

**DON'T FORGET  
MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR  
FORCE WEEK!**

**SHOW THAT YOU  
WERE PART OF THE 8TH!  
OCTOBER 8-14, 2000**

**PLAN SOME EVENTS —  
GET US SOME PUBLICITY!**

# THE JOURNAL

Official Publication of the



Veterans of  
WORLD WAR II



Volume 39 Number 2

Summer 2000

## New 8th Air Force Commander Has Second Air Division Connection



**LT. GENERAL THOMAS J. KECK**

**L**t. General Thomas J. Keck is commander of the 8th Air Force, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, and also serves as an Air Force Component Commander for the United States Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. His command of the central United States and Atlantic Ocean territory is comprised of seven wings and two groups. This includes nearly 500 aircraft and about 44,000 people, including 14 gained Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units. He oversees the warfighting capability of this numbered air force's B-1, B-2, B-52, F-15, F-16, A-10 and HH-60 aircraft.

A graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1969, the general is a command pilot with more than 4,400 flying hours, including 886 combat hours. He has flown operational tours in the A-10, B-1, B-52, RC-135, U-2 and SR-71. He has commanded the 9th Reconnaissance Wing, the 55th Wing and the 4404th Wing



**The 491st Bomb Group's 854th Squadron Operations during World War Two. Captain JIM KECK is kneeling, fourth from the left. Louis Bur, who submitted this picture, would like to have the names of the others. Can you help?**

(Provisional) in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, supporting Operation Southern Watch. His staff tours include plan assignments in Strategic Air Command and Tactical Air Command, plus duty as deputy director of plans and programs at Air Combat Command. He served in plans and operations at Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon; as executive assistant to the first vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and as director of Strategy, Policy and Plans (J-5), U.S. Southern Command. The general has also served as vice commander of 12th Air Force, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, and prior to his current assignment, was vice commander, Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia.

General Keck's father, Major Jim Keck, served in the the 2nd Air Division of the 8th Air Force in World War II. First assigned to

the 458th BG, Jim Keck and his crew were selected to transfer to the 491st Bomb Group as a lead crew when the 491st became operational. Jim eventually became the Operations Officer of the 854th Squadron, serving with great distinction in the 491st Bomb Group and the 2nd Air Division.

Postwar he was one of the young officers chosen to lead the Strategic Air Command. After commanding a group, wing, etc. he became commander of the 8th Air Force. Jim Keck completed his career as the vice commander of the Strategic Air Command.

Son Tom, following in his father's footsteps, graduated from the Air Force Academy and has now assumed command of his father's former command, a tribute to the excellence of his father's training and career in the Second Air Division. ■

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# DIRECTORY

Honorary President..... JORDAN R. UTTAL  
7824 Meadow Park Drive, Apt. 101, Dallas, TX 75230-4939  
Telephone: 214-369-5043 • Fax: 214-369-0758

## OFFICERS

President..... FELIX LEETON  
7325 Bonanza Place, Greenwell Springs, LA 70739  
Telephone: 504-261-5300 • Fax 504-261-7197

Executive Vice President..... WALTER J. MUNDY  
23020 Basin Harbor Court, Tehachapi, CA 93561-9638  
Telephone: 805-821-5101

Vice President Membership..... EVELYN COHEN  
6410 Delaire Landing Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114-4157  
Telephone: 215-632-3992 • Fax 215-632-8319

Treasurer..... E.W. (BILL) NOTHSTEIN  
40 Meadow Drive, Spencerport, NY 14559-1142  
Telephone: 716-352-3350 • Fax 716-352-4201

Secretary and Director of  
Administrative Services..... DAVID G. PATTERSON  
28 Squire Court, Alamo, CA 94507-2230  
Telephone: 510-837-1667 • Fax 510-743-9940

2ADA Representative  
Board of Governors..... CHARLES WALKER  
9824 Crest Meadow, Dallas, TX 75230-5331  
Telephone: 214-987-0467 • E-Mail: B-24MAN@aol.com

## GROUP VICE PRESIDENTS

Headquarters..... RAY E. STRONG  
320 Burlage Circle, Chapel Hill, NC 27514-2701  
Telephone: 919-967-2301

44th Bomb Group..... RICHARD D. BUTLER  
16494 Wagon Wheel Drive, Riverside, CA 92506-5850  
Telephone: 909-780-7421 • Fax 909-780-1459

93rd Bomb Group..... ALFRED ASCH  
6205 Meadow Court, Rockville, MD 20852-3637  
Telephone: 301-881-1376

389th Bomb Group..... BERNARD F. DRISCOLL  
431 Pool Road, Richards, TX 77873-9507  
Telephone: 409-291-6253

392nd Bomb Group..... CHARLES E. DYE  
4949 San Pedro Dr. NE Apt. 87, Albuquerque, NM 87109-2583  
Telephone: 505-883-3107

445th Bomb Group..... FRED A. DALE  
Box 352, Mahomet, IL 61853-0352  
Telephone: 217-586-3136

446th Bomb Group..... AUD RISLEY  
682 Slade Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120-3066  
Telephone: 847-741-7757 • E-mail: aud446@aol.com

448th Bomb Group..... ROBERT ANGLE  
1445 Forelle Lane, Tom's River, NJ 08755  
Telephone: 732-286-0948

453rd Bomb Group..... LLOYD PRANG  
4251 Willow Street, Greenwood, IN 46142  
Telephone: 317-885-0224

458th Bomb Group..... E.A. (RICK) ROKICKI  
365 Mae Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21061-4694  
Telephone: 410-766-1034 • Fax 410-969-1452

466th Bomb Group..... JAMES H. LORENZ  
5331 East Poinsettia Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85254-4716  
Telephone: 602-951-0343

467th Bomb Group..... GEOFF GREGORY  
3110 Sheridan, Garland, TX 75041-4400  
Telephone: 972-278-8537 • E-mail: ggregmt@aol.com

489th Bomb Group..... NEAL SORENSEN  
132 Peninsula Road, Minneapolis, MN 55441-4112  
Phone & Fax: 612-545-2698

491st Bomb Group..... JOHN D. LEPPERT  
4383 Live Oak Blvd., Palm Harbor, FL 34685-4024  
Telephone: 813-784-1984

492nd Bomb Group..... W.H. (BILL) BEASLEY  
1525 South Garfield Street, Denver, CO 80210-3022  
Telephone: 303-756-4766 • Fax 303-759-3684

## JOURNAL

Editor..... RAY PYTEL  
P.O. Box 484, Elkhorn, WI 53121-0484  
NOTE NEW AREA CODE! Tel. 262-723-6381 • Fax 262-723-7981

## HERITAGE LEAGUE

President..... CRAIG A. BEASLEY  
3459 Celebration Drive, West Valley City, UT 84120  
Telephone: 801-250-8565 • 801-252-3042

## 2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL ROOM

Trust Librarian..... DEREK S. HILLS  
2ADA/Fulbright Librarian..... JUDITH A. JEROME

SECOND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL ROOM  
71 Ber Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 3AD, England

# SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



# JOURNAL



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1 Limetree Road, Norwich NR2 2NF, England  
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"Westering," Salhouse, Norwich, Norfolk NR13 6RQ, England  
**T.J. DOWLING**  
Assistant Cultural Attaché, U.S. Embassy  
24 Grosvenor Sq., London, W1A 1AE, England  
**NICHOLAS P. COOPER**  
Wychwood, Cothey Lane, Cringleford, Norwich, Norfolk NR4 7RE  
**MRS. FRANCES DAVIES**  
57 Church Lane, Eaton, Norwich NR4 6NY, England  
**ROGER A. FREEMAN**  
May's Barn, Dedham, Nr. Colchester, Essex, England CO7 6EW  
**DAVID Q. GURNEY**  
Bawdeswell Hall, East Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4SA

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England  
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Duxford Airfield, Cambridge CB2 4QR, England  
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School of English and American Studies  
University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ, England  
**KEITH R. THOMAS**  
Cannell Farm, Bow St GT Ellingham  
Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 15A, England  
**CHARLES WALKER**  
9824 Crest Meadow, Dallas, TX 75230-5331 USA  
**LT. COL. W.D. WUEST**  
14 St. Andrews Close, Hingham, Norfolk NR9 4JT, England



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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

Since by the time this *Journal* will be read, a new president will have been selected at the Tampa Bay convention, I only want to say that it was a pleasure and honor to serve you. I wish great success and all the best to the new president, and offer to help his administration in any way I can! Good luck and continued success to the Second Air Division Association. ■

## VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY FELIX LEETON (389TH BG)

As I write, the grass is growing, the birds are singing, March Madness is into the Final Four. We have been to the 2ADA Southwest Regional Reunion in Dallas! It must be time for the 2000 convention in Tampa!! Since this *Journal* won't be circulated until after the meeting, it is impossible to report on the business of that meeting, so we'll stick to our "hopes and dreams" and save reporting for some later date!

To me, an annual convention highlight is the presence of a British delegation, because it reminds me of our roots, and that, as a veterans' association, we are unique!! In a recent correspondence, Hap Chandler referred to me as an "anglophile." My dictionary defines the term as "a person who strongly admires, or is devoted to England, its people, customs, etc." I plead guilty!

From my first three-day pass to London (21 June 1944), I was hooked! We had gone to Berlin in the morning. As the tail-end Charlie group, we had taken a beating from yellow nosed fighters. During the debriefing, Major Tolleson, the squadron C.O., came to our table and asked if we would like a pass. We caught the earliest train and were in London before dark. We made the suggested contact and were in a Cromwell Road Hotel in time to see one of the first really big V-1 attacks on London. We watched from the roof, fascinated, while listening to the locals tell how the Blitz was much worse! The next morning we inspected the town and were impressed by the Underground and the facilities for its use as a huge air raid shelter.

It didn't take too much finger-counting to realize that these people had been at war for nearly five years, and the fact was that for many of those years (the fall of France in 1940 until December 7, 1941), they had been alone.

On the train back to Norwich we were in one of the old third class carriages where there was a door for each seat and no access through the train. One of the passengers in our compartment was an old woman (probably at least 40) who with a bit of encouragement told us some of her stories of the Blitz. She told about riding up the lonely lane on her bicycle when a German fighter swooped down and strafed her. She took to the ditch and wasn't hit, but (here her eyes got very large), "then the bastard turned around and made another pass!!"

I saw "Gone With the Wind" in Norwich! Although I had read the book and seen the movie two or three times, this was a real adventure! The crowd was really "into" the play; they seemed to take the burning of Atlanta as a personal attack! When the intermission came and Scarlet gave her speech ("As God is my witness, I'll never go hungry again!!") there was a reaction that made one's skin crawl.

There are acts of kindness that are so impressive that they are hard to explain. Let's just say that this is one that I have remembered for 56 years in every detail as though it were yesterday. We were wandering through the market stalls near the Norwich City Hall, and an old lady (this one may have been 50) was selling an orange drink. I bought one, and as she filled a cup from her container, she hesitated, removed the cover, fished out a sliver of ice and said, "We know how you Yanks like your ice!"

Back to an instance of people who can endure above and beyond. After the V1 attacks became even worse, I happened to be in London on another three-day pass at a time it was decided to evacuate children to safer sites. We came into the Waterloo Street Station and into what appeared to be thousands of children. I would guess the ages as between 6 and 12; they all looked as if they had been scrubbed with a brush; there was supervision but it was sparse and unobtrusive! There was no movement; the place was quiet; the discipline was frightening; they stood silently in their queues. This was before I got into the game of raising children — after five of my own, it is incomprehensible!

Only an anglophile would spend his honeymoon on a 2ADA convention in England with an extra male in tow! Let me put it this way. After a year as a widower, I decided to spread my wings and go to the 1983 2ADA convention in Nashville. I met lots of dandy folks and had a great time. The late Charles Dearing and I, being at loose ends together, hit it off particularly well. We decided to go to England in 1984, and made our arrangements which included reservations at the Royal Horse Guards Hotel in London.

Then, Marge found herself in similar straits. By the time I had talked her into getting married and going to England with us, it was too late to change plans, so Chuck came with us! We did the Norwich convention, and moved on to London where we did all the usual things: visited Stone-



(continued on page 12)



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. ■

**Will It!**  
**To The Second**  
**Air Division**  
**Memorial**  
**Capital Fund!!!**

# Report from the 2ADA Representative on the Board of Governors

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

The good news is that construction of the new Millennium Library in Norwich is progressing approximately four months behind schedule but will still be open before our November 2001 convention, and it is still on budget. David Hastings reports that over 50 workers are hard at work on the project. Their yellow hard hats scurrying around reminds one of a beehive. Robin Hall, CEO of the Millennium Company, was interviewed last week on BBC Norfolk and gave a very upbeat report on construction progress to date.

The sad news is that our Trust Governor John Whitehouse died on April 4, 2000, as a result of a horse riding accident on 26 March. John had until recently run a major international machinery business with important markets in the United States. Following the sale of his company he concentrated on development of a company responsible for the aerial surveillance of the entire fishing waters of the UK for the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. He was an experienced pilot.

John had been a Governor of our Trust for five years and had made outstanding contributions to its development. The excellent brochure for the British 2AD Memorial Library Appeal was one example of his good work. Chairman Paul King stated, "We, the Governors of the Trust, will miss John enormously. He gave so much. He was a marvelous friend and colleague. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Susie and their two daughters."

The Association is donating books to our 2AD Memorial Library in memory of John.

On a lighter note: At the Governors meeting of April 13, EVENT Limited showed the proposed interior design of our 2AD Memorial Library. It is stunning in concept, reports David. The Governors also studied the staffing and cost implications of the new building and finalized the five-year financial plan.

Mr. Carson Holloway of Durham, NC has been selected as the 2ADA/Fulbright scholar to succeed Judy Jerome as her term expires in September. Carson was so excited about the appointment that he flew to Norwich in late March where he met with Paul King and David Hastings. In a note to me, he said he liked them both and appreciated the time they devote to the Memorial. He also said he has begun thinking and working on ideas for the Web site.

Ms. Janet Holden has been appointed the new "Central Library Chief" to succeed Colin Sleath, who is retiring.

Keith Thomas attended his first Governors meeting with great enthusiasm. Richard Crockett was appointed to replace Professor Howard Temperley who is retiring as a Governor. Professor Crockett has twice been a Fulbright Scholar and specializes in American politics. He will be filling the enormous shoes left by Professor Temperley who has contributed so much as a hard-working Governor of our Memorial Trust. We thank him profusely and wish him well in his future endeavors.

Mr. George Wright, a Brit, presented his outstanding models of the group assembly ships to the Governors for inclusion in our new 2AD Memorial Library. Those of us who have seen the models applaud George for the fine work he has done and his generosity in donating them to the library.

David Hastings reports this year's American Essay Competition was awarded to Andrew Whittle of year nine Notre Dame High School. His essay was about the American expansion westward and its effect on the Native Americans. His prize: £50, 2 tickets to the American Air Museum, and a free pleasure flight. We congratulate Andrew.

EVENT Limited is the designer responsible for the Norfolk Heritage Visitors Attraction Center which will depict the five major influences on Norwich: the Vikings, the Normans, and the 2nd Air Division are among the five. It will be a three-story display adjacent to our Memorial in the new library. EVENT has expressed an urgent need for items with links to the 2nd Air Division's stay in Norwich during WWII: uniforms, A-2 jackets, caps, maps, chewing gum, photos, copies of Yank Magazine, letters, or anything which will show the links between the 2nd Air Division and the people of Norwich. Your contributions can be mailed to David Hastings or to me to carry to Norwich when I attend the annual Governors meeting in October.

Can you believe that a scant 100 years ago, one in ten adults could read or write, only 14% of homes had a bathtub, and only 8% had a telephone? We still need the bathtubs, but who needs the telephone — we have the Internet! Stay well and happy. ■

## Folded Wings

### HDQ

Warren E. Alberts  
Lillian Meadows Moore

### 44th

Arvin L. Irish

### 93rd

Henry C. Betz (44th)  
Henry W. Brandt (HDQ)  
Stanley F. Jacewicz  
William J. Komarek  
Kendrick L. Williams

### 389th

Roy N. Baxter  
Charles E. D'Arcy  
Stephan A. O'Connor

### 392nd

Warren A. Polking  
Philip A. Sullivan  
Leslie L. Tribbett  
Leonard C. Waldo (44th)

### 445th

Walter J. Bartkow  
Stephen S. Hull (93rd, 389th)

### 446th

Howard K. Phillips

### 448th

Robert E. McMillen  
James L. Smith

### 453rd

Lawrence Joseph  
Robert S. Mallick, Jr. (467th)  
Kenneth R. McVee  
Lloyd M. Nelson  
Perry M. Roberson  
Robert W. Wolfe

### 458th

Donald R. Conway  
Creek R. Fairfield  
Harry T. Lucas, Jr.  
Henry L. Newell  
George W. Parks  
M.E. Van Sky

### 466th

George W. Corrar  
W. Harold Nash  
James E. Thomas

### 467th

Arcade J. Boisselle  
Ralph H. Elliott  
Joseph M. Reilly

### 489th

James J. Fetterly  
Baylor B. Wise

Board of Governors  
John Whitehouse

## CHECK OUT THESE WEB SITES:

Judy Jerome has done an outstanding job in updating our 2AD Memorial Library Web Site. The new address is:

<http://www.obycity.com/2admemoial/index.htm>

You will want to check out the new features, especially the dots on the left side.

And you can follow the Library Construction on this Web Site:

<http://www.esinet.norfolk.gov.uk/millennium/libcam.htm>



### SEVERAL ITEMS

#### FOR ALL JOURNAL CONTRIBUTORS:

Please remember to double-check your articles for the following common mistakes:

1. It's "2AD Memorial Library," not "American Memorial Library" or "Norwich Library."
2. It's "2ADA/Fulbright Librarian."
3. It's "Army Air Forces" after June 20, 1941, not Air Corps!
4. It's FLAK (not "flack").
5. You were drafted into the Army first!
6. Aviation cadets were under the Army Air Forces; they were not "Air Corps" per se.
7. Clippings from newspaper and periodicals must include the name, place, and date of publication in order to be considered.

### GROUND PERSONNEL

The 490 BG, part of the 3rd Division, first flew 40 missions in B-24s always overrunning the B-17 groups in the 3rd Division then got tired of it and converted to B-17s in the fall of 1944. They reminded me in their Spring 2000 "Bombs Away" bulletin to salute *all* the ground personnel, not only the men who worked on our planes.

The next reunion of the 490th will have the theme "Salute to Our Support Personnel," which they listed as the Quartermaster Company, the Station Complement, the Military Policy Company, the Medical Dispensary, the Firefighters, the Air Service Group, the Ordnance Company, the Financial Section, the Chemical Company, the Sub Depot, the Weather Squadron, and the American Red Cross.

This list is far from complete; one has only to think of all the generals, WACs, and officers at Headquarters and up the line who did the planning, maintained the statistics, analyzed the bomb strike photos, interpreted German propaganda and substituted it for our own, and those who filled up our bulletin boards with various orders to "fill up" our time when we were not on actual missions.

There were the "SAD" depots who picked up our wrecks and reassembled our B-24s; the rescue services over land and sea; and finally the ultimate rescue services, the various chaplains who were always around, ready to punch your T.S. ticket whenever one of us felt like we needed it.

One can go on and on . . . for example, the various secret B-24 groups and squadrons such as the Carpetbaggers, the 36th Bomb Squadron flying specially equipped B-24s with radio countermeasures to jam not only German air and ground communications, but also our VHF transmissions during assembly by circling over the Dutch coast thus preventing the Germans from gaining useful last-minute information

# THE EDITOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

BY RAY R. PYTEL (445th)

Still Up To Speed,  
THE EDITOR HAS HIT 80!  
(Born May 5th, 1920)

about our missions.

There were many, many other such secret squadrons, ground and air, who did their own thing and which never received any thanks for their contributions towards beating the hell out of a mighty war machine, the Luftwaffe. Let us now say "Thanks, boys, we were all in this mess together!"

Anyone who has a story to tell about these or any other support services of any kind, please speak up. Write a piece; tell us "who happen" for the record, while we are still "up to speed."

### SUMMER QUIZ

A variety of 19,257 Liberator types and Liberator derivatives were built. How well do you know the history of this plane?

1. What was the prototype company designation of the Liberator?
2. The XB-24, YB-24 and RB-24 started with several distinctive features not found on later models. Can you name at least two?
3. The B-24A was ordered by what country and how many were produced and delivered?
4. What was the original Liberator designation by the British?
5. What was the designation of the first real production B-24 and how many were produced?
6. What models of the B-24 introduced the tail turret? The ball turret? The nose turret?
7. How did the B-24J and B-24H differ?
8. How did the B-24L and B-24M differ?
9. What were the significant differences between the Navy PB4Y-1 and PB4Y-2? How did they differ from the Army Air Forces model B-24N?
10. What was the significance of the Liberator named Commando? ■

## B-24 Production Summary – All Models\*

(ANSWER TO SPRING QUIZ, QUESTION 1)

Model & Series	TOTAL PRODUCED <sup>1</sup>					Total
	CO	CF	FO	DT	NT	
XB-24	1					1
LB-30A	6					6
Liberator I <sup>3</sup>	20					20
YB-24	1					1
B-24A	9					9
Liberator II <sup>3</sup>	140					140
B-24C	9					9
B-24D <sup>2</sup>	2,415	303		10		2,728
B-24E	144	490	167			801
B-24G					430	430
B-24H		738	1,780	582		3,100
B-24J	2,792	1,558	1,587	205	536	6,678
B-24L	417		1,250			1,667
B-24M	916		1,677			2,593
XB-24N <sup>4</sup>			1			1
YB-24N <sup>4</sup>			7			7
C-87		280				280
C-87A		6				6
AT-22		5				5
PB4Y-2 <sup>5</sup>	740					740
RY-3	34					34
R2Y	1					1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>7,501</b>	<b>3,034</b>	<b>6,792</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>19,257</b>

Note 1: Manufacturers: CO = Consolidated, San Diego, California. CF = Consolidated, Fort Worth, Texas. FO = Ford, Willow Run, Michigan. DT = Douglas, Tulsa, Oklahoma. NT = North American, Dallas, Texas. Note 2: 977 U.S. Navy PB4Y-1 Liberators were built under USAAF B-24D contracts. Note 3: Only the Liberators Mk. I & II were bought directly from the manufacturer; subsequent aircraft were obtained under Lend-Lease agreements. Note 4: Only the single-tailed B-24s produced for the AAF at war's end. Note 5: Navy single-tailed extended fuselage, souped-up engines without superchargers. "Privateers" used for submarine patrol. \*Courtesy: "Liberator – America's Global Bomber."

**ANSWER TO SPRING QUIZ, QUESTION 2:** The Ford Motor Company also acquired a \$120,000,000 contract from the government to build 64,708 Pratt & Whitney engines, the first coming off the line on 15 August 1941 with peak production in July of 1944 at 186 engines per day. That's over 7 per hour. Ford also manufactured 52,281 "B-22 type" turbosuperchargers in the same building. These were used in the B-24 and B-17 bombers.

— Courtesy: Yankee Air Force's "Hangar Happenin's"

# NOTES AND NEWS FROM THE HONORARY PRESIDENT

BY JORDAN R. UTTAL (HQ), 2ADA HONORARY PRESIDENT

Even though there is nothing earth-shattering in these reports to you on matters with which I am involved, I still think that some word should be forthcoming to keep you up to date. So, here we are again:

## ROLL OF HONOR

I always start with this subject. When I became involved with this responsibility in the early '80s, it soon grabbed my heart. This remembrance of those whose deaths were combat-related, I feel, should be a matter of prime reverence on the part of all of us.

In spite of the flurry of names presented to us this year, only three names have been certified for eligibility according to the criteria adopted by us (2ADA Executive Committee) in 1984, and reconfirmed in 1993. These criteria firmly state that after investigation by the group VP involved, final certification must be obtained by him from Washington. The Executive Committee is now involved with the details of creating a separate register of those killed in the line of duty other than combat.

## MEMORIAL LIBRARY APPEAL

No, this is not a request for funds at this time. Rather it is to convey the news of the untimely death of a member of the Board of Governors, John Whitehouse, in a horseback riding accident. We met John at the 1998 Oak Brook convention, and had since developed a strong appreciation for his many activities for the benefit of the 2nd Air Division and our Memorial Trust.

John was the creator of the handsome Memorial Appeal brochure which started the fund drive by the Governors in November 1998 in which we participated. He designed and produced it, and it contributed to the understanding and the success of the appeal in England, and here as well, a fitting memorial to a wonderful friend of the 2nd Air Division.

## SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BOOKS

Since the last issue of the *Journal* we have had six more contributions from members. I repeat, nothing gives me more pleasure than to work with any of you who wish to remember in this manner anyone to whom you have felt close. I will be calling to the attention of the Executive Committee that a seldom-used request will be made for the Association to underwrite books in memory of three individuals who, by precedent, deserve such a gesture. I refer to the recent losses of one of the seven co-founders of the Association, Henry Brandt, 93rd BG and Headquarters, a two-term past president, 1964/1966, Warren Alberts, 93rd BG and HQ, and of course, John Whitehouse.

## FRIENDS OF THE 2AD MEMORIAL

Keith Thomas, one of the past chairmen of

the Friends, was recently invited to become a member of the Board of Governors. I am sure he will be willing to answer any questions about past, present and future activities of the Friends, a great group which is dedicated to assisting the 2nd Air Division Memorial in any way it can.

I had word in April that the main topic of discussion at the Friends' annual base contact meeting would be how they can help us with our base visits when we come over in November 2001. Again, I invite you to become members of the Friends and show them your support. Dues are \$6.00 single or \$10.00 family. Checks should be made out to me, and I will convert to pounds.

## A PERSONAL OBSERVATION

It's no secret as we get older I think we all have experienced a higher level of irritation with matters that are forced to our attention. Come on, admit it! Such irritation often leads to behavior on our part that perhaps we regret after the fact. Just to name a few of them, how about the tensions of the recent political primary activities (which can only get worse), the Elian/Cuba affair, the stock market volatility, and how about our aches and pains?

To help offset these distractions and make it easier for me to cope with my reactions, I have been jotting down bits of what I consider wisdom and good advice from well-regarded public figures. Here are some of them, all related to reactions and expressions:

"By all means, let us articulate our disagreements on policies without attacking the character, integrity, or mental capacities of the people with whom we disagree."

"Let us work for consensus by bringing *reason* and *facts* into our discussions."

"It is well to speak passionately — but please, without rancor."

I didn't jot down the sources of these comments, but I think you will agree that they make sense.

## WE SENIOR CITIZENS AIN'T GUILTY!

The following bit of what I consider brilliant social commentary was sent to me by Betty and Norb Gebhard (389th) with their 1999 Christmas card. I was pleased to see, a bit later, that Gene Hartley, who publishes the 389th Newsletter, saw fit to use it in a recent issue.

As Norb said, the author is unknown, but the material came from the June 1999 issue of the 8th AFHS - Pa. Chapter Newsletter. Here goes:

### "DON'T BLAME THE ELDERLY FOR THE FAILINGS OF SOCIETY"

*We are probably the only members of society in the history of mankind for which the younger generation has so little respect and has demonstrated such a shameful lack of regard for its older citizens. Senior citizens are constantly being criticized, belittled and sniped at for every con-*

*ceivable deficiency of the modern world, real and imaginary.*

*Upon reflection, I would like to point out that it wasn't the senior citizens who took the melody out of music, the beauty out of art, the pride out of appearance, the romance out of love, the commitment out of marriage, the responsibility out of parenting, togetherness out of family, learning out of education, loyalty out of Americanism, service out of patriotism, the hearth out of the home, civility out of behavior, refinement out of language, dedication out of employment, prudence out of spending or achievement out of ambition. We certainly are not the ones who eliminated patience and tolerance from relationships.*

## BEAUTIFUL THOUGHTS FROM A FRIEND

When we were over to Norwich in November 1998, Bud Chamberlain, who MC'd the dinner for the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial, read the following poem written by one of our most active supporters.

We apologize for the delay in presenting this to those of you who were not there, and also to the author, Christine Armes.

Christine has been a long time proponent of all matters involving the 458th BG, and for that matter has done considerable chores for some of the other groups, particularly with research for anyone who called on her. Here are her thoughts:

### "MADINGLEY"

by Christine P. Armes, 1998

*Here in England's meadows lie  
Men who came to fight in war  
No farewell or last good-bye  
To loved ones on a distant shore.*

*Not for honor, lasting fame  
Or glory did they come to fight  
Or count the cost or portion blame  
But to protect, defend the right.*

*No heroes these uncommon men  
Who flew on wing and silent prayer  
So long ago. Remember when  
They gave us hope amid despair?*

*As buildings new from rubble rise  
When hope lies prostrate in the dust  
These fine young men who braved the skies  
Have lived again within our Trust.*

*Missions flew o'er land and sea  
For freedom in our midst to keep  
So here at rest in Madingley  
Lie men who gave that we might reap.*

# The Heritage of a Trout Stream in Memory of Holland: Down and Dirty

BY CLARK C. ALLAN

I pulled in my line and secured the lower fly of my nymphing rig into the cork handle of the old fiberglass fly rod. Looking upstream I could see Dad landing a nice brown, and downstream, poking out from the willows around the bend I could just make out the tip of my older brother's fly rod. That was good. There would still be two or three small but fishable holes between my brother and the next big deep hole, where I thought a four-pounder may be waiting.

As usual, my brother Scott and I were racing for the best holes as we all leap-frogged by one another along the steep stream banks; and yet at the same time trying to thoroughly fish each hole that might hold a good brown trout. A tricky task. If you linger in one spot too long, your brother catches the big fish ahead of you; if you are too hasty, Dad slips in behind you and catches the big one you've neglected. Of course Dad seems to be able to do that anyway no matter how long you stay, so you race off to the good hole ahead of your brother.

I wiped the sweat off my forehead as I stumbled along through the rocks and brush in my hip boots, passing far enough behind Scott to avoid getting hooked on his back-cast. Just as I passed him he hooked a nice brown. Looking up to see if anyone was close by, he saw me. As he fought the fish, Scott yelled over the sound of the swift current that I should stay away from the big hole around the bend — that one was his. I had him now. Even if he had wanted to pull out and race me to the big hole, he'd have to land the brown first.

As I pulled loose my flies and got ready to cast into the big hole, I looked up to see Dad pause on the hillside behind me. He had followed me, also wanting to see what might be in the big hole. I made a mental note to be careful not to break the fly off when I got the strike. Having Dad watch always made me nervous and I usually set the hook too hard.

Now, concentrating only on fishing, I cast into the edge of the foam right at the head of the hole, right next to where the swift water pours around a big boulder. I leave a little slack in the line so the two nymphs will sink as deep as possible. They drift downstream, then pause for a moment. An instant before I realize what's happening, I hear Dad yell, "There he is!" I set the hook hard. Luckily the six-pound leader holds. Before I can react, a thick nineteen-inch brown streaks for the swift current and rides it downstream. I get him stopped in an eddy forty feet below on the other side of a big willow patch. Excitedly, I look to the river: too much fast water to get to the fish that way. On the bank, the willows are impossible. I look at Dad and yell for help. Laughing all the way, Dad hustles down the bank below the willow and lands the big brown for me.

It was 1981, and I was 19 years old. We were



Lt. Evan Allan and his brother Collin

fishing Sixth Water, one of my favorite places in the entire world. This trip was a kind of family tradition — our own special going-away ritual. In a few days I would be leaving to live in Europe for two years, and thereafter? Who knows when our trio would happily return. Our bond with Sixth Water goes far beyond the good fly fishing. There is a depth of feeling and emotion — a bond deeper than the deepest pools in the river. It grows deeper with each passing year.

I remember vividly one of my first trips up Sixth Water when I was very young. Dad, Scott and I were driving up the canyon on a warm September day. As we rode along in the cab of the truck, I looked up and saw a tear in Dad's eye. When I asked what was wrong, he explained that it was the anniversary of his big brother Evan's death.



As my brother and I were doing, Evan and Dad grew up in Mapleton, a small farming community in central Utah nestled up against Maple Mountain of the Wasatch Range. In fact, my forebears were among the first residents to homestead and found the town in the mid 1800s. The Allans were Welsh immigrants and had been outdoorsmen and hunters in Wales for many generations before coming to America. They took easily to the Wild West. My great grandfather apparently got along better with the native Ute Indians than with some of his white neighbors. He had an Indian name meaning "Wildcat" arising from an incident where he tried to capture a live bobcat in his coat. The bobcat won the contest much to the entertain-

ment of his Indian companions.

By the time Evan and Dad came along, the family had settled down into the farming trade, but their hunting and fishing heritage was still alive and well. Evan and Dad were the only children in the family, Evan being the eldest by ten years. Although they had very little, their family was extremely close and caring. Through the 1930s as the boys grew up, times were lean and I have heard many stories about the difficulty in rounding up enough ammunition for a hunting trip, or even enough gasoline for a fishing trip.

When World War II came along, there was no question about whether Evan would serve his country; although he could have had a farm deferment. Dad, on the other hand, was far too young. He would have to sit it out, waiting for the return of his older companion. Soon after the outbreak of war, Evan and a boyhood friend, Juan Whiting, hitchhiked to Salt Lake City and enlisted in the Aviation Cadet program of the Army Air Forces.

After waiting to be called up, Evan went through flight training and earned his pilot's wings. He was assigned to the B-24 combat crew of Lt. Claude T. Lovelace as his copilot. After transition training the crew was sent to the 489th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force stationed at Halesworth, England.

I suspect that it was more than mere coincidence that we often fished Sixth Water on the anniversary of Evan's death. In an earlier time, a similar trio consisting of Grandpa, Evan and Dad made such trips. Sixth Water had obviously held a warm place in Evan's heart. In June of 1944 Evan wrote home from England:

*My Dear Brother,*

*Well Collin, your out of school now. I'm wondering what you are doing. Mom mentioned you were thinning beet's — that's worse than being in school. Now about 4:00 p.m. there. I'm wondering if you and Dad are almost ready to go up on Sixth Water — sure wish I were going with you. We'd stay for a week.*

*How's Pup [the dog] doing? Lazy as ever I'll bet. Take good care of him for me. I have a picture of him, one of the mountain and one of you three to keep me from getting homesick. I hope to hear from you soon.*

*Your Loving Brother, Evan*

Four days later Evan wrote:

*To My Dear Dad,*

*Here's a line to wish you a very happy Father's Day. Although I can't be with you I'm thinking of you as always. Planning all the things we have to do when I get back there. Wondering what you are doing today? If it's warm enough to drive up the canyon or even if there is enough gas. I know what I'd like us to be doing if I were there — up on Sixth Water doing some fishing. Have some of Mom's fried chicken and ice cream. What a*

*(continued on page 36)*



491st BOMB GROUP  
POSTREMUM ET OPTIMUM

## the RINGMASTER REPORTS

BY JOHN D. LEPPERT

### LOOKING BACK:

The 491st Bombardment Group was an exceptional outfit and the records show that we did our job with superior results. The files of the Eighth Air Force say it best:

"No other group was ever committed to action so fast and flew so many missions in so short a time, achieving such fine results."

After VE Day, the 491st was alerted to fly back to the States and after 30 days leave to reform at McCord AAB for duty in the Pacific out of Okinawa. Of course the result is history now. The war in Japan ended in August and the 491st was deactivated in September 1945.

The spirit of the Ringmasters lived on with the many accomplishments of our people. Think about these four generals (that we know about): General Jack Merrell, Major General Frederick H. Miller, Major General Ralph S. Saunders, and Lt. General James M. Keck. And we can't even count the great many who were promoted to higher ranks during the years following WWII. We know of several enlisted men who worked their way up to become high ranking officers over the years. With Korea, many were called back to active service and then elected to stay and finish their careers in the service.

Also a great number of Ringmasters who picked up civilian life ended up as airline pilots, airline service people, lawyers, doctors, judges, professors, CEOs of major corporations, engineers, executives, and the list goes on.

Further, our sons and daughters have also distinguished themselves. There are many, but to pick just two outstanding ones:

Lt. General Thomas J. Keck was recently appointed commander of the 8th Air Force. He is the son of our own Lt. General James M. Keck.

Dr. Janet Lynn Sellers Kavandi is a very active NASA astronaut and the daughter of William Sellers, who was on the Kenneth Rowe crew. Her father and the rest of the crew had to bail out over Germany and became POWs. Janet carried our 491st group flag on a NASA mission and the flag is now displayed at the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia for all to see.

We're all real proud of our Ringmasters and their accomplishments. ■

## Not All Our Wars Were Big – For Example, The Bloody Pig War!

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

The U.S. troops started landing. First, a company of the Ninth U.S. Infantry, commanded by a young officer named George E. Pickett showed up to assert America's manifest destiny on the beaches. A few days later, three Royal Navy warships arrived, ready to defend the rights and immunities of all British subjects and their possessions.

Peaceable though it now seems, a tiny island was quickly becoming the staging ground for a military contest between two mighty nations. Both the United States and Great Britain claimed the island as their own, and were ready to defend that right to the death. The "death" came soon enough in the form of a pig — which later became known in U.S. history as the "Pig War" that began on June 15, 1859.

If you have never heard of the Pig War, there is no need to feel inadequate. All it means is that you probably do not live within zip code 98250, the postal address of Washington State's San Juan's Island, a small tourism, farming, and whale-watching community just east of Victoria, B.C.

The pig's moment in history's limelight was a brief one. We know nothing of its biography prior to that fateful June morning, when it tunneled under a fence into a potato patch, began rooting up and eating the tender young tubers, and very shortly thereafter was shot dead by the man who had planted them. The pig, a large black boar, belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company (which had set up a farm on the island), and was therefore British. The pig-killing farmer had recently arrived from Kentucky, and was therefore American. This added up to an international incident when both the farmer and the Hudson's Bay Company started complaining to their respective governments, which drew new attention to the fact that each government, due to certain geographic irregularities, considered itself rightful proprietor of the island.

A military standoff occurred with threats and name-calling by both sides, until level-headed officials assessed the situation and agreed to a joint military occupation until the two governments could figure out which of them was the island's rightful proprietor. So the American troops hunkered down on the south shore of San Juan, and a small detachment of red-coated marines set up camp sixteen miles away, on the north shore.

Before long, the two garrisons more or less threw down their rifles and settled into a friendly round of picnics, track-and-field matches, and potluck dinners. This is how they whiled away the next thirteen years. The U.S. government was preoccupied with the rather more urgent matter of civil war; the British Empire, too, had other fish to fry. It was not until 1872 that the contenders got around to settling the San Juan question.

Then one day word arrived that Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany — who had for some reason been asked to arbitrate — had decreed that San Juan was American soil. The British lowered the Union Jack and sailed away. A farmer named William Crook bought their campsite and planted fruit trees on the old parade ground, and turned the old barracks building into storage sheds. The U.S. Army left a couple of years later, and the Pig War was over.

It had not been a particularly bloody conflict, unless you were the Hudson's Bay Company's pig. For that unfortunate animal, the war had meant a brief, glorious sortie across enemy lines, a daring raid, a flash of light, and then a kind of immortality.

The Library of Congress has several books on the Pig War. One of them, *The Pig War And Other Experiences of William Peck, Soldier 1858-1862*, offered a look at the journal of an American participant in the great conflict. Unfortunately, it turned out to consist largely of entries such as "Camp Pickett, November 18th. Weather as usual, dull. Detachment doing nothing. These are really halcyon days of our soldiering, utterly idle."

Today a sign that says "Pig War Museum" greets you at the tiny island. Soon you are met by Emilia L. Bave, who for the last 40 years has been San Juan Island's self-appointed curator of Pig War history. The museum's vast room is lined with cases of shop-window dummies dressed in historical garb, enacting episodes from the island's war history. In another display case, George Pickett (of Gettysburg fame) wears what looks suspiciously like a Coast Guard uniform.

The exhibits grow stranger and stranger. One, which depicts a certain Charles McKay, an ex-miner who lived on San Juan during the Pig War, bears a placard that reads: "His granddaughter, Aurelia Gagner, remembered when he was eighty years old that his teeth were still strong enough to shell walnuts. How he loved to play chess!"

Finally, there is an entire wall devoted to the Crook family, who had farmed where the English camp once stood, until William's last superannuated children transferred the land to the National Park Service in the 1960s. There was James Crook, who "lost his eye from a flying knot while chopping wood;" his sister Mary, who was "a perky little woman and very religious;" and sister Rhoda, who "wore her shirt collar up to try to hide huge goiters." This last dummy is particularly upsetting in appearance. Rhoda's life-size likeness, the placard states proudly, "was created from wall spackle by Emilia L. Bave."

Goiters made of wall spackle aren't quite up there with the Iwo Jima Memorial. Yet we can't help but wonder whether she hadn't created a suitable monument for a war that was started by a pig. ■

# THE LONG, LONG SEARCH FOR OUR HERO

BY EVERETT R. JONES JR. (466TH), AS TOLD TO BILL MARVEL, THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS  
WITH COMMENTS BY JIM LORENZ, 466TH GROUP VP

The following are excerpts from an article by Bill Marvel, based on an interview with Everett R. Jones and published in the August 3, 1999 edition of *The Dallas Morning News*.

## WWII FLIER FINALLY FINDS THE PILOT WHO SAVED HIS LIFE!

They never knew who he was. All they knew is that they were in trouble. Their B-24 bomber had lost an engine and now they were flying alone, way below the rest of their formation, a fat, juicy morsel for any German fighter that came along.

Then an American P-51 appeared off their wing tip, a guardian angel to see them safely home. They had just started to relax a bit when a German fighter did appear. It hurtled down from somewhere above and behind them, faster than anything they had ever seen before. It blasted the P-51 out of the sky, then rolled towards earth and disappeared.

If that P-51 had not been there to take the attack . . .

And they never knew who he was.

→ → → →

Four months ago, Everett Jones saw a model airplane magazine on a newsstand. The shape on the cover caught his eye. Sleek and bat-winged, it was the same shape he and his crew had glimpsed in that electric moment over Germany 55 years ago — an ME-163, Komet, the rocket-powered German fighter. But Jones was not thinking about the German plane — he was thinking about the fate of the American pilot.

"I had never really forgotten," Jones says. "But when I saw that magazine with that cover on it, that really lit my fuse. There just had to be a way . . . to find out who that P-51 pilot was."

A few days later, Jones placed an ad in the *Air Force* magazine: "Seeking information on a P-51 pilot shot down in the Gelsenkirchen, Germany area November 1, 1944."

The first letter arrived within a week. A thick sheaf of correspondence and documents began to accumulate. No one had the whole story, but each had a piece of the puzzle.

Mr. Jones knew the American fighter pilot who sacrificed his life that day was a hero, but he didn't know who he was. The others knew who he was, but they didn't know he was a hero. It took all of them to put the story together.

→ → → →

"You have to know my brother," says Tom Alison. Tom is a retired mortgage broker in St. Clair, Michigan. On November 1, 1944, he was in the U.S. Navy. His older brother, Denis Alison — called "Spike" — was a second lieutenant flying a P-51 with the 20th Fighter Group out of England.

"My brother was a really independent guy. He was already six feet tall and 190 pounds when he was 13 years old. He normally got his way. Personality-wise, if he wanted to do something, he did it."



Lt. Denis Alison (standing), 20th Fighter Group, 77th Squadron, 8th Air Force. The other man is unknown.

When the Alisons got word that their son was missing in action over Germany, the family was devastated. "With a death like that, it sort of bugs you. When somebody just disappears — I can't explain it but you just instinctively try to find out what happened . . ."

About 11 years ago, Tom learned more about his brother's death. But only a little, and that almost by accident.

One evening he received a call from a gentleman with a rich Virginia accent who identified himself as James Herbert, his brother's wing commander in WWII. Herbert said he had a letter from someone who "wanted my brother's most recent address, and that dropped a bomb on me, because when people ask for an address, the implication is that the person is alive. And the best we knew he was MIA, dead and everything else."

Throughout the Netherlands, Tom learned, small groups have dedicated themselves to investigating plane crashes during WWII. Members of such a group had become interested in a P-51 that had crashed outside their village on November 1, 1944.

"My brother's P-51 was the only one downed on that date, according to the records. That's why James Herbert contacted me," Tom says. As it turned out, there was a mistake: wrong day, wrong plane. But Tom and a member of the Dutch group, Henk Jensen, started writing each other regularly. Later on, that would come in handy. Meanwhile, Herbert suggested that Tom join the 20th Fighter Group Association.

On November 1, 1944, the 20th Fighter Group was escorting the B-17 (1st Division 8th AF) over Germany. "Unfortunately, Denis always lagged back," Capt. Herbert says. "I talked to him a number of times about keeping up." But Denis Alison, as his brother points out, was an independent man. It would not be

unlike "Spike," if things were slow, to go looking for action on his own.

That day, Capt. Herbert recalls, there were German fighters about, ME-262s that were considerably faster than the P-51s and very dangerous. Somebody came on the radio and said a ME-262 was trying to sneak up on a Mustang. I kicked my plane around and I didn't see any jet . . . Ten to fifteen seconds later this 262 came right underneath my left wing . . . Calling for his flight to follow, Herbert dropped the nose of his Mustang and gave chase. For a time, it appeared the jet had outrun them. "My number 3 man and another cut a circle inside us and shot the 262's engine out at 16,000 feet." Engagement ended, Capt. Herbert called for his flight to form up. "Alison never showed up," he says. "I assumed the 262 had gotten him." So it appeared on the official Missing Air Crew Report that Lt. Denis Alison had been lagging behind his flight and had fallen prey to the German ME-262 jet fighter.

Steve Blake, a post office carrier and amateur historian in California, spends his leisure time researching the air-to-air combat of WWII. Jones' ad in *Air Force* magazine caught his interest. Several years ago, he and another historian had looked into an incident involving a P-51 on that date, for a book they were writing on encounters between American fighters and German jets during WWII. The United States had no operational jets during the war. The other historian had died and the book project was shelved. Mr. Blake dug into his files, found copies of his files and photos and sent them to Jones. The pieces seemed to fit. Only one P-51 had been shot down on that November day; 2nd Lt. Denis Alison had been the pilot; hometown listed was Birmingham, MI.

The burgermeister of Wiefel-Liefucht had reported to German authorities the burned wreckage of an American P-51 outside the village of Legden. Lt. Alison's body had been identified from his dog tags. With German thoroughness, the local police chief noted the contents of the pilot's pockets: eight coins. The body was buried the following day in the town cemetery, plot number 3. Now, Jones had a name and photos to work with. He sent a letter to the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce asking for help. "I am on a dedicated challenge to locate the next of kin for a deceased 2nd Lt. Denis Alison," he wrote. "I have some information which, I believe, would be of interest to anyone in the immediate family of 2nd Lt. Alison."

Jones also mailed an account of the P-51 incident to Steve Blake.

He was the pilot, flying the lead B-24 with the 466th Bomb Group, Mr. Jones says. They had bombed the synthetic fuel refineries at Gelsenkirchen and had turned back towards England when trouble developed in one of his engines. He had shut down the engine and

(continued on page 30)



## WENDLING 392nd B.G.

BY J. FRED THOMAS

While I would rather regale you with tales of heroism, crashes on takeoffs, mid-air collisions, fighter attacks, heavy flak and coming home on one engine, such will not be the case. It has been just the regular "grunt work" part of most of every day since our last report. There has been correspondence, both e-mail and postal, with folks over about three-quarters of the world. Requests answered; meetings and reunions attended; funerals attended; and a continuous effort to make headway in pursuit of a Roll of Honor for our KILODs as well as add to the Roll of Honor for our KIAs. We are keeping in touch with our Database Committee, etc., etc. Put all that on top of getting the IRS report in the mail, and there is no time for heroism and the like.

As in most issues of the *Journal*, you noted that we lost another five members in the last quarter. Two, Jack Crane and Harold Prouse, were friends and residents of our local area. While Jack Crane's funeral was more or less a private event, we were able to be of some small help, and along with our ever-supportive friend, Dick Hoover, attend the funeral of Harold Prouse. We tried to contact the National Guard and the Reserves, but all we got for the most part were phone menus. We did speak with one human who said he knew nothing about the program of the military furnishing representatives for veterans' funerals, but he would connect us with someone who should know. That connection broke as soon as that person uttered something guttural. From then on, we were never able to speak with a human. Perhaps that is another example of the "new" military. However, we were able to obtain a flag from the local congressman's office for Harold's casket. Also, there was a wreath from the 392nd BG. The funeral director's people did a fine job with the flag ceremony, so the program went well. Betty, Harold's wife, choreographed the ceremony. If we must have funerals, and we all do, Betty's program and the minister made this one of the most rewarding farewells one can imagine.

Now, while the "new" military has been mentioned, you will remember our paragraph about our trying to get our crew's ball turret gunner his DFC medal. We had no success, so we turned the file over to our C.O. of the 392nd BG, Col. Lawrence Gilbert. Since that report, we have had a nice letter from Col. Gilbert in which he outlined his efforts in contacting numerous units of the "Blue Suits." So far, he has had no success, either. On the surface, it would appear that the new boys have the DFC in the category of the Bronze Star, Silver Star, or

what have you, which were awarded for acts of heroism. All the while we thought the DFC had to do with flying. All my crew members who finished the tour with me received the DFC. The only heroic thing they did was survive 30 missions while flying with me and my abilities as a novice pilot with about 400 hours and combat training which was minimal. It seems Congress passed an act that would enable those who fell through the cracks to get the deserved medals, but the paper-shufflers continue to do their thing. Damn it!

The annual chore of trying to recoup members who had neglected to pay 2ADA dues for the year 2000 was attended to when Evelyn Cohen sent me 23 names of non-payers and I sent them a stamped return envelope along with several questions and blanks to check as to why the dues were not paid. We had better than average returns. We received replies with eight checks. Six checked the selection noting that, due to age and health, they were no longer interested in 2ADA. One member, Leslie Tribbett, was reported as having died 4/8/99. We appreciate the cooperation of those who replied.

We have exchanged e-mail with our friend Paul Ballam-Davies, who is in Harlow, which is north of London and not too far from Duxford. Being a person with quite a number of technical skills, Paul has worked with a group who does volunteer work restoring planes at the Duxford Air Museum. He reports that he has decided to remain as part of the group. We are pleased about that since he will be able to tell us at any time how the work goes on the B-24. At last report, he said the B-24 was there in several sections. The museum people estimate it will be about two years in restoration.

We had an interesting call on February 10. A German researcher, Enrico Swartz, called seeking information on Raymond Pound, who, along with his crew, was shot down on the Bernberg mission of July 7, 1944. Swartz was calling from Cologne, Germany. I was unable to find Lt. Pound in any roster, but I did find Norman D. Dewitt who was a member of the Pound crew. Next day, Mr. Swartz called back to let me know he had contacted Mr. Dewitt. Mr. Swartz was most familiar with the numerous crash sites related to the Bernberg mission. He has witnesses who saw some of the crashes. Harold Prouse, William Milliken and three other crews were lost that day. Swartz said the Gestapo murdered three of the Prouse crew. We don't know what he found out about Pound, but if anyone wants to contact Mr. Swartz to swap information, you can e-mail him at [sweta@aol.com](mailto:sweta@aol.com). He said he had worked with Mr. J.A. Hey, the noted Dutch researcher. He credits Mr. Hey with a great deal of his success as a researcher.

February 26 brought the annual Southern California 2ADA reunion at the Phoenix Club in Anaheim. About 230 people attended. Thirty of those members and guests at the tables of

the 392nd BG were: Anthony and Edna Albino; Gilbert and Martha Bambauer with guests, Tommy and Mary Dobsch; Paul and Joan Bordewich; Anna Mae Crane and son, David; Thomas J. Edgington with Mike and Steve; Dick and Eleanor Hoover; Larry and Louise Bachman; Willard Levin; Andrew Landsy; Willis and Dorothy Miller; Betty Prouse, with son and guests, James and Dolores Myl; Keith Roberts; Don and Erny Satterthwait and J. Fred and Elva Thomas. While we missed the military atmosphere and the rapport we had with the Marines at El Toro MAS, the Phoenix was a roomier place, and we believe the evening was enjoyed by all.

I had an e-mail from Bernard Paroly. He and Burrell Ellison remember the June 4, 1944 mission to St. Avord differently than the report in Bob Vickers' book. Bob reported good bombing results on an airfield, but Bernard and Burrell remember it as an abort on account of weather. They say the bombs were brought back with at least one plane salvaging the bombs and landing at a British field with problems. My crew and I were on the mission, but I don't remember the details. I do remember coming home to fog and very low ceilings after dark, but I don't recall having any bombs aboard at the time. Perhaps some of our readers can help resolve the discrepancy.

That brings us back to the subject of adding the newly found names of those men KIA to the Roll of Honor. Further, it was voted by the 2ADA Executive Committee that a new Roll be produced for all those men KILOD, regardless of what their duty might have been. Being the loudest proponent in support of such a project, you just know I was made chairman of the Honor Roll Committee. While the KIA Roll is supposed to list only those men killed going in, or returning from combat, a KILOD Roll would cover all others. Ground personnel regardless of duty, crews lost on training flights, ferry flights, and even crews lost while ferrying flights back to the USA after the war. We maintain that any person doing his assigned duty with the Second Air Division during and as a result of that hateful war should have his or her name listed on a Roll of Honor in the new 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich. To be successful, this would mean that each group's records kept by the U.S. Archives would have to be searched, as well as considerable validation conducted. I have been sent several hundred names from most groups. Copies have been sent on to the VPs of the several groups and some work is being done. However, we have several matters to consider and decisions to make. Any help or suggestions we can have from the field will be appreciated. Stay tuned. My successor or I will keep you updated. It will take time, but it can be done.

We close by expressing true appreciation for gracious and complimentary letters from Mrs. Betty Prouse and Mrs. Alma Johnson. An old man can always use a good hug. ■

Unfortunately, my supply of information to put in the *Journal* is very low. I could reminisce about the pleasure and satisfaction I have received from being a member of the Second Air Division Association. But I have done that in previous issues and in the HQ Newsletter. I doubt that there is any other organization like ours anywhere. To be a part of an organization that honors those who gave their lives so the survivors could enjoy theirs is something very special to me. Or I could talk about the many friendships I have retained with those with whom I served in the Second Air Division and the many new friends who served in the bomb groups that I have met at the 2ADA conventions. And, of course, there are our British friends who are so proud of our Memorial Library. This organization has enriched my life and I am proud to be a member. But we are all now in the twilight of our lives. The list of "folded wings" grows longer.

As an example, after one convention in Norwich, Ruth and I went with about 60 others on a two-week tour of the continent. We got to know all of these people and still keep in touch with some of them. One couple, Tina and Livingston Jones, lived in Asheboro, which is less than an hour's drive from Chapel Hill, and we have visited back and forth. They were a delightful couple who married after they lost their respective spouses several years ago. Both were avid supporters of the 2ADA, and Livingston was HQ vice president at one time. In recent years they both had health problems and Tina passed away about three months ago. A couple of days ago, we received the following note from Ellen Smoak, Tina's daughter:

"On behalf of Livingston and my brother and sister, I would like to thank you for the book memorial in my mother's memory. She would be pleased with this — it was her hope to visit the new library in Norwich. My mother enjoyed knowing you and spoke fondly of your visits. The trips she made with the Second Air Division Association and the friends she made meant so much to her. We thank you for being a part of it. Please continue to keep Livingston in your prayers. He is in poor health and, as a matter of fact, he is in the hospital now, with a severe viral infection. He has also had a mild heart attack in the last few days. So, please remember him."

While most of us may be in the twilight of our lives, many of us hope that the Second Air Division Association is not. We hope that the Heritage League (made up of descendants of 2ADA members) in this country and the Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial in England (most of whom lived around the bomb group bases) will continue to meet, publish, and cooperate in support of the Second Air Division Memorial Library. Both organizations are proud to honor those who gave their lives in support of freedom. The Association is already involving members of the Heritage League in the workings of the 2ADA by having an observer from the League work with the officers and committee chairs. And in Norwich in recent years the Board of Governors have had the Chairman of the Friends of the 2nd

## KETTERINGHAM HALL DIVISION



BY RAY STRONG

Air Division Memorial in attendance at their regular meetings. Further, in recent weeks, a past chairman, Keith Thomas, has been added to the Board.

Back in the early days of the Memorial Library, it was the hope of many people that we could endow the library in order that it could continue to exist "in perpetuity." Some people believed that the funds already in hand would be sufficient. Recent opinions from experts are that the funds will, in just a few years, be insufficient. Inflation is not provided for. This might mean that the library will have to do without its 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian. Or it could mean that the library will not be able to keep up to date with new technology and will be unable to replace obsolete computers. Funds to buy new books and replace worn-out books are already insufficient.

When I started writing this article for the HQ page of the *Journal*, I did not intend it to be a plea for money for our Memorial Library. But the earnings from the trust capital funds are the primary source of support. The new Millennium Library is providing the space for our much larger Second Air Division Memorial Library. No entrance fees will be charged. No membership fees will be required to use our new library. Only earnings from the trust capital funds provide almost all of the income for use by the library. Only a few years are left for members of the 2ADA to ensure that funds will be available to make good on our desire to leave our 2AD Memorial Library adequately funded "in perpetuity."

I know that I am repeating what has been said by others. I urge each of you to consider how you can help to ensure that our Memorial will survive. Don't put off looking at your will to see if you can leave something to the library. Go back and read the article by Geoff Gregory on page 7 of the Winter issue of the *Journal*, Volume 38, No. 4. At the very least, increase the amount you allocate to the trust capital funds with your annual dues.

Today, a smaller and smaller fraction of the people in the U.S. and Britain know very much about World War II. Most young people are not aware of what the world would be like if Hitler had not been stopped. They must be educated about this period in history. Our library provides a source of information about the contributions made by the 8th Air Force on the outcome of the war. More specifically, it has information about the Second Air Division. It has information about the tyranny of the Nazi regime. And it has the Roll of Honor

containing the names of the almost 7000 young men of the Second Air Division who gave their lives that the rest of us could live. The Second Air Division Memorial Library must live "IN PERPETUITY!" ■

### *You Couldn't Lose These Girls If You Tried!*

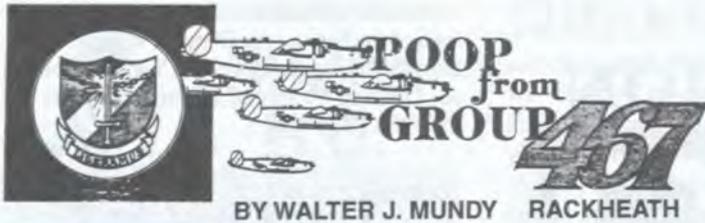
The January 1999 issue of *Aviation History* magazine contained an article by Mike Minnich describing how the American Navy used females as regular flight crew members. An extract of his article is below:

"Of the many thousands of individuals who wore wings and flew in support of America's massive war effort between 1941 and 1945, one small category has been virtually overlooked by history books. They were women, but not the renowned WASPs (Women's Air Force Service Pilots) who tested and ferried USAAF aircraft stateside, nor were they the regular Army & Navy flight nurses who saved lives aboard medical evacuation cargo planes from Normandy to Okinawa.

America's unknown fliers of WWII were a small handful of female aerial navigational instructors of the U.S. Navy. The WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) earned a place in aviation history as the very first American female military personnel whose duties were truly those of federal civil servants during the war, and were only retroactively militarized in 1977, while the flight nurses had a function that pertained to other passengers, not operation of the aircraft itself.

These female Navy officers were navigational instructors and flew combat patrols in the Gulf of Mexico and on the Atlantic and Pacific shores as navigators in PB4Ys and other naval aircraft. They flew regularly to the Canal Zone; Guantanamo Bay base in Cuba, and other naval bases. Some were navigators on the four-motored PB4Y land-based bomber (the Navy version of the B-24 Liberator) on long flights (up to 14 hours) over the Pacific — earning respect from other crew members for their skill in aerial navigation at night!

In 1943 the Navy authorized these females to wear the U.S. Navy navigators wings on their uniforms. These women had to carry a copy of their orders in their possession at all times — as male officers always stopped them saying, 'You are not allowed to wear your boyfriend's wings!' " ■



**POOP**  
from  
**GROUP 467**  
BY WALTER J. MUNDY RACKHEATH

I had not finished reading the *Spring Journal* and the 467th Poop from Group when Ray Pytel's friendly reminder letter arrived to announce that the *Summer Journal* submittal is due. How time does fly!

I have been looking into the changing of the management of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. Bill Beasley of the 492nd Bomb Group wrote to forward some concerns that he had about the change in not only the management (CEO Dr. Barry Buxton has resigned) but also an apparent change in the mission of the museum. It seems that the museum has expanded its scope to include the entire Air Force and they have developed a role for teaching school children the history and legacy of the Mighty Eighth Air Force in World War II.

I think the program to attract our school children to the museum is outstanding. We must get our history and accomplishments passed on to future generations. The likelihood of our grandchildren visiting the museum in Savannah is many times that of them visiting Norwich. This is not to denigrate the 2AD Memorial Library, which is a unique memorial dedicated to the memory of those who gave their lives for their country and the free world.

Many Eighth Air Force veterans have contributed financially to the museum and many individuals have chosen the museum to memorialize those who served.

We have to recognize that the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich is the result of the 2ADA's and our British friends' effort. The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum encompasses the Eighth Air Force including the three Air Divisions of WWII and the Eighth Air Force that has continued for 55 years and hopefully will be around for a long time in the future. The progress in the establishment and development of the museum has necessarily required the financial support of the bomb groups of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Air Divisions. The bomb groups of the 1st and 3rd Air Divisions operate as individual groups and are not as cohesive as the 14 bomb groups of the 2nd Air Division. The museum has also required support from the county and the state from its inception.

Although individuals of the 2ADA may not all agree on some of the displays and presentations, there are a number of members who

find that the exhibits are representative of the story of the Eighth Air Force. The 2ADA should continue to support the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in addition to our primary mission of support for the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library. We can all be proud of the dedication and effort that has been contributed by the 2ADA leadership and membership that has sustained the Memorial since its inception and the ongoing effort of endowing it in perpetuity. The 2ADA is still a strong organization in spite of the fact that our veteran membership is decreasing; we are blessed to have an active Heritage League. Yes, we will continue to focus on our primary target, but we can also do more.

The Bequest Program is an excellent example of how the membership can continue to ensure that the Capital Trust Fund has money to operate the library. I urge all 467th BG Association members and all 2ADA members to participate in this program.

I am also very proud of the contributions of the 467th Bombardment Group (H) Association and our individual members who have given generously. The 2ADA Wall is now enhanced by the 1/6 scale model of the B-24 "Witchcraft." A copy of our group historical archives is now a part of the museum library. We have installed a group marker for the garden. We have sponsored the Bombardier Display featuring the 8th AF precision bombing record of the 467th BG. We have supported the chapel project by providing a pew in memory of four dedicated veterans of the 467th. Our contributions have exceeded the Silver level and are about to achieve the Gold level (\$50,000 to \$100,000).

I am equally proud of the support for the 2AD Memorial Library that the 467th membership has provided. We have provided funds for the restoration, the book fund, and a number of individual contributions including the Bequest Program.

Kevin Coolidge, 467th group historian, reported that the response for biographical data requested to complete the electronic database has not been what was expected. A one-page form has been again included in Poop from Group. We are especially eager to get data from widows and/or family members of veterans who have passed away. We want everyone who served in the 467th to be a part of our database and this will be our last chance to get it all together for our future generations to get the straight Poop from Group. I get letters every week requesting information on those who served. Let us get the biographies, photos and stories to Kevin Coolidge, 760 La Loma Lane, Corona, CA 91719. Anyone who needs the biographical form can contact me (address on page 2) and I will send one.

*Editor's Note: Walter claims he is the youngest 2ADA member — born August 16, 1925. Can you beat that? ■*

**VP MESSAGE** (continued from page 3)

henge, The Tower, Simpson's, saw a couple of shows, and watched all the military bands practicing for the Queen's birthday parade on the Horse Guards Parade Grounds.

Chuck went home and Marge and I went to Scotland, Oxford (Turf Tavern, Blenheim Palace), London (shows, side trips to Brighton, Canterbury, and Bath).

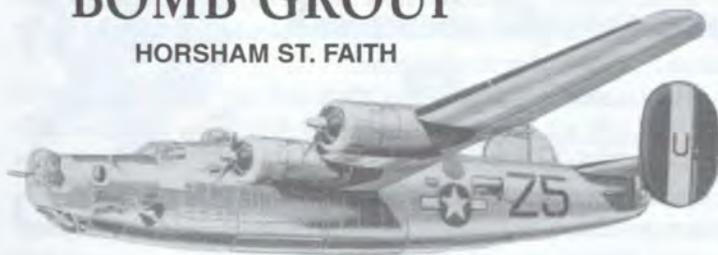
From the middle '30s, I had followed the happenings in Europe. I had an uncle who had told me many stories about World War One, I was an avid reader about the progress of aviation in the '30s, and the fact that I had a short-wave radio contributed to my watching the approach of World War Two. I listened attentively to Hitler's speeches. Since I understood no German, I had to tune into the BBC to know what was going on! This may well have been my introduction to "anglophilization" (how's that for a brand new word?) ■



**Felix Leeton (left) and Charles Dearing (right) with warden (Beefeater) at the Tower of London, 2 June 1983. "No, Colonel, when she's out to there, she's probably pregnant!"**

# 458th BOMB GROUP

HORSHAM ST. FAITH



BY RICK ROKICKI  
MEMBERSHIP

In the past, those who did not pay their dues after a second notice would have been dropped in March and not received the Spring *Journal*. This year, Evelyn Cohen delayed the "drop list" until the group VPs had a chance to write their own personal letter to those who had not responded. Of my original 37 who would have been dropped, 21 reinstated, 7 had passed away, 2 asked to be dropped, and the remaining 7 did not reply.

### 458TH REUNION?

Both Duke Trivette and I have been questioned as to whether we plan to have another group reunion (it would be our fourth). By now, the youngest of us should be about 75, and the oldest, who knows? We feel that another reunion in the Wright-Patterson/Dayton, Ohio area

part of our Memorial in the Norwich library. It has now been proposed, voted on, and affirmed that a second such book will be made, listing all 2nd Air Division personnel killed in the line of duty (KILOD). If you know of anyone who should be listed as such, you must first write to Mr. John Johnson, Mortuary & Casualty, PED F, U.S. Army Total Personnel Command, Alexandria, VA 22331-0482. Request validation from him, and then after authenticating, send the name(s) to Jordan Uttal, whose address is at the top of page 2 of every *Journal*. Jordan also has a fax number: (214) 369-0758. Remember, names submitted for authentication must have served in the ETO.

### FLORIDA CONVENTION

Since this is being written before the Tampa convention, I thought I'd do a little checking as to how many of our group live, or winter, in Florida, to see if our attendance might be improving over the last few conventions. Our 458th BG roster shows that 69 have a Florida address, but as of mid-April, only four indicated that they would be attending our 2ADA convention in May. As we've seen in the past, holding a convention in a city or state where a large percentage of the total 2ADA membership lives, does not necessarily bring out more Association members for any of the groups. To be fair, by Memorial Day a number of the "snowbirds" have returned to their primary residence and may not relish the quick return. However, it is a bit disappointing since this is our first Florida convention.

### NORWICH AIRPORT AIR SHOW

There will be a two-day air show celebrating sixty years of flight at Norwich Airport on August 5 & 6, 2000. The airfield, which initially was



**HISTORIC SHOW:** The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight over Norwich Airport.

**PICTURE:** COLIN EDWARDS GRAPHIC DESIGN

can and will be done if there's enough demand. Write or call Duke Trivette, 1791 Utica Dr., Dayton, OH 45439-2541, phone (937) 299-7125. Your response will determine whether or not we pursue this event. The 2001 2ADA convention will be held in Norwich in late November of that year; our earliest opportunity may be mid- to late summer of 2001. Although we would like to be as practical as possible, we won't hold you to your response, since we are all aware of the numerous things that can happen by then.

### ROLL OF HONOR ADDITIONS

As you know, we have a Roll of Honor for those killed in combat as

built for the RAF in 1940 and was later used by Col. Zemke's 56th fighters, eventually became the 458th's "home" in January 1944. Known as USAAF Station 123 Horsham St. Faith, we flew 240 combat missions from this Norfolk County "airdrome." For anyone who may be visiting Norwich in August and would like more information, contact David Hastings whose address appears on page 2 under the Memorial Trust Board of Governors. I found out about this coming event through the Eastern Daily Press and the Evening News. Note the Hilton Hotel (formerly the Stakis) under the left wing of the Spitfire in the graphic design above by Colin Edwards.

*(continued on page 14)*

# BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP  
BY AUD RISLEY



Home again after our annual winter in Florida and welcomed by snow falling over hundreds of blooming daffodils. Most survived, as we did, and surely spring is here now. By the time this gets to press, we 446ers will have gathered in Washington, DC and won the war all over again. My photos of important people and happenings at our national reunion will appear in the next *Journal*.

On our recent return from Florida we took a turn off the interstate halfway between Chattanooga and Nashville, Tennessee to visit Arnold Air Force Base, known also as Arnold Engineering Development Center. The base is full of exciting flight simulation test facilities which occupy 4,000 acres on the 40,000 acre base.

Upon our arrival, the security personnel made it perfectly clear that we would proceed no further through Gate 1. We wandered miles around to Arnold Village with the Lakeside Club with facilities for conventions, dining, dancing, and private parties and the Wingo Inn for visiting personnel, where we spent the night in beautiful accommodations fit for any general.

Some limited tours are available at the base by appointment only. The base was opened in 1951 and dedicated by Harry S. Truman, who said that "Never again will the United States ride the coattails of other countries in the progress and development and the aeronautical art."

If it is on your way to or from points north, south, or east, stop by. Every major advance in aerospace has been tested at this site. Who knows what will be tested there in this century?

Another major advance came to our attention from our friend Jean

## 458TH BOMB GROUP (continued from page 13)

**ON FINAL:** Recent communication with some of our members revealed that Jim Isbell and Chuck Booth were contacted by Jordan Uttal, found to be well, and asked to be remembered by all. Dale Dyer celebrated his 80th birthday by making his first parachute jump as a sky diver along with his 23-year-old granddaughter who jumped from 14,000 feet. The jump was originally planned for Dale's birthday, December 8th, but was delayed until January 15th because of bad weather. When asked if he would jump again, Dale said, "I'll be back when I'm 90!"

Doris Howard has written to advise that Kelly, her husband, has recently gone to a nursing home. Alexandria Dembecki advises that John is quite ill, but managing to keep up good spirits. Bill Lizut tried to order the Classic Aircraft stamps with the information I gave in a previous column, but the Postal Service had issued a new catalog. However, they did "come through" and he received the stamps. Bill also mentioned that he attended the San Diego B-24 celebration. He witnessed the radio-controlled B-24 crash that destroyed the model completely. He asked if anyone knows anything about a book written by Don Patterson under the title *Shoo Shoo Baby*. Bill Lizut's address is 1408 Santa Rosa Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505-3489. C.P. "Larry" Kurtz is looking for information regarding aircraft serial number 41-29489 which was in the 752nd Squadron and transferred to the 492nd BG. Larry says the aircraft flew eight missions and then transferred again to the 448th. He was the crew chief and said the aircraft flew many missions before he got it. Larry would like to hear from any 458th crew who flew the "ol' camouflaged" workhorse. He was in the 492nd and transferred to the 467th when the 492nd was disbanded.

Matthews in Norwich, who regularly sends us news clippings of what's old and what's new in Norwich. Most recently she enclosed clippings of the new look for the Norwich train station remembered well by each of us and basically unchanged since the war days. It is described after two million pounds of facelift as a "clean, pleasant, and user-friendly venue . . . more fitting for its station."

446th members who served in WWII and were killed in the line of duty (KILOD) will be memorialized on a Roll of Honor in the new 2AD Memorial Library in Norwich due to open in 2001. As many of you know, formerly only men killed in combat were on the Roll of Honor. A search is now being made for any names which may not have been found to date for this added memorial.

If you know of any personnel who may have been overlooked, please notify me with their names, serial numbers, dates of death, and any other information which may help with validation.

## NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

Recent new members of the 446th who have joined the 2ADA include Scott Broder of Boca Raton, Florida, son of the late Joseph Broder of the 446th. Scott also included a donation to the World War II memorial.

Associate member Jacqueline Campbell of Hazel Crest, Illinois, is the wife of the recently deceased James W. Campbell of the 446th.

Word was received through 2ADA of the illness of Robert Mallett and a change of address. Inquiries may be addressed to his wife, Meadie, at Country Club Village #408, 1925 Malvern Ave., Hot Springs, AK 71901.

Several members have not yet paid their dues to 2ADA, according to Evelyn Cohen, membership vice president. Please forward them to her so that you will remain part of the organization that pulled us all together more than fifty years ago. Also please notify Evelyn of your address changes.

And KEEP THE NEWS COMING TO ME!! ■

I just received an advance copy of George A. Reynolds' latest book titled *M'aidez*. While the story is fiction, its theme is based on some factual incidents. 458th navigator George Strand, a long-time member of the 2ADA living in Hawaii, contributed to this novel. Published by Pentland Press, it is a riveting tale of three strangers battling for their lives after a horrific plane crash, and explores the physical, emotional and psychological repercussions of a brush with death and its aftermath. *M'aidez* sells for \$13.95, soft-cover, ISBN #1-57197-196-3, 169 pages, and is currently available. Check your bookstore, or contact Pentland Press Inc., 5122 Bur Oak Circle, Raleigh, NC 27612, phone toll free 1-800-948-2786, fax (919) 781-9042. Shipping charge is \$4.00 per copy. ■

## You May Be a Redneck Aviator If...

- You use a Purina feed sack as your windsock.
- You think GPS stands for "Going Pretty Straight".
- You refer to "flying formation" as "We got us a convoy."
- You have a gun rack hanging on a passenger window.
- You have more than one roll of duct tape holding the cowling together.
- You consider anything over 100 ft. as high altitude.
- Any part of your airplane is labeled "John Deere".



HETHEL  
**389th  
Green Dragon  
Flares**

BY BARNEY DRISCOLL

Greetings to all the fine folks in the 2nd Air Division Association in general and to the 389th Bomb Group family in particular. At this time I know a good many folks are looking forward to a great reunion of the 389th to be held at the Hilton East in Tucson, September 26-28.

If anyone knows of fellow crew members or friends who served in the 389th BG and do not belong to the 2nd Air Division Association, please send me their names and addresses, and we shall endeavor to get them to our reunions.



This photo of the fourth production Dominator, B-32-1-CF 42-108474, was taken at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base sometime between September 1946 and August 1949. The aircraft had been preserved for planned exhibition at the Air Force Museum, but was finally scrapped in August 1949.

PHOTO: SAN DIEGO AEROSPACE MUSEUM

In as much as during the past year, 1999, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the B-24 and extolled its virtues (of which there were many), the question has come up: How many people are familiar with the big brother of the B-24 Liberator, the B-32 Dominator? In my opinion it was a fine-looking airplane.

When our crew finished our missions on October 15, 1944, I was shipped back to the States and stationed at Fort Worth Army Air Field (known to the local folks as Tarrant Field), later to be named Carswell Air Force Base. As a radio operator my duty was to fly with pilots who were taking B-24 transition training when they would go on a cross-country flight. On these flights they were supposed to have a radio operator on board.

In as much as the B-32s were being built at the Consolidated plant on the other side of the field from the air base, it was not uncommon to see them around. My first impression upon seeing a B-32 was that it looked like what you might think a great big four-engined Martin B-26 might look like. But to get on with the story.

Early in the year 1940 the old Air Corps began to realize that they were more than likely going to need a large aircraft that could carry a big bomb load over great distances. The plane was to be referred to

as the "very long range" (VLR) or the "very heavy" (VH) bomber. Neither the B-24 nor the B-17 could meet these requirements.

General H.H. Arnold went to the War Department for permission to start planning for such an aircraft. The plane was to be larger, faster, have a much longer range, and have the capability of handling a larger bomb load than any other plane in existence at that time. Two of the major requirements were long range and high speed.

In April of 1940 the old Air Corps made these requirements known to Boeing, Douglas, Consolidated and Lockheed. Both Douglas and Lockheed decided they did not wish to participate. This left Boeing and Consolidated to concentrate on the XB-29 and the XB-32 respectively.

The original design of the XB-32 called for using the Davis wing, similar to the B-24 but on a larger scale, 135 feet as opposed to 110 feet, tri-cycle landing gear, hydraulically controlled roll up bomb bay doors and twin vertical stabilizers. The fuselage design was totally different than the B-24. The XB-32 was to have cylindrical fuselage with a maximum diameter of 9 feet 6 inches, 83 feet long, as opposed to the B-24's box

shape of 66 feet. The original drawings called for the crew spaces to be pressurized, and the plane was to have remote controlled gun turrets. The plane was to use the Wright R-3350 radial engines rated at 2,200 horsepower. These were the same engines that gave the B-29 people so much grief.

The design proposed by Consolidated was approved in September 1940, and three prototypes were ordered, the first to be delivered within 18 months and the other two to follow at 90-day intervals. There were numerous production problems, and the first plane rolled out exactly six months behind schedule. One of their major problems was the pressurization system. Boeing was also having problems, but they had a jump start because they had been experimenting with pressurizing the B-17.

This first XB-32 prototype, serial number 41-141, was equipped with dual vertical stabilizers similar to the B-24 tail section. This plane first flew in September 1942 and in its succeeding flights experienced innumerable problems, such as trouble with the Fowler flaps and also the trim tabs. In May of 1943, during takeoff, apparently one of the flaps hung up and caused the plane to crash, killing Consolidated's senior pilot. This crash of plane 41-141 was a real blow and set the program

(continued on page 16)

### 389TH GREEN DRAGON FLARES *(continued from page 15)*

back considerably, because many of the vital test records were on board the plane and were destroyed in the crash. These tests all had to be repeated using the second prototype, which was also behind schedule and would not be able to fly for another five weeks.

In July 1943, 41-142, the second prototype, took to the air. This plane was also pressurized, had remote controlled turrets, and was also built with the twin tail configuration. The Army Air Force inspection team was about to cancel the B-32 program because it was so far behind, but in December 1943 allowed it to go forward although they required some major changes. Consolidated was to eliminate the pressurized crew compartments, and to use manned gun turrets rather than the remote controls. A great many other changes were to be made, not the least of which was the elimination of the twin tails to go with a single vertical stabilizer.

While the second XB-32 continued to fly and run test programs, the third unit, 41-18336, which had been built with twin tails, after several flights was taken into the shops and equipped with a single tail. The single tail was sixteen and a half feet tall, the same as that used on the B-29, but the B-32 having a somewhat shorter fuselage than the B-29, it required a larger tail; so the B-32 wound up with a tail nineteen and a half feet tall.

The original three XB-32s plus one other were manufactured at the San Diego plant, but all production planes were built at the Fort Worth plant.

The B-32 was truly a fine-looking aircraft. In conjunction with the 2,200 horsepower engines, it was equipped with Curtiss electric propellers that were 16 feet 8 inches in diameter. The two inboard propellers could be reversed to assist in braking and maneuvering while on the ground. This was a first in the industry.

The plane was equipped with four self-sealing gas tanks consisting of twelve cells in the wings. The tanks had a capacity of 5460 gallons of gas. There was also provision for the use of two 750 gallon self-sealing gas tanks that could be shackled in the bomb bay and could be dropped in flight. This made a total gasoline capacity of 6960 gallons.

The armament consisted of ten 50 caliber machine guns. The plane had two Martin upper turrets and three Sperry ball turrets, one in the nose, one in the tail, and one in the belly of the plane. There was no provision for waist guns. Maximum rated bomb load was 20,000 pounds or forty 500 pound bombs.

One of the first requirements was to build forty TB-32s. These were planes to be used for crew training and were not equipped with all the armor and armament that would be necessary if they were being built to go into combat. As production progressed on the B-32, as on any aircraft there were a number of production changes, not the least of which was the firefighting equipment located in the engine nacelles, as the Wright R-3350 was prone to catch on fire.

The flight deck on the B-32 was quite spacious, with plenty of room for a couple of navigators and all the radar equipment, and there was still plenty of room for the radio operator and flight engineer.

The original intention of the Army Air Force had been to replace some of the planes in the Eighth and Fifteenth Air Forces with B-29s and B-32s, but both these programs were so far behind schedule that this plan was abandoned at the first of 1944. As the B-32 had so many teething problems in its development, a number of people wanted to discontinue the program. However, it was discovered that the tests run by the AAF proved the B-32 to have some very good features. The plane was found to have excellent low speed directional control and good takeoff and landing qualities. It made a very stable bombing platform and had very good ground handling qualities because of its reversible inboard propellers.

There were very few B-32s that saw any combat. General George

Kinney, commander of the Far Eastern Air Force (FEAF) in the Pacific Theater, requisitioned some B-32 crews because he had some targets that he felt needed to be destroyed and were beyond the range of the B-24s. These three B-32s were assigned to the 386th Squadron of the 312th Bomb Group and were stationed on Luzon in the Philippines. They were later transferred to Okinawa where they were joined by four additional B-32s. While on Luzon the planes had a very successful bombing record. General Kenny liked the plane because with the same size crew the B-32 could carry two and a half times the bomb load and cruise 50 mph faster than the B-24 with a much longer range. Between bombing missions the planes were used for transition training for the B-24 crews.

While stationed on Okinawa, after the atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the B-32s were assigned the job of flying photo missions over Tokyo to monitor the cease-fire terms.

After the war was over, the B-32 Dominators were destroyed like so many other aircraft. In many cases the planes were flown directly from the end of the assembly line directly to the scrap yard. There was one B-32 that was being saved at Davis Monthan Air Force Base to be installed in the Air Force Museum at Dayton, but in 1949 some feeble-minded individual with a little authority issued the order to destroy the plane, and so ends the brief history of the B-32 Dominator. All 118 planes gone without a trace.

It would be interesting to know if any of you folks in the 2ADA had the opportunity to fly in a B-32.

*Editor's Note: See the article "Liberator's Big Brother" (2ADA Journal, Vol. 35, No. 4, Winter 1996) which states in part:*

*The war didn't end abruptly. Several B-32 aircraft of the 386th Bombardment Squadron were out on missions that fateful day when the order to cease all offensive actions against Japan was received on 15 August 1945. Hostilities were then at an end. Or were they?*

*The four Dominators checking the Tokyo area on the 17th were attacked by about a dozen Japanese fighters. In the ensuing exchanges, two B-32s were damaged. However, the American quartet won their first aerial match, for the visiting team's scoreboard registered one Japanese plane damaged, one probably destroyed, and one definitely destroyed.*

*The mission of the 18th was to have been flown by four planes, as well. But two aircraft had to abort due to mechanical trouble, leaving the two machines that had not been damaged on the previous day's mission to carry on. Again, the B-32s met Japanese fighters over the Tokyo area. But, unlike the previous day, 1st Lt. John R. Anderson's B-32 was hit in the aft compartment by a couple of explosive rounds, which wounded one of the photographers working there and killed the other. These were probably the last American casualties resulting from aerial combat during World War II.*

*As a balance for this extraordinary loss, Lt. Anderson's crew claimed two definite kills. Headquarters Fifth Air Force made it official by issuing General Orders No. 159 on 10 October 1945, crediting the bomber crew for the destruction of two enemy aircraft in aerial combat.*

*The action had taken place about twenty miles south of Choshi, Japan, at 1335/1 and 1340/1, 18 August 1945. The final aerial combat of the war was described this way by the general order: "This [Lt. Anderson's] crew was flying in a B-32 type aircraft on a photo mission in the Tokyo area when intercepted by enemy aircraft. The tail gunner of the crew sighted one enemy fighter attacking and opened fire. Several bursts hit the enemy plane and it exploded in mid-air. Several minutes later another enemy fighter attacked and the upper rear gunner opened fire and scored hits which caused it to burst into flames and crash."*

*The little known story of the Consolidated Vultee B-32 is told in word and picture in the book "Dominator: The Story of the Consolidated B-32 Bomber" by Stephen Harding and James I. Long. The book may be ordered by calling (406) 549-8488. ■*

# Our Unforgettable Mission 23 Was Worth Every "Penny" Of It

BY LT. COL. JAMES R. MARIS (392ND), WITH VICKIE J. MARIS

*"Engineer to pilot, engineer to pilot: Our number one engine has been blown off the wing. Number three is stripped of its cowl and supercharger. There's a three-foot wide hole in the left wing between engines one and two. The bomb bay doors are crushed in. And we've got a bomb hung up on the shackles in the bomb bay."*

→ → → →

This was the frantic report from my flight engineer, Milford "Fitz" Fitzgerald, who had been asked to assess the damage to our B-24, "The Bad Penny." She had been badly damaged as we passed through heavy flak over Hamburg, Germany on our 23rd mission. It was August 6, 1944.

"Lieutenant, I don't think she can get us home [over the North Sea back to England]," says Fitz. "We'd better abort to Sweden."

But I still had faith in the "Bad Penny." I checked the handling characteristics of our faithful war bird. Her controls were still responding, so I started a slow turn toward Sweden and asked the flight engineer to take a poll. I wanted the crew to decide if we should go to Sweden or fly back across the North Sea to our home base at Wendling.

Fitz left and returned promptly with the vote. The crew wanted me to fly her home.

I started the slow turn toward England and asked Fitz to organize the crew in an effort to dislodge the 500-pound bomb that was hung up in the bomb bay. They would also need to kick out the bad dent in the bomb bay doors so we could attempt to close them.

Acting quickly, Fitz attached several parachute harnesses end to end to form the lifeline that would be fastened to each airman before he crawled along the narrow catwalk and out into the open bomb bay. Each airman kicked until he was tired in an attempt to free the tenuously trapped bomb. After several attempts, the faulty shackle let go and the bomb fell free.

The next task was dealing with the badly dented doors. It took the tiresome efforts of several more crewmen to right this situation. As each man grew weary, he would crawl back up the catwalk and another would take his place. They eventually succeeded in closing the doors.

Meanwhile the navigator, Herbie Silverman, and I were feverishly comparing notes on position, rate of sink, distance across the water to England, and the general condition of our "Bad Penny." She was not looking good. We also recalled the bad weather we had dealt with when we took off from the base. Would it be there when we returned?

When this mission started, the squadron



THE MARIS CREW AND THE B-24 THEY FLEW OVER THE ATLANTIC



B-24J "THE BAD PENNY"

clerk had opened the door of our Quonset hut at 0415 hours to call us to briefing. As we pedaled our bicycles to breakfast, the damp fog of this early British dawn cut through our uniforms.

During the briefing, we were warned of the flak barrage that we would encounter over our target, Hamburg. The reports stated that the flak was intense and highly accurate. We should expect a large number of casualties.

Our takeoff was at dawn in a light rain. We entered the heavy cloud overcast at 600 feet and immediately turned to a heading of 350 degrees. As soon as the gear retracted, we were careful to hold an accurate heading and constant rate of climb. We had to hold our spacing

through the overcast because the sky around us was full of heavies all climbing to the assembly area. At half assembly altitude, plus 1,000 feet, we made a 180 degree instrument turn to head back to the assembly area over our base and followed the needle on the directional indicator to an accurate return heading of 170 degrees. At 5,500 feet, we broke through the clouds and marveled at the beauty of the early morning sun lighting the tops of the turbulent clouds.

After assembly, we headed our B-24s to the coastal departure point, making scheduled turns where other squadrons joined the long line of departing bombers. The B-24s tracked

*(continued on page 34)*

Looking back over my over 40 years in aircraft maintenance, I consider my most memorable experience to be from March 1944 through June 1945 while serving as a crew chief with the 491st Bomb Group. I was 22 years old at the time and maintaining the aircraft required many hours, day and night, by all maintenance personnel, frequently under very adverse conditions. We did not have shelters for our aircraft.

I remember that after our group's first mission, while performing a post-flight inspection, we discovered that an engine required replacement, so we worked all night and most of the next day removing and replacing the engine and preparing for test flight. The aircraft was test flown that afternoon and ready for flight the next day.

On a typical mission day, the CQ would come to the hut where all the crew chiefs were housed and alert us several hours prior to the mission. We in turn would wake our assistants and bike to the mess hall for breakfast, usually powdered eggs and Spam or S.O.S., etc. From the mess hall we biked to the squadron maintenance area, performed preflight and ground run up inspection of the aircraft. The engineer was usually the first crew member to arrive and the condition of the aircraft was

## We Always Hoped The Missing B-24 Wasn't Ours

BY BILL KOON (491ST)

discussed with him. He in turn performed his inspection of the aircraft. By then the other crew members would arrive, perform their required inspections, load equipment and stand by for takeoff instructions. Normally you could detect from their actions the type of mission being flown, by their kidding, joking or being quiet and serious.

Once the aircraft were in flight, normally we would return to the squadron area until informed by the CQ that our aircraft were returning from the mission. We immediately returned to the flight line, anxiously awaiting the aircraft to appear over the field, while still in the air, checking the markings on each aircraft for the missing. We always hoped that any of the missing aircraft didn't turn out to be ours. I can still

recall the empty feeling I had when my aircraft was among the missing.

After the aircraft returned to the hardstand and the flight crew departed, the aircraft was thoroughly inspected for battle damage and evidence of maintenance problems. We then began to restore the aircraft to a safe flight condition. Many times this required working continuously for 24 to 36 hours at a time to get the job done.

In December 1944, during engine replacement at night, a freezing rain coated both the old and the new engines. We had to melt and chip the ice from both engines to complete the exchange.

I remember well some of the combat crews who flew missions in aircraft I crewed: Woodward, Wyatt, Diefenderfer, and Southwell. My job was made easier with our very able assistant crew chief, Daniel Lampros.



*The 491st Bomb Group crew chiefs and assistants changed over 400 engines, many for preventative maintenance, many for battle damage. Without their devotion to duty and working in all kinds of conditions, the group would have been hard pressed to perform its combat missions. The 491st had 72 B-24s and it took a lot of maintenance people to keep them in the air. ■*

## RECONSTRUCTING DAD

BY ART LEVY, STAFF WRITER • REPRINTED FROM THE SARASOTA HERALD-TRIBUNE

Ellen Swatek put down her salad fork, and gave her full attention to the man speaking about her father's death.

This was why Swatek went to Georgia in the first place, to find out as much as she could about her father, even the sort of information that she really didn't want to hear.

Her father, Second Lt. Henry Gillette (445th BG), was killed in Germany during World War II, when Swatek was two, and so she grew up knowing little about him.

As she grew older, this lack of knowledge bothered her more and more, and so she set about to learn who her father was.

That's why, earlier this month, she went to a reunion of her dad's World War II flying group in Savannah, GA, hoping she would find someone there who knew him, or even someone who had heard of him.

By chance, she sat next to a man at one of the reunion dinners who didn't know her father first-hand, but was familiar with the March 24, 1945 airplane crash that killed him.

Her father's plane was flying low, probably no more than 100 feet off the ground, while dropping supplies to American troops stationed behind enemy lines.

"He said small arms fire hit the plane and the wing tipped and hit the ground," she said. "And then the plane burst into a ball of flame. He said that would be a terrible death."

As hard as it was to hear this, Swatek kept her composure, because that's how desperate she is for any news about her father. She didn't want to do anything to keep the man from talking.



Ellen Swatek

This desire for information started about the time Swatek turned 40, when she began to understand the impact of growing up without a father.

"It's a part of my life that's really missing," she said. "I grew up in an era where people watched 'Ozzie and Harriet' and 'Father Knows Best' and everybody had a father. It was significant and negative not to have a father."

Now a 56-year-old mental health counselor living in Sarasota, Swatek feels this affected her first marriage, which ended in divorce.

"I thought that since I didn't have a perfect family growing up, I could create one when I was an adult, but I couldn't," she said. "I had a very unrealistic view of family and parenting and mothers and fathers. When I remarried, I was more realistic."

Swatek said it would have been better to learn about her father from her mother, but that didn't happen. The subject was so painful to her mother that she wouldn't discuss it.

"The war widows moved on and tried to be brave. Many remarried quickly. The real dad became someone they didn't talk about."

After her mother died ten years ago, Swatek went through some of her mother's personal items, and found scrapbooks, photographs, letters, medals, and documents pertaining to her father.

It was nice to have some memorabilia, but it wasn't enough, which is why Swatek joined the Orphan's Network. The group teaches people how to access government documents, and offers members a forum to exchange ideas and support.

Swatek's immediate goal is finding people who knew her dad personally, either from the time he was in the military or before. She is even seeking his high school classmates, knowing she must act quickly, since her dad's contemporaries are aging and dying off.

"It's helping me paint some kind of picture, like putting puzzle pieces together, of who this man was," Swatek said. "Right now, I still don't know half of me. I only know who my mother was. I want to know the things my father said, what his personality was like and how he related to other people."

*2nd Lt. Henry Gillette usually flew as copilot, but on his last mission, Lt. Col. Fleming took the copilot's seat and Gillette flew in the waist gunner's position . . . As of Journal preparation time Swatek has plans to attend the 2ADA convention May 26-29 in Tampa Bay, Florida, hoping to meet more members of the 445th BG who perhaps were acquainted with her father and the operations in support of "Operation Varsity." ■*

# MORE INTERESTING TIMES THAN I CARE TO REMEMBER

BY CHARLES E. MORGAN (445TH)



**Kneeling (L-R):** James M. Campbell, radio operator; Jack W. Thorsby, engineer; Rowan R. Carlton, ball turret gunner; Ernest B. Dunn, waist gunner; Guy J. Devito, waist gunner; John M. Heidler, tail gunner. **Standing (L-R):** James A. Bohn, navigator; Arthur E. Lundburg, copilot; Charles E. Morgan, pilot; Jack C. Witte, bombardier.

Our crew had some interesting times. Like when we crash landed in southern England with forty 100 lb. napalm bombs and not a single one came out of the bomb racks. Also over Dessau when we were hit after bombs away. Flak came through on pilot's side, hit me in the flak jacket and knocked me unconscious. A piece hit our copilot Lundburg's helmet and put a big crease in it; another missed Campbell, radio operator, and entered his radio, bigger than a golf ball. Other pieces pierced the wing overhead and gasoline started dripping into the cockpit. Gas was streaming out of our plane into the clouds and the group commander ordered us out of the formation. We had to come home all by ourselves. Then the plane had to sit all by itself for three days to let all the gas drain out of it before they could repair.

While in flight we had torn off our GI undershirts and the engineer had stuffed them into holes where the gas was dripping into the cockpit.

In conjunction with all this, our copilot, Art Lundburg, recently wrote me the following:

"No, I haven't forgotten that flak incident. Two inches lower and "Kaput" one copilot and the same for the pilot. We were lucky!

"It seems to me as we slide into the so-called Golden Years that one starts to remember lots of the events that took place in our lifetime. I keep remembering so many things about those

years. That's one reason I am putting them on paper.

"The other side of things I try not to think of, although I guess I should put them down on paper also . . . well, maybe. Only you, myself and [a pilot named] Mainhood would understand. Sometimes I think about dropping those blockbusters and wonder how many people we were responsible for. We never saw the results, but I'll guess hundreds. Sure they were shooting at us, but . . .

"Have you noticed how the young people look towards WWII as we looked at WWI! Ah, so what!

"Well enough now . . . REMEMBER.

"As ever, Art Lundburg."

## "REMEMBER"

**CASPER, WYOMING:** Cold, Cold, and Cold. Night Flying. Round Robin to Chicago. Cold! Cold! Cold!

**TOPEKA, KANSAS:** The train ride that took forever. Signing the papers for our new B-24 and laughing over the statement, "One each." The nose art you had painted on it, "Pregnant Angel" after your pregnant wife Angelyn.

**FLORIDA:** Takeoff for overseas. Our orders were sealed and we couldn't open them until after takeoff. I opened the package before the gear was up. We were off to Merry Old England and the 8th Air Force.

**PUERTO RICO:** Our planned, unauthorized landing to pick up rum. The Jeep going down the runway in front of us about 80 mph with flashing lights and "Follow Me" sign. We almost turned him and the Jeep into hamburger. The officer climbing aboard and after listening to our story telling us to turn the airplane around and get the hell out of there.

**TRINIDAD:** The "crap" game at the officers club. You cleaned them all out.

**BELEM:** The gaucho boots we bought along with silk stockings and what we did with them. The takeoff at Belem through the trees. "Hold your brakes until you have 80 mph airspeed." We blew the fence down behind us. "Watch those turbos, don't let them run away, 1/2 flaps, stagger into the air. Gear up through the trees. "Holy Cow!"

**DAKAR:** The steel runways at Dakar — "crunch." The smell of the city. Wonder if the sewers still runs down Main Street. The native workers trying to get our GI shoes; they had size 16 plus feet.

**TINIAN:** Emergency landing in desert due to sandstorm. We had to wait until skies cleared to continue our flight to Marrakech. The landing in the desert, dust everywhere. The tower operator almost had a stroke. Arabs trading with our crew assigned to guard the plane for cigarettes.

*(continued on page 30)*

# Southern California Regional Reunion Dinner

BY DICK BAYNES (466TH)

We missed the military atmosphere of the closed Marine Corps Air Station El Toro Officers Club, but the new setting at the Phoenix Club in Anaheim had better facilities and accommodated our annual dinner very well. Two hundred and twenty-five members, family and friends joined in for socializing, a fine meal, and an interesting program.



Part of Mark Hoage's exhibit at 2AD Regional Reunion Dinner.

J. Fred Thomas (392nd) started this idea of a regional reunion dinner nineteen years ago, and it is still going strong. Other areas have taken up the idea, and hopefully still more will try it.

The current committee members who planned this year's dinner were: Dick Baynes (466th), Chairman; Fred Bromm (445th); Bud Chamberlain (489th); Malcolm Dike (466th); Julian Ertz (44th); Delbert Mann (467th/491st); Jack Pelton (445th); John Rowe (448th); and J. Fred Thomas (392nd).

Greeting people as they arrived were Nick Kuklish (466th) and Rex Tabor (466th). Friendly faces at the registration table were Margaret Baynes (466th) and Agnes Rowe (448th). Salesperson at the raffle table was Patti Quintana (466th). John Rowe did a marvelous job of printing name tags, table markers, and an excellent program booklet.

Jack Pelton (445th) conducted the opening ceremonies, starting with the beautiful voice of Maria Gunnarsson, wife of Frank Grew (448th). Then the solemn Eight Candles of Remembrance with the following members participating. 1st Candle (Air Offensive Europe): Amador Espinosa (445th), Larry Keeran (448th), Charles McBride (448th). 2nd Candle (Ploesti Campaign): Robert Schaper (44th), John Gately (44th), Robert Young (489th). 3rd Candle (Normandy Campaign): John Rowe (448th), Rex Tabor (466th), Paul Bordewich (389th). 4th Candle (Northern France Campaign): Nick Kuklish (466th), Frank Piowarski (466th),

Bill Caplinger (492nd). 5th Candle (Ardennes Campaign): Frank Grew (448th), Gilbert Bambauer (392nd), Willis Miller (392nd). 6th Candle (Rhineland Campaign): Dick Boucher (445th), John Linford (445th), Fred Gerritz (466th). 7th Candle (Central Europe Campaign): Richard Moody (448th), Wilbur Clingan (453rd), Harry Godges (453rd). 8th Candle (All Comrades and Loved Ones): Walter Mundy (467th), Willie Sparks (492nd), Carl Johnson (492nd). Standing by as alternates were Bill Beasley (492nd), John Foster (489th), and Tom Nelson (489th).

The invocation was given by Malcolm (Mac) Dike (466th), and the master of ceremonies, Academy award winning director Delbert Mann (467th & 491st), was introduced.

After dinner, Craig Beasley, president of the 2AD Heritage League, was introduced and brought greetings from the Heritage League. Delbert Mann then asked all members of the 2ADA Executive Committee to stand and be recognized, then read a letter of greetings from 2ADA President F.C. (Hap) Chandler.

The program for the evening was a review of the wartime life of a Belgian patriot and resistance fighter, Yvonne de Ridder Files, who told us about her *Quest for Freedom*, a true story of her deliberate actions risking her life during the entire war, extensively involved in sabotage and espionage, then sheltering downed Allied airmen. Towards the end of the war she was betrayed, captured, tortured, and sentenced to be hanged, but was not. She was a very interesting speaker.



Master of Ceremonies Delbert Mann and speaker Yvonne de Ridder Files

Generous raffle prizes donated by our members, especially the grand prize of an official A-2 jacket donated by Harry Orthman (492nd), attracted the attendees and enabled us to donate \$500 each to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich, England and the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia.

See you next year — last Saturday in February — same place! ■



Lighting the 6th Candle



Agnes Rowe (L) and Margaret Baynes at the registration desk.

# OF HONORED MEMORY

By TAMAR A. MEHURON, Associate Editor, AIR FORCE Magazine / May 1999

## WORLD WAR II CASUALTIES

	Battle Deaths	Non-Battle Deaths	Total Deaths	Wounds Not Mortal	Number Who Served	Ratio of Battle Deaths to Number Who Served
Army Air Forces	52,173	37,856	90,029	17,359	2,244,000	2.33*
Army	182,701	45,544	231,245	548,502	9,016,000	2.03
Navy	36,950	25,664	62,614	37,778	4,183,466	0.88
Marine Corps	19,733	4,778	24,511	68,207	669,100	2.95
<b>Total World War II Deaths</b>			<b>408,400</b>			
AAF Percentage of Total	17.89	33.25		2.58	13.93	*Over 12% of air crews

### The Heavy Toll of Two Battles

B-24s – Ploesti, Romania, August 1, 1943	Number Involved	Combat Deaths/Aircraft Lost	Attrition Rate
PERSONNEL	1770	582	30.10%
AIRCRAFT	177	54	30.50%
B-17s – Schweinfurt, Germany, October 14, 1943	Number Involved	Combat Deaths/Aircraft Lost	Attrition Rate
PERSONNEL	2290	590	26.20%
AIRCRAFT	229	67	29.30%

SOURCE: AIR FORCE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

## 8TH AF BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

REPRINTED FROM THE 8TH AF NEWS, JULY, 1986

Your editor recently read an interesting report on the 8th AF casualties in June, July, and August of 1944.

This 65-page report is Chapter IX (pages 547 through 611) of a report, *Wound Ballistics*, prepared by the Medical Department, U.S. Army, Office of the Surgeon General, Washington, DC. The book may be identified by Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 62-600002.

Due to the need for data on air combat casualties, the Chief Surgeon of the ETOUSA, on 1 June 1944, appointed Major Allan Palmer to be chief of a Medical Operations Research Section. From the report they produced, it appears that the Medical ORS was located on the grounds of the Cambridge American Cemetery. In his report, Palmer states that those three months in 1944 were chosen in the belief that they would "yield a satisfactory sample of casualty data . . ."

For the record, the report noted that the 8th AF was served by the 1st, 7th, 65th, 91st, 97th, and 184th General Hospitals, and by the 49th, 121st, 136th, 231st, 280th, and 303rd Station Hospitals. It is a shame to note that we are only in contact today with members of the 65th, the 231st and the 303rd. It would be interesting to know the location of each of the

hospitals.

The report covered casualty statistics for the 12, 14, and 14 heavy bombardment groups in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Bomb Divisions respectively. This force conducted 69,682 combat sorties during the period under study.

A survey of their findings produces the following data by type of aircraft:

	B-17	B-24
Sorties	39,724	29,958
Man-combat msns	357,516*	299,580*
A/C MIA	390	303
Crew MIA	3,510*	3,030*
A/C Ret	624	320
w/casualties		
Crew WIA	673	334
Crew KIA	69	41

\*The report states that the B-17 carried an average of nine crew members during the period, while the B-24 carried an average of ten crew members. It also stated that the 8AF had estimated that 40% of the MIAs in the first six months of 1944 were KIA. (Ed. Note: In the 13 months of combat by members of the 466th BG, 428 men were MIA on combat missions. Of these, we have found through MACRs that 222 were KIA. That rate is 52%. This may indicate

that the 8AF KIA estimate for MIAs was low).

Another look at the figures given in this report shows the following data, by Division:

	1st BD	2nd BD	3rd BD
Sorties	23,488	24,448	21,746
A/C MIA	237	272	184
Av. # WIA, per group	32.17	20.21	24.14
Av. # KIA, per group	3.42	2.36	2.57

A breakdown by crew position shows relative casualty rates as follows:

Bombardier	17.6
Navigator	12.2
Pilot (2)	14.0
Top Turret	8.4
Radio Operator	8.5
Ball Turret	5.9
Waist Gunner (2)	20.9
Tail Gunner	12.5

It was interesting to learn that 94% of the casualties brought back to the UK during this period were the result of flak. 4.5 were due to fighter attacks, and 1.5% due to unknown causes.

The most remarkable statistic in this report was the fact that during the study period the

(continued on page 22)

## SORTIE LOSS RATE

REPRINTED FROM  
THE 8TH AF NEWS, JULY 1989

Another look at the unit data found in the back of Roger Freeman's source book, *The Mighty Eighth*, gives an interesting look at the relative security of the various heavy bomber groups.

Group	Date	Opns	Total	Number	Sorties
Nbr	Began		Sorties	AC MIA	per loss
** 490	31 05 44		5060	22	230.00
* 467	10 04 44		5538	29	190.97
** 486	07 05 44		6173	33	187.06
** 487	07 05 44		6021	33	182.45
** 34	23 05 44		5713	34	168.03
* 446	16 12 43		7259	58	125.16
* 466	22 03 44		5762	47	122.60
* 458	24 02 44		5759	47	118.80
** 493	06 06 44		4871	41	118.80
* 453	05 02 44		6655	58	114.74
398	06 05 44		6419	58	110.67
† 801	05 04 44		2809	26	108.04
* 491	02 06 44		5005	47	106.49
* 489	30 05 44		2998	29	103.38
457	21 02 44		7086	83	85.37
* 93	09 10 42		8169	100	81.69
404	26 11 43		7430	95	78.21
379	29 05 43		10492	141	74.41
351	14 05 43		8600	124	69.35
381	22 06 43		9035	131	68.97
* 448	22 12 43		6774	101	67.07
452	05 02 44		7279	110	66.17
* 445	13 12 43		7145	108	66.16
* 389	09 07 43		7579	116	65.34
303	25 06 42		10721	165	64.98
385	17 07 43		8264	129	64.06
97	17 08 42		247	4	61.75
390	13 08 43		8725	144	60.59
305	17 11 42		9231	154	59.94
384	22 06 43		9348	159	58.79
94	13 05 43		8884	153	58.07
95	13 05 43		8903	157	56.71
388	17 07 43		8051	142	56.70
306	09 10 42		9614	171	56.22
92	06 09 42		8633	154	56.06
* 392	09 09 43		7060	127	55.59
* 44	07 11 42		8009	153	52.35
447	24 12 43		7605	153	49.71
‡ 482	27 09 43		346	7	49.43
100	25 06 43		8630	177	48.76
91	07 11 42		9591	197	48.69
96	14 05 43		8924	189	47.22
* 492	11 05 44		1513	51	29.67
Totals			297930	4257	
Average			6929	99	87.18

\* 2AD - B-24 Groups: The table speaks for itself. You can see that except for the hard luck outfit (492nd BG) those units that arrived early had a harder time of bringing their planes back than those units that reached combat status in 1944.

\*\* It should also be noted that those bomb groups in the top ten in safety records brought B-24s to the 8AF. Also please note that five of the top ten (490, 486, 487, 34 and 493) of the 3rd Air Division later converted to B-17s in the fall of 1944.

† Carpetbagger B-24s

‡ One squadron Pathfinder B-24s

## 8TH AF BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT (continued from page 21)

battle casualty rate (MIAs and those casualties returned to the UK) was 1.87 per 1000 man-combat missions in B-17s, while it was only 1.25 per 1000 man-combat missions for those fortunate crew members who flew combat in B-24s. This report makes you wonder where all those fables about the perils of B-24 life came from.

Accordingly, it seems to have been safer to have been assigned to the 2nd Bomb Division during this period. In regard to the data on the casualty rate by position, it appears to have been safer, during this period, to have had a crew position nearest the center of the aircraft.

All in all, this report should be of high interest to many 8th AF historians. ■

## KEY WEST MUSEUM Is a "Sub"stantial Vacation Sight

BY CONNIE KOSEK

REPRINTED FROM YANKEE AF'S "HANGAR HAPPENIN'S"

Yankee Air Force members and others who are World War II vets might think they have seen everything with air and war museums all over the country. You might like to go to the lighthouse and military museum in Key West, Florida. The museum is a stone's throw from the now-abandoned U.S. Navy Submarine Station.

You will find in Key West the strangest reminder of the Japanese attack 59 years ago, on Pearl Harbor, sitting on cement blocks on display at the museum. It's a midget submarine named "C" and is a testimony to the inept courage of Ensign Kazuo Sakamaki, the first Japanese prisoner of World War II.

The Japanese planned a surprise, three-pronged assault on the U.S. Pacific fleet at anchor. In between two air strikes, five tiny subs were to each fire two 18-inch torpedoes at aircraft carriers, battleships and cruisers.

By circumstance, the primary targets — the carriers — were off on maneuvers when the attack was launched. Had they been destroyed, the war might have had a different outcome.

The little subs were built especially for the Pearl Harbor operation. Each carried a two-man crew. The vessels each weighed 59 tons, were 79 feet long and could cruise for 55 minutes. Counter-rotating twin propellers powered by lead-acid batteries propelled them.

The five underwater midgets — "A" through "E" — were strapped to a mother sub and carried within ten miles of Pearl Harbor. The clamps were released at 6:30 AM Sunday, an hour and a half before the first wave of Japanese carrier planes.

Enemy sub "A" had ballast trouble and could not submerge. An American patrol plane spotted the crippled vessel cruising slowly and alerted the destroyer USS Ward.

A salvo from the Ward's 4-inch cannons hit sub "A" squarely and sank it in 1,200 feet of water. The sub is still there on the deep bottom with the bodies of its two crewmen inside.

The skipper of the Ward, Lt. Cmdr. W.W. Outerbridge, radioed an urgent report to command headquarters: "We have attacked, fired upon, and dropped depth charges upon a submarine operating in defensive sea area. Stand by for further messages."

The time was 6:45 AM — an hour and 15 minutes before the aerial attack on Pearl Harbor. As it was Sunday morning, the message was never delivered. Neither was a late message from a mainland lookout that a strange flight of airplanes was approaching. It was assumed the planes were from the American carriers on maneuvers.

Sakamaki's sub "C" was having trouble with his ballast when released from the "mother" sub and sunk to the bottom, nose first. He succeeded in releasing the sub, getting it to surface.

Sakamaki's mission was to slip around Pearl Harbor's anti-submarine net and up the main channel to fire on ships tied up at Ford Island. The destroyer Ward, which hurled five depth charges at it, spotted sub "C." Sakamaki and his crewman were to destroy themselves and the sub if captured, but the self-destruct charge aboard failed to detonate because the fuse was drenched with battery acid. Both Sakamaki and his crewman hung on to the reef. The crewman drowned.

In the morning, a beach patrol picked up Sakamaki, too weak to run. Sakamaki remained a prisoner for the entire war, racked with feelings of guilt for failing his mission.

Upon returning to Japan, he was ridiculed for failure. Eventually he found a job with Toyota in its Brazil agency.

Mini-sub "C" was repaired by the U.S. Navy and taken to the mainland to be exhibited in War Bond Drives.

Sub "B" got inside Pearl Harbor and fired both its "fish." The first missed a seaplane tender and blew up a pier. The second torpedo also missed and exploded harmlessly on the beach.

Sub "E" was never found. It is assumed to have been sunk by four U.S. destroyers, which that day lobbed depth charges on a small target.

Sub "D" was discovered in 1960 near the harbor entrance by a Navy diver. The torpedoes were still in place, but there was no trace of the crew. This vessel was returned to Japan at the request of that government. The sub is on display at the Japanese Naval Academy. ■



# 492nd BOMB GROUP HAPPY WARRIOR HAPPENINGS

NORTH PICKENHAM

BY W.H. "BILL" BEASLEY

## 2ADA SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DINNER

The 2ADA Southern California Dinner at the Phoenix Club in Anaheim afforded us another opportunity to visit Southern California at the end of February. We met Craig in San Diego, went to our favorite haunts for seafood and just had a great time relaxing. Saturday, February 26 was the dinner, but we made a stop at Knott's Berry Farm for chicken and dumplings for lunch and look-see at the Crystal Cathedral before going to the dinner.

The 492nd was well-represented with 19 attendees: Bill, Norma and Craig Beasley; William and Marie Caplinger; Betty Byrne Daly and son Patrick Byrne; Carl and Verla Johnson; Bill Moorhead and Vinnie Brewer; Harry and Sally Orthman; Tom and Mary Anne Nelson; Willie and Molly Sparks; and Carl and Shirley Taylor. The 492nd members attending the dinner thought it might be fun to get together following next year's 2ADA Southern California Dinner. Harry Orthman was asked to check out possible sites for the 492nd to do this next February, possibly a brunch on Sunday morning following the dinner.

The speaker for the evening was Yvonne de Ridder Files, who lived an adventurous life and was awarded medals from Belgium, France, and England. One of the medals she received was Great Britain's King George Medal for Courage in the Cause of Freedom. It is the highest medal awarded a civilian for combat-related activities during wartime. She was a member of the Resistance.

This was the first time Betty Daly and her son Patrick Byrne had attended a 2ADA function, and the evening proved to be quite exciting for both of them.

Austin "Red" Byrne was their husband and father respectively. Harry Orthman knew Austin personally and was able to help them with some of the history they were looking for. Letters from Betty and Patrick said they had a terrific evening.

Austin "Red" Byrne was flying as command pilot with the 44th Bomb Group on the August 6, 1944 mission to Hamburg. Unfortunately, he was killed on that mission. Credit goes to Will Lundy (44th) who has done research on this crew (pilot James McKenna). Excerpts follow:

"Hamburg is another great port city in Germany, but this day an oil refinery was the target for the bombs of the group. Our bombs hit directly within 1000 feet. No enemy aircraft were observed, but flak was intense and accurate. One of the 66th Squadron's PFF aircraft, which was flying deputy lead for the 492nd BG, was hit by flak just after the target and did not return.

"The aircraft was hit by flak and went into

a tight spin. Two chutes were seen at first, then eight more. Plane was seen to blow up when it crashed. Pilots apparently were able to pull it out of the spin once or twice, but then it would go back into a dive again. It crashed in the target area, with seven of the twelve men on board surviving. There was no accounting for the other three chutes observed (ten chutes).

"Lt. Emmett Tucker, pilotage/navigator, said, 'I was flying a make-up mission to catch up with my regular crew (Lt. Peterson) and was in the nose turret. When the plane went into that tight spin, I was unable to move for quite awhile. But when the plane came out of the spin, I bailed out. The bombardier, Forseth, went out first, then the navigator, and then me. I think the pilot and copilot were killed by the flak hits because when I went out of the bomb bay, I could see no movement. The smoke was very bad.

"Someone said, 'Let's get out of here!' and we left the ship. There was never any communication from the front of the ship to advise us to jump. (Intercom knocked out?) The action of the ship at this time was not violent, but more like a falling leaf.

"The officers went to Barth, Germany to Stalag Luft #1 and the enlisted men to the new Stalag Luft #6 and Stalag Luft #4. We were liberated by the English in early May 1945."

## 2ADA SOUTHWEST DINNER, DALLAS, TEXAS, MARCH 18, 2000

Bob and Dorothy Cash, Jim and James McCrory, and Joyce Rorak represented the 492nd Bomb Group. Dorothy Cash helped with registration and Bob Cash was a "docent" in the hospitality room. He said a copy of *Fortunes of War* was brought for display and he felt the 492nd was well represented. General Lew Lyle from the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum and 2ADA President F.C. "Hap" Chandler spoke.

## NEWLY FOUND MEMBERS

Betty Byrne Daly & Patrick Byrne; Jerome Patten; Brian Mahoney, who is writing a book to honor his late father, Col. James J. Mahoney (also 467th); Billy Gene Biggs; and Charles Brantley, brother of Haywood Brantley.

## MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 2000

Wreaths to honor the 492nd BG War Dead and Missing were laid at the following American Battle Monument Cemeteries this May 2000: Cambridge with Russell Ives doing the honors; the Ardennes with Ferdinand Dessente doing the honors for our group as well as the 2ADA; and the Netherlands (Maargraten) with Enrico Schwartz and Svetlana Reimer doing the honors for the 492nd BG and the 2ADA.

Enrico and Svetlana found and excavated the crash site of the Lloyd Herbert crew whose

members are memorialized on the Wall of the Missing at the Netherlands Cemetery.

John Hey, Klaus Neimeijer, Arl DeJong and Henny Kwik have been invited to attend the ceremony at the Netherlands Cemetery. These men have been instrumental in providing not only our group but also other groups in the 2nd Air Division Association with information about former crew members.

Wreaths were laid this year at American Battle Monument Cemeteries in memory of the War Dead and Missing of all the Second Air Division in the following locations in Europe: Ardennes, Brittany, Cambridge, Epinal, Henri-Chapelle, Lorraine, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Normandy. The next issue of the *Journal* will have pictures and details of the programs at the cemeteries.

## 492ND HISTORY BOOKS

Allan Blue still has a few copies of *Fortunes of War*. If interested, send him a check for \$9 at PO Box 201, Bendersville, PA 17306-0201.

*89 Days* is available for \$50 from author Russell Ives, 38 Mill Moor Road, Meltham, Huddersfield, HD7 3JY, West Riding of Yorkshire, England. ■

## "We See," Said the Passengers!

REPRINTED FROM "BOMBS AWAY"  
490TH BG

I was flying from San Francisco to Los Angeles. By the time we took off, there had been a 45-minute delay and everybody on board was ticked.

Unexpectedly, we stopped in Sacramento on the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be another 45-minute delay, and if we wanted to get off the aircraft, we would reboard in 30 minutes. Everybody got off the plane except one gentleman who was blind. I noticed him as I walked by and could tell he had flown before because his Seeing Eye dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of him throughout the entire flight. I could also tell he had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached him and, calling by name, said, "Keith, we're in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?"

Keith replied, "No, thanks, but maybe my dog would like to stretch his legs."

Picture this . . . all the people in the gate area came to a completely quiet standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with the Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses.

People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, they were also trying to change airlines.

— scottys 182

## 445TH PARTICIPATION IN CAMBRIDGE CEMETERY MEMORIAL DAY 2000

The 445th Bomb Group participated in the Memorial Day 2000 service at Cambridge Cemetery by having a wreath placed in the flagpole area. Hilary Hammond of the Memorial Trust Board of Governors was asked to lay the 445th Bomb Group wreath. I sent a personal check for \$70 to the florist in Cambridge. Any member of the 445th who would like to contribute to this memorial can send a check to Fred A. Dale, Vice President, 445th Bomb Group (address on page 2).

## 445TH BG ATTENDS SW REUNION

The 445th Bomb Group members who attended the Southwest 2ADA Reunion held in Dallas, Texas on March 18, 2000: Fred Dale, Paul Dickerson, Bruce Gaw, John Goffe, Ray Lemons, Arnold Nass, Robert Swofford, Chuck Walker, and Don Whitefield.

2ADA President F.C. "Hap" Chandler was present and brought the attendees up to date on the activities of the Association. He and Chuck Walker brought the group the happenings that are going on in Norwich with the rebuilding of the library and the 2nd Air Division Memorial. Plans are still on for the 2001 convention of the 2ADA to be held in Norwich in November of that year. Over 400 have indicated they would like to attend.

## HELP WANTED!!!

I recently received a letter from Kenneth F. Tinklepaugh, who was eight years old when his father, T/Sgt. Arthur J. Tinklepaugh, was KIA on the Gotha mission of February 24, 1944. Of the crew of ten, five were KIA and five became POWs. The POWs were: bombardier 2nd Lt. Bruce G. Caturan; radio operator T/Sgt. Edwin H. Barker; right waist gunner S/Sgt. Robert A. Graham; left waist gunner S/Sgt. Robert F. O'Corman; and tail gunner John D. Speakman. The plane crashed near Brottarode (don't know country).

The 445th Bomb Group on 14 May 1945 was awarded the Presidential Citation for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy.

"On 24 February 1944 this group participated, with other heavy bombardment groups of the 2d Bombardment Division, in an attack on the Gothiaer Waggonfabrik, A.G. located in Gotha, Germany. On this occasion the attacking bombers met and overcame the fierce and most determined resistance the enemy was able to muster in defense at the target, so vital to his ability to wage war. Unprotected by friendly fighter cover, the 445th Bombardment Group (H) was under almost continuous attack from enemy aircraft for a period of 2 hours and 20 minutes. Although anti-aircraft fire was hurled at the formation along the route to and from the target as well as at the target itself, the most deadly opposition was given by enemy aircraft. For one hour and 20 minutes before 'bombs away' savage attacks were made by



## BY FRED A. DALE

single- and twin-engined enemy fighters in a vain attempt to keep the bombers from reaching their target. On the actual bomb run, that critical period of each bombardment mission, fierce and relentless attacks were unable to keep the bombers from accomplishing their task. For another hour after bombing, the group continued to be the object of ferocious fighter attacks. Of this group's 25 aircraft which penetrated enemy territory, 13 were lost to these fighter attacks, which number is approximately twice the loss suffered by any of the other groups participating in this mission. In addition, 9 of this surviving 12 aircraft returned from the mission with battle damage. With determination the 445th Bombardment Group (H) flew its assigned course, destroying 21 enemy attackers, probably destroying 2 more, and damaging 7 during the long running battle. The target was located and bombed with extreme accuracy and devastating results. This target, the most important source of ME-110s, was so well hit that the enemy air force suffered a most telling blow. The courage, zeal, and perseverance shown by the crew members of the 445th Bombardment Group (H), 2nd Air Division, on this occasion were in accordance with the highest military traditions of the military service of the United States and reflect great credit on themselves and the group, and the Army Air Forces."

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:  
G.C. MARSHALL, Chief of Staff

If anyone who reads this knows of or about any of the men on this plane that went down and were POWs, please contact Kenneth F. Tinklepaugh, Long Meadow, 91 Onderdonk Road, Warwick, NY 10990.

## NEW BOOK ABOUT A 445TH MEMBER

A new book has been put on the market, authored by Kitty Strickland about her husband who was a pilot in the 445th. The book is called *Red Roses and Silver Wings — A WWII Memoir*.

Jack Strickland became a B-24 bomber pilot with the 445th BG stationed in Tibenham, England. On March 24, 1945 he was piloting the deputy lead plane for the 8th Air Force 2nd Air Division raid on Wesel, Germany (Operation Varsity — the crossing of the Rhine). Col. Carl

Fleming, deputy base commander, was flying in the copilot's seat. At home in the United States, Jack's wife, Kitty, was caring for their young son and awaiting the birth of the couple's second child.

This is the story of a young couple whose lives were abruptly and permanently altered by World War II. Unlike most WWII books, it is told from a woman's perspective. Having been with Jack all through his pilot training in the Air Force, Kitty gives a vivid description of what life was really like during the war years.

This book includes letters from Jack — an unusually observant young man — written to Kitty, his family and friends. It also contains numerous pictures, newspaper articles and well-researched military documents, including flight orders. Jack and Kitty's story will bring back memories for the men and women who lived through those days. It will make you laugh and cry, but mainly will give you an authentic look and insight into the lives of young people at that time. A "must" for history buffs, WWII veterans, and anyone who enjoys a love story and a good read. ■

## The Miracle Cure... Or Ox Tail Soup Is Not Healthy

A farmer had an ox and a mule that he hitched together for plowing. One night, after several continuous days of field work, the ox said to the mule, "We've been working pretty hard. Let's play sick tomorrow and lie here in our stalls all day."

"You can if you want to," the mule responded, "but I believe I'll go to work."

The next morning when the farmer came out, the ox pretended he was sick. The farmer bedded him down with clean straw, gave him fresh hay and a bucket of oats, and left him for the day. The mule picked up the slack and pulled the plow by himself.

That night, the ox asked the mule how he got along and if the farmer had said anything about him. "No," the mule stated. Hearing this, the ox decided to play sick the following day.

Again, the ox received comfortable bedding and plenty to eat. When the mule returned that night, the ox inquired about how the day went.

"About the same as yesterday," the mule noted.

"Did the old man say anything to you about me?" the ox asked.

"No," replied the mule, "but he did have a long talk with the butcher on the way home." ■

## Attlebridge Tales



by Jim Lorenz

### MEMORIAL ROOM BOOKS

Several years ago, the 466th BG completed its pledge of \$1,000 to the 2ADA Memorial Room Book Fund. This January I received a note from Derek Hills, our Trust Librarian, saying that they have purchased two new books with the interest from our donation. Our book plates will read: "Provided by the 466th Bomb Group, in honor of all who served at the Attlebridge Air Field, B-24 Base, March 1944 - July 1945." Remember also that any of you or your relatives or friends can make a \$35 donation, which will buy one book, and create their own book plate — perhaps in your honor? My son and family did this — a surprise gift for my 75th birthday some years ago which made me proud! Check with me for details on how to do this!

### OUR ATTBLEBRIDGE GUIDES

As most of you know, the 466th has three official "base guides" who work with our Memorial in Norwich helping visitors to visit our Attlebridge Base area. Any veteran — or any interested relative or even just a visitor — can use these services. Our library staff will contact a guide, and most often, the guide will "fetch" the visitors at the library, take them to see the base, village, church, and pub and then return them to Norwich. When we have a meeting in Norwich these people help us plan our "Day at the Village." And every Memorial Day and Veterans Day, these are the people, along with Rev. Illingworth of All Saints Church and British Legionnaire Digby Horner, who place a wreath on our 466th memorial at Frans Green in Weston Longville off the end of the base runway with a short ceremony. These events are always attended by the local residents — whether we are there or not!

Thus, we owe Ted and Joyce Clarke, Brian and Barbara Youngs, and Cathy Thomson (her husband Donald died last year) a ton of gratitude for their devotion. If you plan to visit Norwich on your own, please let our Memorial Library staff know when you plan to be there. They will find one of our guides to show you to the Attlebridge area.

### MAIL CALL

James Van Ginkel, pilot of Crew 752, reports that his radio operator, Loren B. Whitebread, died January 28, 2000 in Dallas, Texas, survived by his wife, Dorothy and three children.

We had an interesting e-mail from Kathy Jackson (VP Communications of the Heritage League); she had received a note from a lady

whose father's brother had been MIA while flying in a P-38 in the 479th Fighter Group — cover for a B-17 group in 1944. She stated that they had no information from the government on what happened. U.S. officials did notify them in 1948 that his body was found — but no further details.

Since this did not involve the 2nd Air Division, I merely wrote her a letter giving her suggestions on what to do, along with what data I had on this group and a fighter group historian's name — she did the rest. She was able to actually locate and talk to his fighter group commander and get details on his crash, where he was buried, and that his body is now in Arlington. She writes to me: "Thanks for your help. My father will have spent 54 years, come May 2, never knowing what happened to his brother. He asked me three weeks ago to please find out what happened . . . what a mission for me. But so far, with the help of wonderful people like you, we have to come to find what had been lost. Thank you." The crash is still a mystery — this pilot was following his leader (on instruments) from 30,000 feet and apparently dove straight down. His commander could only guess oxygen problems, vertigo and blackout.

We've had three other requests for mission data (in which we could not be of much help, but it's a nice feeling to be of help sometimes).

### 466TH BOMB GROUP LOGO

The 2ADA has approved the buying and installation of group banners (like the 36 x 120 inch ones in the rotunda of the 8th Air Force Museum) in the new Memorial Library in Norwich. These will be slightly smaller — 30 x 44 inches — due to the lower library ceiling.

As Evelyn Cohen was getting these together, she couldn't find one for the 466th. When I sent her a photo of the 466th banner hanging in the museum, she responded, "That's pretty plain — don't you have a 466th logo?"

In checking, I found that somehow we did not get our logo banner made for the museum along with the other groups. Just before opening, someone (I'd guess Mary Beth Barnard) noticed ours missing and hurriedly ordered one made. They used a rudder with our correct red/white colors.

I looked up the history of the "Flying Deck" logo (which the 466th BGA uses). I found that the original cadre of 466th crews while still in training prior to being sent to England had decided on this logo done in color (red, black, yellow, and white), the four playing card suits (guess these guys were poker players) represent our squadrons: 784th — 4 of clubs; 785th — 5 of diamonds; 786th — 6 of hearts; and 787th — 7 of spades. For the smaller Memorial Library banner, I took an informal poll, and we decided to replace the "Flying Deck" words with "Attlebridge," as the base location would mean more to the British visitors.

Later on, if we all concur, we will also see about replacing our "tail" banner at the museum with this design, with the "Flying Deck" and add "Attlebridge Station 120" at the bottom.



Original 466th Bomb Group logo (1942)



Logo for new Memorial Library banner

### U.S. AIR FORCE LOGO?

An article in the March, 2000 issue of *AIR FORCE* magazine, entitled "World Ready, or Not?" reports on this emblem.

"USAF wants to update its image in an effort to spur recruiting and retention and more accurately reflect on its new role as an Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF) . . . Many people believe the Hap Arnold emblem (*see cut*) is the official Air Force symbol, but it isn't," said Col. Ron Rand, Air Force director of public



### The original Hap Arnold emblem

affairs. "We don't have an official symbol and never have had one. With the transition to the EAF and a new millennium, our leadership decided the timing is right to modernize our identity and give us an official symbol . . . As for our aircraft, which are seen by millions of people, the tail markings tend to represent the wing and the command."

"Air Force leaders committed about \$800,000 to survey the general public and their own personnel about attitudes toward the service and have those results interpreted by a private corporation identity firm, Siegel & Gale. They had survey input from 10,000 people (*my banner survey involved five people and cost me \$1.98*).

(continued on page 26)

# Meet the Newest Trust Governor...

My interest in the USAAF, like many young boys of my age, stemmed from the time I was evacuated from London. In 1943 we were living in West Wycombe, Kent (Doodle Bug Alley). As my father was in war work in London, it was decided that my mother, sister, and I would live with an aunt and uncle in High Easter in the Essex countryside, some 70-80 miles from London.

It was there that I first heard the strange English accents of the men of the 9th USAAF, stationed a few miles away at Matching Green, near Leaden Roding. In the evening they would cycle into the village, and we lived in the first cottage as they came in (it's the oldest cottage in the village after the church; it goes back to the 16th century, and is still there to this day). They would leave their bicycles, collect my mother and sister, and off they would go to the two local pubs in the village — but not before they had a chat with my sister and I, and gave us candies and yes!! chewing gum. So I was enrolled into the expression "Got any gum, chum?" every time the American servicemen came into the village. I suppose it was from these beginnings that my interest in the Willys Jeep started.

When the war ended, I went back to grammar school in Loughton, Essex, where we had moved back to. Having finished school, just before my 18th birthday, I now awaited my "call up" papers to serve two years National Service. Having continued my interest in flying, I had been in the Air Force Cadets prior to my call up; this guaranteed my entry into the Royal Air Force.

After trade training, my job was Operations Clerk. Doesn't sound like much, but what I did was very interesting. I assisted the controller in air traffic control, and I was posted to R.A.F. Luqa, Malta G.C. for the next 18 months. This is an international airport run by the RAF for both military and civil aviation 24 hours a day. Halfway through my service, in 1956, England together with France declared war on Egypt over the canal, but that's another story.

Having met my wife Iris, we were married in 1960. I chose a professional life in sales, moved to Berkshire, worked for a number of international companies, brought up two boys. I still had a strong interest in aviation, and in 1977 I drove past a local garage where sitting on the forecourt was a Willys Jeep very much in need of care and attention. I bought it, and took two years to restore it. It is still in our possession, and we have been all over Europe in it. You may remember it in the marking of the 491st Bomb Group's "Piccadilly or Bust."

About twenty years ago, Iris and I decided to move to Norfolk. Our eldest son Martin was just leaving school and Brett was changing school as well. At first we purchased a cottage, but this was too small, so we moved to our present address, a 17th century farmhouse that just happened to be beside the old 8th Air Force base of Deopham Green.

Iris had opened a retail business in Swaff-



**KEITH THOMAS**

ham, and every morning drove past North Pickenham. I knew that all the 2nd Air Division airfields had contacts who could be called on for assistance when veterans and their families returned. Then one day in 1986 I was in the Memorial Library and spoke to Tony North, offering the services of Iris and I, that if in the event some veterans of the 491st or 492nd Bomb Groups were returning, we would help in any way we could. About 18 months later, I had a call from the library, and the rest, as you say, is history.

Iris and I attended the very first meeting in Norwich to form the Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial, and I became a committee member under the chairmanship of the late Graham Saville, who had also been an air cadet in the same squadron as myself in the early fifties.

After three or so years I took over the chairmanship of the "Friends" and continued for three years with a very supportive committee. We gradually built up the membership and secured a firm financial basis.

Having stood down after my term of office, a year later both of us were elected to the committee. As a result of the tragic fire that destroyed the Central Library in Norwich, the "Friends" were asked to raise £5000 towards furniture and fittings for the new, enlarged library.

It was decided by the committee that one of the ways to raise this amount was to stage a "Forties Dance" in a hangar on a WWII base. We obtained the support of a local company who let us use their hangar for a nominal fee at Norwich Airport. A local band, the Jonathan Wyatt Big Band, supplied the music, and the refreshments were in the style of the 1940s; i.e. cheese sandwiches, etc., together with doughnuts which a number of local supermarkets donated free of charge. We also had various monies donated to us by local firms.

The result was that everybody who attended enjoyed themselves and the "Friends" made two thousand pounds. We were able to present

Paul King with a cheque for the promised amount at our Thanksgiving Dinner last November.

It is indeed an honour to be asked to join the Governors of the Memorial Trust, and I will endeavour to help and inform the public at large what this splendid Memorial represents and to continue our strong links with the United States of America. ■

## **ATTLEBRIDGE TALES** (continued)

Siegel & Gale recommended making a core theme out of the service's vital EAF mission, about which enlisted person and officer alike felt the most passionate.

"Based on its research, Siegel & Gale concluded 'the Air Force is a world-class, mission-ready organization,' according to the USAF; thus the firm proposed the slogan 'World Ready.' It also proposed a logo (*see cut*), a streamlined version of the Arnold emblem. Both were presented to USAF leaders in November. The verdict: More work on the theme is needed; the logo might pass.



## **U.S. AIR FORCE**

### **The new Air Force Logo for our Expeditionary Aerospace Force**

"We're trying to encapsulate the essence of what it means to be in the Air Force," said Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters. "The Air Force is a wonderful organization. It offers extraordinary opportunities beyond the monetary and educational benefits that we have been using in recruiting."

### **ETO ABMC CEMETERIES**

Thanks to Bill Beasley (492nd BG), we have a summary of our 3335 2nd Air Division men buried and/or memorialized in the thirteen American Battle Monuments Commission cemeteries in the European Theater of Operations, World War II. Bill's 492nd BG had a wreath placed at Ardennes American Cemetery last year, and the Superintendent, Ferdinand M. Dessente, wrote how moving it was as over 1500 Belgians and a representative of the King attended the Memorial Day event.

The 2ADA Executive Committee has now voted that we will attempt to make arrangements and pay for a wreath to be placed at these thirteen cemeteries each year via each local cemetery superintendent. The 466th BG has 155 men at eight of these locations: 11 at Ardennes, 3 at Brittany, 84 at Cambridge, 2 at Epinal, 2 at Henri-Chapelle, 5 at Lorraine, 31 in the Netherlands, and 10 in North Africa.

Remember the only 2ADA meeting in 2001 will be the one in Norwich in November! ■

# YOU'RE HUN FORGIVEN

Reprinted from "Daily Star"  
Submitted by our British Friend,  
Phil Levick of Sheffield

## KRAUTS GET BITTER OVER BOOZE ADS, BRITS OVERJOYED

Furious Germans have bombarded advertising watchdogs with complaints over an ale named Spitfire.

They went on the attack when brewers used the slogan: "Downed all over Kent, just like the Luftwaffe."

Another ad showed a bottle of Spitfire flying a World War Two doodlebug with the message: "Relax Smudger, it's one of ours."

But the final straw came when they spotted brewers Shepherd Neame's next ad for Spitfire, which simply read "4-2" — referring to the score in England's 1966 World Cup win over the Germans.

The Kent-based brewers nearly landed in the Messy-schmidt when the Advertising Standards Authority received a barrage of complaints about ads for the ale they've dubbed



"The Bottle of Britain." Yesterday an ASA spokesman confirmed: "We had a total of 55 complaints about these advertisements, many claiming they were racist."

"I think a lot of them probably came from Germans or people who had German friends visiting who didn't find the ads very funny."

The brewers' previous ad campaign featured slogans including "No Fokker comes close" and "Goering, Goering, Gone."

But yesterday the brewers escaped being shot down in flames after the ASA said they would take no action.

The ASA spokesman said: "We decided the advertisements were unlikely to cause serious or widespread offence." Yesterday a Shepherd



Neame spokesman said: "Spitfire has always been known as the Bottle of Britain and these were light-hearted ads which were intended to be taken in the same vein."

The last word goes to scouse comedian Stan Boardman, famous for his German jokes.

He said: "I walked into a pub the other night and shouted out 'Four Spitfires' . . . six Germans dived under the tables!" ■

## NEW MEMBERS OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

### 44th

Joseph Coro

### 93rd

Thomas A. Halker  
Robert H. Densmore (AM)  
Simone Johnson (AM)

### 389th

Sigurd E. Andersen  
Roland L. Ring

### 392nd

Robert Books (AM)

### 445th

Herbert J. Beatty  
John S. Coleman  
Seymour Glass  
Gregory R. McLaughlin  
M.C. Thornton, Jr.  
Anna May Bachman (AM)  
Irving H. Berkowitz (AM)  
Richard Carlisle (AM)  
Gwen Ellis (AM)  
Randy R. Ripps (AM)

### 448th

K.L. Flinders

### 453rd

Jimmie W. Woolley

### 458th

Procter H. Grigg  
Guido Piccirilli  
William H. Raupp

### 466th

Joseph J. Rooney

### 467th

Charles E. Deardorff  
Herbert Dunning  
William F. Mattulke  
G. Bruce Palmer  
Robert B. Troy

### 489th

Dan Boone  
Henry Markowitz  
David L. Smart, Jr.  
Collin Allan (AM)

### 492nd

Billy Gene Biggs  
John Lusk Moore  
Talt T. Smiley (AM)

### SM

Rusty Bloxom  
Jennifer Christian  
John Creber  
John Keegan  
Alan Trattle

# The 448th Speaks



SEETHING

BY CATER LEE

By the time we receive the Spring issue of the *Journal* it's time to submit our articles for the Summer issue. Usually I like to read the past issue before starting my article for the next issue, to maybe get some ideas from what I read. In reading the Spring issue of the *Journal* I found that some groups have recently held their group reunions at the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum and others are planning theirs there soon. The 448th Memorial Bomb Group Association plans its reunion there on

August 27-30, 2000 to dedicate the \$14,000+ granite memorial already in place.

Also, the 448th has contributed for a per-gola, and since there will be only five of them in the chapel area, we wanted to be sure and get our \$10,000 in early.

We are also working on getting the balance of our donation to go over \$100,000 total contribution to the Heritage Museum. Anyone of the 448th who has not as yet made a donation toward this or if you wish to make an addition to what you have already donated, you may do so by sending me a check made out to the 448th Bomb Group stating that it is a Heritage Museum donation. To date we believe only one group has made a contribution of \$100,000. Let's be the first B-24 outfit to meet that criterion. We have contributed a little over \$90,000 at present.

This Heritage Museum is truly a great tribute to those who served with the 8th Air Force in World War II, so let's make it even better for generations to come and see what a task they accomplished.

I'm sure some of our 448th will attend the

dedication of our new Memorial Library in Norwich. Some will go with the 2ADA and some will make it a side trip to go with other destinations in Europe. Whichever you choose, I'm sure this will be an affair you won't want to miss if you can make it.

The Station 146 Tower Association will by this time have started their annual open house at the Seething Tower, and we thank all those who give so much of their time and labor making this a must to visit if you get to Norwich. It's only eleven miles, and you'll be glad you stopped by to see what a great job our British friends are doing and have done to keep the memories of World War II alive.

If you have not sent in your membership dues to the Tower Association, please do so, as it's only \$10.00 and you receive a wonderful newsletter four times a year telling what's going on in the Association. Send your \$10.00 check to Jim Turner (Recruiting Sergeant) at The Beeches, Brook Road, Seething, Norwich, Norfolk N15 1DJ England.

Hope to see you in Savannah, August 27-30. Be there. ■

# HALESWORTH 489TH NOTES

BY  
JAMES M. DAVIS

The 489th BG has a group reunion scheduled for October 11-15, 2000 in San Antonio, Texas. Mr. Charles Weaver has requested that those who plan to attend and make hotel reservations, please make your reservations directly with the hotel of your choice as well as any tours. You can choose your own method of payments. This will give each person their choice of hotel and activities and save a lot of confusion and problems.

I can assure you, San Antonio is a great place to visit, and there is no doubt that the people of the 489th Bomb Group are as fine a group of people as you will ever find. So you can't help but win by attending the "San Antonio Fall Fling 2000!" When making your reservations please tell the hotel you are a part of the "San Antonio Fall Fling 2000" group. Charles has also informed the hotels that some of you may refer to the 489th BG reunion. See you there.

Two weeks ago I attended a reunion of my high school class (1940). Our last reunion was held in 1990 and about two hundred and fifty ex-students attended. This year we had only about fifty attend. It took a lot of effort for some of them to come, so we voted that this would

be our last reunion.

Each year our attendance at the 2ADA convention drops off. The Second Air Division Association began in the 1940s and grew to the largest association of its kind. It had a great beginning and strong leadership since it was started. I first heard of the Association in 1976 and have attended all of the conventions except one or two. Each year Jean and I look forward to the convention so that we can meet and visit with the greatest group of people in the good ole USA. By the time this is published we will have had our reunion in Tampa Bay, and the next 2ADA convention will not be held until November 2001 in England. That is a long way off, so you might give greater consideration to attending our upcoming group reunion in San Antonio as well as the 2ADA convention in Norwich.

A few days ago I had a call from Mrs. Tina Corbett, who handles public relations and media matters for the Confederate Air Force Headquarters in Midland. Midland High School had called her and requested permission for two of their high school students to produce a video about the B-29 during World War II. They wanted to have someone familiar with the B-29 to conduct the filming, and they requested if possible to have someone who flew B-29s during WWII. Tina told me that she searched and could not find anyone living in this area who was an airplane commander or even a crew member. She said someone told her they believed there was a person named Davis who had been on a B-29 crew, and she wanted to know if I knew that person. I told her that I knew him well. I told her that I had several hundred landings and hundreds of hours as an airplane commander of B-29s during World War II after I returned from a tour of duty as

a pilot of a B-24 with the Eighth Air Force. She and I found it hard to believe that I was the only person in this area of two hundred and fifty thousand people who had been involved with B-29s during WWII. Since then I have tried to find someone else, but I guess I am the only one. I do not even know anyone in this area who flew as a crew member of a B-24 with the Second Air Division. We are rarer than I ever realized but grateful to still be around.

A few weeks ago a young man visited the Confederate Air Force Museum here in Midland. During his visit he asked one of the staff members some questions. It was obvious, because of his accent, that he was from some foreign country. He told the staff member he was from Norway and was a serviceman in the Norwegian Navy. He spent much of his time aboard ship doing patrol duty along the coast of Greenland and Iceland. All his life he had dreamed that some day he would be able to come to the CAF and see and touch all the old WWII airplanes. He took his leave this year, flew to New York, spent three days seeing the sights and then boarded a bus for Midland. He spent three days and nights on the bus. He arrived in Midland and rented a room at a motel. The next day he walked twenty miles to the Midland International Airport and spent the whole day at the museum. It was an experience of a lifetime for him to see, touch, and crawl around the old airplanes that he had read and heard so much about. The CAF was so inspired by the time, money and effort he had made just to visit with the old planes that they bought him an airline ticket back to New York so he would not have to ride the bus for three more days and nights. It is amazing how many people come from all over the world just to see and touch all the old WWII airplanes. ■



# NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY LLOYD W. PRANG

There's good news and there's bad news. The good news is that there are 53 people from the 453rd who have reservations for the 2ADA convention in Norwich in November 2001. The bad news is that the convention is now completely booked and the waiting list is getting longer by the day. At this time a total of 500 people have reservations. The "Final Farewell" is going to be a very memorable experience. One day has been set aside for the groups to do their own thing. Planning is underway for this day and details will be made available as ideas are firmed up.

## NOTES FROM THE 2ADA EXCOM MEETING LAST OCTOBER

The B-24 Groups Memorial (for the Bronze B-24 at the Air Force Academy) was over-subscribed by several thousands of dollars. NEAL SORENSEN reported that \$25,000 of the surplus moneys were donated to the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum for a bell tower for their memorial chapel.

In the future if a voting group vice president is unable to attend a 2ADA Executive Committee meeting the committee has approved that his assistant VP can represent the group and have the same voting privileges.

All 2nd Air Division veterans are welcome to attend 2ADA functions, even if they are not members of the Association. This point will be noted in future articles which will be published in the *Journal*. On a personal note, I'd like to stress once again that back in 1944-45 all of us were members of the 2nd Air Division — we all pulled together then, and we should continue to do so now. If you're not a member of the 2ADA, now's a good time to correct the situation. Just send \$20 to EVELYN COHEN at 6410 Delaire Landing Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19114-4157. Among other things, Evelyn will make sure that you receive your copies of the 2ADA *Journal* (four copies per year).

## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

One of the pleasant things about this job is listening to interesting stories from members like HUBERT CRIFE. Hubert was a pilot on one of the original crews from the 734th Squadron. On March 2, 1944 he was returning from a training flight. He was on the final approach to the short runway at Old Buck and he was a little low. That runway was positioned about 18 inches above the ground level. He touched down on the grass, hit the beginning part of the runway, and wiped out the landing gear. The damage to the aircraft was so severe that it had to be salvaged and the "Libby Raider" never flew again. On March 6th the 453rd

conducted its first daylight mission to Berlin. This was mission number 14 for the group and number 8 for Hubert. He didn't make it back to Old Buck. He bailed out and landed in the freezing waters of the Zuider Zee. Luckily he was able to inflate his Mae West and was picked up by a civilian fishing boat. Later the crew of a German patrol boat took him into custody and he spent the rest of the war in a prison camp. There's much more to the story — Hubert, how about putting the whole thing together for the September issue of the 453rd Newsletter?

Regarding the Newsletter: Members of the 453rd have come to expect an outstanding publication each time WILBUR & JEANE SITTES perform their particular brand of excellence. The March issue was just one sterling example. In the theater, when an actor gives a good performance, the reward is thunderous applause from the audience. It's difficult for us to do that here and now, but with a little dash of imagination a resounding Thank You might suffice. So thank you, Wilbur and Jeane, you guys are great!

Do you remember the GI band at Old Buck? Well, the leader and trumpet player, AL BROENDEL, is alive and busy sending out e-mail. Al sent information regarding his band and other people he knew at Old Buck. Here's another guy with an interesting story for the Newsletter. How about it, Al?

JOHN KASSAB underwent surgery for a five-way bypass on February 14th. Good news! He came through it very well. By the time you read this John will be well on the way to recovery. Recently I noticed that John has returned to working on his e-mail correspondence. The Tampa convention will be history by the time you read this, but if John didn't get to Tampa I'm sure he'll be looking forward to Savannah. John doesn't miss too many of our gatherings.

JOSEPHINE VERCLER sent the following note to Evelyn Cohen, which was forwarded to me: "John made a reservation to attend the Tampa reunion a week ago (February 28) — We hadn't mailed it yet, when he was struck with a mild stroke. We are still hoping to come the last of May. He is getting along OK. It affected his whole left side and made it numb, but he is able to walk with a walker and there is no sign of his being paralyzed." That's more good news! These Johns are tough people. Hang in there, guys — if we didn't see you in Tampa, Savannah isn't far away. See you then.

BILL WHEELER sent a note via Evelyn Cohen saying that Mary, his beloved wife of

52 years, had passed away last October. Bill, please accept the condolences of all of your 453rd friends and comrades. Bill had been a bombardier on the Fischer crew. He said they had been to several reunions and they enjoyed them all.

TOM BRITTAN has provided the following information regarding the B-24 on page 27 of the Spring 2000 issue of the 2ADA *Journal*. It was an original 453rd plane, 735th Squadron, olive drab in color. The call letter may have been W+. It was lost on 4 February 1944. It took off from Old Buckenham on a practice mission and made a turn to the left while climbing through the overcast to a heading of 80 degrees. After breaking out on top at 6500 feet it never joined the formation but continued in an easterly direction. It may have landed in Czechoslovakia.

It was captured by the Germans, had its undersurfaces painted yellow, and was flown by the Luftwaffe with the German markings (??+KB). It was used primarily to fly supplies to the island of Rhodes. Later it was retaken by the advancing U.S. forces at the Salzburg airport in Austria where it had had a nose wheel collapse.

You may also see a color photo of this B-24 on page 121 of "Bombardiers Lourds de la Dernière Guerre" par Mister Kit & J.P. De Cock (serial visible on the tail [28641] erroneously interpreted in the caption as 42-8641). This photo was also taken at Salzburg and shows the nose wheel collapse but from a different angle. Thanks, Tom.

Finally, BILL EAGLESON and his Savannah reunion committee have done a great job of providing an excellent program and excellent housing for us at the Quality Suites & Conference Center, which is located close to the 8th AF Museum. From the feedback I've been getting, these rooms are going to be completely sold out. Don't find yourself in the "bad news" category. If you haven't already registered, please check the March issue of the 453rd Newsletter for details. ■



## SEARCH FOR HERO (from page 9)

dropped down to a lower altitude hoping to restart the engine when they got to the English Channel.

"There was an unwritten law," he says, "that you did not leave your formation." B-24s bristled with defensive armament and there was safety in numbers. Now, 4,000 feet below the rest of the pack, they were alone. "I alerted my crew to watch for anything moving."

For 30 minutes they flew on — eyes anxiously scanning the sky.

"The P-51 just suddenly appeared off our right wing," Jones says. Nobody knew where he had come from. Their own escorts, P-47 fighters, were apparently busy elsewhere. It was not uncommon for a panicky (bomber) gunner to shoot at a friendly fighter, so the P-51 stayed his distance. "We felt better that he was there."

Then he was gone!

"It was almost instantaneous," Jones says. "Something knifed through the air, plastered the P-51, dived and disappeared into the clouds. It was like a flash. We had never seen a man-made object travel so fast! The P-51 went into all sorts of gyrations and tumbled out of the sky. I don't think Alison knew what hit him."

Afterwards, back at their base, they described what they had seen. "Oh, yes," the debriefing officer said, "the rocket plane — we know they have those." Something about that bothers Steve Blake, the historian. He says there is no record that on November 1, 1944 any German rocket planes were in the air near Jones' B-24. There was the jet-powered ME-262 that day, and one 262 pilot claimed to have downed a P-51.

But the rocket-powered Komet (ME-163) was still highly experimental. "They had a lot of problems and didn't see a lot of action," he says. "It's hard to pin down, hard to gather evidence after 55 years. I still lean to the theory of a ME-262."

James Herbert, Denis Alison's wing commander, accepts Jones' account. "In light of what Everett says, I believe Alison tried to follow us in that dive but was too far behind. He pulled out and discovered that lone bomber and pulled up to try to help. Then the ME-163 flew by."

One afternoon recently, Knox Bishop, curator of the Frontiers of Flight aviation museum at Love Field, reached into a display case and placed a small model of the ME-163 Komet in Jones' hands. "Oh, yeah," Jones said, "that's the one!"

Everett Jones went on to lead 11 more bombing raids over Germany. He's become something of a hero himself, earning the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters. After the war, he moved to Dallas and entered the gas and oil business. But the memory of the P-51 and its pilot stayed with him — "plagued" him, he says.

"We never saw a chute," he says. "That was the reason for believing he wasn't going to survive the crash. When you're caught up in combat, you really don't take anything person-

ally . . . But I have to feel that German pilot wasn't up there for nothing. He was going to take something. I think he took Alison because he knew if he took us [out] Alison would take him. Komets were fast, but vulnerable to American pilots. Alison took our place in that drama!"

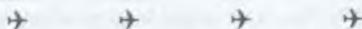
Jet or rocket, whatever shot Denis Alison down, it would be just like "Spike" to risk his life to save ten others," says Tom Alison. "The big question mark in my mind had been how my brother happened to separate from his squadron in the first place. He must have spotted this bomber flying low, obviously in need of an escort. When bombers got to be alone, they were dead ducks. If he'd seen that happen, he would have done what he did. I'm not happy that he died, obviously. But I am happy that's what happened."

Many years later, while he was corresponding with Henk Jensen, Tom mentioned to the Dutchman that his brother had been buried in Legden. Mr. Jensen traveled to Germany to photograph the cemetery and sent him the pictures. During the war, townspeople had buried 13 downed fliers from England, Canada, Australia, Poland, and the United States.

"After the war," Tom says, "the British came to take their men out of the cemetery. Eventually the Americans were taken. But in the process, my brother's body was lost."

Tom Alison wrote to his congressman and to then-President Bush. He got a packet from Washington with his brother's entire file. He was told they even dug up a grave in the British cemetery.

The body of Denis Alison has never been found.



*Comments by Jim Lorenz, 466th Group VP: I would just like to add several additional confirmations of the existence of the ME-163s, which Everett Jones found in his research and were not used in the above article. Our 466th BG Attlebridge Diaries, by John Woolnough, confirms that several other 466th BG crews on the 466th's mission #134, November 1, 1944 did indeed also sight at least two of the small ME-163 jets. I was a copilot and instructor pilot in the 466th in 1944-45 and was not on mission #134, but did fly eight missions in November 1944 and did see the ME-163 twice. We called them "Squirts," as they had fuel for only one pass through our formations. On reporting this unusual, speedy little plane to our debriefing officers, they replied, "Yes, we know of the 163 rocket plane, but it is only 'experimental' and not in combat!"*

*I would also like to quote part of a letter that Denis Alison's brother Tom wrote to Everett Jones on June 9, 1999:*

*"I have been absolutely amazed at the turn of events related in your letter. I am certain your analysis of what happened is completely correct. There is not a whole lot I can add . . . I was kind of shocked when you mentioned that "Spike" had likely "split out"; however, when I thought about it, he probably did . . . If he had been flying in formation for 45 minutes for an hour with absolutely nothing happening, I wouldn't be surprised if he did not split out seeking some*

*action. I assume he saw your feathered prop, flying at a lower than normal altitude and at a slower than usual speed and saw that accompanying you would provide some needed protection . . . In closing, I have to say that I am as certain as you can be under the circumstances that Spike chose to split off from his squadron and escorted your plane on his own volition. Speaking for myself, I'm glad to know that his action spared you and your crew a very hard time at the hands of the German flying the ME-163. His death was not for naught . . . I had the opportunity to lunch with Jim Herbert (Alison's flight leader) in his Virginia home . . . the 20th Fighter Group's losses were incredible. I don't think our general public has any idea of the debt we owe our airmen."*

*If you want to see and touch a real ME-163 jet plane, just visit the rotunda of the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah! ■*

## INTERESTING TIMES (from page 19)

**MARRAKECH:** The B-29s on their first leg to India. When we had to wake Campbell for the colors of the day. That was close. Red flares everywhere. The walled city of Medina.

**ENGLAND:** The flight from Marrakech to England. Seeing all the lights in Lisbon, Portugal. No blackouts there. Cohen plotting our course so we wouldn't get too close to the continent and we wound up over Ireland. Looking for numbers on the beach as we had been told to do to determine what heading to take into England. After landing they took our plane and shipped us to Northern Ireland by train and boat. The trip across to Ireland in the worst storm they had in years!

Remember the cabby in London as the buzz bombs were chasing us down the street? "Don't know about you Yanks, but I'm heading for the tube." Bet you forgot that one. The park in London where one could say anything as long as they had a box to stand on. "Down with the bloody Queen and the King." The Goose and Gander club in London. Remember?? I wonder if it's still there?

The train we used to ride to Norwich with all those doors on the sides. All going bang-bang as they left the station. The museum in Norwich and all the torture chambers.

**EUROPE:** Remember our aerial tours over Germany, France, etc. The old world cities we visited, Berlin, Gotha, Hamburg, Saarbrücken, Brunswick, Dessau, Politz, Oldenburg, Boulogne, Rennes, St. Lo, Emmerich, Wismar, Strasbourg, Schwerin, Ludwigshafen, Reims, Lutzendorf, Kothen, Bretigny, Caen, Sautrecourt, Dreux, Leipham, St. Lo, Sens, etc.

**TIBENHAM:** Finally, remember our base, Tibenham, where Col. Terrill was the 445th C.O. when we joined the group in May of 1944 and where Col. Jones took over as C.O. when we finished our 35 missions. ■

I remembered.

To say that being there had been an emotional experience would have been an extreme understatement; after all, it was the place where I had spent what were the most important six months of my young life more than fifty years ago.

I was at the very English base (now a small civilian flying field) from which my World War II B-24 Liberator bomber crew, along with hundreds of other crews, had flown our combat missions against Nazi Germany.

The British townspeople living in the surrounding area had invited our group back for a reunion.

This was to be our final get-together at Seething, the tiny nearby village which had given our base its name.

True, my wife and I had attended the group's earlier reunions in several cities in the United States, and in 1995, commemorating the end of the war, at Seething.

As we several dozen gathered, the stoop-shouldered, often cane-dependent or wheelchair-bound attendees confirmed the reality of that decision. It was difficult for me to picture us physically as we were against the reality of what we are.

Seeing the remains of the buildings in which we had been housed, fed and briefed was over-

## Memories Were Made Of This...

BY IRA WELLS (448TH)

whelming.

I glanced skyward and visualized the almost daily sights and sounds of more than a thousand tight-formationed Reich-bound airplanes from Seething and neighboring bases stretching in a line more than 500 miles long; weather-related mid-air collisions had been all too common.

From these very runways our group's aircraft, heavily loaded with bombs, had left; to these same runways, often with many battle wounded, or worse, on board, they returned.

Frequently, severely damaged from attacks and devastating anti-aircraft fire from the ground, they crashed attempting to land.

Large numbers never made it back.

I recalled how my own crew, all ten of us hardly out of high school, had flown our fac-

tory-fresh Liberator across the Atlantic from Kansas, with refueling stops in New Hampshire, Labrador, and Iceland.

We had met only a few months before our arrival in England, complete strangers.

Once we arrived at Seething, we knew that our very lives depended upon each other.

We have remained in touch since our final mission, but only seven of us are still alive of the original ten, and several are in precarious health.

I visited the restored control tower, now a museum dedicated to the memory of the hundreds of our group's crews who had been killed in action. Our pilot had "buzzed" it at the conclusion of our last flight together, a raid on the German capital, Berlin.

Large numbers of the English men, women, and children present personally thanked us, even seeking our autographs with requests to include our home towns.

Those old enough to have actually experienced the wartime years tried to guess whether each one of us had been a pilot, navigator, bombardier, engineer, radioman, armorer, or gunner.

One apologized for the then well-known local saying that the "Yanks were overpaid, oversexed and over here."

Then I remembered even more. ■

## "You Are One Lucky Lady"

BY SHARON WAJDA • BORROWED FROM "CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE COUPLE'S SOUL" AND "BOMBS AWAY"

The passengers on the bus watched sympathetically as the attractive young woman with the white cane made her way carefully up the steps. She paid the driver and sat down in the handicapped seat at the front of the bus. She settled in, placed her briefcase on her lap and rested her cane against her leg.

It had been a year since Susan, thirty-four, became blind. Since then she had been thrown into a world of darkness, anger, frustration and self-pity. Once a fiercely independent woman, Susan now felt condemned by this terrible twist of fate to become a powerless helpless burden on everyone around her. "How could this have happened to me?" she would plead, her heart knotted with anger. But no matter how much she cried or ranted or prayed, she knew the painful truth — her sight was never going to return.

A cloud of depression hung over Susan's once optimistic spirit. Just getting through each day was an exercise in frustration and exhaustion. And all she had to cling to was her husband Mark.

Mark was an Air Force officer and he loved Susan with all of his heart. He was determined to help his wife gain the strength and confidence that she needed to become independent again. Mark's military background had trained him well to deal with sensitive situations, and yet he knew this was the most difficult battle he would ever face.

Finally, Susan felt ready to return to her job,

but how would she get there? She used to take the bus, but was now too frightened to get around the city by herself. Mark volunteered to drive her to work each day, even though they worked at opposite ends of the city. At first, this comforted Susan and fulfilled Mark's need to protect his sightless wife who was so insecure about performing the slightest task. Soon, however, Mark realized this arrangement wasn't working; it was hectic, and costly. Susan is going to have to start taking the bus again, he admitted to himself. But just the thought of mentioning it to her made him cringe. She was still so fragile, so angry. How would she react?

Just as Mark predicted, Susan was horrified at the idea of taking the bus again. "I'm blind!" she responded bitterly. "How am I supposed to know where I'm going? I feel like you're abandoning me."

Mark's heart broke to hear those words, but he knew what had to be done. He promised Susan that each morning and evening he would ride the bus with her, for as long as it took, until she got the hang of it.

And that is exactly what happened. For two solid weeks, Mark, military uniform and all, accompanied Susan to and from work each day. He taught her how to rely on her other senses, specifically her hearing, to determine where she was and how to adapt to her new environment. He helped her befriend the bus drivers who could watch out for her, and save

her a seat. He made her laugh, even on those not-so-good days when she would trip exiting the bus, or drop her briefcase full of papers on the aisle floor.

Each morning they made the journey together, and Mark would take a cab back to his office. Although this routine was even more costly and exhausting than the previous one, Mark knew it was only a matter of time before Susan would be able to ride the bus on her own. He believed in her, in the Susan he used to know before she'd lost her sight, who wasn't afraid of any challenge and who would never ever quit.

Finally, Susan decided that she was ready to try the trip on her own. Monday morning arrived, and before she left, she threw her arms around Mark, her temporary bus riding companion, her husband, and her best friend. Her eyes filled with tears of gratitude for his loyalty, his patience, and love. She said good-bye, and for the first time, they went their separate ways.

Each day on her own went perfectly, and Susan had never felt better. She was doing it! She was going to work all by herself.

On Friday morning, Susan took the bus to work as usual. As she was paying her fare to exit the bus, the driver said, "Boy, I sure envy you."

Susan wasn't sure if the driver was speaking to her or not. After all, who on earth would ever envy a blind woman who had struggled to find

(continued on page 33)

# 445TH PILOT LANDS IN THE RIGHT SPOT AT THE RIGHT TIME!

BY KENNETH R. PANNEBECKER

It was nearly 26 years to the day that Robert Ripps, a pilot in the 445th Bomb Group, once again set foot on Belgian soil in 1969. The second time he arrived by automobile rather than parachute.

The date of his first visit was April 11, 1944, and Ripps was on a bombing mission to Oschersleben, Germany. Midway to the target, the formation came under heavy ground and air attack. Then it happened. "One minute we were flying along, and the next we were on fire and in a wild spin," he said. It was impossible to control the aircraft, so he crawled back to the bomb bay, where the doors had been blown open by the explosion. Just as he got there, the plane made a violent turn and he fell out.

The next few minutes were the worst he had experienced in his life. The plane kept spinning in a tighter and tighter circle, heading right at him. He was so scared he almost forgot to pull the ripcord. He landed uninjured in an open field, a short distance from where the plane crashed and exploded. He was the only survivor among the ten-man crew.

He unhooked his parachute and ran into the nearby woods. He heard voices but didn't stop. With no idea where he landed, he decided the best course of action would be to head in a westerly direction, hoping eventually to reach the French border. His guess was that he had come down somewhere in Germany.

By sleeping during the day and traveling at night, he managed to avoid the German patrols. His cumbersome flight boots made the going slow and painful, since he kept to wooded areas as much as possible. One morning, just before dawn broke, Ripps faced a tense situation. The only way to cross a river was to walk over a long bridge and directly through a town on the other side. Crossing the bridge was no problem, but as he was walking down a street halfway through the town, a door opened suddenly and a woman came out to get her milk from the doorstep. Not knowing what to do, he blurted out "Guten Morgen." She gave him a long, hard look, returned his greeting, then went back into the home and closed the door. He ran the rest of the way out of town.

After wandering three days, he discovered that he was in Belgium rather than Germany, after spotting a road sign pointing the way to Brussels. Realizing he needed help, he decided to contact the Belgian underground somehow, but the question was how. Coming across a farmer plowing a field, Ripps spent the better part of a day observing him from the nearby woods. He decided that he would be his first contact after reaching the conclusion that anyone working that hard couldn't be a German collaborator.

"My first impression on the farmer wasn't the best," he recalled. "My sudden appearance, flying clothes and bedraggled look scared the poor man out of his wits." Not knowing what language the farmer spoke, he explained his situation in German, a language he could speak

fairly well. After getting a blank stare, he gave him a card, on which in several European languages it said, "I am an American flyer. I am hungry and thirsty." That brought a friendly response, for it seems the farmer understood French, the common language spoken in this part of Belgium. The farmer motioned him to accompany him and together they went in the farmhouse. He spent the night sleeping in a hayloft.

The next day, another downed American flier, Walter McHugh, was brought in, and later both men were closely interrogated by the

Less than a month went by before the two fliers were moved to the town of Haustere. Several villagers had spotted them walking outside the house. Hidden beneath a truckload of furniture, the two were moved to Haustere.

In Haustere, the fliers were guests in a house in the center of town. A railroad track ran alongside the house, and from the windows they watched American planes bombing the German trains. Some of the bombs came too close for comfort. From the London news broadcasts, and the rapid increase of the German troops pouring through town from the

*Anyone in Dinant not only would be smack in the center of the German army, but in the middle of a hot battle.*

head of the local underground. After he was satisfied that neither of them were Germans posing as Americans, they were taken by truck to his home in the nearby village of Dinant. He was a plumber by trade and did a lot of work for the Germans, which was an excellent means to obtain information and, at the same time, travel freely without raising suspicion.

They stayed in his house for almost four months. It was directly across the street from a German barracks, and next door to a café where on Saturday nights, the German soldiers liked to bang on a bass drum until 3 AM. Both men followed the progress of the war through the daily broadcasts received from London. They had mixed emotions on June 6th, 1944, when the invasion of Europe was announced. Up until that time, the underground was working on a plan to smuggle them to Spain, but after D-Day, they were told to concentrate their efforts on sabotage activities.

As the Allied armies swept toward Germany, both men suddenly realized that they were situated in a very precarious position when the liberating army did arrive. The town of Dinant is located on the eastern bank of the Meuse River, while directly across the river on the western side was the town of Maurene. A bridge linked the two towns. They thought that when the American army finally reached this area, the German army would make a strategic withdrawal across the river to the eastern side and then take a stand. Therefore, anyone in Dinant not only would be smack in the center of the German army, but in the middle of a hot battle. When the American army came, they wanted to be on the eastern side of the river.

The underground agreed with their theory, so the two fliers were moved across the river to a house outside Maurene. Located on a high hill, and surrounded by a high stone wall, the hideout afforded the fliers an opportunity to exercise outdoors in the summer air without being seen too readily. Both men took off for the woods the day a German motorcycle patrol pulled into the courtyard at the house. It seems the owner wasn't meeting a food quota leveled on all the people to feed the German troops.

east, it was only a matter of time before the Americans arrived. Many times the German soldiers would knock on the door and ask if any bicycles were available. From the second-story windows they watched the Germans prepare to blow up a bridge located only 100 yards from the house. The Germans did a lousy job. The explosion lifted the bridge straight up in the air, whereupon it settled right back down in almost the identical position. Although the bridge flooring slanted in toward the center, it still was usable. The Germans poured gasoline over the structure, but they never got a chance to finish the job. The Americans arrived. For the next three days, the two fliers were in the middle of a pitched battle, with the possession of the town going back and forth between the two armies. An artillery shell landed in the frontyard of the house, blowing out all the front windows.

The underground got word to the American army that the men were hiding in the house, and finally, after nearly six months of hiding, they were freed amid a heavy barrage of mortar and small arms fire. The rescue was none too soon. Two days later the house received a direct hit and was demolished. The two men were sent to Paris and then on to London. The trip to Paris wasn't Ripps' idea of first-class accommodations. Since he could speak German and French, he traveled on a prisoner-of-war truck convoy, acting as interpreter between 500 German prisoners and the American authorities and the French. Via telephone Ripps called his parents back home in Philadelphia — the first news they had of their son since he was shot down. After failing to return from the mission, he had been reported as missing in action. Ripps didn't stay in London very long — in fact, he left the same day the Germans launched the first V2 rocket against the city.

He was on the first plane home that had space for him.

"It's difficult to put into words the warmth of these people," Ripps said of his return to Belgium. "I can't help thinking what a sacrifice they made — it's something one can never repay." ■



HARDWICK

# Open Letter to the 93rd

BY ALFRED ASCH

## AIR FORCE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

Some of you may have already received your packet from the Air Force Memorial Foundation for building the Air Force Memorial on the Arlington Ridge at the Arlington National Cemetery. If not, let me bring you up to date. I have been in telephone contact with the Foundation staff and this is what I learned. A tax-deductible gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250 or more will help the Foundation raise the remaining fund requirements to build the memorial. A unique feature of the memorial will be the Airmen's Chapel. A donation of \$25.00 or more will make you a charter member of the Foundation and your name will be inscribed in a book to be maintained in the memorial. The book will be arranged in such a way that names can be retrieved. Also, the sponsors' names will be on the Foundation web site and may be retrieved.

Various levels above \$25.00 give sponsors other considerations such as lapel pins, invitations to ground-breakings, dedication ceremonies, and other activities. The Foundation has raised over \$21,000,000 but needs additional funds to reach the required \$30,000,000. The aircraft industry, some veterans' organizations and others have been most generous. I learned through my discussions that an individual will have his name shown on a plaque inside the memorial with a \$10,000 donation. The Foundation has a brokerage account with Smith Barney and will accept negotiable securities as a donation. The Foundation staff is checking for me to determine what recognition our Association and group organizations would receive by making generous donations.

Members of the Air Force and the Foundation have worked hard to get this memorial project approved. They fought and won a courtroom battle with an outspoken and misinformed minority that sought to keep us from honoring our heroes. If you wish to donate, or to learn more about the Foundation, contact the Air Force Memorial Foundation, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198, or visit their web site at [www.airforcememorial.org](http://www.airforcememorial.org).

## THE GENERAL TIMBERLAKE BUST AND 93RD PLAQUE

We have collected \$5,770.00 for payment for the General Timberlake bust to be shown in the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia. The sculptor is at work and the museum has General Ted's biographical information for the inscription. I do not have an exact completion date, but it seems we can have the dedication ceremony some time this fall.

Our plaque for the museum wall is almost completed; we can hold dedication ceremonies at the same time for both the bust and the

plaque. Advanced notification will be provided in our newsletter, the "Ball of Fire."

I personally appreciate the support and generous donations received from you and your wives. We received two very generous donations from two members of the 2ADA who had never been assigned to the 93rd Bomb Group but they knew General Ted and had a great deal of respect for him as we all did. It was refreshing to interface with you guys and the Timberlake family to do this memorial project. Thanks again!

## THE GREATEST GENERATION

Tom Brokaw, anchor man for the Nightly News on NBC, is not the only one who believes we represent the greatest generation. Last summer, I wrote letters of introduction for a young man from Nashville, Tennessee (my son, David, introduced us) to visit the Memorial Library and the 93rd air base at Hardwick. He is a high school teacher in the Nashville area and I understand he is writing a book about the air war of World War II. His visit to England was to gather material for the book. He sent me a great "thank you" letter; parts of it are as follows:

"I wanted to write you to express my deepest and sincere gratitude for all that you did for me in my independent study of the World War II air wars in England this past summer. Norwich on your recommendation turned out to be the highlight of my trip. I spent two full days conducting research in the 2nd Air Division library, speaking to Tony North, and reading about you noble men who bought my freedom with the sacrifice of your own blood, sweat and tears. Tony North supplied me with an ample first-hand perspective of the war from a local boy's point of view, and Ms. Snowden was utterly delightful in her assistance. I read and took all of the notes I could. It was especially rewarding to read about you, since it was your kindness that made research in Norwich possible for me.

"David Woodrow and his dear wife were the kindest-hearted people I met during my entire trip. David picked me up at the library on the third day and drove me out to his kingdom which is full of noble ghosts. (Note: *The "kingdom" is our Hardwick air base that the 93rd operated from during WWII. David farms the land but preserved some of the runways where they cross, a few buildings, and developed and maintains a small museum which features the 93rd*). Talking to David was every bit as informative and infinitely more personal than the class I took at Oxford and I could not have dreamed up a better day, thanks to you. He showed me all around the airfield at Hardwick and had Morris take me up to view 17 different World War II airfields from the air. What

a surprise! His restored Harvard and D-Day Artillery Spotter housed in his Biggin Hill hangar were also a sight to see. (Morris told me that he was working on the restoration of a P-51 with all the original parts.) I ran out of film after taking over 100 photographs at Hardwick alone. Afterwards, I gladly helped David unload some pig feed for his livestock, and then he treated me to dinner at a local fish and chips restaurant."

The letter goes on and comments about the sacrifices our generation made for our country to ensure freedom and liberty for generations to come. Then he comments about the lack of World War II knowledge of today's students: "It is imperative that today's students understand that the freedoms and luxuries that they now enjoy were bought and paid for by the lives and sacrifices of men they never knew, and it is a privilege and an honor to tell them about your part in the great World War II. My students know far too little about World War II, if you ask me, and I hope to bridge this chasm in their education since my students owe an unrealized debt to all of the men who fought for their freedom."

He ends his letter with this quote: "G.K. Chesterton once said that 'A country is not so much loved because it is great, rather it is great because it is loved,' " and comments that our generation had and continues to have a great love for our country.

It is great to receive a letter like this from a stranger from the younger generation. Our efforts to maintain a legacy of our generation have not been wasted. I discussed the Air Force Memorial earlier. We should do everything we can to see that it has a WWII air war flavor. ■

## ONE LUCKY LADY (from page 31)

the courage to live for the past year.

Curious, she asked the driver, "Why do you say that you envy me?"

The driver responded, "It must feel so good to be taken care of and protected like you are."

Susan had no idea what the driver was talking about, and again asked, "What do you mean?"

The driver answered, "You know, every morning for the past week, a fine looking gentleman in a military uniform has been standing across the corner watching you when you get off the bus. He makes sure you cross the street safely and he watches until you enter your office building. Then he blows you a kiss, gives you a little salute and walks away. You are one lucky lady."

Tears of happiness poured down Susan's cheeks. For although she couldn't physically see him, she had always felt Mark's presence. She was lucky, so lucky, for he had given her a gift more powerful than sight, a gift she didn't need to see to believe — the gift of love that can bring light where there had been darkness. ■

**"BAD PENNY"** (continued from page 17)  
out over the North Sea passing Heligoland. Near Kiel we turned to the southeast assuming a heading toward Berlin. This turn was to throw the fighters off course and make them think the target for the day was Berlin. As we were making this turn, the wings changed formation and split into squadrons in trail — sixteen B-24s per squadron. Soon after this maneuver, we made a turn to the northwest that put our airplanes on course to bomb the oil refineries at Hamburg.

The anti-aircraft guns at Hamburg were not firing at individual aircraft, but instead were set up to fire in predetermined grid blocks over the target we were to bomb. They would wait until a complete squadron was overhead and fire into their assigned grid. This type of firing made a large block of smoke and fire over the target. For a moment, an entire squadron would vanish in the thick, black blanket of smoke.

But the moment didn't last long. Planes would disrupt the layer of smoke as they spun out of formation or blew up before us. With each squadron, we anxiously counted the B-24s that would fly free of the smoke on the other side of the target. Ten, eleven, maybe twelve planes from each squadron survived the flak barrage. The sky was filled with parachutes descending airmen into uncertainty. As many as 40 to 60 men per squadron made the jump.

We now approached with a vivid picture of our near-certain destiny. I was so overcome by this skyline display of death and destruction that I vomited into my oxygen mask in the cockpit. My copilot had to take over for a few moments as I cleaned up the mess, repositioned my mask and steadied my nerves for the task ahead.

We entered the flak storm over our target and were immediately tossed by the severe turbulence created by the exploding 88-mm flak. The "Bad Penny" was bathed in brilliant flashes of light and peppered with exploding shells. She rocked and shuttered with the jarring impact of every burst.

## GOLF OUTING

Organized by Kurt and Vicki Warning, the 2nd Air Division Association Annual Golf Outing was held on Friday, May 26, 2000 at The Eagles Golf Club in Tampa, Florida. A total of 29 golfers participated on a beautiful day on the Forest Course. The winners received 2ADA logo golf balls. They were as follows:

**LOW GROSS:** 1st — Dick Hagg (guest) 44th; 2nd — Jerry Austin, 458th; 3rd — Delbert Shaffer, 458th. **LOW NET:** 1st — Louise Kelleher, 93rd; 2nd — Harry Kelleher, 93rd; 3rd — Eugene McDowell, 453rd. **Closest to the Pin:** Dick Hagg (guest), 44th. **Longest Drive (Men):** Ed Zobac, 445th. **Longest Drive (Women):** Louise Kelleher, 93rd. ■

The biggest jolt came when the number one engine was blown off. We rolled hard to the right and it was all that my copilot and I could do to right our B-24. Not long after, a second blast stripped the cowling and supercharger off engine number three on our right wing. An engine oil fire created an expanding plume of white smoke that trailed our aircraft.

But even at half-mast, our "Bad Penny" was determined to get us home. As the airmen had been dislodging the bomb and closing our bomb bay doors, Herbie and I had been carefully watching our descent. We had dropped from 22,000 feet to 18,000 in our recovery process. After calculating our ground speed and rate of sink, we estimated that we would probably cross the English coast at about 1,900 feet. This would allow us to go the remaining distance inland to Wendling — home.

There were a lot of "ifs" involved, though. Because of this, we decided to lighten the load and improve our chances. Anything loose was thrown out of the aircraft. Flak vests. Flak helmets. Machine guns. Ammunition. Cameras. Aircraft manuals. The bombardier had a few choice words to say about his binoculars going overboard.

The "Bad Penny" strained to hold altitude while her engines — the two that had survived the attack — were running extremely hot. I continued to be amazed that our number three was hanging in there. She was running, but without cowling and supercharger. Then, out of the blue, she kicked in with enough additional power for us to cross the English coast at 1,400 feet. I had never dreamed of flying a B-24 on two and a half engines and with a full crew across the North Sea.

When we identified our landfall, Herbie gave us a heading for Wendling. We broke out the red flares and were standing by to shoot them off as we neared the base.

Our problems were not over yet, though. Our electrical system and hydraulics were inoperative. This meant we had to manually lower the landing gear. If we lowered it too early, the gear would create too much drag and cause us to fall short of the landing field. So we worked out the timing as best we could and started to crank when the base came into view. Herbie and our bombardier unlatched the nose gear and with the help of Fitz, pushed the nose gear out. It fell in the locked position.

In the bomb bay, the flight engineer organized the gunners into a team to crank down the mains (landing gear). I put the gear handle in the down position and gunners took turns on the crank. Since the bomb bay doors weren't fully closed, they again used the parachute harness lifeline when lowering an airman into the bomb bay to turn the crank. When an airman would slip or be thrown off balance by the force of the wind blowing in through the doors, the others would pull him to safety with the makeshift line. After many more turns than the 71 defined in the manual, the gear locked into place. We were at 500 feet on the downwind side of the runway. The airmen fired our red flares to announce our arrival.

Just when we thought we were home free, Mother Nature dished up one more challenge. Since the "Bad Penny" had been at high altitude for hours, her surfaces were extremely cold. This caused our forward glass on the nose and windshield to ice over during our descent through the moist air near the ground. I had to peer out the open side windows to judge height and direction. With some divine assistance, I was able to hold our aircraft steady as she settled onto the runway. With no hydraulics and consequently, no brakes, we rolled the entire length of the runway before the "Bad Penny" came to a stop.

I had ordered the crew into crash positions before landing. Everyone was somewhat dazed with the realization that we were safely on the ground. I had to shout to them to get them to quickly exit the aircraft and run to a safe distance. The "Bad Penny" was primed to blow at any minute. According to procedure and to prevent imminent fire, the copilot and I shut down the cockpit and then scrambled down, through the front of the bomb bay and out onto the open tarmac under the right wing. There we found our entire crew, ignoring instructions to flee, waiting for us to make sure we could get out. Once again, I had to motivate them to hurry away from the aircraft!

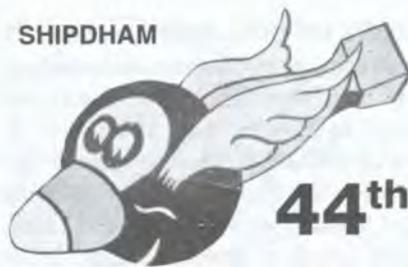
They were off like a shot. The copilot and I were close behind. At a safe distance, we turned and looked at our "Bad Penny." Her tires were flat. Gasoline was dripping from her battered fuselage and wings. Her pain fell to the tarmac with each drop of ice melting from her aluminum skin. Tubes, pipes, broken metal fairings hung down in tangled disarray. Her once overheated engines now crackled and popped as parts began to cool and shrink. This valiant bomber safely brought us home. But she would fly no more.

My crew was checked over at the infirmary and all were unharmed. I, on the other hand, had been wondering what I would find under my flight vest. I had tried to ignore the pain that was wildly spreading across my side during our return trip, but suddenly it seemed to grow more quickly now that we were on the ground.

After removing my flight suit and flight jacket, we found a piece of flak embedded in a steel plate in my flak jacket. It had bent the plate and severely bruised my side, but beyond that, I was uninjured. Today, touching that steel plate with its embedded flak is an instant reminder of all the events that attempted to end Mission 23 that day in August.

The following day, we returned to the "Bad Penny" to tell her goodbye. We counted 85 holes in her fuselage from nose to tail. Her number one engine was somewhere in Germany along with pieces of the number three. The hole in her left wing was large enough to lower a man through.

My crew and I always felt that the "Bad Penny" shed her own blood to save ours. We are certain that she was running with a power far greater than the lift in her wings to carry us safely home. ■



BY R.D. "DICK" BUTLER

Great news! The 44th Bomb Group once again has a presence on Shipdham Airfield. This is due to the generosity and interest in the history of the 44th of the airfield owner, Mrs. E. Patterson; the enthusiasm of some local aviation people; and the hard work of our fine friend in Norwich, Steve Adams. To explain this present most pleasant situation, some background information is in order.

Shipdham Airfield had been run by Arrow Air Centre Ltd since 1969. In recent years the place had taken on a down-at-heel atmosphere and appearance. This was due to difficult trading conditions and extremely high overheads. The death of the proprietor, Nigel Wright, in June 1996 meant that the business folded in November 1998. There was a business on the airfield willing to take over, but it was not granted a lease, and airfield operations ceased on 31 March 1999.

After the airfield closed, rumor and uncertainty became the order of the day. We are fortunate that Shipdham Airfield is owned by Mrs. E. Patterson, because Mrs. Patterson has a keen interest in aviation, having herself contributed to the war effort by working on the Wright Cyclone engines which were fitted to the Sunderland Flying Boats that operated from Felixstowe in Suffolk. It was Mrs. Patterson's unenviable task to sort through the applicants to take over the airfield. Suffice it to say that in the end she chose four enthusiasts who were willing to sign as guarantors of a lease. On 14 January 2000, sixty ex-members of the previous aero club voted in favor of forming a new club, and the lease was duly signed.

The newly elected chairman, Adrian Hall-Carpenter, stated:

"In order to make the club successful we need to have the grim determination to succeed and never admit defeat, in fact the kind of spirit that built Shipdham in the first place."

In the weeks to come, those words were to ring true with unerring clarity. The fledgling Aero Club had cleared its first hurdle, securing the lease. Now the harsh reality of years of under-funding and neglect had to be faced by the management committee: literally thousands of jobs to do, needing tens of thousands of pounds to do them and no money!

Following the Shipdham spirit of never turning back, the management committee had to prioritize the tasks. The main objective was to get the airfield operational once more, and for this to happen there were three priorities: a



#### SURVIVORS TOGETHER AGAIN. WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE? ANSWERS NEXT ISSUE.

serviceable runway; a clubhouse which recreates the atmosphere of Station 115; and a fuel facility.

The runway was inspected and the worst areas prioritized for repair. Mike Atherton, vice chairman and member responsible for runway operations, obtained a thousand-pound loan to carry out initial repairs. Repair and redecorating of the clubhouse was initiated. Steve Adams, who had had the foresight to remove all the artifacts and memorabilia before the liquidators arrived when the previous organization folded, reported to the management committee: "It's a great pleasure to return the contents of the museum to their rightful display place." Steve was already working on making the museum even better. He stated that Mrs. Patterson had said that any club should have a 44th Bomb Group presence and he was asked to set up and run a 44th museum.

The existing fuel installations were to be tested and if the tanks failed, a fuel bowser will be acquired. Several fuel companies offered the use of a bowser in return for exclusive supply of fuels and oils.

In addition to the previously mentioned chairman of the new Aero Club, Adrian Hall-Carpenter, and vice chairman, Mike Atherton, other officers are Steve Dorrington, secretary, and Barry Cator, treasurer. Initially, there were thirty paid-up members and four aircraft in the hangar, which has the capacity for ten aircraft. A grand opening day was planned for around the end of March. On 31 March, the day before the grand opening was to take place, Steve Adams e-mailed me:

"The museum is now as it has been from the start, a fitting tribute to the men of the 44th BG. The new wooden sign in the entrance is solid English oak that has been stained, varnished and professionally hand-written. It lists first and last missions, total a/c losses, e/a claims, and the history of the group. There

are four photo sections which are lighted with spotlights, as are the cabinets.

"Will Lundy's books are now locked in a display case, along with my B-24 Electrics Manual and several dear books that I have placed over there. I never felt comfortable about these being there before. I have been very selective about what I have placed in the display cases. I have put my original A-2 in one case along with some navigator instruments which are around the jacket. The last case has other items of navigational equipment with their cases.

"There will be five wooden B-24s in formation, one for each squadron, forming up behind 'Lemon Drop.' These have been cut out but only 'Lemon Drop' has yet been painted. Mike Bailey is doing a painting of B-24-1-F, 68th BS, 'Heaven Can Wait' for us. Depicted is this airplane leaving the Norfolk coast as this aircraft stands out beautifully against the sea and the land beneath it. A large artwork was needed for this particular space.

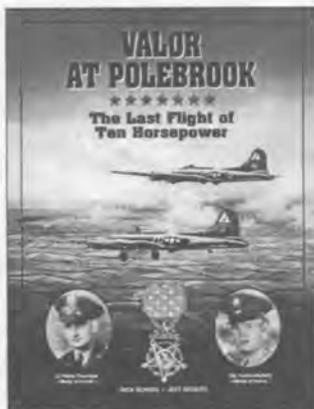
"The word 'museum' doesn't particularly appeal to me. I feel that the room is a memorial to all the men who served in the 44th, so I am open to suggestions as to what to name the room. I also need help in obtaining a copy of both the 506th BS book and the 68th BS book to replace the ones that went walk about. I bought the 68th one from Webb Rodd, so I don't feel as bad about losing it as I do about the 506th one which was donated by a veteran. Perhaps someone in the Association has a spare copy of one of these books to donate . . . Also, there is a large wall to use up, and I came up with the idea that if a veteran could send just one photo of a friend, his crew, or himself, we could have a veterans' wall. This would be their own wall and they would decide what is on it by what they send. This would make it very personal.

"There is to be a fly-in today of some Stear-

(continued on page 36)

★ ★ ★ *Now available* ★ ★ ★  
**Valor at Polebrook**  
**The Last Flight of Ten Horsepower**

by Rick School and Jeff Rogers



**FEBRUARY 20, 1944, SOMEWHERE OVER GERMANY:**

In the sunlight at 20,000 feet, the B-17s of the U.S. 351st Bomb Group had nowhere to hide from the German fighters. Explosive shells smashed into a plane named Ten Horsepower. The copilot was killed, the pilot knocked unconscious. The crippled bomber wavered, then fell away in a steep, spiraling dive. No one expected to see the crew again, but their story was not over.

Through eyewitness accounts, reports, interviews, and letters, we get to know ten young men who found themselves in a struggle for survival that tested their courage, faith, and commitment to each other. With over 100 photos, charts and maps, *Valor at Polebrook* tells a story with more than words alone.

*"As a lead pilot who flew combat during World War II, I feel well qualified to recommend **Valor at Polebrook**. It not only portrays the bravery of this crew, it also details the experiences of the hundreds of combat crews that served their country well during the big conflict. This book tells it like it was."*

— Maj. Clinton Hammond, President, 351st BG Association  
*Valor at Polebrook* is 8.5 x 11 inches and 152 pages, with illustrations and photographs throughout. Hardcover is \$24.95; four-color laminated softcover is \$17.95. \$4.00 shipping. The book can be purchased from the authors through Cross Roads, PO Box 83, Kimberly, WI 54136. For credit card orders, call 1-800-592-1243.

**"Just Tryin' to Stay Alive"**

— A Documentary Video —

**May 8, 1945**

VE Day. Victory in Europe. The guns were laid to rest. The killing stopped. After six long years of war, Europe let out a collective sigh. The jubilant English people and the Allied Forces started their celebrations.

*"I'd like to see 'Just Tryin' to Stay Alive' in every school in the country. I've donated one to my local school, the library, and the Air Museum. It's straight talk; who we were, what we did, and what happened to us afterwards. Excellent!"*

— Mr. Earl Wassom, Bowling Green, KY (2nd Air Division)

**May, 1995**

The Second Air Division announced that a 50 Year Anniversary was taking place in May of 1995 in England. Four hundred surviving veterans of World War II and their families attended. They were reminded of those special and precious days. *Just Tryin' to Stay Alive* is a documentary-video of that 50 Year Anniversary.

*"I was there in England when George gave this address. I sat there astonished. Here, finally, was someone saying aloud the thoughts I'd developed over the past fifty years. And now this talk is supported by some moving and dramatic visuals. The perfect video to show my family and friends — and for service clubs, such as Rotary."*

— Dr. Roscoe Heins, Pueblo, WA (465th Bomb Group)

**"JUST TRYIN' TO STAY ALIVE"**

\$20 (incl. shipping & handling)

Running Time: 33 minutes.

To order, send name and address to:

George H. Lymburn

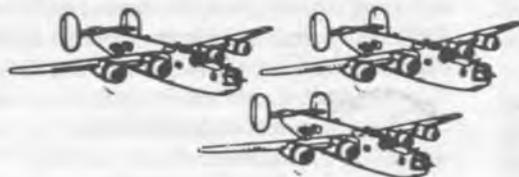
1225 Taylor St. #403, San Francisco, CA 94108

For further information: (415) 921-1225 or B24Pilot@Yahoo.com

**SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION  
 EIGHTH AIR FORCE**

RAY PYTEL, JOURNAL EDITOR

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



**CHANGE OF ADDRESS?**

Address changes should be sent to:

**Evelyn Cohen**

6410 Delaire Landing Road  
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 Permit No. 74

## Convention Tour Options - Please Read Carefully!

1. LUNCHEON BOAT CRUISE. Authentic paddle wheel excursion boat for a 2-hour tour along inland waterway. Choice of 5 entrees. \$37.50 per person.
2. JOHN F. KENNEDY MUSEUM EXHIBIT & YACHT CLUB LUNCHEON. This major interactive exhibit contains the largest collection of Kennedy artifacts in the world. Lunch at private St. Petersburg Yacht Club. \$47.00 per person.

Above reservations should be mailed directly to FLORIDA DESTINATIONS using the form below.

### RESERVATION FORM — 2nd Air Division Association — Saturday, May 27, 2000

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Tour 1 - No. of reservations @ \$37.50 per person \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_ check enclosed

Tour 2 - No. of reservations @ \$47.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_ check enclosed

Mail this form with your check to: FLORIDA DESTINATIONS, P.O. BOX 3888, SEMINOLE, FL 33775

3. FANTASY OF FLIGHT, POLK CITY. Fantasy of Flight is an aviation-themed attraction featuring an array of vintage aircraft with flight simulators, etc. They are now working on the restoration of Delectable Doris (renamed Joe) in memory of Joe Kennedy. They hope to have this B-24 ready in time for our visit but cannot guarantee same. Trip will take place on Saturday, May 27, and lunch will be served with a choice of 2 items. \$36.00 per person.

Reservations for this trip should be mailed to  
Evelyn Cohen, 06-410 Delaire Landing Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19114.

Tickets for all trips will be available at the convention registration area on Friday, May 26.

## At Last We Are There! Where? Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation Inc. (WIMSA)

BY GLADYS VEYNAR (HQ)

Wilma L. Vaught, Brigadier General USAF (Ret.), President of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation Inc. (WIMSA), has informed me that all the WACs who served with HQ 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force, are registered as charter members and their names will be transferred to the memorial site itself which is located at the entrance to Arlington National Cemetery. A very special thanks to those individual members and the 2nd Air Division Association who gave us \$1,000 to make this possible. The original WACs were transferred from Horsham St. Faith to Ketteringham Hall by Special Order #58 dated 10 November 1943 and are as follows:

1st Lt. Hilda T. Berry	T/5 Valeria F. Brinegar	T/5 Ella B. Sharp	PFC Myrtice N. Smith
2nd Lt. Dorothy (NMI) Marble	T/5 Bernice B. Bruce	T/5 Jean L. Young	PFC Florence I. Soliday
S/Sgt. Marita L. Eisenhower	T/5 Evelyn (NMI) Cohen	PFC Bernita O. Baker	PFC Annie P. Stone
S/Sgt. Maria J. Grahovac	T/5 Barry T. Colvin	PFC Hazel I. Bliss	PFC Jean M. Storrar
S/Sgt. Winnie I. Van Dyke	T/5 Mildred E. Cornwell	PFC Gertrude A. Blue	PFC Nancy B. Watt
Sgt. Virginia L. Bowdoin	T/5 Lida B. Cowen	PFC Alma L. Bell	PFC Charlotte I. White
Sgt. Pearl I. Ernst	T/5 Rose M. Donahue	PFC Lucile M. Carter	PFC Mary F. Williams
Sgt. Beatrice B. Puch	T/5 Aline J. Graham	PFC Vara G. Christian	PVT Earline (NMI) Embrey
T/4 Alice M. Kelley	T/5 Gladys B. Hathaway	PFC Marie J. Cizek	PVT Emma J. Whitlatch
T/4 Thelma I. Noble	T/5 Vera M. Heard	PFC Mary E. Cutts	CPL Rose M. Halloran
T/4 Rena E. Owen	T/5 Molly T. Kelley	PFC Oneta J. Going	PFC Dorothea S. Cully
T/4 Bertha (NMI) Seyfried	T/5 Edna M. Kerber	PFC Vera J. Hibernik	PFC Emma M. Utter
Cpl. Fern E. Bennett	T/5 Stephanie G. Kuflewski	PFC Elizabeth R. Jeffrey	PVT Rosalind D. Hatting
Cpl. Jane M. Freytag	T/5 Garnet R. Marcum	PFC Bonnetta F. Paulhamus	
Cpl. Wilma A. Fritz	T/5 Shirlee S. Paskoff	PFC Grace E. Priester	
Cpl. Doris L. Ogden	T/5 Anne L. Pennick	PFC Vivienne A. Reimer	
T/5 Martha (NMI) Bartell	T/5 Ethel D. Rudolf	PFC Theresa K. Rice	

The rest of the WACs joined us at Ketteringham Hall in several increments. At the present time, we are not all listed as a group under 2nd Air Division. When available, this will be done. We have the distinction of being one of the two groups to register all our members. The other is a Navy group.

For those of us who are left, they would like to have a picture (military or civilian), medals, citations or awards to include. You can send this information to me [Hathy Veynar, 4915 Bristow Drive, Annandale, VA 22003-5457] and I will see that it is included. We served our country with dedication and honor and continue to do so as members of the 2nd Air Division Association and its projects. ■



To the editor:

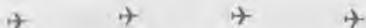
In the Spring 1999 issue of the *Journal*, there was a letter asking for anyone having information about B-24 aircraft 709, 392nd BG, 576th BS, that was lost on the Wesel mission on March 24, 1945, to contact First Sergeant Chief Peter Loncke, Sint-Franciscusstrat, B-3920, Lommel, Belgium. Loncke does research on downed aircraft. I contacted him in April, and we have since exchanged many letters, pictures of the crew, aircraft after the crash, and many telephone calls. One picture was taken by the 513 Paratrooper Infantry, which rescued five of us after we were captured and held prisoner for about four hours.

Peter Loncke has researched the Wesel mission; returned to the site where we crashed; made pictures of the field, which is now growing potatoes; and sent pictures of the house, which is now covered in vines, in which we were held POW. He feels certain he has the right location, for with a German friend he has talked to people in the area and they told about a B-24 crash. He has recently sent me a small piece of metal, about the size of the palm of your hand, that came from the crash site. He just found the grave of one of our crewmen who is buried in a military cemetery, and will put flowers on the grave. He also sent a picture of the crewman's grave. Three of our crew were killed, but none in the crash.

To further document what Peter found, he read about the paratroopers' drop at Wesel in the books *Paratrooper* and *Geremono*, which tell of the 513th rescuing airmen from a basement where they were held prisoner. Jack Hummel, pilot, and I were held in a basement with the German wounded, since we were injured. The basement was also the communication center.

Finally, he told me his German friend knows of four other B-24 crash sites, and they will visit them in the near future. If anyone crashed in the area, I am certain Peter would welcome any information about the possible location.

James E. Reynolds (392nd)  
1101 Mockingbird Lane  
Northport, AL 35476



To Chuck Walker, 2ADA Representative, Board of Governors:

Please convey to the 2ADA Executive Committee my gratitude for the beautiful flowers they sent to me while I was in hospital. I have waited to write until I felt a bit more stable mentally and until the chemotherapy treatment started. I am supposed to be able to live a "normal" life while the treatment is in progress, and I am trying to do so. It will be some time before the doctors can give me any prognosis. Apparently this tumour might be controlled by the treatment but it cannot be eradicated. Anyway, I am learning to welcome every new day as a special gift.

The 2ADA flowers brightened my time in hospital. Many 2AD men have written to tell me that I am remembered in their prayers. Everything helps!

Phyllis DuBois  
22 Hungate Street  
Aylsham, Norwich



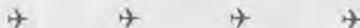
To the editor:

While on a tour of the D-Day beaches of Normandy this past July 4, I was deeply moved and made aware that there are people from all parts of the world that fought and would like to be remembered. I met one lady, now an American citizen, who was going back to Poland to meet with her children and grandchildren. She said she wanted her grandchildren to understand their old Polish grandmother and where she came from. She had fought in the resistance when she was only 15 years old.

As the daughter of a 458th BG airman, I feel the need to remember as many of the brave souls and their accomplishments and sacrifices as possible. My father is no longer here to tell his story, but there are others who *are* still with us, thank Heaven, and *can* share those experiences.

I would like to compile these stories for a book to leave as a legacy to the grandchildren and great grandchildren of these men and women who gave so very much, stories that will live and be remembered forever. Will you help me and share your experiences?

Joanne Burton Shaffer  
908 Wilderness Circle  
Pelham, AL 35124  
E-mail: dshaffer@hiwaay.net



To the editor:

It was common practice for English families to invite servicemen into their homes, and my parents were no exception. Our home was close to Horsham St. Faiths, so it was usually American airmen who came. I remember one in particular who used to come riding on a big old cycle painted black and yellow. He,

like the others, was always welcome. S/Sgt. Worley Buckles was a flyer. He would come every so often for the months he was here, and I was the one who took him to places of interest, including once to London. His crew had a little dog named Liz (named after our Queen, now the Queen Mum), and we had the dog when he went back to the States. We cared for that dog for many years.

Worley Buckles wrote to us after he went back and we were always happy to hear from him, but after a while we lost touch. Sadly my parents are dead, and when going through their papers eleven years ago I came across a bicycle permit issued to S/Sgt. W. Buckles. This tempted me to try and find him.

I went to the old Memorial Room (sadly now burnt down) and was given some addresses in the States; I wrote them but to no avail. Then finally, eighteen months ago I read in our local paper that a plaque was being dedicated to American airmen. I phoned the paper, the lady spoke to me, and after eleven years of searching, I was soon talking to S/Sgt. Buckles in Bristol, Tennessee. We started a wonderful correspondence, and in September I went to meet him and his wonderful family. The fifty-four years just rolled away. Everyone I met had heard of me! I'm sure they thought royalty was coming, but it was just me. I was treated regally, though. It was wonderful!

Marge Stares  
5 Old Farm Lane  
Drayton Road  
Norwich NR3 2DR  
ENGLAND



To the editor:

The Fall *Journal* cover reminded me of when I was selected to fly a poor Liberator to the "graveyard" in Altus, OK. It did not make me feel very good. After parking the ship I went up into the tower and chatted with the controllers. I asked to borrow their pair of binoculars.

When getting ready to fly home from England after the war ended, I was assigned to fly home in a ship called "D-Day Patches." We were all set to go when someone decided that "D-Day Patches" was not airworthy enough to fly home. I had flown her a couple of times before and found her quite good in the air, but it was just as well since I got an almost-new B-24M to fly home.

I took the binoculars and looked carefully over the field of planes. Suddenly I spotted "D-Day Patches" - *someone* had flown her home. Who did? I would really like to know!

George Goehring  
799 Pleasant Avenue  
Westbury, NY 11590

