are paid.

This past November 11, 1999, we noticed in our local news media that a lot of attention was paid to Veteran's Day. In fact, members of our

(continued on page 33)

Sadly we have had a letter from Ken Mercer informing us of the death of his father, Jackson C. Mercer, a pilot with the 445th BG, 703rd Squadron. Ken's letter reads in part:

"I am sorry to have to inform you of the death of my father, Jackson C. Mercer, on Friday, October 22, 1999 in his hometown of Fort Worth, Texas. [As members of the 445th BG] Lt. Mercer and his crew survived the Kassel mission of September 27, 1944, crash-landing at RAF Manston using the autopilot and differential engine thrust for control. The crew was credited with the destruction of five enemy aircraft on this mission, and received the Distinguished Flying Cross for their valor and decisiveness.

"Although Dad was not career military, he was nevertheless very proud of his service. Unfortunately he was unable to attend recent reunions, but was very interested in the Second Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich. We have asked that donations in his memory be directed to the 2ADA for that very worthwhile purpose.

"It's sad to see this generation of heroes go; however, their commitment and actions are just as inspiring as they were over fifty years ago. I hope that those of us of my generation would respond as our parents did."

445TH BG BOOK ENDOWMENT

Derek Hills, Trust Librarian in Norwich, informs me that the following book was purchased with the interest from our 445th BG Endowment: *Seven Trails West: Exploring the Major Routes That Linked the United States to the Far West*, by Arthur King Peters. Derek states that the library has maintained our stock selection policy which places emphasis on the following main subject areas about America: Land and People, American Culture, the 8th Air Force with particular reference to the 2nd Air Division, and major reference works.

BILL DEWEY IS BACK TO WORK

Bill Dewey reports that he is home and back at his desk, working at about 50% speed. He spent ten weeks in the hospital, but doctors have now given him a clean bill of health. Bill was the prime mover in planning the Savannah reunion of last September, but was unable to attend. Thanks, Bill. We are glad to hear you are back and on the way to full recovery.

A MESSAGE

FROM MARY BETH BARNARD

"In mid-October 1999, I resigned from the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum to accept a position with an organization that has close federal government associations. In this position, I will remain in the Savannah area and work from my home.

"Be assured that after 20 years' association and membership in the 2ADA, my founding membership in the Heritage League, and my personal ties with the 445th BG, I want to remain in contact and assist in any way I can."

You can reach Mary Beth by phone at (912) 748-1765, by fax at (919) 748-4676, by e-mail at blackjag@gateway.net, or the old standby: 813 Robin Drive, Pooler, GA 31322.



BY FRED A. DALE

TIBENHAM'S "PEAL APPEAL"

Tibenham Church Tower was completed in the 15th century and in 1437 a Thomas Tibenham of Norwich gave 6 shillings 8 pence towards the cost of new church bells. The wooden bell frame dates from this period and is one of the earliest of its kind. The bells were rehung twice, once in 1787, and again in 1876. Tibenham's ring of six bells is one of the finest in the country, alongside the Funderhall Five and the Redenhall Eight.

Sadly the bells are silent since they are now in an unringable state, but our Tibenham friends want to change this. The Tibenham Peal Appeal is restoring the bells to their former glory so that they can be rung again for Christmas 2000.

This is what they need to do:

Preserve and repair the existing bell frame.

Rehang the bells with appropriate hangings and ropes.

Repair and replace as required the floor in the second floor chamber and hopefully add a viewing platform.

The estimated cost to do these repairs is £50,000. The Tibenham Peal Appeal stands at £8,000, so they need another £42,000 (about \$71,400).

The church has a bronze plaque on its wall recognizing the 445th and their contributions made during WWII. We have helped the church in the past. Several kneeling pads made by our wives were sent to them, and they are used in

every service. We also purchased "tea towels" several years ago from Chuck Walker and the money was sent to them for church repair.

This is an opportunity for members of the 445th Bomb Group to again help our friends in Tibenham who are as nice to us today as they were during WWII.

If you would like to support the "Peal Appeal," please send your contributions to Charles Walker, 9824 Crest Meadow, Dallas, TX 75230. Make your check out to "Chuck Walker" and he will consolidate all contributions and send one check to Tibenham, thus saving on the conversion to pounds. Thank you very much.

HERE HE IS

In the Winter *Journal* we had a picture of Pelton's crew sans Jim Withey, who had broken a hip trying to clean the windshield on his Winnebago. Jim sez he is about 75% back and may be able to travel (without gun we hope) to our "Tampa Bay Fest."



Above is a 1997 picture of Jim (right) and our *Journal* editor on the shores of the Atlantic in Maine, near the "hideout" of former President Bush during his presidency. ■



KASSEL MISSION WEB SITE

Oral historian and author AARON ELSON has created a World War II Oral History Web Site devoted to the Kassel Mission of 27 September 1944. Elson's fourth and newest book, *Nine Lives*, chronicles the stories of nine people connected with Kassel, and he is continuing to gather accounts of the mission for a future book. Visit this web site at www.kasselmission.com.

The 8th Air Force really got its dollar's worth from my crew on 21 March 1945. In the early morning we piled into our lead B-24J, "Black Cat," 466th Bomb Group. For a change, we took off in beautiful spring weather, and headed for a jet airfield at Hesepe — a few miles west of Berlin. "Cat" was handling extremely well, as she always did. Third squadron lead today. About halfway to the target, I realized that the winds aloft were playing tricks. From experience, I also knew that "Cat" was a good 10 knots faster than some other aircraft. Soon, I saw that I was going to overtake the second squadron if I didn't act quickly. Since we were fairly close under and behind the second squadron, there was only one action I could take. I started a slow, shallow bank to the right — levelled out for a few seconds, then the same bank to the left, etc. Back and forth, back and forth. Dog-legging, no less. Remember, I'm doing this with an entire squadron of twelve B-24s, mile after mile. (The other pilots in the squadron must have thought I was on the sauce.) Fortunately, by the time we reached Hesepe, the wind had changed enough to allow a normal follow-the-leader formation.

As the field came into view, I was impressed by the sheer beauty of it. A triangle of snow white concrete runways, surrounded by a sea of beautiful green grass, a breathtaking sight

TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

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

even from 25,000 feet. We unloaded on the runways and began a shallow bank to the left. Looking back, all I could see was a monstrous pile of dirty, brown earth. The beauty was totally destroyed. That really hurt! All because of the war.

The flight home was uneventful. No flak, no fighters. We landed at home base (Attlebridge) around noon. Before we left the aircraft, we were asked if we wanted to do another mission that afternoon. The crew said OK, and "Cat" was ready without maintenance, as she

usually was. The target was another jet field at Essen, in the Ruhr Valley. Takeoff was 1530, second squadron lead.

This time the wind behaved (no dog legging) and we hit the target at 1800 — German supper time, we hoped. Hopefully, we could unload and depart before their gunners could get organized. WRONG! Flak started before bombs away — accurate and heavy. As bombs away, a tight bank right — flak directly in front and tracking us all through the turn — exploding exactly where we had just been! My squadron got away undamaged, but the ten squadrons behind us were hit pretty hard. This mission was done with only twelve squadrons — 144 B-24s.

It was fairly dark on the ground now. I couldn't see damage, but I began to see gun muzzle flashes — all over the place. Took a minute to figure it out — our fighter escorts this time ... SPITFIRES! They had peeled off from escort duty and were shooting anything that moved or didn't move. They were having a ball — sporty, what? By the time we reached the coast, the Spits were gone — job well done.

We landed safely at home, a total of 5:15 hours for the first mission and 4:35 for the second mission — two for the price of one! For me, missions #12 and #13 — only 12 more to go. At least we didn't see any jets around for a while. ■



IN RETROSPECT "THE POOR 100TH"

BY KENNETH KINNEY

Reprinted from the American Legion Magazine, June 1947

When ex-Army Air Force men get together and talk for more than five minutes at a time, the conversation invariably gets around to the various outfits that flew and fought from England, Italy and points west.

From there the talk will turn to reminiscences of big raids, flak and enemy fighters. Then let one of the former buzz-boys say he was in the 100th Bomb Group, and the respect for this man will fairly permeate the air. For the rest of the men realize that they are conversing with a museum piece — an ex-pilot, bombardier, navigator or gunner who flew a tour with the 100th and lived to tell about it.

When the 100th, a B-17 outfit, joined the Eighth Air Force in England in May 1943, it became just another in the rising tide of groups helping flatten Germany from the air. But it wasn't long before the 100th gained quite a reputation and earned the ingratitude of Goering's fighter pilots.

In October 1943, the 100th was responsible for a stunt, seemingly insignificant at the time, which snowballed into something all out of proportion to its origin.

Nobody seems to know where or how it began, but the word got around that if an American bomber lowered its wheels over German territory, it was a sign that the ship was going to crash-land. Thereupon, enemy fighters would close in, unmolested and unmolested, to escort the crippled ship down.

It seems that one enterprising pilot of the 100th Bomb Group thought of a way to get a feather in his cap and at the same time give his gunners some good practice. Undoubtedly self-preservation was a major factor too, for this pilot was flying his B-17 back over France after hitting a target in Germany. His ship was shot up some, enough so that he'd had to drop out of formation.

Two FW-190s spotted the crippled '17 and closed in. The pilot lowered his wheels and the German fighters came in, one on each wing tip, to escort the big plane down. Whereupon the '17's gunners opened fire, and being in a position where they couldn't miss, quickly downed the two '190s.

The story later got out. The B-17 was crippled and losing precious altitude, so the pilot ordered the crew out, and out they bailed. Most of the crew later reached England with the help of the French underground. The pilot just managed to reach England's shores before he crash-landed safely.

But it seems the Luftwaffe got wind of the incident too, for almost immediately the German fighters, trying to intercept American formations, began to single out the planes of the 100th for special attention, identifying them by the "Square D" insignia on their tails. One gunner, a member of a group in the same wing as the 100th, has related how the FW-190s and ME-109s would barrel perilously through his formation without firing a burst to get at the ships of the 100th.

It certainly wasn't coincidence that caused the 100th to have 100 percent losses in the short space of two days. On October 10, a short time after the incident, the group sent 20 planes, full strength for the group, into the air. Eight of the 20 were shot down. The next day, 12 out of the 13 that left England failed to come back, making a loss of 20 in two days.

Then during the following February something else happened that zoomed the losses of the 100th. The target was "Big B" (Berlin) for the first time.

It was an all-out attack involving the whole Eighth Air Force. Bad weather, however, forced all but a few groups to turn back before reaching the target. The 100th was one that persisted. Thus it gained the distinction of being one of the first outfits to hit Berlin.

It probably would have waived that distinction, though, for right after that raid the 100th was given more special attention — Luftwaffe style. The "Square D" group lost 82 planes during February and March 1944, 18 of them almost an entire complement being downed in one day.

So if the guy tells you he flew with the 100th, be nice to him. He deserves it! ■



IN RETROSPECT

Fortress vs Liberator

BY ALLAN G. BLUE, 8TH AF HISTORIAN

Ed. Note: The following appeared in the AAHS Journal in 1963. In seeking permission to reprint it in the ZADA Journal, we asked the author if he felt any changes should be made for the year 2000. The reply was, "Not a word."

The much-debated question of which was the better airplane will probably never be settled — nor is this article directed toward that issue. Rather, the following data have been compiled to allow a side-by-side comparison of the tangible contributions of each airplane toward the victory over Japan and Germany.

The record of the Liberator when thus displayed is, perhaps, of considerably greater magnitude than generally believed. There are several reasons for this. First, the B-17 was world-famous before the war. Caught right in the middle of an internal old Air Corps doctrinal dispute as well as the inter-service struggle for Congressional appropriations during the late 1930s, the plane literally rose to the occasion. Non-stop "mass" flights¹ to South America, plus new speed, load and altitude records during the 1938-39 period made "Flying Fortress" a household word while winning important friends for strategic bombardment aviation.

In fact, the continuing pre-war effort to sell the B-17 was to prove embarrassingly successful. By 1941, probably no other single weapons in the U.S. arsenal had achieved greater public identification as a symbol of American war power. Thus when the conflict did come, all eyes were on the Fortress, expecting miracles. The miracles came, of course — a few at first (some fact, some fiction) and many more later on. Without question the B-17 ultimately repaid the public in full measure for the loan of its confidence. But the Air Force (and Boeing) had gambled and won with the B-17, and it is understandable that those who had opposed the airplane so bitterly were not allowed to forget it for the duration.

Finally, B-17 predominance in the public eye was perpetuated by a great deal of post-war literature aimed at a rather strange human characteristic — i.e., we seem to prefer reading about our country fighting against heavy odds, possibly losing, rather than vice versa. And without question the Fortress had the major role during the somber days of 1942 and, at least against Germany, much of 1943.

The Liberator, on the other hand, went through no such pre-war love affair with the public. By the time of its operational debut, there was no longer a need to glamorize the four-engined long-range bomber, no restriction on the availability of dollars to buy them. In perfect complement with the B-17, the B-24 was built, flown and fought with a minimum of fanfare. And with the exception of Ploesti, its wartime record — which includes some of the classic missions of all time — has remained remarkably unreported in popular print.

By an interesting coincidence, the ratio of the B-24 to B-17 production was very nearly the same as their model designations: 24 to 17. However, Liberator deliveries to the USN and the United Kingdom reduced considerably the availability of this plane to the USAAF, so that the average monthly wartime inventory of the first-line aircraft was a relatively close 9:8 in favor of the B-24 (3016 to 2672).² On the average, however, 43.6% of all available first-line B-24s were assigned to combat theaters while the equivalent B-17 figure was a somewhat lower 41.5% so that in 86 months of enemy-opposed operations (41 vs Germany, 45 vs Japan) Liberators represented 53.7% of all AAF heavy bombers committed to combat, Fortresses 46.3%.³

The operational records of the two aircraft in the European war are readily available, including the number of sorties airborne and the tons of bombs dropped by each.⁴ Evidently similar data were not kept for the campaign against Japan; at least none have been located to date by this

writer. However, comparable figures have been approximated from available data as follows. For each month in each of the four Pacific combat theaters⁵, the ratio of first-line B-17s to B-24s (known figure) was applied to the number of sorties airborne (known) and the tonnage of bombs dropped by heavy bombers (also known). Although this represents a theoretical total of several hundred calculations, the required figure is much less in as much as B-17s operated in only three Pacific theaters in 1942, two in 1943 and none thereafter. Actually, although it is believed that the obvious errors introduced by this method (e.g., it assumes equal bomb loads for both planes and equal utilization of aircraft on hand) are largely offsetting, they are in fact reduced to insignificance by the size of the 1944 and 1945 totals — all allocated to the B-24 without opposition. The results are shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

HEAVY BOMBER SORTIES	Total	B-17	B-24	% OF TOTALS	
				B-17	B-24
Airborne	608,606	295,641	312,965	48.6	51.4
vs Germany	518,283	291,508	226,775	56.2	43.8
vs Japan	90,323	4,133	86,190	4.6	95.4
BOMB TONNAGE					
DROPPED	1,279,413	648,589	630,824	50.7	49.3
vs Germany	1,092,544	640,036	452,508	58.6	41.4
vs Japan	186,869	8,553	178,316	4.6	95.4

The honors could hardly be more evenly divided — the B-24 with a slight percentage edge in sorties and the B-17 with an even smaller lead in bomb tonnage. (The latter difference of 17,765 tons, in fact, is equal to only *four days* of heavy bomber operations at the March 1945 rate.)³

Another way of measuring the USAAF utilization of the two types is in terms of trained fighting units, capable of engaging the enemy. During World War II, this basic unit was the combat group. Using this index, we find that heavy bomber groups equipped with B-17s were operational a total of 746½ months, Liberator equipped heavy bomber groups 807½ months. Again the honors are practically even at 48% B-17, 52% B-24.

The discussion thus far has dealt only with the USAAF usage of the Fortress and the Liberator as heavy bombers. Any overall comparison must also consider the following⁶:

ANTISUBMARINE OPERATIONS. Early in 1942 it was recognized that "... the long range B-24 was especially well suited to the demands of antisubmarine warfare, and in September the [antisubmarine] command received the first of the planes that would thereafter become the principle reliance in the AAF's antisubmarine effort."⁷

The Navy evidently agreed, assigning a large percentage of the B-24s (PB4Y-1s) it received to similar duties after the USN assumed responsibility for antisubmarine operations in 1943.

Editor's Note: A total of 95 U-boats were sunk by B-24s.

TRANSPORT & CARGO OPERATIONS. Caught woefully short of long-range, high-capacity transport aircraft at war's beginning, the AAF again turned to the Liberator and found it "... unusually well suited for transport work..."⁸

The plane served in this role throughout the war in a variety of configurations, hauling men and supplies in all theaters. There was only incidental use of the Fortress for similar purposes and, of course, no B-17 production counterpart of the C-87 or C-109.

PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE. As the F-7, the Liberator ranged throughout the Pacific. Until the arrival of the F-13 (B-29) late in the war, it was the mainstay of a campaign that had become a "seek out and

(continued on page 26)

London Taxis Do It Their Way!

REPRINTED FROM
BRITAIN BOUND TRAVEL CLUB
NEWSLETTER

Black Cabs abound in the streets of London like their yellow cousins in New York, yet unlike the stateside jokes about the rudeness of cab drivers, the British are very proud of their fleet of London taxis. To qualify as a driver of one of these vehicles, candidates must complete several years of study. They ride around the Greater London area with clipboards attached to their motor scooters, learning to navigate the capital by heart. This process of learning London's one-way systems, short-cuts and trouble spots is known as "Doing the Knowledge." After three years, the prospective cabbies are tested by an inspector, who will select a pick-up and drop-off at random, and the wannabe driver must describe the route quickly and accurately. To maintain their licenses, cab drivers are re-tested over the years and are required to keep their vehicles spotless and in good repair.

The result? You can hail a distinctive Black Cab on any street (provided the "For Hire" sign on the roof is lit) in full confidence that he will take you directly to any London address you might care to give him. At rates per 313.5 yards or 64 seconds, this mode of transport is better suited to short trips in town, outside peak hours, and definitely not for trips from Heathrow. All cabs display their license number, so if you are dissatisfied for any reason, you can easily report the offender.

A trip in a Black Cab is an essential London experience; there is something quintessentially English about stepping down from the spacious interior for an evening at a West End show. Needless to say, if you are at a loss for directions and there are no bobbies (policemen) around, a cabbie is the next best person to ask. ■

FORTRESS VS LIBERATOR (continued)

destroy" operation. The Fortress equivalent, the F-9, saw relatively limited use in Europe.

EMERGENCY RESCUE. The AAF experimented with a variety of aircraft for this role, including Navy Catalinas, British Warwicks, Liberators, Fortresses, and Superfortresses. Each type had its advantages, but on balance the range and rugged dependability of the B-24 made it the best plane available. Most emergency rescue crews eventually converted to Liberators.⁹

To sum up, the USAAF had two basically similar aircraft with which to accomplish its WWII strategic bombing mission. It used the two in virtually equal proportion in doing so. In addition it found that one of them — the B-24 — was uniquely suited to a variety of other vital roles. In retrospect, it appears that the Liberator was second to the Fortress only in the public relations department.

NOTES:

- 1 "Mass" during this era meant six to ten aircraft. It is interesting to recall that it was August 1942 before the AAF was able to put more than ten B-17s simultaneously over an enemy target.
- 2 All Inventory data has been taken from the *Army Air Forces Statistical Digest* (WWII Edition), published in December 1945 by the Hqts AAF Office of Statistical Control.
- 3 All figures in this article exclude B-29 operations.
- 4 *Flight* magazine, September 1945.
- 5 FEAF, CBI, Pacific Ocean Areas and Alaska.
- 6 The YB-40/XB-41 "Bomber Escort" experiment is best excluded; certainly this ill-starred affair added nothing to the reputation of either aircraft.
- 7 Craven & Cate, *The Army Air Forces in World War II*, Vol. 1, pg. 537.
- 8 Ibid, Vol. VII, p. 28.
- 9 Ibid, Vol. VII, p. 493. ■

Folded Wings

HQ

G. Rile Blackwood
Henry W. Schussler, Jr.
Tina Jones (AM)

44th BG

Elbert J. Gallatin
David E. McCash (96th)
Richard Pick

56th FG

Leo D. Lester

93rd BG

Joseph T. Covone
Joseph E. Kelly
Homer L. Moran

389th BG

James N. Allred
Francis P. Doyle
Howard A. Lyons
Donald F. McCrea
Frank E. Morris
Peter H. Wester

392nd BG

Jackson B. Crane
Ray J. Dunphy
Frederick J. Hollien, Jr.
Lawrence P. Myers
Harold W. Prouse

445th BG

George Bovie
Charles H. Neeland
Thomas C. Newton
Richard J. Parkes
Marvin W. Sawyer
Bob C. Shearer

446th BG

Joseph Broder
James W. Campbell
Robert A. Smith

448th BG

Arthur F. Decker
Thomas A. Galligher
Charles G. Manrose
Robert G. Silver

458th BG

James M. Charlton
Edward K. Dantler
Frederick M. DeNeffe, Jr.
Thomas S. Hackman
Ray F. Hemrich (96th, HQ)
Robert P. Nielson
Peter Vander Kamp

466th BG

John C. Rohrssen

467th BG

Julius N. Summa

489th BG

Warren P. Conrad
Robert M. Dorriety

491st BG

Marvin E. Kniese
Eugene T. Porter
Guy E. Tweed

492nd BG

Charles W. Beard
Paul J. Perry

"Ach du Lieber!"

It's That Damned Liberator Nose Gear Again!

REPRINTED FROM THE 3D STRATEGIC AIR DEPOT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



ABOVE: A LIBERATOR FOILS THE NAZIS AGAIN. PHOTO COURTESY OF DONALD DIEHAM AND JOHN MAGUIRE.

The only recorded use of the Liberators by the Luftwaffe were those which made crash landings in occupied territory and were restored by the Germans. These restored bombers would join USAAF planes enroute home, and cause as much havoc as possible, as they retained the USAAF markings. The same use was made of American fighters forced down and restored.

In a book written by General Adolph Galland, chief of Luftwaffe fighters, he mentions the use of restored Libs by his fighters to determine the best angle of attack in combat. 3D SAD Mobile R&R teams at Manston were aware of restored P-47s used to engage returning bombers, as such was reported by crews making emergency landings at Marston.

The photograph above shows a B-24 Liberator with most turrets and guns removed, with Nazi markings, which indicates that the Luftwaffe possibly used the aircraft to transport ranking Luftwaffe officers. This particular photograph was taken by Sgt. Donald Diehm, 27th Air Transport Group. His comments follow:

"When Paris was liberated our group left BADA #2 (Warton, England) for an airport in Paris for operations. We flew priority material and supplies to Army forces, often personnel plus mail. I also served as sergeant radio operator on a C-47 with 312 Ferry Squadron, 27th Air Transport Group.

"Later the group moved to 5th SAD near Merville, France, and continued similar operations.

Just after the German surrender, my aircraft flew to R-80, a civilian airport in Salzburg, Austria, taking mail and supplies to the Allied occupational troops. There was the Liberator with Nazi markings and with an apparently damaged landing gear. I regret that I do not know any other specific information about this aircraft, except that it had apparently been used for transport purposes." ■

It's the Vacation, Stupid

FROM WORLD PRESS REVIEW, OCTOBER 1999

Håkon Borud reports in Oslo's *Aftenposten* on the startling findings of a German brain researcher: Vacations make us stupid. Siegfried Lehl, a psychologist at Erlangen Nürnberg University in Germany, says after five days of doing nothing, our IQ sinks by five points, and after three weeks it loses, on average, 20 points. "The loss of 20 points is serious," says Lehl. "Vocabulary shrinks and we can even detect personality changes . . . Moreover, if you let your brain do its own thing for a whole summer, you run a real risk of being unable to keep up with your colleagues at work. Perhaps forever."

Lehl says he bases his conclusions on 35 years of research on patients whose IQs were tested before and after a hospital stay. "The drop occurred because the patients were bored," Lehl says. He suspects that the brain never fully recovers after a long rest period. "And the loss," he says, "accumulates over the years." ■

Killed on WWII Mission, 15th AF Airman to Come Home

BY MARK DAVIS • REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, MARCH 6, 1999

John McConnon was dead and buried somewhere in Albania, another airman lost during a series of air raids on oil fields in Ploesti, Romania, during the height of World War II. His younger brother, James McConnon, accepted that.

But James McConnon, a Center City resident and lawyer, never quit trying to find his brother.

His search ended two weeks ago. The remains of 2nd Lt. McConnon are coming home in May — the fulfillment of a quest that began seven years ago with an Albania travel story in the Sunday Inquirer and that last year led McConnon to an unmarked grave in the mountains of Albania.

Late last month, a forensics specialist told McConnon what he already suspected: the skeleton of the man that Albanian villagers had carefully buried 54 years ago was that of his brother, age 24 when he died.

"I know now what I hadn't known for 50 years," said McConnon, 72, who will bury his brother's remains in Pittsburgh, where he and his five brothers grew up. "I don't know how to describe that feeling."

James McConnon performed a remarkable feat in finding his brother's remains on the other side of the world, said Larry Greer, a spokesman for the federal Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office. The agency searches the world for lost American fighters, and two weeks ago confirmed the identity of McConnon's bones, plus those of a crewmate.

"[James McConnon] was the catalyst to make this happen," Greer said yesterday from his office in Washington. "Mr. McConnon obviously has a love for his brother and family to have done this."

The story of John McConnon's disappearance could be the tale of almost any airman lost over Europe during World War II.

After dropping bombs on Axis oil fields and depots in central Romania, McConnon's B-24 Liberator turned around to make the trip back to its air base in San Pancrazio, Italy.

For McConnon and his nine crewmates, the August 10, 1944, run marked their 28th, and last, mission.

According to military records, the bomber formation, already battered over the heavily fortified Ploesti fields, veered slightly south from the usual course home. That put them within range of German encampments in and around Berat, Albania. As they passed overhead, in daylight, antiaircraft guns peppered the sky. A shell found McConnon's bomber, severing the aircraft's tail gun turret and rudder.

Fatally crippled, the airplane limped south, crashing in Goraj, a farming village in the Dolemite mountains 60 miles south of Tirana, the Albanian capital. Five crewmen parachuted — one died, apparently from the impact — and

Germans soon captured the remaining four.

Three, according to records, did not bail out and vanished — lost, perhaps, in the fire and carnage after the 25-ton airplane smashed into the earth.

Two others — McConnon and Sgt. Wayne Shaffner of Martinsville, Ill. — apparently jumped from the bomber just moments before it crashed. Investigators theorize they may not have had time to open their parachutes and died on impact. Villagers buried them in unmarked graves, according to reports.

The next year, 1945, the Army officially proclaimed Shaffner and McConnon killed in action.

They were lost, too. Following the war, Albania, like much of Eastern Europe, was closed to Western visitors as the Cold War escalated. Years turned into decades. The McConnon boys matured, moved away from Pittsburgh, had families of their own.

But they never forgot John, the second-oldest, an aspiring lawyer who left the University of Pittsburgh to fly.

"He was an inspiration to all his younger brothers," said McConnon, who was six years younger than his navigator brother.

An inspiration at the piano, too, someone who understood the emotion and sweep of *Rhapsody in Blue* when it was played right. "He was a brilliant pianist," McConnon said. "He loved to play jazz."

Those memories came back in painful clarity on August 9, 1992, a Sunday. McConnon was reading *The Inquirer* and noticed an article about Albania in the newspaper's travel section. He wrote the freelance author, asking for help in locating his lost brother.

"He got the letter and called me immediately," McConnon said. "That's what started it."

The writer, who lived in New York, suggested that McConnon write to a journalist he'd met in Tirana. McConnon took his advice, posting a letter to Tirana in October 1992. The months passed, then a year. In early 1994, the wait ended with a response from Albania.

During his wait, McConnon learned, the Albanian reporter had been digging through war-era archives and visiting sites in and around Goraj, asking about airplane crashes.

The two corresponded for the next year — the faraway reporter telling the American lawyer what he had learned, the lawyer offering advice and support.

The work paid off in September 1995, when McConnon received a letter and photos from the reporter. The documents described the discovery of a site where elderly Goraj residents remembered a big bomber that crashed to earth in 1944. Two men, the villagers said, were buried nearby — one at a farm, and another in a hillside grave.

"Everything fit," he said. "I was sure I'd found my brother."

McConnon sent the information to the POW/MIA agency, which agreed to send a researcher to the village. The timing was good. Albania was more open to visitors than it had been in decades, following the fall of the Soviet Union. The investigator confirmed McConnon's assertions: There were two graves in the village, possibly those of the lost airmen.

Yet three more years would pass before McConnon could stand at his brother's graveside. Albania virtually closed its borders when a revolution broke out in the country, before the team could retrieve the bones.

In early 1998, the agency's team specialists got permission to return. During the week of April 6-13, the visitors made inquiries, took photos, and dug. McConnon was with the searchers, standing under an olive tree, when shovelers carefully removed dirt from bones that turned out to be his brother's.

Those bones will be buried on May 15 in Pittsburgh.

John McConnon, who turned his eyes to the sky, will be back in his native soil. ■

THE LIGHT STUFF!

REPRINTED FROM AIR WAR BULLETIN

Retired Air Force Brigadier General Charles Yeager, the man who broke the sound barrier, was speaking at the 38th Annual Air Force Convention in Washington, D.C. when he shared a funny incident from his days as a P-51 fighter pilot in Europe.

Describing an experimental water inflated pressure suit he was obliged to try, he said, "You put it under the flying suit. Then you got down and sat in the cockpit. The crew chief brought out his five-gallon bag of water and screwed it into a nipple in the suit. And all this water gurgles around."

After Yeager crossed the English Channel and picked up bombers, the suit had stretched, and so, he said, "it would be down around your legs and end up down around your ankles. It made a lot of sloshing and reminded me of a couple of active people in a waterbed."

The last act of the skit was when the pilot landed, "lifted his legs over the cockpit and waddled out to the end of the wing and opened two drains. You stand there with your arms folded and two streams of water coming down." ■

Stillwater Airport Memorial Museum, located in Stillwater, Oklahoma, invites you to enjoy an exhibition of photographs, memorabilia, artifacts and information created to collect and utilize the aviation history of the Stillwater area as an educational and informational resource.

STILLWATER AIRPORT HISTORY

Early aviators landed in fields around Stillwater. The Stillwater Municipal Airport was created in 1929. George Searcy agreed to manage this plot of grassland, but on a return flight to deliver a new aircraft, he crashed in the "Lake of the Ozarks." The airport was renamed "Searcy Field" to honor the deceased manager.

In 1936 Al Guthrie, a barnstormer, became manager. During his administration the airport flourished with the building of a rock hangar by the WPA and the development of a pilot training program. In 1941 the program became a "Secondary Course for Civilian Pilots." This program would train over 1500 pilots during its operation.

In 1942 the Navy leased the airport for the duration plus six months to be used as an "Auxiliary Emergency Landing Field" and built three 5,000-foot runways and hangar.

Near the end of World War II, 475 warbirds were sent to Searcy Field. They were sold to Paul Mantz, a movie stunt pilot and consultant. He purchased them for \$55,425 and most were scrapped. These aircraft included P-39Qs, P-40s, P-47s, P-51Cs, a A20G, a A35A, B-17s, a B-18, B-24s, B-25s, and B-26s.

In 1949 Oklahoma A&M leased the airport and began flight instruction.

In 1952 the city resumed management of the airport, with Hoyt Walkup as manager.

In 1953 Central Airlines began daily flights to Stillwater. (Fare to Dallas was \$15.40).

In 1984 the first "Okie Twist-off" Aerobatics Competition was held at the airport, and has been held at Stillwater each year thereafter.

Gary Johnson is the present airport manager. He was appointed in 1986 and has been involved in the many changes, additions and improvements to the airport during his administration.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Stillwater Airport Memorial Museum Association was organized in 1992, incorporated in 1994 as a "Not-for-Profit" and in 1996 was approved as an IRS 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization. The museum is housed in the terminal building at the Stillwater Municipal Airport.

The members of the museum have been able to locate a large number of pieces and parts of warbirds that were scrapped at Stillwater. The "bill of sale" to Mantz for these planes contained the serial numbers and production information on each of the 475. Using this information and hours of research and numerous mailings, the members have been able to locate pictures, nose art, histories, and crew members of a number of these aircraft.

From this beginning the museum has col-

Stillwater Airport Memorial Museum Stillwater, Oklahoma

SUBMITTED BY BOB VINCENT (458TH)

lected memorabilia of not only the "war years" but from the beginning of aviation in Stillwater up to the present. The museum is actively searching for additional information and items to enhance its exhibits and mission.

The Stillwater Airport Memorial Museum is open on Sundays from 1:00 to 5:00 PM and by appointment. It is located at 2020-1 W. Airport Road, Stillwater, OK 74075. For more information, call (405) 372-7881, fax (405) 372-6460, or e-mail: wgharr@hotmail.com. ■



Above: The name of our own Col. Robert W. Vincent USAF (Ret.), is on the door of the Stillwater Airport Memorial Museum. Bob Vincent piloted 23 missions with the 458th Bomb Group from 15 August to 27 December, 1944. He writes: "I was down with Parkinson's when my daughter told me my name was on the door to the museum. It is a tremendous honor. My picture was on the Internet for several months. Also, my WWII uniform (above left) with new Air Force crests on gold (not brass) buttons, is something of a rarity. The buttons came out in '46 and were instantly recalled. I kept mine."





491st BOMB GROUP
POSTREMUM ET OPTIMUM

the RINGMASTER REPORTS

BY JOHN D. LEPPERT

2ND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION YEAR 2000 REUNION AT TAMPA BAY

The Tampa area is a great spot for a reunion. My wife Marilyn and I live here because during the winter of 1944-45 I was never warm. Many of you were with me during those times, so I'm sure you remember. I had always promised myself that some day we would live in a warmer climate. We have had a home here since 1977 and moved down here full time in 1986 when I retired. Interestingly, it never gets that hot here, and of course, never very cold. The highest temp was 95 degrees a couple of years ago, and we have had temps as low as 28 degrees for very brief periods (maybe two hours).

There is a lot to offer here, and I urge everyone to attend our Year 2000 reunion. Here are a few examples of some things you might enjoy in the Tampa Bay area (note that the area includes the towns of Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Dunedin, Tarpon Springs, Bradenton, and many other smaller communities. Sarasota is one hour away by car).

- Busch Gardens is a family amusement park with a world class zoo and entertainment.
- Museums: There are five in St. Petersburg within walking distance of each other.
- The Pier at St. Petersburg has restaurants, games, fishing, and boat rides.
- Beaches: The Pinellas county beaches are white sand and world class.
- Shopping: Many malls, with some very unusual ones, for the ladies.
- Tarpon Springs is a Greek Community with sponge docks, fishing, dining.
- Florida's finest aquarium
- Military: MacDill AFB with everything. Now Central Command.
- Parks, walking, swimming, bird watching, gator watching.
- Trail: The Pinellas trail is 37 miles long for hiking, biking or roller skating.
- Places to stay before or after the convention are plentiful and reasonably priced.

If you have questions, maybe we can help. Call, write, or e-mail me and I will respond. We'd like to see a big crowd at this reunion! Contact John Leppert, 4383 Live Oak Boulevard, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, phone (727) 784-1984, e-mail JLM13710@aol.com ■

Pilot's Silver Wings Unearthed in England

BY TOM MOONEY • REPRINTED FROM THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL, 8-18-99
SUBMITTED BY DONALD WIMBISCUS (445TH BG)

The sun beat down on the amateur archaeologist's neck as he stood in the English field and watched the needle of his metal detector dance. He'd found what he'd been looking for.

The spot where, half a century ago, the American pilot Capt. Kenneth L. Gilbert, of Middletown, R.I., died.

John Harris picked up a shovel. Several daffodil bulbs which had escaped commercial harvesting lay scattered atop the tilled soil. With his six-year-old grandson by his side, Harris began to dig.

He had dug down a foot when small pieces of Gilbert's World War II fighter plane began emerging from the past: an oxygen cylinder, a 12-inch steel battery plate with the engraved words "U.S. Army Air Corps," fragments of engine, bits of aluminum skin.

The pieces were caked in lumps of chalk and clay. Harris, a refrigeration repairman by trade and aviation historian by hobby, placed the clods of debris in two sacks and took them home.

It was there, as he and his grandson soaked the items in a water bucket, that John Harris's search for historical relics turned into a search for living souls.

"It was actually my grandson who found them," Harris says. "He said, 'Grand Dad look what I got!' And he was holding Ken Gilbert's silver wings. He had just pulled them out of the water. They looked brand new."

Gilbert had earned his wings after completing flight school. He was apparently wearing the three-inch pin when he crashed.

"Finding something like that is quite moving, actually," says Harris, who has examined nearly 100 plane crashes across his English countryside but rarely found anything as personal.

"When my grandson gave them to me, the thought went through my mind of how those wings came to be in this field and that Ken's family, if he had any, would probably like to have them."

On the afternoon of July 17, 1945, mechanics and pilots of the 339th Fighter Group milled about Grange Field, carved from a swath of rural English farmland beside the tiny hamlet of Flint Cross.

Some of the guys were playing baseball. Others were watching the new pilots, who had arrived to fly the silver Mustang fighters, practice landings and takeoffs.

For those who witnessed the last seconds of Ken Gilbert's life tick away, it was an all-too-familiar end.

Already an accomplished bomber pilot at the age of 22, Gilbert had miraculously survived 92 missions over occupied Europe, earning four Distinguished Flying Crosses at the controls of a slow and vulnerable B-24.



CAPT. KENNETH GILBERT

Luck seemed to have followed Gilbert. During one span of 29 missions in 32 days, Gilbert pulled his bomber out of a spin at 2,000 feet — an aviation feat thought impossible with a full load of bombs.

Now with Germany defeated, Gilbert had tired of being prey in the sky.

He wanted to hunt.

Like other bomber pilots that summer of 1945, he was learning to fly the P-51 Mustang in expectation of winning dog fights against Japanese Zeros over the Pacific.

But the transition to a smaller, less-forgiving aircraft was proving difficult for Gilbert.

According to the official report of his fatal crash, Gilbert took off for a training mission from the grassy airfield with another pilot at his wing.

On their return, his companion landed but Gilbert inexplicably did not. He flew around the field again and came in for another pass. Again he didn't land but instead flew parallel to the strip, 50 feet off the ground.

He flew beyond the field for another three-quarters of a mile before his plane suddenly rolled upside down and plunged to the ground. He was buried overseas.

According to the accident report, "it is not believed that Capt. Gilbert was so foolhardy that he attempted to slow roll from such a low altitude."

What did happen remains unknown.

Gilbert's fate wasn't unusual for many bomber pilots attempting the transition to flying fighters.

"Getting bomber pilots to fly fighters was the worst thing [the military] ever did," says Kenneth Willard.

Willard, a fellow Rhode Islander, served with Gilbert in the 339th that summer after Germany surrendered.

"The transition from bombers to fighters was kind of extreme for those guys," says Willard, who now lives in Fairport, NY. "I remember many of them coming in and crashing. We lost a lot of them."

(continued on page 31)



NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY LLOYD W. PRANG

Welcome to the year 2000. Who would have thought we would have lived this long. There were a lot of people who did their darndest to keep that from happening, but I'm glad we made it and I'll bet you are, too. So, a Happy New Year to all of us. Let's keep thinking good thoughts all the way through this year and far into the future.

At the October meeting of the 2ADA Executive Committee, the merits of the 2AD Memorial Library in Norwich versus the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum were discussed. To put things into perspective, **EVELYN COHEN** made a very simple statement which spoke volumes when she said, essentially, "The 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich, England has been in existence for more than fifty years. It is widely respected by the British people and all those whom come into contact with it. The story of the 2nd Air Division and the creation of the library as a living memorial for our 6700 comrades who gave their lives in World War II has been entered into the history books of Norwich. The Town of Norwich has been in existence for more than 400 years. The 2nd Air Division occupies a place of honor in the history of Norwich, and we will remain there forever." This isn't an exact quote, but it's pretty close.

The dedication ceremony for the new 2AD Memorial Library will be held in conjunction with the 2ADA convention in November, 2001. There are only a few rooms left, and they're going fast. November 2001 not only seems like a long time in the future — it is! However, if you're thinking about going, you must contact Evelyn Cohen very soon.

Also at the October 2ADA meeting it was voted that we have an Honor Roll for men Killed in the Line of Duty while they were in the ETO during World War II. This list would be separate but equal to the Roll of Honor of those who were Killed in Action. This list will also be placed in the Memorial Library in Norwich. I hope you will agree that this is a worthwhile project which needs immediate attention lest the names of these men be lost forever. Is there anyone out there who will volunteer to find the names of these men who were killed in the line of duty? Please let me know as soon as possible.

When I received my December copy of the Air Force Magazine, I noticed their e-mail address is www.afa.org. For years this magazine published a page titled "Valor." These were stories about Air Force heroes. This feature has been discontinued, but you can still read all of the stories on their web site. This is another reason to go out and get a computer for the "kid."

PEOPLE WE'VE HEARD FROM

WIB CLINGAN mentioned a loss of energy. I'd say "join the club," but I know very well that most of us are already members of that club. Wib wrote that he had to go out and put up an awning that had been blown off by a storm — be careful on those ladders, Wib. **PHYLLIS DuBOIS** very kindly sent several pages of information regarding the names of 453rd men who were Killed in Action. Thank you, Phyllis.

At the request of **DAVE HAMLIN** we sent the negative of the picture of the five members of the **JACK SANDERS** crew to him. The picture had been taken at our Austin meeting. Jack had them reproduced for the rest of the crew, a good-looking bunch of guys and their wives. **BILL NORRIS** mentioned that his wife had just been released from the hospital and that it was the best Christmas present anyone could have given him. We all know that certainly is the truth. As we travel along this road of life we begin to realize how very important we are to each other — it's been 55 years for Bill and Pris, 55 for Wib and Diana, and 55 this June for **ALEX & TOOTIE WALLACE**. I thought all of us could join them at their place near (not in) Lake Tahoe, but they're planning to go on a cruise to celebrate the occasion. It's been only 50 this February for Irene and me, but we're happy to be in such good company. Hooray for all of us!

BOB MARX checked in, looking for information regarding Operation Market Garden and a supply drop mission on 18 September. He and **BOB JORDAN** have some memory of this mission, and **FRANK KYLE** has filled in many blanks. If anyone has anything more on this mission, please contact Bob Marx at P.O. Box 429, Hull City, SD 57745. Had a note from **G.W. FORD** in reply to my request for information regarding the **KARL SHEARER** crew. He mentioned that Karl was KIA after he finished his tour with the 453rd and had transferred to a fighter group. I have the names of the enlisted men — now I need the names of the other officers on the crew. Anyone have this information?

Another "kid" received a computer for Christmas. **JACK ELLIOTT** sent a list of his entire crew via e-mail — way to go, Jack. Just keep searching for those letters on the keyboard, and soon you'll be better than the rest of us two-finger typists.

Say hello to **JOHN (JACK) RAISER**. Jack was a pilot with the 732nd Squadron. **FELIX LEETON**, 2ADA Executive Vice President, referred Jack to us. Thanks, Felix. Jack was another of those people who didn't know we exist-

ed, but he joined both the 2ADA and the 453rd BG as soon as he received the forms. He was "employed" by the 453rd from April 1944 to June 1944. As he was returning from mission #92 of the 453rd to Juvencourt Airfield in France, he fell victim to flak. His was the third crew lost on three consecutive days of operations. Jack lives in Gulf Breeze, Florida. We hope to see him soon at the 2ADA convention in Tampa Bay.

JOHN KASSAB responded to a note which had been placed on the 453rd web site for information regarding a B-24 named "Clancy." Says John, "I can only figure out that someone has mistaken the name of Clancy Bryzinski for the name of the plane. 'Little Nancy' was assigned to our crew after I had taxied 'Hard T' Get' into the mud on D-Day (my first mission). We flew 'Hard T' Get' on four practice missions, and each time we lost an engine. On D-Day we were assigned 'Hard T' Get' and the whole crew was apprehensive. To this day I do not know if I went into the mud on purpose. Jimmy Stewart and Col. Sullivan came out to where we were stuck in the mud. They knew we were scared since it was our first mission. They told us to take 'Little Nancy,' and we flew her for 35 missions. We went on an R&R to London about halfway through our missions and someone else flew 'Little Nancy' for one mission. They crashed on return landing. However, three days later the plane was ready for our next mission. Those repair crews were fantastic, considering the things they had to do to keep us flying."

Well, that's one more mission completed. Gotta go now, the truck just pulled into the hardstand. The crew is busy throwing their gear on board and climbing in. It's not right to keep them waiting. Bless 'em all! ■

PILOT'S SILVER WINGS (continued)

Willard and Harris met at a recent reunion of the 339th. They started talking about Ken Gilbert. Harris told him how he had Gilbert's recovered wings sitting in his conservatory. The two men wondered if Gilbert might still have family in Rhode Island who would want them.

Willard hasn't been back to Rhode Island for years, but over the next few months he made some inquiries without finding any relatives of Gilbert's.

Finally, two weeks ago, Willard wrote to The Providence Journal, suggesting publication of Harris's discovery might allow Ken Gilbert's silver wings to finally come home.

"We're doing this for sentimental reasons," says Willard. "I'm sure if it was my brother or son, I sure would love to have the wings."

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦
Capt. Kenneth L. Gilbert was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leo L. Gilbert of Prospect Avenue, Middletown, NJ. He was born in Newport, July 5, 1923. ■

2ADA FILM LIBRARY — REVISED 1/00

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

Donated by
 Roy Jonasson

"Passage to Valhalla"

donated by William Fili, 15th AF

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

The following VHS tapes are also available for rent from your 2ADA film library.
 Order by Roman #.

I	Remember Them	} Order together	\$3.00
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, Monroe Township, NJ 08831-1636

MESA WARBIRDS ENROUTE TO SEATTLE

An internationally famous collection of vintage fighter planes is moving from Falcon Field in Mesa, Arizona to the Museum of Flight in Seattle. Museum director Ralph Bufano says the institution has purchased all 33 planes in the Champlin Fighter Aircraft Museum's collection, plus thousands of related artifacts.

All the planes are in flying condition.

The Museum of Flight is building a \$100 million expansion for the Champlin collection on six acres donated by the Boeing Co., Bufano says. The collection will remain in Mesa until the addition is completed.

"These airplanes comprise one of the most historically significant collections of fighter aircraft in the world," Bufano says. "In combination with the museum's recent acquisition of the Caproni 20, the world's first fighter, the expanded Museum of Flight will truly offer visitors a premier experience of the history of aviation."

The museum now has 54 planes from 80 years of aviation history, including the first Air Force One and an SR-71 Blackbird spy plane. ■

Give 'Em Hell!

FROM "IN FORMATION,"
 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ARMY AIR
 FORCES ASSOCIATION
 BY FRANCES C. "RUSTY" RICE BRENNAN
 2ND LIEUTENANT - ARMY NURSE CORPS

Our hospital was with the 7th Army during the cold, cold winter of 1944-45. We received our patients during and after that never-to-be-forgotten Battle of the Bulge. Many suffered loss of toes and sometimes a foot due to trenchfoot. Frozen extremities and hepatitis were common diagnoses at that time.

Picture this if you can: At last the sun has come out! The sky is clear. The snow has stopped . . . young soldiers are lying in a hospital ward and they begin to hear the Air Force bombers overhead. Wave after wave of planes flying in perfect formation — it seemed to me that they flew over for hours — maybe day in, day out . . . but this I know, they were on their way to bomb the enemy, Germany. Our patients hear the planes and they scream, "Give them hell, give them hell!" as they pound their beds with their fists. ■



WENDLING 392nd B.G.

BY J. FRED THOMAS

There is no doubt about it — concerning our troops, it is the season of the walking wounded. Larry Gilbert getting another new knee. Blanche Keilman getting a new knee. Oak Mackey with the viral pneumonia. I could mention several more, but you get the picture. Even I had to get into the act after the ill-fated trip to Savannah. Another dividend from a poor investment. Anyway, my left knee gradually quit on me during November, so on December 2 I had arthroscopic surgery to clean out the torn cartilage in the joint. Then, the leg swelled from knee to toes. I wondered what the hey, but the doctors said the swelling was because of poor blood circulation. After wearing an elastic stocking and two weeks of therapy, I am back walking at an old man's gait. If the whole scene wasn't so serious, it would be a circus.

Along with all that came the everlasting holiday season from Halloween 'til well after January 1. Whatever it means to you, we hope you enjoyed the entire thing. For me, it meant writing notes and sending 150 cards to folks around the globe. A chore, but one has to send them to get them. It is always good to hear from many who write a note just once a year. Regardless, the exercise takes quite a large part of a month besides whatever else has to be done. I think it is called "c'est la vie," regardless of how one feels. At least the Y2K thing gave the papers grist for the mill with which to keep the natives on edge. It wasn't all bad. A lot of extra groceries were sold, and a lot of needed updating of computers was accomplished. After all was said and done, about the most serious happening was the retirement of Charles Schultz. No more Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the gang. Now that is serious!!

Despite the above, there were some 2ADA items considered and attended. The matter of finding and tabulating our KIAs and KILODs continues. We have written letters to all group VPs about the situation, as well as the hopes of having an Honor Roll for those killed in the line of duty regardless of what the duty might have been. We had one direct answer, which was from Ray Strong (HQ). However, we have had indirect word that some groups are working on the project. As for our group, we wrote a separate letter to the heads of our 392nd BGMA. As yet, we have had no answer of action being taken, but we did have a copy of an extensive e-mail letter sent to several by Bob Vickers. He gave a detailed report on his research while writing his book. As re-

ported earlier, there was a list of 79 names misplaced. It is Bob's opinion that all the records in the archives will have to be researched again in order to find as many names as possible. We believe some of that work is now being done by our second generation workers. We hope they will continue, and while at it, keep the KIA and KILODs in separate groups so that they may be validated and sent on to Charles Walker. He will act as the central locator for the Association and forward valid names to Jordan Uttal, 2ADA Honorary President, who monitors the Rolls of Honor.

December 10 brought Year 60 of the B-24 at San Diego, California. Gimp leg or no, the flag of the 392nd BG had to be flown, so crutch and all, we attended the first day. We visited with Bill Long of the Sacramento area, the only member of the 392nd BG we saw, but we understand that several of our group were there the second day. We saw and spoke several times with our British friend, Pat Ramm. We weren't aware of it, but Pat told us that he had contributed \$450 to the Bronze B-24 project and his name is on the lists with the B-24 at the Air Force Academy. We wish that had been announced at the time of the dedication of the replica at the Academy. Pat was only 11 years old during our time in Britain. All that aside, while the B-24 - 60 was a modest affair compared with the B-24 - 50, we heard no complaints and we believe the attendants were pleased with the event. We regretted missing the second day, but one day of crutching about was enough.

Now hear this. You will remember in my last report, I wrote as a tired old man who was ready to call it a career. Well, I told that to quite a number who have supported me these several years, and it created quite an outpouring of protests. I had already had serious requests from active members of the 392nd BGMA, 2ADA Executive Committee, 2ADA, several British friends, et al, that I reconsider and withdraw my offer of resignation that I had made at Savannah. During Christmas, I had several more requests that I reconsider. Only yesterday a member who has been a great supporter, both financially and in person, asked me to promise him that I would retract my resignation. While I have done my best to represent the 392nd BG and help steer the 2ADA, I well know I am not indispensable. As someone said recently, the graveyards are full of indispensable people. However, with the continued support and requests being sent me, I will continue in the office of VP for the 392nd BG, 2ADA. That is, if the family health continues as well as it is at present. Of course, I will expect one or more candidates to be on the slate at our election at Tampa. That is fine and the way it should be. It is likely that the heads of the BGMA will offer at least one candidate, but the outcome will be determined by the votes

of the members present. Further, a meeting and an election process will give us a chance to air some laundry, which has brought us to where we are. Also, we need to air the relationships and cooperation, or lack thereof, between our BGMA and the 2ADA. We urge and hope you will make every effort to attend the Tampa convention, especially if you are interested in who your next group VP will be.

Mr. Derek Hills, 2ADA Memorial Trust Librarian, has reported two books bought with the interest from our 392nd BG Endowment: *Dog Soldier Societies of the Plains* by Thomas E. Mails, and *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage* by John E. Haynes and Harvey Klehr.

Lastly, we wish to remind all who served with the Second Air Division that one does not have to be a member of the 2ADA in order to attend the convention. Just fill out the forms and pay the fee to Evelyn Cohen. You will be most welcomed by all present. Time is moving on, and the number of convention dates fewer. SEE YOU THERE! ■

BUNGAY BULL (continued)

hometown Elgin, Illinois American Legion Post #57 went to the newly dedicated Abraham Lincoln Cemetery near Joliet. They served as honor guards for four burials during their first official day at this national military cemetery.

The second Monday of each month this group of seven veterans will repeat their duty. Our local paper noted that 1500 veterans die each day. Of that number 1100 are World War II veterans.

The newspaper also said that 400,000 burial spaces will be available at this new Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery just south of the Chicago area, a site of 900 acres which was formerly the Joliet Army Arsenal. As a U.S. military burial place it is second in size only to Calverton National Cemetery in New York.

DATES TO REMEMBER

The 446 National Reunion will be held in Washington, D.C., May 18-21, 2000 at the Arlington Hilton, Arlington, Virginia. The number for reservations is (703) 812-5111. Ask for the special 446 BG rate!

The 2ADA Year 2000 Convention will be held May 26-29, 2000 at the Hyatt Regency, Tampa, FL. Contact Evelyn Cohen (telephone number on page 2).

→ → → →

We need news for the Bungay Bull. Keep your letters coming with news of our members. You may reach me by e-mail at Aud446@aol.com or call me at (847) 741-7757. The address is still the same: 682 Slade Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120. ■

I came across this piece in the Fall 1999 JUG letter — the regular publication of the P-47 Thunderbolt Association. It struck several responsive chords in me, so I phoned the editor and received permission to use it in our *Journal*. Hope you find some pleasant notes in it, despite the fact that it points out the inescapable fact of our mortality.

Let's enjoy each other and be proud of our shared experience while we have the chance. For me, my 49 of our past 52 conventions have furnished me with a host of pleasant memories, and as we approach our 53rd convention at Tampa Bay, I look forward once again to seeing all of us with whom I have had the pleasure of getting older.

The introduction to the piece reads:

"Our recent encounter with a reunion of aging fly-boys from the treacherous CBI theater in WWII brought this from retired Major General Dave Easson. It is from the Beam, a magazine for aviators, and was sent to the magazine by a WWII B-24/29 pilot. The magazine did not have a clue as to the author other than it carried the name 'Rachel Firth.' 'Our ranks are thinning, and reunions of crews have more significance each year. This piece is especially poignant,' Gen. Easson said."

THE REUNION . . .

Autumn leaves rustle together as to the appointed place, the old warriors come.

Pilgrims, drifting across the land they fought to preserve.

Where they meet is not important anymore . . .

They meet and that is enough for now.

Greetings echo across a lobby.

Hands reach out and arms draw buddies close.

Embraces that as young men they were too uncomfortable to give, too shy to accept so lovingly.

But deep within these Indian Summer days they have reached a greater understanding of life and love.

The shells holding their souls are weaker now but hearts and minds grow vigorous remembering.

On a table someone has spread out old photographs: a test of recollection.

SHARED EXPERIENCE

SUBMITTED BY JORDAN UTTAL

And friendly laughter echoes at shocks of hair grey or white, or merely gone.

The rugged bodies lost forever.

Yet they no longer need to prove their strength.

Some are sustained by one of medicine's miracles.

And even in this fact they manage to find humor.

The women, all those who love them, have watched the changes take place.

Now, they observe and listen and smile at each other, as glad to be together as the men.

Talk turns to war and planes and foreign lands. Stories are told again and again, reweaving the thread-bare fabric of the past, mending one more time the banner of their youth.

They bear the vibrations, feel the shudder of metal as propellers whine and whirl and planes come to life.

These birds with fractured wings can see beyond the mist of clouds and they are in the air again, chasing the wind, feeling the exhilaration of flight, close to the heavens.

The wild blue yonder is their anthem.

Dead comrades, hearing their names spoken, wanting to share this time, if in spirit, move silently among them. Their presence is felt and smiles appear beneath misty eyes.

Each in his own way, may wonder who will be absent another year.

The room grows quiet for a time. Suddenly an ember flames to life. Another memory burns.

The talk may turn to other wars and other men and of futility.

So this is how it goes. The past is so much the present.

In their memories, the allegiance, the speeches and the prayers, one cannot help but hear the eternal loves of a country they will forever share.

Finally, it is time to leave. Much too soon to set aside a little piece of yesterday. But the past cannot be held too long for it is too fragile.

They say "Farewell . . . See you next year." God willing, breathing silent prayers for one another, each keeping a little of the others with him, forever.

— RACHEL FIRTH



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QUINTESSENTIAL AIRMAN (continued)

in New York, he did not wear the Purple Heart. But on that memorable September day as he stepped ashore from the Queen Elizabeth, Colonel James M. Stewart wore the ribbons of valor in wartime — the Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Croix de Guerre from the French government. Stewart's first Distinguished Flying Cross was presented by 8th Air Force Commander General Jimmy Doolittle, himself the holder of the Medal of Honor for his historic Tokyo Raid, earlier in the war. Stewart's citation read, in part:

"For extraordinary achievement while serving as Deputy Leader of a Combat Wing formation on a bombing mission over Germany . . . In spite of aggressive fighter attacks and, later, heavy, accurate, antiaircraft fire, Major Stewart was able to hold the formation together and direct a bombing run over the target . . . The courage, leadership, and skillful airmanship displayed by Major Stewart were, in large measure, responsible for the success of the mission."

Jimmy Stewart flew 20 combat missions against the enemy in Europe. He ended a distinguished career with over 2000 flying hours. His wartime record reads like this: Squadron Commander in 445th Bomb Group — Group Operations Officer, 453rd Bomb Group — Operations Officer, 2nd Bomb Wing* — Chief of Staff, 2nd Bomb Wing*, and, finally, as World War II ended, Commander of the 2nd Bomb Wing*. In the last days of the war, Stewart received a commendation from the commander of the 2nd Bomb Wing*. The citation read in part:

"Throughout the time you have been associated with this Command . . . you have displayed the most intense loyalty and patriotism as evidenced by your participation on 20 important combat missions and encounters with the enemy in addition to your staff work . . . Your initiative, sound judgment, personality, and sincere devotion to duty have contributed immeasurably to the smooth operation . . . and the morale and efficiency of the men of this entire Command. Your keen interest and unselfish devotion to duty has been exceptional . . . and . . . you are to be commended for an outstanding performance of duty."

Stewart spent his entire time overseas in World War II flying the B-24 Liberator in combat with units of the 2nd Bomb Wing* of the 8th Air Force, promoted up the ladder from squadron commander to wing commander, and flying on many missions as command pilot. Stewart served in the Air Force Reserve as a colonel from 1945 until President Eisenhower appointed him to Brigadier General in 1959 in the Air Force Reserve. He retired in 1968. Jimmy Stewart was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1985.

Colonel Bernie Lay, in his magazine article on Stewart, wrote: "Only a tiny nucleus of offi-

cers who had grown up with the Air Corps carried within them the sound air doctrine and military know-how with which the rapidly expanding AAF had to be inoculated . . . Stewart listened to these men and his attitude was humble."

Jimmy Stewart was fortunate. He had three Air Force leaders as his mentors and friends. The first was Colonel Bob Terrill, C.O. of the 445th, who had provided his first combat job. The second was Brigadier General Ted Timberlake, C.O. of the 2nd Bomb Wing*, who had planned the famous Ploesti mission earlier, and the third was Colonel Ramsay Potts, C.O. of the 453rd, a B-24 specialist who had been a flight leader on the Ploesti raid. Terrill and Timberlake were West Pointers, regular Air Force officers, who continued their distinguished careers after the war and retired as Lt. Generals. Potts, a reserve officer, became a prominent Washington lawyer, and retired from the Air Force Reserve as a major general.

Another friend, and, as it turned out, a lucky encounter from the 453rd days, was Stewart's assistant, Major Andy Low. A West Pointer and regular Air Force officer, Low was shot down and spent time in a German POW camp. He went on after the war to a brilliant career and retired as a major general. Andy Low was Jimmy Stewart's closest Air Force friend, and their warm relationship continued through the years until Stewart's death, a few hours before the Fourth of July in 1997.

My own relationship with Jimmy Stewart during the war years in England was professional — not personal. I was a combat intelligence officer in the 453rd and worked with Stewart night after night, preparing the mission and briefing the crews. It was my impression that the crews saw Stewart not as a famous figure, but as their leader who had made the combat scene — a man they liked and trusted. My own view of Jimmy Stewart is this: I have never known a more intelligent, knowledgeable, hardworking, conscientious, and dedicated officer.

In my book, *ONLY THE DAYS ARE LONG — Reports of a Journalist and World Traveler* — I wrote of Stewart: "At night, working with me preparing the mission, Stewart was crisp and business-like; reserved, but he knew his job and was a keen student of daylight precision bombing. (The Americans bombed in daylight, the RAF at night.) It was interesting to see Stewart at the bar of the officer's club after a tough day and hear his discussion of the mission with the returning pilots. But even then he was always slightly aloof. He was never one of the boys. This is not to say Stewart was unfriendly. Rather, he went about his work with a cool professional detachment — a single purpose approach that did not allow for personal involvement. This, I think, was the reason for his success in the war. He was determined to prove that he was more than an actor, more than a Hollywood star. He was determined to

prove that now he could measure up as a man doing a really important job in the military crucible and not just a celluloid hero."

Since the war, I have been asked many times to give a candid viewpoint on Jimmy Stewart and the way he fought the war in England with the 8th Air Force. Here it is: Jimmy Stewart was a combat pilot and commander — a man who was famous in another world — a man who trained hard and served well — a man who, from the beginning, wanted desperately to join the hunt in the cause of freedom, and who, in battle, furnished inspiration and leadership to his fellow airmen, won the respect and admiration of his superiors, and, in the end, was like many another — a good man who fought the good fight.

As I stand before you here today, I believe Jimmy Stewart would be very proud of this magnificent museum — this historic repository — a lasting tribute to his thousands of comrades-in-arms, men and women, who served in the 8th Air Force in World War II. Three years ago, the museum created an annual award for outstanding airmanship, and named it in Jimmy Stewart's honor. It is proper and fitting that this building will stand forever as a memorial for the warriors of the air who fought for America in World War II. To paraphrase a great American newspaper, *The Denver Post*: "Ah, love of country, devotion to duty, honor and courage — when expelled from all other haunts — make the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum — thy Dwelling Place."

So today, as we are gathered at this time and in this place, only a few miles from the birthplace of the 8th Air Force — Jimmy Stewart's military and emotional home — I have the unforgettable pleasure — in the name of human decency, international civility, Americanism, patriotism, and, above all, honor, love of country, and courage under fire — to dedicate this memorial to the memory of a brave and remarkable American, Brig. Gen. James Maitland Stewart.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Editor's Notes: Starr Smith is an international journalist, author, photographer, and one of America's premier travel writers. He has traveled in over 100 countries and his byline has appeared from six continents. He has written more than 500 travel articles, covering the world. His current book is ONLY THE DAYS ARE LONG — Reports of a Journalist and World Traveler. He is now working on a book covering Jimmy Stewart's service in the Air Force in World War II. Starr Smith was a combat intelligence officer with the 8th Air Force in England during the war, and, later, was posted as a public relations and press officer on the staff of General Eisenhower at Supreme Headquarters in London and Paris. He is a retired colonel in the Air Force Reserve and is based in Montgomery, Alabama.

*The "2nd Bomb Wing" mentioned in this article was the "2nd Combat Bomb Wing." ■



To the Editor:

We read the *Journal* regularly and find it quite interesting. However, isn't there ever any news about the ground crewmen? Or was the war won only by flyers? How interesting!

Santo & Carmela Russo (44th)
1177A So. Drive Circle
Delray Beach, FL 33445

Ed. Note: I searched my files from the time I took over as editor, and could not find a submission from you on the activities of the ground personnel. I can't just fabricate what went on when we were up, so please send me some stories, and I promise to print them! In looking over the last five years that I have been editor, here is an incomplete list of articles on ground activities or by ground personnel: 8th AF Nomads (Spring 1999 page 29), Never Dull at Wendling (Fall 1998 page 16), "At Home" in England (Fall 1998 page 27), Who Packs Your Chute? (Fall 1998 page 28), Neath the Eiffel Tower (Summer 1998 page 14), B-24 Were the First (Summer 1998 page 16), No Unimportant Jobs (Spring 1998 page 14), In Retrospect (Spring 1997 page 16), Schreck letter (Spring 1997 page 38), Quality Time (Winter 1996 page 21), Hamm from Ground Up (Fall 1996 page 13), First to Solo (Fall 1996 page 30), Chapel Service (Summer 1996 page 16), Bombshells (Summer 1996 page 21), Aviation Ordinance (Summer 1996 page 29). Remember too that regular contributors Jordan Uttal, Ray Strong, & Jim Reeves (among others) were HQ personnel.

→ → → →

To Hap Chandler, 2ADA President:

The words you put together so beautifully in the "President's Message" of the Fall 1999 *Journal* — what can I say other than *thank you* for "Battlefields Revisited." Your well-chosen words brought tears to these eyes, and my thoughts turned to the actual scenes as you described.

We who were not there can never fully understand what you so appropriately put into words, what you experienced during 1942-1945 along with so many other young men — boys, really.

A heartfelt Thank You for these descriptive paragraphs that will be read, and reread, and reread...

Mrs. C.H. Forsch (AM, 446th)
440 Missouri
Casper, WY 82609-2507

→ → → →

To the Editor:

This is my contribution and addition to the "All Hell" story about Bob Johnson, the P-47 ace, that appeared in the Fall 1999 issue of the *Journal*, page 36. I worked with Bob at Republic Aviation in the '50s when his role of developing jet fighter-bombers may be of interest.

Bob Johnson was working in executive row in the Sales Division, and was involved in selling the F84F to replace the straight wing 84G for the "Thunderbird Demonstration Team." I was working at the Long Island plant at the same time as a liaison engineer on the Thunderstreak and lived through all the early production days, troubleshooting equipment and instrument problems. The group engineer assigned me as liaison to the Thunderbird Program and asked me to report to Bob Johnson's office to get a list of modifications required for the Thunderbird planes. Of course the list included a paint job, a smoke tank instead of machine guns, and about 100 improvements that were scheduled for later blocks of aircraft. Bob Johnson had negotiated these improvements and the team pilots wanted them NOW.

My job was to obtain prints and sketches from various specialty groups and to start the Experimental Shop modifying six new 84Fs. I had to work out any problems when the changes did not fit this block of Fs. Often this involved Bob Johnson and the team pilots. My relation to Bob was professional and in those days there was little WWII nostalgia, with the Korean conflict and the Cold War going on. There were problems to fix, but now I regret that I did not get to know Bob Johnson better.

Two of the test pilots at Republic also fit in this category, and they were from the 491st Bomb Group. Charlie Pugh was one I remember from formation sheets when I was flying, and the other was Lin Hendrix who was chief test pilot when I was with Republic. This company, now Fairchild, supplied two sets of Thunderbirds while I was liaison engineer, and it was great to see a private show for the over 10,000 employees at Farmingdale, Long Island.

At that time, the team leader was Jack Broughten; Ed Palmgren flew slot; and Bill Creech was right wing. I understand Creech went on to become the general the Thunderbirds reported to in later years.

Jack Van Acker (491st)
430 Springcrest Road
Dundee, IL 60118-1026

→ → → →

B-24 Flight Simulator Arrives in UK, a Gift to 2nd Air Division Memorial

EXCERPT FROM DAVID HASTINGS
LETTER TO EVELYN COHEN,
23 NOVEMBER 1999

I am delighted to report that the 2nd Air Division B-24 Liberator for the Flight Simulator has just arrived from Canada, and the President of the VIP Group, Mr. Kenneth Kerr, is insisting that this is a GIFT to the 2nd Air Division Memorial.

The finished product is absolutely stunning, the realism of the cockpit is superb, and the roar of the four Pratt & Whitneys on takeoff is quite something. In the new Memorial Library, for people both young and old to be able to "fly a B-24" will be a huge asset. I have already flown it at a low level all around Norfolk, and aim to try for a "Mission to Germany" next week.

LETTER FROM EVELYN COHEN
TO KENNETH KERR,
10 JANUARY 2000

Mr. Kenneth Kerr
2500 S. Millway #52
Mississauga, Ontario L5L 3T8
CANADA

Dear Mr. Kerr:

I hear from my friend David Hastings that the Flight Simulator from your company has arrived in Norwich and that this is a gift to the Second Air Division Memorial Library.

What can I say except THANK YOU from all the men and women who served with the Second Air Division and those who flew the B-24 from the 14 bases in and around Norfolk and Suffolk, England.

We will be going to Norwich in November 2001 to rededicate our Memorial Library, and I am sure the men will be delighted to try out this B-24 simulator. ■

Former Cadets Revisit Old Miami Beach Training Center

A reunion of World War II flyers, some from the 8th Air Force, dedicated a memorial in the city of Miami Beach, Florida in honor of the thousands of U.S. Air Force cadet trainees who took basic training in this resort city in 1942-1944. The city was the center for training an estimated 100,000 men quartered in 200 hotels for three years of war. This reunion event was held on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1999, with an estimated 150 men and women in attendance at special memorial services; and included time for the men to revisit the hotels where they had been stationed more than 50 years ago, a dinner, a parade, and tours of the nearby Weeks Air Museum of WWII aircraft. A flyover of AT6 and YAK52 was given as a tribute to the airmen. The reunion group also supported a resolution for funds for the national World War II memorial in Washington, D.C., and a proposal to make Pearl Harbor Day a national holiday.

— FORREST S. CLARK (44th BG)

HELP! 2ND AIR DIVISION NAVIGATORS:

The United States Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio plans to add a diorama display about aircraft used by the 8th AF during WWII. Your help is needed to make this display as accurate as possible. For details, please contact JOHN MASSEY, 6810 Rosewood Ct., Tampa, FL 33615-3318, telephone collect to 813-886-1938 or e-mail to :

afnoacg@aol.com

AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS ON THE RESTORATION OF THE MURAL ON THE WALL OF THE SECOND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL LIBRARY

23 June 1999

To The Board of Governors
of the Memorial Trust of the
Second Air Division USAAF, 8th Air Force
Gentlemen:

Veterans of the Second Air Division, represented by the Second Air Division Association, strongly support an exact reproduction of the wall mural depicting the climax of a mission, "Bombs Away," destroyed by the 1994 fire. We firmly reject any substitute that modifies or dilutes this portrayal of the World War II mission of the Second Air Division.

In World War II, with our British allies, we were engaged in eradicating the tyranny and oppression of the Nazi regime. Through our joint efforts we were able to restore world freedom, justice and peace. To accomplish this the Second Air Division conducted bombing missions by day, and the RAF by night, destroying the Nazis' industrial might. Indeed, post-war interviews with Nazi leaders revealed that, but for the necessity to concentrate the Luftwaffe and over a million troops in Germany for defense against air attack, the outcome of the war might well have been different. By repeated and increasingly more powerful bombing of Nazi industries, the Reich's ability to wage war was essentially stopped. Thus, the Nazi aim to conquer and enslave the peoples of Europe and England was thwarted and their ruthless dictator Hitler ended his life in a Berlin bunker. The mural, which to many of us was the most significant portion of the Memorial Room, depicted the efforts of the Second Air Division in a readily understandable and impressive manner. In particular, it honored those Second Air Division members "who flying from bases in these parts, gave their lives defending freedom." Their names are inscribed on our Roll of Honor, the hallowed centerpiece of our room, nearby.

It is our firm conviction that any less depiction of conditions in which these brave men made their final sacrifice for humanity is neither appropriate nor proper.

For instance, a suggestion has been made to replace the pre-fire mural with one depicting a darkened silhouette of a farmer with a B-24 poised on a runway in the background. Such a rendering neither depicts the mission of the World War II Second Air Division, nor does it honor or pay tribute to those to whom the memorial is dedicated — those members of the Second Air Division who made the supreme sacrifice over the hostile skies of war-torn Europe. The silhouette could well be a plane departing on a training mission or making a supply run to a depot. Neither is a true reflection of the conditions in which our brave comrades "gave their todays, for our tomorrows."

Our Second Air Division Association members, veterans of the air war, are unanimous in their preference for the restoration of the previous mural. We respectfully urge the Board of Governors to commission an exact replica of the mural as it existed before the unfortunate 1994 fire. By so doing you would properly depict the efforts of the Division during the thousand days we flew from bases in East Anglia.

With thanks for the exceptional stewardship you have shown over the years to our legacy, and the wish that you will see fit to honor this request made on behalf of our membership, I am

Sincerely,

F.C. "Hap" Chandler, Jr.
President, Second Air Division Association

→ → → →

9 July 1999

To F.C. "Hap" Chandler, Jr., 2ADA President
18 Willow Glen, Atlanta, GA 30342-2023

Dear Hap:

At yesterday's [meeting] of the Memorial Trust, a letter from you on behalf of the Second Air Division Association was circulated by Chuck Walker. It concerned the photographic mural that was a centerpiece of the old Memorial Room and the suggestion that it be replaced by another image in the new Memorial Library. As the instigator of this suggestion, I am writing to explain, but emphasise that this is on my own behalf and in no way does it purport to represent the view of other Governors.

The photograph for the mural in the old Memorial Room was supplied by me, and I was also partly responsible for its selection. As you acknowledge, it was visually significant with major impact upon entering the Memorial. As soon as I saw the mural in place I began to have misgivings, for to the uninitiated, its immediate message was one of power and achievement, not sacrifice. This is foremost a memorial to nearly seven thousand men who gave their lives, and the initial impression for visitors should be that the room is dedicated to the fallen. A photograph of a Liberator formation dropping bombs without enemy reaction does not directly give a message of sacrifice. A shat-

tered Liberator falling from the sky would be appropriate; more so the ranked white crosses of the Madingley cemetery.

Another reason why I feel the original mural was inappropriate is that it clearly depicted the markings of one particular bomb group, albeit that with a top record of operational efficiency. Any Liberator depicted in the mural should be so positioned as not to be identified with any one group. The picture should be representative of all groups.

Now we come to the photograph which I gave to our chairman for consideration as the type of illustration that might be suitable for the new mural — if it is to dominate like the old. The reasoning behind this is as follows. Firstly, in the future most visitors to the Memorial Library will continue to be British and the majority from outside the region will probably know nothing of the Second Air Division or its association with Norfolk. It has been agreed that the B-24 Liberator, virtually the symbol of the Division, should feature in the prime mural. A Liberator taking off from an airfield suggests the regional connection. Yes, it does not suggest sacrifice other than an aircraft setting out into the unknown. The human element is important, hence the ground crew man waving off a bomber — as you will know, a common practice when a mission was launched. The Liberator being in silhouette, no group markings are visible and it was at dawn that most missions were launched. Overall, perhaps bland, but it is typical of what Norfolk people saw time and time again back in the war years, and as such, an introduction to the Memorial Library. However, I stress that this photograph was put forward only as the type of illustration I felt would make a more suitable introduction. There must be scores of others in a similar vein if that is the way the Planning Group chooses to go.

Finally, in suggesting a different illustration should be used for the major mural, this was in no way seeking to minimise what you people did in the air war against Nazi Germany. If it is not a conceit, I doubt that anyone else has devoted so much time and effort in his life to recording and presenting the history of the Eighth Air Force, and my championship of your cause remains as strong as ever. This matter is simply a personal opinion on what form the major mural for the Memorial Library should take, as I hope the foregoing explains, and there is no reason to believe my views will have any influence on the Planning Group's decision about new murals.

All good wishes,

Roger A. Freeman
Member, Memorial Trust Board of Governors
8th Air Force Author & Historian
May's Barn, Dedham, Colchester,
Essex, CO7 6EW, England

Ed. Note: See page 7 for article by Chuck Walker for later developments on this subject.

To the Editor:

Here are pictures of our crew and "Limpin Ole Sadie." Maybe the 2ADA members will be able to fill in the missing names. In addition I am enclosing two pictures of an unnamed colonel awarding our copilot Bill Lundquist and myself the Air Medal on April 6, 1945. Who was the "eagle" in these pictures?

R.L. "Bob" Dunlap (389th)
P.O. Box 448
Cedar Park, TX 78630-0448

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To the Editor:

I was surprised to see on page 27 of the Fall edition of the *Journal* a quote from George Schmidt that "I was [in] the last plane shot down over Germany" on April 7, 1945.

The book *Wings of Morning* by Thomas Childers describes a plane that was shot down on April 21, 1945, which belies the statement of Mr. Schmidt. Apparently this unenviable distinction belongs to the Farrington crew of the 446th Bomb Group. A press release for *Wings of Morning* reads as follows:

This is the story of the last heavy bomber, the B-24 "Black Cat", to be shot down over Germany in World War II. Childers writes of the Richard Farrington crew assigned to the 466th BG AS 120, beginning with crew member's days before the war and ending with this own search for answers to the fate of the crew members. Flak over Regensburg brought the plane down. With the war long over, the crew was listed as Missing Air Crew for months. Gradually, one by one the families were notified that their sons, husbands, and brothers were Killed in Action.

Two of the crew survived, and through the years there was disagreement as to the number of parachutes out of the plane, which left many unanswered questions. Childers' search led him down many avenues, ending in Germany to interview a host of eye-witnesses to the crash and ultimately to answers.

Childers is a historian of the Nazi years of some note. He writes in a personal vein, as his uncle was the radio operator on the crew.

This book would be meaningful to read for anyone who lived through those years, but particularly those whose family members perished and those still searching for MACR. Childers is detailed as he documents the places and methods of research. If you are interested, the ISBN number for WINGS OF MORNING is 0-201-40722 and can be ordered from any bookstore.

Perhaps this will set the record straight.

I believe every member of the 2ADA would appreciate reading *Wings of Morning*.

Dave Vineberg (446th)

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Standing (L-R): engineer (?); Cross; Dunlap; Flowers (?); radio operator (?). Sitting (L-R): Roberts, pilot; Lundquist, copilot; J.R. Roberts, tail gunner; Monk (?), bombardier; Art Arnoff, navigator.



COLONEL ??? congrats copilot Bill Lundquist (left) and Bob Dunlap (right).

Next Stupid Question Please?

FROM THE 361ST FIGHTER GROUP NEWSLETTER

Strange as it may seem, there are those who never served in the military who still do not understand why military personnel do what they do for a living. When John Glenn was running for the U.S. Senate, he was asked, "How can you run for a seat in the Senate when you have never held a 'real' job?"

Glenn replied, "I served 23 years in the U.S. Marine Corps through two wars. I flew 149 missions; my plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire on 12 different occasions. I was also in the space program, you may recall. I didn't have a 9 to 5 job where I took time off to take the daily cash receipts to the bank. In my line of work, it wasn't my checkbook that was on the line — it was my life. I'd like you to go with me, as I went the other day, to a VA hospital, and look at those men with their mangled bodies. Look them in the eye and tell them they didn't hold a 'real' job. Come with me to visit the widows and orphans of Ed White and Gus Grissom and Roger Chaffee, and look those kids in the eye and tell them their dads didn't hold a 'real' job. Join me on Memorial Day or Veteran's Day and stand with me at Arlington National Cemetery, where I have more friends than I care to remember — you stand there and you watch those waving flags, you think about this nation, and you reflect, as I have, about all those heroes buried there, then tell me to my face they didn't have a 'real' job. Then I'll tell you, my friend, that you should be on your knees every day of your life thanking God that there were some men — SOME MEN — who held a 'real' job. And they required a dedication to purpose and a love of country and a dedication to duty that was more important than life itself, and their self-sacrifice is what made this country possible. So you see, my friend, I HAVE HELD A JOB. What about you?" ■

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Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) is proud to issue an original collector plate by acclaimed military artist Major David Wayne Russell, depicting the B-24D of the USAAF dropping depth charges over a type VII-C U-boat, a scene constantly repeated in crushing the U-boat menace.

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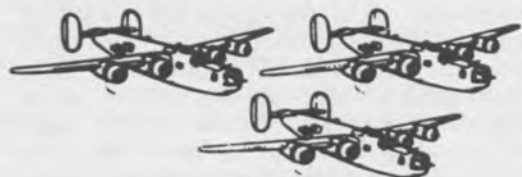
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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION EIGHTH AIR FORCE

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