

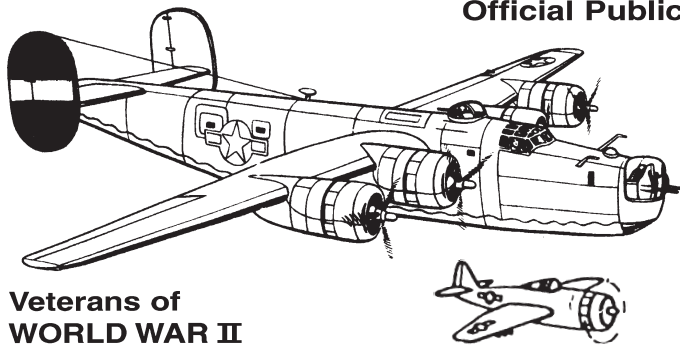
It's Been Five Years
Since He Left Us...

COLONEL JAMES "JIMMY" STEWART

445th, 453rd, & 2CBW
of the 2nd Air Division

THE JOURNAL

Official Publication of the



Veterans of
WORLD WAR II

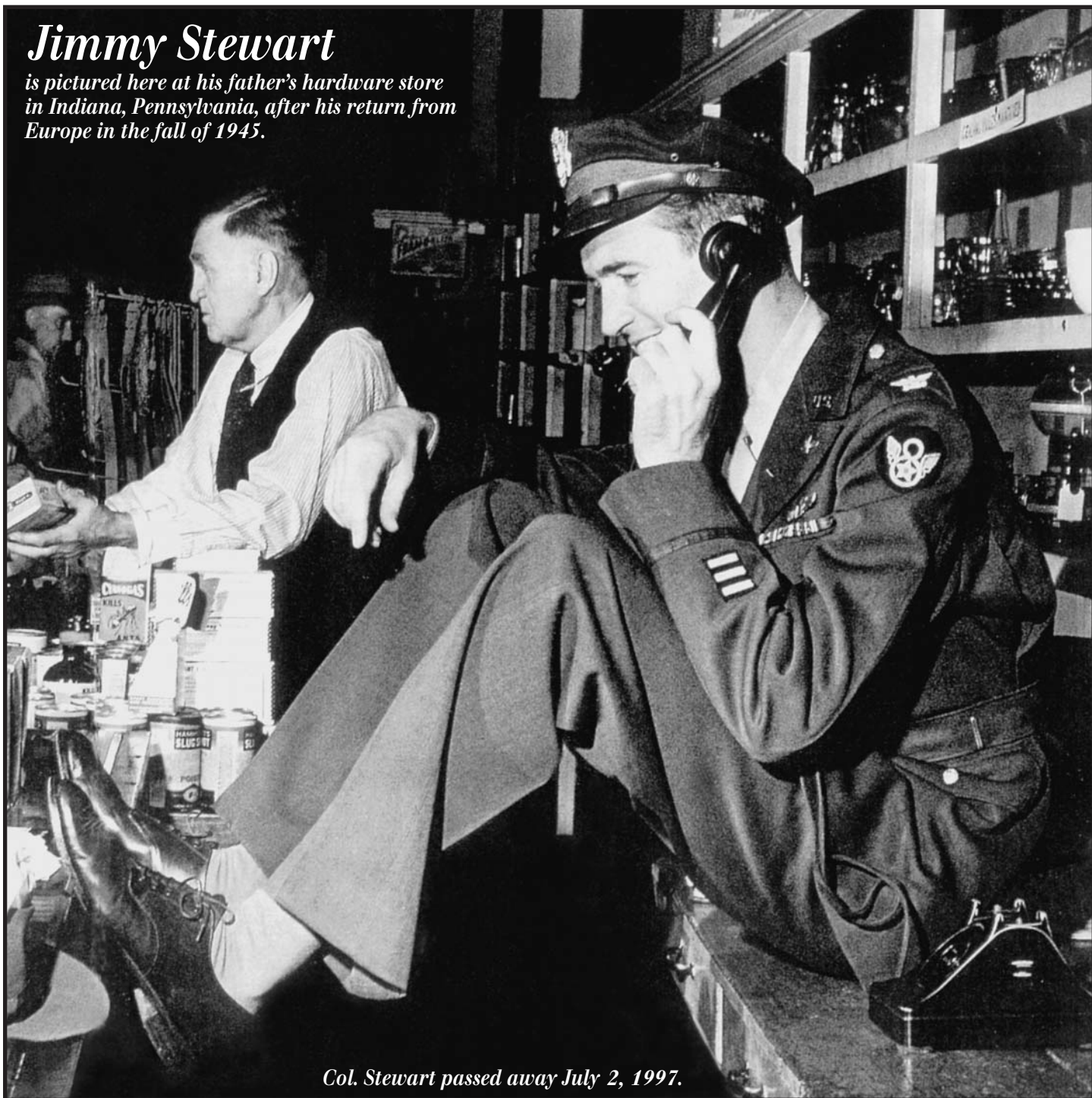


Volume 41 Number 2

Summer 2002

Jimmy Stewart

*is pictured here at his father's hardware store
in Indiana, Pennsylvania, after his return from
Europe in the fall of 1945.*



Col. Stewart passed away July 2, 1997.

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



JOURNAL



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A Message from the President

BY WALTER J. MUNDY (467TH)

Since this message is being written before the Executive Committee meeting in Dallas, it will not be possible for me to report on all the progress that was achieved at that meeting. However, there are some important issues that are scheduled to be addressed, including some housekeeping items and incorporating a number of changes into the Bylaws and Procedures that the Executive Committee had previously approved; a review of the proposed changes to the Long Range Legacy Plan; and a look at the status of The Heritage League.

At this time I am looking forward to meeting Tahitia Orr, our new 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian. We certainly have been fortunate to have had excellent librarians, and I am confident that Ms. Orr will carry on. Now that the new Memorial Library is in full operation and is very well attended, there will be many challenges to ensure that it is a living Memorial and reflects the legacy of the Second Air Division, and is not just another library room.

It is my goal to establish a realistic forecast of the financial requirements for the operation and maintenance and providing an American librarian for the Memorial Library, in perpetuity or for a very long time. There are a few major elements to consider. First, we must determine, as accurately as possible, how much money is required annually over time; then we must assess how to provide the funds; then we must assess the availability of time and effort to provide the funds. What a challenge! Our Bequest Program has made a wonderful start; however, I believe we must accelerate this program and add some creative financial appeal to avoid underfinancing in the face of such factors as inflation and economic decline. The Memorial Trust is also planning an appeal and we will need to take into account the amount that our British friends will contribute. We should not lose sight of the fact that the library is the responsibility of the Trust and that the greatest percentage of attendance there is made up of our British friends who also come to learn and to honor the Second Air Division Legacy.

We must realize that our time is getting shorter, our numbers are getting fewer, and our incentive and ability to travel and participate declines as our members' health and well-being problems increase. Even the Greatest Generation knows that "old age is not for sissies," so we must think about passing the challenge to the next generation, The Heritage League, while we still have the resolve to complete the mission of passing on a healthy, viable, and financially strong Legacy.

Most of the subjects I mentioned here, I touched on in my message in the last *Journal* where I outlined the goals that I intended to pursue in my short term as president. I am pleased to report that progress has been made to achieve the tasks proposed. Committees have been assigned, and they are working on proposals to achieve the needed improvements. They will make their reports at the mid-year Executive Committee meeting and these tasks should be complete for the amazement of the membership at the 2002 convention.

The way things are going in this crazy world, we must maintain our focus on the things we fought for; freedom and peace and the values expressed in terms of respect for all mankind. ■

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



THE SECOND 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 made for Associate (Non-Voting) memberships and also for subscribing memberships (Non-Voting).

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.

PLOESTI 60TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION PLANNED

Ploesti Tidal Wave veterans, historians and enthusiasts: A 60th Anniversary Reunion is in the planning for those who participated in this famous mission of August 1, 1943, and for historians and enthusiasts who would like to participate in this event.

It is scheduled around August 1, 2003, and is planned to be held in Salt Lake City, Utah. A side trip is on the agenda to visit the Hill Air Force Base Museum, where a restored B-24D will be on display. A program will be held at the museum, with the possibility of a lunch or dinner as well.

Consequently, it is necessary to get some kind of feedback from you Ploesti veterans and historians, to see if this is a feasible undertaking. The planners of this reunion need to get an idea of the number of people wanting to attend the reunion, so the plans can be made to get it organized. We know that it is more than a year away, but we need your feedback now in order to determine whether or not this reunion is possible. Please drop us a postcard and let us know if you are a veteran, either ground or air crew, who would like to attend the reunion, or if you are an enthusiast and would like to be part of the reunion and would be willing to help out in some capacity. Right now there are only a handful of us wanting to see this reunion come about, and we will be needing some assistance from fellow enthusiasts to make this a successful event.

Please drop a postcard to either of the following:

Kent Jaquith, 760 Knight Hill Road, Zillah, WA 98953, phone (509) 865-2481, fax (509) 865-2189
Blaine Duxbury, 524 Weston Hills Ct., Eagan Hills, MN 55123

Executive Vice President's Message

BY DICK BUTLER (44TH)

A big thanks to Dick Baynes for arranging and hosting the Annual Second Air Division Association Southern California Reunion Dinner on 23 February. Details of the event appear elsewhere in this issue, but we are deeply indebted to Dick and his committee members for providing us with such a splendid evening event. Dick always quietly goes about doing things for the 2ADA without any fanfare. Thanks, Dick, from all of us for all you do.

The March 2002 issue of the Retired Officer Magazine contained an article entitled "Our Nation's Hangar." This article describes the New National Air and Space Museum that is being built at Dulles International Airport. It is the Udvar Hazy Center, named after a Hungarian refugee whose family came to the United States in 1958. Udvar Hazy founded an aircraft leasing company that now has a fleet of 400 commercial jet aircraft, valued at \$17 billion. His achievement prompted him to give something back to our nation, namely \$66 million toward the construction of the new museum. According to current estimates, it will eventually cost \$300 million. It will truly be a magnificent facility, housing 187 aircraft and more than 100 space artifacts. The magazine article names some of the famous aircraft that will be in the museum. As any one of us might suspect, a B-24 is not mentioned. The article further names a Web site where the entire list of the 187 airplanes to be included can be viewed. Again, there is no mention of a B-24.

Needless to say, this omission of our great B-24 got my attention, and I decided to write a letter to the Director of the National Air and Space Museum and express our disappointment in the lack of attention to our great aircraft. The director is a four-star retired Marine, General John R. Dailey. I talked to George Welsh, who runs the B-24 Liberator Club, about my thoughts on writing such a letter. George mentioned that he seemed to recall seeing something in a past issue of the Air Force Magazine where mention was made that a B-24 was wanted for the museum. I researched back issues of the Air Force Magazine and did find an article that contained this statement: "This means there will be room for the museum's most wanted airplane, a B-24." This considerably tempered my thoughts, but I decided to send a letter to General Dailey anyway, expressing the importance of telling the B-24 story, one way or another. Here follows my letter to the General of 2 April 2002:

*General John R. Dailey, USMC Retired
Director, National Air and Space Museum
6th and Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20560*

Dear General Dailey:

The March 2002 issue of the Retired Officer Magazine contains an excellent article about the new Udvar Hazy Center. We look forward to its opening on 17 December next year. It certainly is bound to be a facility that all Americans can be proud of.

The article mentions several historic aircraft that will be on display in the new museum. The list of all 187 aircraft that will be included in the new facility is available on the museum's Web site. As you can see by my letterhead, I am the Executive Vice President of the Second Air Division Association. In World War II, the Second Air Division in England had fourteen B-24 bomb groups. These and the support fighter groups and the headquarters in the Division are depicted in the lower part of this page. Our Association is a very active organization with about 5400 members who are all either B-24 veterans or relatives of veterans. All of us are very desirous that the history and facts about the B-24 Liberator be preserved and made known to our present citizens and the generations to come.

I am in possession of the article "New Horizons for Air and Space" which appeared in the March 2001 issue of the Air Force Magazine. That article contains a sentence which reads, "That means there will be room for the museum's most wanted airplane, a B-24." This is very encouraging to us, to know of this high priority. We are well aware that only a very few B-24s still exist, and understand that it will be difficult for the museum to procure one.

That leads to two questions I have of you. The first is, do you require that the aircraft to be put on display be fully equipped, inside as well as outside, or would one be acceptable as a static display with only the exterior prepared for viewing? If this latter condition would be acceptable, and apparently it is, as the Air Force Magazine article mentions the Castle Air Museum's B-24 which does not have a restored interior; that means there are some other B-24s not mentioned in the article that could be considered or possibly one could be assembled from parts that might be located.

The other question we have is that until an actual B-24 is obtained, why could there not

be established an elaborate B-24 display that would contain a large model of a B-24 and several panels containing some photographs and facts, of which there are many, about this famous aircraft? I am sure that you are no doubt familiar with the B-24 Liberator's "First" and I don't have to repeat them here for you.

We members of the Second Air Division Association thank you for your strong interest in our beloved B-24 and encourage you to aggressively pursue every possibility to obtain a B-24 for the museum. We do not think our National Air and Space Museum can adequately tell the story of one hundred years of aviation without the inclusion of the B-24 Liberator story. I would appreciate hearing from you in regard to my two questions above.

*Sincerely,
Richard D. Butler
Colonel USAF Retired*

As of this writing on 13 April 2002 a reply to my letter has not been received. If any of our members are so inclined, letters to General Dailey might well focus attention on how important it is to tell the B-24 story if the story of 100 years of aviation is to be adequately told. General Dailey's address is at the top of my letter above.

A bronze B-24 model identical to the one we placed at the Air Force Academy but on a more elaborate base is being planned for installation in Balboa Park in San Diego, right on the final approach to Lindbergh Field, where the B-24 was first designed, built, and flown. More on this later. ■

NEW MEMBERS

448th

William L. Voigt

453rd

William Carlson (389th)

R.E. Wickham

458th

Harry L. Katzman

Robert J. La Jeunesse

Malcolm B. MacEwan

466th

Joseph C. Moore, Jr.

491st

Enrico B. Nicolini

492nd

Alfred R. Darbyshire

Report from the 2ADA Representative to the Board of Governors

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

Much of this report has been taken from the Trust Librarian's and 2ADA/Fulbright Scholar's reports prepared for the 11 April 2002 Governors meeting. I will be attending that meeting and hopefully be able to bring you up to date in the next *Journal*.

Derek Hills, Trust Librarian, reports a staggering increase in visitor numbers at the Millennium Library: 415,756 from opening to 3 March, 2002. This of course has resulted in a significant increase in visitors to our Memorial Library. Norwich, a city of approximately 175,000, certainly uses its library!

Derek reports that "to meet the heightened number of visitors, we recruited two extra staff at nominally 17 hours per week each and made a budgetary allowance of £17,000 for the twelve-month period."

He has managed to stay within budget overall, but it has been finely balanced and he is likely to overspend the pro rata December '01 – March '02 period by up to £300.

The finance subcommittee is projecting insufficient investment income to cover costs. "At the request of the chairman and the finance committee chairman, I have been asked to prepare an opening hours proposal which is more sympathetic to our current budget."

Derek proposes operating hours to be 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., although the Millennium Library is open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. There are fewer visitors to our library after 5 p.m.

The higher level of staffing has been more than offset by the increased number of vis-

itors, the need to oversee the computers, etc. Saturday, once the quietest day, has become the busiest day of the week. "We are running a more sophisticated operation with obvious concomitant costs."

Andrea Hough, 2ADA/Fulbright Scholar, reports: "This quarter I have spent the bulk of my time on educational activities, such as preparing lectures for area high schools, visiting schools, and talking to school groups brought in by the Children's Librarian. Working with the Literacy Coordinator for Norfolk County, I co-taught three creative writing workshops for children. I have also worked on the Student Essay Contest, and made a number of additions to the Web site. Of course, I am available in the library at least twenty hours a week to provide coverage on the desk."

As you can see, Andrea has been a very busy member of the Library team. She is held in high regard by the Governors and the library staff.

David Hastings, Chairman, reports that the influx of books cannot be accommodated on the shelving now available. The planned-for 4,000 volume capacity is being overrun. If books are not to be retired prematurely, additional shelving will be needed. He also reports that six computers are too many to accommodate legitimate users as well as too many to be properly overseen by staff. (The computers are attracting many users who are not at all interested in the Memorial.) At the

upcoming Governors meeting it will be proposed that two computers be removed and that additional shelving be installed to accommodate a total of 5,000 books. Whether the new shelves will be the new steel type or the former wooden type is to be determined.

I believe this brief report will give you a feel for the important subjects confronting the Governors at the 11 April meeting and the need for your 2ADA Representative to be in attendance.

Chairman David Hastings has sent details about the next 2ADA/Fulbright Scholar, selected at a meeting in London last December 18th. She has accepted the position and should be aboard in early August.

- Name: Tahitia Lynn Orr
- Present Position: Librarian, Alaska State Library
- Master of Library Science
- Bachelor of Arts (History)
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre)
- Well versed in Web site work

The Executive Committee invited Ms. Orr to attend the 27 April meeting in Dallas, Texas, and she accepted. This invitation was to give Ms. Orr an opportunity to meet and become acquainted with Association members and learn first-hand what the Association is all about before she gets to England. I suspect this report will get to you around the Fourth of July, so Happy Independence Day, and remember to use long fuses on those firecrackers. ■

The Role of Education in the Future Work of the Memorial Trust

Report by the Education Subcommittee of the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division

Membership: Richard Crockatt (Chair), Frances Davies, Derek Hills, Carson Holloway, Victoria Musgrave

At the meeting of the Governors of the Trust on 12 April 2001, it was proposed that a subcommittee be established to explore two areas felt by the Governors to be of importance: firstly, the method used to appoint new governors; and secondly, the role of education in the work of the Trust. It quickly became clear to the subcommittee that these were two separate questions and that the personnel of the committee was not appropriate for consideration of the first of these questions. The committee therefore (with the approval of the Chairman of the Governors) opted to address the second question. Another subcommittee will consider the first question.

For a number of reasons, the Governors of the Trust felt that this was an appropriate time to consider the role of education in the work of the Trust. For one thing, education in its broadest sense lies at the root of the Trust's primary concern — the maintenance

and development of the Memorial Library of the Second Air Division. The opening of the new Millennium Library last year gives us an opportunity to look afresh at the ways in which knowledge of the library and what it stands for can be made more widely available in the locality. In particular, we need to remind ourselves that the Library is itself an educational institution which is both a memorial to events and people of the past and a living resource in a fast-changing world.

A second and more closely related reason for reconsidering the role of education lies in the march of time. For the generation of children now coming of age, the events of the Second World War are as remote in time as are the events of the First World War for their parents. They are "history," which means that the links between their own lives and the events of the past which have profoundly influenced the world they grow up in are not

self-evident: they have to be learned. We can no longer assume that members of the younger generation know about the "Friendly Invasion," and as time goes on, sadly the numbers of those with first-hand knowledge diminishes. Hence the continuing importance of the library and the Trust's efforts to encourage the local community to regard it as an important resource which they can use as well as a memorial to the achievements and sacrifices of American airmen in this region.

A former Chairman of the Governors of the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division, Tom Eaton, wrote some years ago that "good relations do not happen automatically. They have to be worked at and sustained from generation to generation." Fifteen years on, the point applies even more strongly to the work of the Trust. We have much in our favour, not least an active community of enthusiasts in

(continued on page 6)

EDUCATION (continued from page 5)

the form of The Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial. The Friends' role in sustaining the work of the Trust and the many sites in the region associated with it is indispensable and will remain so.

Additional means, however, are required to broaden the range of the Trust's educational activities. Our question is: how do we make real to a new generation the historical relationship between our community and the 2nd Air Division? While the core of the Trust's work will continue to lie in honouring the past, making that message real to new generations means exploring new ways of presenting the work of the Trust. One avenue to the past is through the present, and it seems inescapable that young people are more likely to understand the past if they can see a connection with it and the present. Equally the relationship between the locality and the 2nd Air Division is likely to register more deeply if it is seen in the framework of the larger relationship between this country and the United States. Evidently the Memorial Library is central to the work of the Trust, not only because it is a memorial but because it stands as a vital link in the chain of Anglo-American relations. We need to remind ourselves that people use the library for many purposes besides recalling the events of the Second World War; it is a resource for learning about the United States more generally and hence for strengthening the links between the United States and the United Kingdom. The proposals listed below have been devised with these assumptions in mind.

EDUCATIONAL PROPOSALS

1. Library Services

Library staff maintain continuous development of the library stock including not only materials relating to the wartime role of the 2nd Air Division but books and other materials on a variety of American topics. The Library is always open to suggestions for specific purchases. The Web page (which is well described in the Fulbright Librarian's report to the 5th July meeting of the Board of Governors) is an important and valuable new service which can only grow in significance as time goes on. The existing stock is already varied and fairly extensive but, while recognising the limits of current resources, it may be useful to create explicit criteria for purchases of new stock.

The Library's archival material is an important resource for the social history of the area as well as the military history of the war. The "Friendly Invasion" had a dramatic impact on the region, with small villages of 3,000 inhabitants suddenly finding as many Americans on their doorstep. At any one time there were 50,000 Americans within a thirty-mile radius of Norwich. Our archive has been used by the BBC for a multi-part series on

East Anglia in the war and by research students for academic theses. In the past we have had one visiting Fulbright archivist, and the recently appointed Fulbright Librarian for next year, Andrea Hough, has extensive archival experience. There is scope to develop the archive further into a major educational resource, which will include greater publicity for American collections at branch libraries in the county and a possible development of a branch collection at Bungay Library in Suffolk. The Director of Cultural Services at Norfolk County Council has indicated to the Chairman of the Governors that he would be happy to liaise with his colleagues in Suffolk.

2. Links with Local Schools

School exam syllabuses increasingly include American topics to which the Memorial Library has the opportunity to make a substantial contribution. This can be done in two ways: by bringing schoolchildren into the library and by sending members of the library staff, Governors, and other appropriate individuals out to schools to give presentations. Our first task will be to establish which schools in the area have American topics or can be encouraged to do so. We might want to link up with LEA Advisory Service as a partnership which could help us develop along these lines.

The essay competition has the potential to extend knowledge of the Library in schools in the County.

In the interests of promoting a live understanding of history, local groups such as the Norfolk Military Vehicle Group and the Norwich Aviation Group are willing to show their collections of historic vehicles and aircraft to interested schools and other educational institutions.

3. Links with Other Bodies

We enjoy close links with the Duxford Air Museum and are fortunate to have its Director, Ted Inman, on our Board of Governors. Duxford is not only a first class museum, with the added bonus of the American Air Museum which is of direct relevance to the Trust, but has excellent educational facilities, including a dedicated educational officer. Our task is to develop ways of enhancing this already strong link.

UEA has a substantial American Studies department (one of whose members is represented on the Trust as a Governor) and the University has a considerable number of visiting American students. In the past the Trust held an annual reception, organised by the Friends, for visiting American students, which made them aware of connections few knew existed. This should be reestablished. Students of American Studies at UEA have in the past made use of the library's resources and can be encouraged to do so again.

Individual governors have links with a variety of organizations in the region and are

urged to take opportunities, such as invitations to speak, to publicise the work of the Trust.

4. Exchanges with the U.S.

The Trust could act as a facilitator of educational exchanges between local schools and schools in the U.S. Indeed the Friends have already made a start. Furthermore, we have a new Governor (Victoria Musgrave) who has experience in arranging such exchanges. A link has already been established between Wymondham College and a school in Phoenix, Arizona. The Trust also has a link with Stowe School which brings a graduate of Harvard University onto its teaching staff each year. Our chief aim should be to extend opportunities for schoolchildren in the region to visit the United States, particularly for those studying American politics and culture.

It should be stressed that the Trust's commitment here would not be financial but in the form of making use of contacts available to Governors, Friends, and members of the 2nd Air Division Association.

Drawing members of the public and school parties to exhibitions serves to publicise the basic work of the Trust as well as providing a focus for educational projects run by schools. Representatives of local schools could be invited to a reception in the Library to publicise the essay competition. Careful planning would be needed and there would be limits to the number and scope of events the library could handle. Nevertheless, they could provide a focus for staff and Governors as well as for the public.

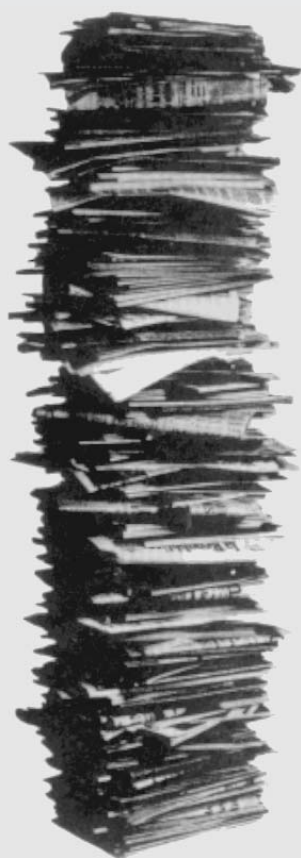
Given the already existing connection between the Fulbright Commission and the Library, it may be appropriate to offer the Library as a venue for a meeting of visiting American Fulbrighters.

5. Lectures

We could establish either an annual or occasional public lecture on the topics related to the work of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust. A possible model is the biennial Thomas Paine Lecture at UEA, which attracts considerable local interest and support. The new library lecture theatre is a possible venue for this event.

The Trust must be realistic about what it can achieve with the resources and personnel it has. It is easy to draw up a blueprint for a range of activities we have little hope of achieving. Work is now going ahead to establish costings for the proposals listed above. It should be emphasized that the proposals grow out of activities the Trust either currently undertakes, has undertaken in the past, or has the clear potential to develop. What is proposed is not a revolution in the Trust's work but a reassessment and an updating of what we do on the educational front in the recognition that education in its broadest sense is a substantial part of the Trust's role. ■

We take these . . .



and give you this...
JOURNAL

The Editor's Contribution

BY RAY R. PYTEL (445th)

First, the best answers to the Winter Quiz came from Harold Fritzler of the 491st BG, who wrote: "As to the questions – I've often wondered about the movie producers and directors. Don't they have any technical advisors? Where were the guys flying the missions? Or is it more interesting using their artistic license with their 'Hogan's Heroes' mentality?"

"My answers to the questions are:

- (1) They didn't know there *was* a B-24 and wouldn't know how to start one.
- (2) They didn't know it was practical and thought it would not work.
- (3) To impress the Germans if captured, who also are shown wearing their fancy uniforms and decorations when flying. but when running to their planes they are in flying clothes. Apparently they kept a set in their planes.
- (4) They had POWs who were tailors and dry cleaners. The "prisoner of war PX" must have been very well stocked.
- (5) They were hot pilots showing how tough they were as aircraft commanders.
- (6) They must have slept through briefing or missed it entirely.
- (7) Pianos must have been donated by Steinway as their contribution to the war effort."

Honorable mention includes a letter from George Risko of the 491st BG, who asked, "Where did you obtain all the silly, stupid questions?" but did not supply any silly, stupid answers.

Answers to the Spring Quiz

The answers to the Spring Quiz include some of the route stop-offs. Perhaps you can provide other exotic locations.

- (1) Puerto Rico; Trinidad; Belem, Brazil; Fortaleza, Brazil; Natal, Brazil; Dakar, French West Africa; and Marrakech, Morocco are a few.
- (2) Goose Bay, Labrador; Gander, Newfoundland; Prestwick, Scotland; Montreal, Canada; Presque Isle, Maine; Meeks Field, Iceland.
- (3) Berka Two, Benina Main, Benghazi No. 7, Benghazi No. 10 – Libya. And the whole Sahara Desert.
- (4) Turkey, Corfu, Sicily, Cyprus, Malta, and, of course, Rumania.

The Summer Quiz is simple:

Name the last 10 locations of the 2ADA conventions, and the president of the 2ADA at each time. ■

FOLDED WINGS

HDQ

Gladys (Hathy) Veynar

44th

Domenick Cannetti
Robert H. Eddings (389th)
Joseph G. Meyers
Wade D. Peters

93rd

Theodore E. Bowles
Basil E. Guynn
Donald F. Hanlon

389th

Homer H. Badgett (453rd)
H.H. Christensen
Robert A. Correll
Charles E. Danford
Gerald Kuhlmann
Bruce C. Leathery
Anthony J. Mammolite
Walter J. Sodo
Robert G. Stout
Floyd G. Toney

392nd

Irving R. Faulkner
Fred Jones
Edward Popek

445th

Charles O. Craig
Kenneth M. Davis
John F. Goan
Alvis O. Kitchens
Henry C. McCray
Robert A. Meyer
Thomas A. Thompson
Eugene B. Wanner

446th

G. Peter Connolly III
Fred M. Freeman
Thomas P. Grant
John R. Matus

448th

James E. Berry
Harry E. Betts

Richard T. Collins
Morris M. Cooper
T.P. Hernandez
Edwin R. Hoover
John A. Vowvalidis

453rd

Basil Costas
Francis L. Fluharty
James R. Grant
Clint Johnson, Jr. (492, 467)
George F. Rich, Jr. (389th)
James K. Walser
William C. Wheeler

458th

Benjamin W. Dankosky
Frederick D. Fleming
Edward E. Klein
John D. Krause
Milton F. Randall
Joe Wagner

Bill R. Wilks
Robert J. Wood

466th

Frank Piwowarski
Melvin J. Robison

467th

Edwin W. Branaman
John Cross
Thomas F. Hastings
Arnold A. Pryor

489th

Gaines Brewster
H.J. Bronaugh
Richard T. Linn

491st

A.F. Dougan
William I. Hamilton
Howard I. McCracken

NOTES FROM THE HONORARY PRESIDENT

THE NORWICH CELEBRATIONS: NOVEMBER 2001

I could use up the entire space allotted to me in this issue on this one subject. Let me just say that I think that the arrangements made by Evelyn Cohen and David Hastings, with the cooperation of the Governors, the City and the County, provided those of us who were lucky enough to attend and all of you who have read about it with a dramatic affirmation that our 2nd Air Division Memorial Library shines out as proof that we have accomplished the major part of our mission.

We have indeed “perpetuated the friendships and memories of our service together in the 2nd Air Division in England in World War II” and we have “supported our Memorial Trust and our beloved Library.” We still have some distance to go, and we will get there.

Let us recall the words in the *London Times* of 8 November, after the opening ceremonies. “It is not luck but judgment that has produced a superb prototype of the 21st century Public Library.” Of course these words covered all the elements of the new Forum, of which our 2nd Air Division Memorial Library is an outstanding example.

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

Our editor concurs that we should start a series of historical articles pertaining to 2nd Air Division Operations. As a first offering in this category, here is some material I wrote

BY JORDAN R. UTTAL (HDQ)

for the 389th Bomb Group Newsletter a couple of years ago:

Bombing accuracy was the primary concern of both of our Commanding Generals, James P. Hodges and William E. Kepner. Bombing accuracy was therefore my primary concern (apart from a personal pre-occupation with casualties) inasmuch as I served as Division Statistical Control Officer, and for eleven months as Division Photo Officer. Bombing accuracy was recorded as an average percentage of bombs which fell within 1,000 and 2,000 feet of the aiming point.

Boy, do I have records — those of the various Group results, and those of the total Division results in the 56-page Summary of 2nd Air Division Operations which was produced by my Stat Control section some few weeks after our last mission on 25 April 1945. In addition, in my possession is a copy of the 8th Air Force Statistical Summary of Operations containing our records and those of the 1st and 3rd Divisions as well as the Fighters.

The most significant measure of the accomplishments of the 2nd Air Division operations, the efforts of every man on every crew in our fourteen bomb groups, are the following FACTS, in print, in the 8th Air Force Summary as follows:

(1) In October, November, and December, 1943, the 2AD led the 1st and 3rd in the percentage of bombs within 1,000 feet — 32%

for us, 25% and 27% respectively for the 1st and 3rd.

(2) On the other hand, all through 1944 we trailed the other two Divisions with the exception of two months when we topped the 1st Division.

(3) In January, February, and March, 1945, we led the 8th Air Force in percentage of bombs within 1,000 feet. In April, the last month of operations, we trailed the 3rd, but topped the 1st.

(4) The 1,000 feet category obviously produced more telling destruction than the 2,000 feet, but our results were substantially the same in the latter.

(5) A close examination of our own performance indicates clearly that except for two brief dips in 1944, we showed steady improvement in bombing accuracy from January 1944 to April 1945. THE CREWS OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION DID THEIR JOBS SUCCESSFULLY.”

I do hope this material is of interest. There is lots more about bombing accuracy to be told, as well as an examination of total sorties, how many of them got into enemy territory, how many were effective, i.e. dropped their bombs against a specific target, and much more.

I salute you all and look forward to our 55th 2ADA Convention in Baltimore. Till then, be well and have fun! ■

THIS IS YOUR Heritage League!

BY IRENE HURNER
Heritage League President

As I sit at my desk, watching our flag whipping in the wind and enjoying the azalea and camellia blossoms, I realize that spring is in the air. I am sure that everyone has been enjoying the green grass and flowers that come with rain showers. Thoughts come to mind regarding our country's activities around the world. My family continues to monitor the war on terrorism via magazines,

newspapers, and television, while life continues busy with day to day activities. The Heritage League and its Executive Committee have continued with activities since our meeting in Norwich, England.

The Executive Committee, which is comprised of the officers of The Heritage League and three immediate past presidents, our representative to the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust, and the liaisons from the Second Air Division Association, held its mid-year meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona, over the first weekend of February. Our officers, like those of the Second Air Division Association, are from various regions of the United States. 2ADA President Walt Mundy and his wife Ruth traveled from Tehachapi, California to join us for our Saturday session. President Mundy was generous with words of praise and encouragement for the League and its goals. Among topics discussed and action decisions made were:

- the appointment of Heritage League Observers to 2ADA committees,
- active membership stands at 725,
- convention planning for our upcoming meeting on Labor Day weekend in Maryland,

- supporting the implementation of a student exchange between the United States and British students,

- the appointment of a nominating committee,

- communication with members including our newsletter, *The Heritage Herald*, and our Web site, heritageleague.org,

- fundraising that will include a pin to be designed by Caron Veynar,

- updating of our membership application,
- a report of books purchased with funds from the Endowment Fund during 2000/2001,

- the laying of a wreath at the Memorial Day ceremonies at Madingley Military Cemetery, Cambridge, England.

It was a busy two and a half days, but we did make it through the agenda. The group gave a special thank you to Jim and Mary Lorenz, liaisons from the 2ADA, who hosted a delicious barbecue at their home. Thanks was also given to Vice President Carol Kendrick, daughter of the Lorenzs, for making all of the arrangements for our stay. The Executive Committee left Scottsdale with enthusiasm and the prospect of a very busy and successful year for The Heritage League. ■



Editor's Note: We apologize for the error of referring to the Dean of the Cathedral as the Vicar of the Cathedral in the picture section of the Spring Journal. We noticed the error upon proofreading, but the correction eluded the process and inadvertently the error was not corrected.

David Hastings, Chairman of the Memorial Trust, writes: "I thought you might like to see the reply I received yesterday to the message of sympathy that I sent to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family on behalf of the Trust and the 2ADA."



WINDSOR CASTLE

The Queen has been deeply touched by the many messages of sympathy received after the death of her mother, Queen Elizabeth.

Her Majesty would like to thank all those who have so kindly sent words of comfort at this sad time.

Sir Robin Janvrin
Private Secretary to The Queen

NORFOLK NOTES By Bill Wuest, Trust Governor

Hello again from the historic County of Norfolk, which despite my last Notes, enjoyed yet another surprisingly mild and dry winter. April, so far, has been very sunny, if cool. We have enjoyed a beautifully long daffodil season, and many fields are yellow with oilseed rape, a European Union "cash crop" better known to us Yanks as canola! Did you know that the official Norfolk motto is "Ich dien" (I serve) and that Norfolk people are well known to "du different" from other Englishfolk.

Under David Neale's wise chairmanship, the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial organization continues to slowly but steadily expand in size and influence. At latest count, there are 224 dues-paying Friends, of whom 83 are American! Paul King, our fine, recently retired Trust Chairman, has done much to increase and improve the working relations between the Trust and the Friends. Our new Trust Chairman, David Hastings, served many years as a liaison governor

to the Friends, so our friendly future looks even brighter. For example, Keith Thomas, a newer governor, now attends our monthly Friends committee meeting as a co-liaison governor with me. Keith and Iris, well-known and loved by so many Association veterans, have recently moved their principal residence to the Cognac region of France. Keith has already begun recruiting French friends and is researching possible European Union subsidies for which our beloved Memorial might qualify. If YOU wish to become a Friend and be a part of this dynamic growth, contact Jordan Uttal.

When the "old" Norwich library tragically burned down in 1994, our Friends met for some years at the lovely, but costly, Wensum Lodge. We then met for a few years at the Canary Public House on an increasingly scary Norwich housing estate. Then for the past several years, we have treasured and enjoyed the wonderful hospitality, so freely given, of a true friend, David Woodrow, at Airfield Farm in the Parishes of Topcroft and Hardwick. So our February meeting of the Friends was rather historic — our first time back in the library in eight long years! Specifically, we convened in the 2ADA meeting room of the new 2AD Memorial Library in The Forum. Whew! To enjoy the best of the new and the old, the Friends have decided to alternate future meetings between the 2ADA meeting room and the Hardwick "Mess Hall" (actually the old "ablutions hut"), provided, of course, David Hastings and David Woodrow will have us!!!

"Cheers" again, from Bill Wuest, for many years President of the English Speaking Union of Norfolk, a rare honor for an American!

TEACHING THE FRIENDLY INVASION

By Andrea Bean Hough, 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian

This winter and spring, I have had the pleasure of working with students throughout Norfolk. This included developing and teaching creative writing workshops based on "The Friendly Invasion," talking to several area high school classes, providing tours to school groups, and working on our annual essay contest. In this article, I will focus on the February creative writing workshops. We will provide information on the winners of this year's essay competition in the next issue of the *Journal*.

The Friendly Invasion Creative Writing Workshops

The Forum offered a variety of half-term events for children in February, under the broad heading "Kids in America." This included visiting Origins, making pizzas, listening to stories in a tepee, and more. The 2nd Air Division Memorial Library, together with the library services of Norfolk County Council, participated as well.

Working with Esther Morgan, the Literacy Development Officer for Norfolk County, we created a short workshop designed to teach children about the Friendly Invasion and have them write about the event. Over thirty children attended the workshop. Overall, the children seemed to enjoy it — one said it was "better than making pizza!" Another child, whose grandfather served in the RAF during the war, told me she had "been looking forward to this for weeks." The workshops proved to me, yet again, the depth to which the people of Norfolk understand and appreciate the contributions of the Second Air Division during the war.

To provide the children with a better understanding of the Friendly Invasion, I gave them a brief overview, in language for children to understand, what it was like for the Americans as well as the local people. Esther offered the children different viewpoints from which to write, and encouraged them to think creatively. We read snippets from airmen's letters and diaries, as well as the guide for American personnel in Great Britain, and shared photographs of different events and people. The children visited the American section of Origins, where we discussed the items on display and asked the children to think "in character" about what it meant to see a B-24 nose with dents or dings; or an American uniform, so much nicer than the British uniforms at the time.

(continued on page 10)

TEACHING THE FRIENDLY INVASION (cont. from page 9)

The children aged 6 to 13, created poems, letters, short stories, and diary entries from the point of view of different people (and things) — including a B-24 Liberator, an airfield, a RAF pilot, a young child, a young woman, and more! What follows is a small selection of the works they created. Spelling corrections are the only changes made to their work. Additional works are listed on the 2AD Memorial Library's Web site, www.2ndair.org.uk, as well as information on using the workshop in a classroom setting.

LIBERATOR

By James Horton, Age 13

The plane's life starts with a spark of the engine and the love of the pilots. Going to the yonder, over the horizon, into the lion's den. The boom boom boom of the German guns. The thud thud thud hitting my side. The rip rip rip of shells tearing my hole. Black dots all around. Then we let them fall — angels of death. Bang thud rip. Engine lost, falling, life going, men jumping, ground rising to meet me. Then no more — engine gone, love gone, life gone, but memory goes on forever.

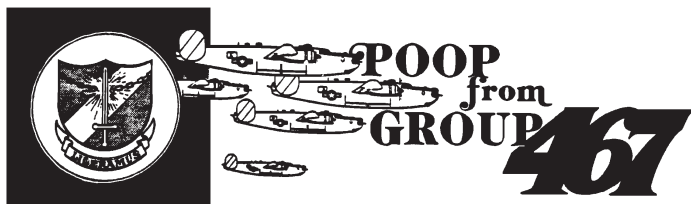
THE ARRIVAL OF THE AMERICANS IN BRITAIN

By Charlotte Truss, Age 9

Dear Amy,

Yesterday, dad told me that the Americans had arrived. I saw the barracks where the soldiers sleep out of the window. I am so excited about the dance tonight! One of the young pilots invited me only a few minutes ago. But I don't know what I'm going to wear. I'll just have to scabble around in my drawer until I find the best possible thing, suitable to put on and dance in. There are only a few people there tonight, and the dance starts at 9 o'clock and ends at 12, so mum told me I'd better go to bed as soon as I get home. I'll keep you posted on everything!

Emily



BY GEOFF GREGORY

Really, folks, not much has happened since Norwich in November. We are now looking forward to the next 2ADA convention, in Baltimore, Maryland over Labor Day. Then it is on to the 467th convention in Savannah. Personally, we are planning a motor trip to the East Coast for the convention; then on to my old school stomping grounds in Philadelphia; on to my hometown in Connecticut; then backtracking to Charleston, where I dug the first latrine at Charleston AFB; on to Savannah for a few days to re-explore that fascinating city; on to relatives in Florida; and then backtracking once more to Savannah for our 467th convention. After that it will be "Home Sweet Home," please God.

We welcomed to Dallas the 2ADA Executive Committee for their mid-year meeting and the yearly Dallas regional reunion dinner at the end of April. Our 2ADA President Walt Mundy, who is doing such a fine job, joined us for that event. I wish to point out that Walt is the fourth 467th member to hold the office of president of the Second Air Division Association. I hope this bodes well for the future of the 467th BG in the affairs of the 2ADA.

Looking forward to seeing ALL of you in Baltimore and then Savannah! Stay well! Cheers till then. ■

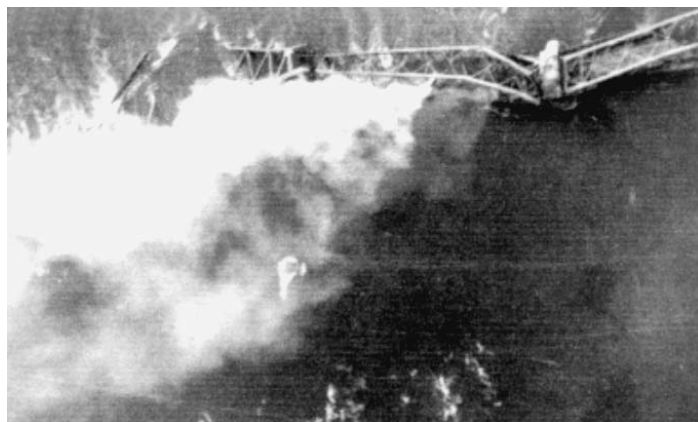


HETHEL 389th Green Dragon Flares

BY FIELDER NEWTON

Good to touch base with all of you again and reflect on our flying days with the 389th Bomb Group at Hethel.

All of us remember VE Day, May 8, 1945, and the sightseeing flights to view the destruction the 8th Air Force unleashed on Germany. Many bomb groups had names for these flights, and we of the 389th called them "Trolley Missions." The J.C. Dodman crew, while on such a flight with ten other passengers, had flown to Berlin and were returning via the Rhine river. We had passed by Koblenz and decided to fly around the cathedral, which had been severely damaged but remained standing. As we started back down the river, we saw smoke coming from a bridge structure in the river and realized it was coming from a B-24 wing stuck in the structure. We remembered there had been a plane flying ahead of us at very low altitude, as we were all doing, but did not see what happened to the plane. There it lay, and what a tragic loss for those twenty men who had survived the wages of war!



The picture of that plane in the bridge is included above, along with a picture of an area of Berlin (below) showing the devastation of what was either an office building or an apartment.



We are looking forward to the 2ADA 2002 convention in Baltimore over Labor Day weekend, and hope many of you will be able to attend. From all that I have heard, downtown Baltimore is a great place to be, with many interesting things to do and see. You can be assured a great program and a good time will be had.

Best regards, and "Keep 'Em Flying." ■

Britain has the reputation of being the most haunted country in the world, with scarcely a corner that does not answer to some ghostly happening or other. Which, apart from the better known traditional hauntings of historic buildings, the lurid storybook kind of headless horsemen, chains clanking in musty cellars, monks lurking in abbey ruins and whey-faced wraiths stealing out of graveyards at dusk, extends to include some really strange phenomena geared to a military aspect. That, if stretching the credulity, nevertheless sparks off a train of thought . . . what if it were true!

Such ghostly accounts of a military nature are not, however, confined entirely to history and the distant past. Nor always wholly to fighting and conflict on the ground. For much later in present-day times some curious tales centered around aircraft and flying crews that saw action in World War Two in particular have emerged. Various incidents have since been published in book form, with others finding their way into local newspapers.

But, for an overwhelming number of tales from a single area, one must turn to East Anglia. To Norfolk in particular — long known as an old and haunted land where we are told ghosts of the Roman Legions still march the turnpikes, and marauding Viking ships steal along the waterways. These are joined by intriguing accounts of the ghosts and hauntings that bedevil a lot of the old wartime airfields in the region.

During World War Two the area became virtually one great airfield, a scant few miles separating each one. The greater number were taken over by the USAAF upon entering the European war in 1941. It is the American airfields that have yielded some of the more persistent tales of ghosts and hauntings.

Thorpe Abbots is famed for its American wartime museum *and* its ghosts! Known as the 100th Bomb Group Memorial Museum, it is housed appropriately in the original World War Two control tower, which was specially restored for this purpose. It contains an impressive collection of wartime mementos, including a wide selection of photographs showing the amusing, colourful paintings that used to decorate the noses of the American aircraft.

From 1943 onwards this was the base of the 100th Bomb Group, nicknamed “The Bloody Hundredth” owing to the extremely heavy losses they sustained. Giant Flying Fortresses flew from here on missions to North Africa and on deep penetration raids into Germany, beyond the limits of escorting fighters. Thorpe Abbots became known as an unlucky base; jinxed, in fact. A place of sorrows, some dubbed it. With so much blood-

GHOSTS OF YANKEE WARRIORS

BY JOYCE RUSHEN
REPRINTED FROM FLY PAST

shed, sudden death and tense emotions, it’s perhaps not surprising that it, and others like it, are said to be haunted.

More than one person here has claimed to have experienced a strange feeling of sadness, of being filled with a sense of utter despair. Some became aware of an unseen presence within the old control tower, described as the nerve centre of those wartime flying operations. Certainly today in its role as a museum, the sighting of a group of dummy figures dressed in full flying gear in a shadowy corner can bring about a touch of the uncanny among the imaginative. To be surrounded by things from the past linked to the realities of war can conjure up an odd feeling.

One sad little ghost that may well wander the airfield is that of a small brown donkey, “Lady Moe,” smuggled home from North Africa in a Flying Fortress. She became a great pet and mascot at the base until her sudden death in 1944.

Another ill-fated station was that at North Pickenham, near Swaffham. Home to the B-24 Liberator-equipped 492nd Bomb Group, which had the highest loss of any Eighth Air Force bomb group, it too has its ghosts.

Much of the airfield there has gone back to farmland. So there was nothing whatsoever to remind a young couple who, on a light summer’s evening a few years ago, were sitting in their car in a secluded spot on the edge of the former airfield, when something happened that left them shaken and mystified.

For, out of the stillness, all at once they heard voices coming over a tannoy, the raucous shouts of men as if giving orders, the whirring of truck engines and the roar of aircraft. It was as if the whole area had come alive again in a way that must have occurred many times before in the past. The noise stopped as suddenly as it began. It is intriguing and inexplicable, how often this unseen ghostly event occurs. Not everyone hears it.

There is a desolate bleakness at times about the windswept airfield at Tibenham, which is well known for its ghosts. It is one of the very few airfields that has retained the greater part of its runways and perimeter track intact. One can stand here on a large expanse of runway where the Liberators used to take

off and land. The tall tower of Tibenham church acts as a landmark, the last glimpse of the village that some of the aircrews ever saw. It still echoes, however, to the sound of aircraft engines as tug pilots tow up the gliders from the Norfolk Glider Club situated on the edge of the perimeter track.

This was the base of the 445th Bomb Group who, akin to others like them, found that war in the air was no picnic. Starting with the original 62 crews, their B-24 Liberators flew 282 missions, losing a total of 138 aircraft. Thirty went down in one day in September 1944. At times the empty seats in the dining quarters spoke all too eloquently of the disasters that hit them.

For years now, rumours have spread that the airfield is haunted, starting with the control tower block, which, before it was finally demolished in 1987, was occupied for a while by the club. Old stories here tell of a ghostly figure of an airman seen by many, of foot-steps heard in empty corridors, and the sound of whistling coming in from the deserted control and crew rooms. Figures have been seen walking along the perimeter track and on the runways. The latter is now basically out of bounds to the public, with warning notices of “Active Runways” on display.

For a closer encounter, a club member was working on his car when he was addressed by an American airman who began chatting about the old B-24s and the airfield. Nothing unusual about this. American servicemen from Lakenheath are often seen around Norfolk, and the clubhouse always welcomes visitors. The crunch came with the realisation, upon glancing up in a lull in the conversation, that the American was no longer there, with nowhere he could have possibly vanished to so quickly.

More weird still are the accounts of unseen aircraft engines heard revving up from time to time. The vibration caused the crockery ware in the Clubhouse kitchen to rattle: the sound of a heavily-laden Liberator revving up, it is held, as it spluttered and thundered along the runways before roaring away into the skies just as countless such B-24s had done in the past.

A fine memorial to the 445th Bomb Group, dedicated in 1987, stands close to the clubhouse of the Norfolk Gliding Club, facing the perimeter track and runways. One famous GI who flew Liberators from here was Captain James Stewart, the Hollywood actor. A photograph of him as a pilot here, along with one of the control tower shortly before it was pulled down, and a splendid line drawing of a Liberator in flight, form part of the airfield’s wartime mementoes preserved at the clubhouse, so keeping the past alive. ■



NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY LLOYD W. PRANG

BOOK ENDOWMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Derek Hills, Trust Librarian at the Second Air Division Memorial Library, reports that since the dedication of the library in November 2001, which was attended by nearly 600 Americans and hundreds of British guests, the library has been in constant use. It continues to draw people from all over East Anglia who remember the Americans with fondness.

The book collection is under heavier use than ever before. It is through endowments such as ours that the library is able to provide additions to the collections, which focus on American life, history, culture, travel, and the arts, in addition to a strong collection on the Second World War and the Second Air Division.

The following books were purchased during the 2000-2001 period: *The Mighty Eighth (revised edition)* by Roger Freeman, and *A Cold Case* by Philip Gourevitch. These books were inscribed: "Presented by the 453rd Bomb Group (H) – B-24s – 2nd Wing, 2nd Air Division – 8th Air Force – Old Buckenham, England."

Also purchased during the 2000-2001 period were *Photographs* by Robert Capa, and *The War Within World War II: Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Struggle for Supremacy*. The photo collection and the book were inscribed: "Presented by the 453rd Bomb Group – In Honor of S/Sgt. **Jay Jeffries, Jr.**, Waist Gunner, 453rd Bombardment Group (H), Old Buckenham, England."

Books purchased via the 453rd Memorial Book Endowment Trust Fund, which was established at the Carleton Rode Primary School, November 2001, in honor of **Major General Andrew S. Low, Jr.**, will be reported as purchases made in Andy's name. It is with contributions to causes such as this that the memories of our dearly departed comrades will live in perpetuity.

FORMATION SHEETS NEEDED

Tom Brittan has asked for our help. He lacks copies of the formation sheets included with pilots' flimsies for almost all the missions flown in 1945. Tom has supplied a lot of information to many of us over the years. Please look through your "stuff" and see if you can locate this material and send it to

Tom. His address is: 42 Chemin de la Joselette, 83390 PIERREFEU-DU-VAR, France. His e-mail address is: Tombrittan@aol.com.

PEOPLE

We've heard from many people since the Newsletter came out — some of those who had things to say are: Marge & Len Lonigan, Lourene & Andy Cumming, Andrew Meyer, Wayne Swanson, Jerry Shulman, Bob Wickham, Don Parcells, Odo Oliva, David & Harriett Hamlin, Walter Morris, Clifford Rhodes, John Hildebran, Eino Alve, Charles Gatton, Bill Carlson, Bob Bieck, and Jim Woolley. Their letters will be in the next 453rd Newsletter.

There was also a letter from **Julie & Bob Randall**. Julie notes that her name used to be Rider. This may help when thinking back to 1944. We met Julie and Bob at the Stag Pub, when the group was in Norwich last November. They wrote: "Thank you for sending the 453rd Bomb Group Newsletter to Bob & I. It makes very good reading. It was nice to have met you and Irene at the Stag. The meeting and the Newsletter brought back many memories for me. My brother, Ernie Rider, is in Australia. He was the first one to go up to Old Buck to see the planes. He was about nine years old. He met some of the boys from huts 30-31A. Everyone asked him where they could get their wash done. He told them that his mum would do it for them. This was how I came to meet the boys. Mum washed for a lot of them. Ernie could not manage to sort it all out, so I went to help him. The way we got to know what belonged to each one was to sew cotton on everything in different colors. We used my sister's pram to bring it all back and forth. I was about thirteen years old. **John Hildebran** was one of the boys. I write to him once a year — also **Andrew Meyer**. They are the only two whose names I can remember. But I see you have the name of Earle Richmond. Mum used to wash for him but he was in a crash. I don't know what happened to him after that. Time goes around so quickly, but things like your Newsletter brought back lots of memories. All the best, Julie & Bob."

I consulted Andy Low's *Liberator Men of Old Buc*, and learned that Earle was the tail gunner on the Brown crew. Their story is:

"The 453rd lost its second PFF crew in as

many months on December 27. Lt. Brown of the 732nd Squadron was the first to test the salt-strewn, slippery runway. He was to lead the low-left squadron. The plane refused to rise more than a few feet off the ground. Lt. Brown was heard to say to the radio tower, "I cannot keep her up. We've had it!" His Liberator slanted down until it disappeared over the hedgerows. Then there was a thundering crash and a column of black, oily smoke appeared. The tail, with tail gunner S/Sgt. **Earle Richmond** inside, had broken off aflame. Waist gunners Sgt. **Marvin Mackey** and S/Sgt. **Tommie Dickson** leaped through their waist windows. Without losing any time, they dragged S/Sgt. Richmond from his seat and beat out the flames licking at his clothes. They sustained many contusions and abrasions, but incredibly they were alive. Ammunition, set off by the flames, began to pop in all directions, and the three survivors made for a ditch just as the bombs blew up. They survived that, too. The crash and fire trucks and ambulances were warned to stay away, as the bombs were due to go off at any moment. With a deafening roar and a rumbling like thunder, two of the 250-pounders exploded. Two more explosions followed in rapid succession as the remaining bombs went off. The 453rd was scrubbed from the mission. Sgts. Mackey and Dickson have been recommended for the Soldier's Medal."

This just in from Tommie Dickson: Marvin Mackey passed away in 1985. Tommie used to have an address for Earle Richmond, but recently mail addressed to Earle was returned to Tommie. The Soldier's Medal was never issued to them.

MEMORIES: THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

There is no 453rd "stand-alone" reunion planned for 2002. In order to participate in another memory-building event, I urge you to make plans right now to attend the Second Air Division Association Convention, August 31 – September 3, 2002. The starting day is August 30 for "early birds;" September 3 is the check-out day. The place is the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland. *Please note: This is a change from the original site. Construction of the Hyatt Resort Hotel in Cambridge, MD was behind schedule, and it was possible that the hotel might not be available for our use on the Labor Day weekend.* You'll make your reservations with Evelyn Cohen of the 2ADA. However, in order to make proper plans for your enjoyment at the 453rd hospitality room, please let me know that you intend to be there. Thanks, and see you in Baltimore! ■



HARDWICK

Open Letter to the 93rd

BY ALFRED ASCH

As I reflect back on our visit to our World War II air base, Hardwick, I remember I was surprised at walking into one of the remaining Quonset huts and observing memorabilia nicely arranged to tell the WWII story of our sister 489th Bombardment Group. Although the group arrived at Halesworth, England relatively late (April-May 1944), it was early enough to support the D-Day invasion and fly other operational missions which were no milk runs. It was one of the few groups to leave England early, in December 1944, to convert to B-29s for Pacific Theater combat. The war ended before the group was deployed for B-29 combat.

We of the 93rd are pleased to share our Hardwick airbase with the 489th. We understand that Halesworth has been totally converted to other use, leaving nothing for the 489th in England.

Although I reported in some detail on the activities at Hardwick last November, one item is worth repeating here for others to enjoy. We were honored by the Norwich and District Branch of the Normandy Veterans' Association at the end of the day, before our delicious dinner of fish and chips. Veterans of the 93rd were presented with a Certificate of Friendship by the Chairman of the District Branch, Mr. Leonard J. Bennett. Just prior to the presentations, he gave a short presentation as follows:

Ladies and Gentlemen. As Chairman of Norwich & District Branch of Normandy Veterans' Association, it is my privilege and my very great pleasure to say a few words on behalf of all our Branch members and at the same time echo the welcome back here to Hardwick made manifest to you by our landlord David and his wife Jean, our esteemed hosts today . . . a welcome back to this, your home for quite a long time.

Now, over the past few days, you have no doubt heard many speeches of welcome, of appreciation and of thanks, all demonstrating the affection in which we hold you all. Well, I won't tread that path too closely, because I think that we can safely say this particular coming together here is rather different — perhaps even unique.

You first came here, dear Veterans, when you were young men, full of life and vigour, no doubt sometimes a little bewildered, often very homesick and frequently very frightened. We British Veterans were also young

men at that time — we were also lively and (if my memory serves me a little) — maybe even virile. We also were often homesick, usually completely without a clue as to what was going on, and most certainly often scared beyond belief.

Together, in our different spheres of service, we faced dangers and hardships which, looking back, seem today almost unbelievable. We on the ground (what our RAF men condescendingly called "brown jobs") trod, with your soldiers, a long, bitter, and hard road from the beaches of Normandy in its heat and dust, through a bitterly cold winter, until we British reached the Baltic, your men stood on the Elbe, and it was all over.

Throughout that long campaign, we on the ground had an umbrella, protecting us and backing us up. We watched with awe — and we rejoiced — to see overhead the massive, glinting, silver formations of B-17s and B-24s by day. We heard by night the drone of the RAF heavies and saw them by day as well later on. We admired the skillful aggression of your fighter pilots as they, with our men of 2nd Tactical Air Force, cleared the enemy from the skies and dealt swiftly with the formidable Tiger and Panther tanks of the enemy.

The Mighty Eighth and the RAF — what a partnership!! Perhaps a quotation from Shakespeare would apply: "Fierce, fiery warriors fought upon the clouds in ranks and squadrons and right form of War. The noise of battle hurtled into the air and dying men did groan" (Julius Caesar, Act 2, Sc. 2)

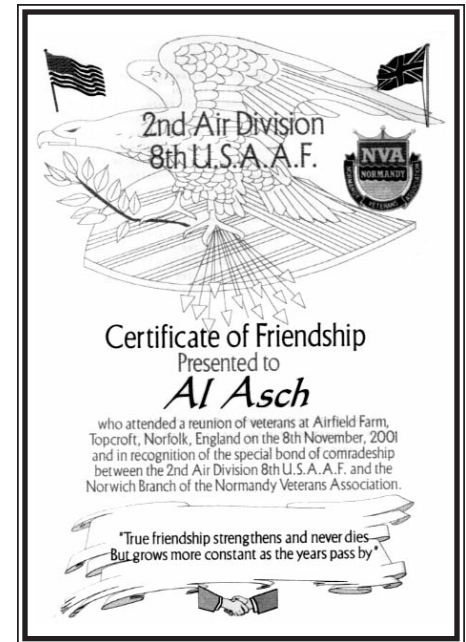
Gentlemen, we fellow combatants salute you and we too thank you for all you did in the cause of civilization. Particularly here in Norfolk there will always be a very special affection and warm welcome for you, your wives, your sons and daughters, your grandchildren . . . yes, ad infinitum.

Today, we are all disappointed that once again we have to stand and fight against evil and tyranny. We in this Branch were quick to express to your Ambassador our sympathies and our sorrow for the atrocities of September 11th and to reassure him that you have our support, 100 percent and up to the hilt. We Veterans, in the time now left to us, are, of course, limited in what we can do practically by way of help and support. We hope that you will find some comfort in the knowledge that you and yours will forever be welcome here

in our hearts, in our minds, and in our homes.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is the unanimous wish of our members, our Branch Veterans, their wives and families, that we present to each of you, our fellow Veterans, an individual token, and a communal presentation to the 93rd Bomb Group, which we hope will be a reminder of the bond between us, a reminder of the days when we were brothers-in-arms and of today when we can justly say we are still brothers.

Thank you all for coming back here and giving us the pleasure of meeting you all. May God's blessings be with you always.



2ADA CONVENTION

Other places in our *Journal* announce that our next Second Air Division Association (2ADA) convention will be held at the Hyatt Harbor Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland over Labor Day. I encourage everyone to attend. This area, Baltimore, Washington and Annapolis, cannot be beat for interesting things to visit. For example, the Naval Academy at Annapolis is close by. Naomi and I enjoyed attending church there one Sunday and then having brunch at the officers' club; it was most enjoyable. Ground transportation is outstanding in this area. All the airports in the area, Dulles, BWI, and Reagan National, are serviced by shuttle companies which are usually cheaper than taxis and some will carry you exclusively from point A to point B without making intermediate stops. The BWI has been selected by the federal government to build the model airport security system. I understand security at BWI is already streamlined and the long lines awaiting security are disappearing. Come and enjoy our area. If you have an opportunity to visit the Arlington

(continued on page 14)



WENDLING 392nd B.G.

BY JAMES GOAR

Col. Irvine A. "Bo" Rendle was the commander who took the 392nd from a small cadre on January 26, 1943, organized it, trained it, and led it to the ETO in June of 1943. There the 392nd joined the 44th, 93rd, and 389th as they returned to England from Africa and the Ploesti mission. These four B-24 groups formed the nucleus of the 2nd Air Division, which grew rapidly into a potent striking force of fourteen bomb groups and five fighter groups.

Irvine Alfred Rendle was born December 12, 1909 in Rawlins, Wyoming to a family of pioneer cattle ranchers. He graduated from Rawlins High School and entered Stanford University on October 1, 1929. He was a transfer student from the University of Nebraska. He received his A.B. degree from Stanford on April 3, 1931 with a major in Political Science.

He won his wings and a commission in the Army Air Corps Reserve on February 20, 1935 and was ordered to a year's active duty. The year's duty was later extended to August 20, 1936. According to Col. Lawrence Gilbert, Rendle's operations officer in the 392nd and later commander of the 392nd, there was a hiatus in Rendle's Army career between this period and his recall to active duty some time before Pearl Harbor. Col. Gilbert recalls that during this time Rendle did a stint as an airline pilot. A War Department Special Order dated October 1, 1938, transferred 2nd Lt. Irvine A. Rendle from Air Corps Reserve to Air Corps, Regular Army, with assignment to March Field.

To illustrate what Army Air Corps pilots did in those pre-WWII times, following is an excerpt from an Operations Order dated April 12, 1935 from Headquarters, 17th Attack Group, March Field, California: "The following named officer pilots will proceed by air in P-26A airplanes on or about April 16, 1935 from this station to the plant of the Boeing Airplane Company, Seattle, Washington, for the installation of wing flaps." Among the four pilots named was 2nd Lt. Irvine A. Rendle, Air-Res; and the flight commander, who was also the group operations officer, was Capt. Ira C. Eaker. The pilot of the C-24 that was to bring the party back to March Field was Capt. Walter R. Peck, later B/Gen.,



Col. Rendle is surrounded by his crew and welcoming ground crewmen, having just landed after leading the 392nd on their first combat mission to Abbeyville, a German-occupied airfield in France, on September 9, 1943.

who commanded the 96th Combat Wing, Second Air Division. *Ed. Note: Those little P-26s must have been landing pretty hot.*

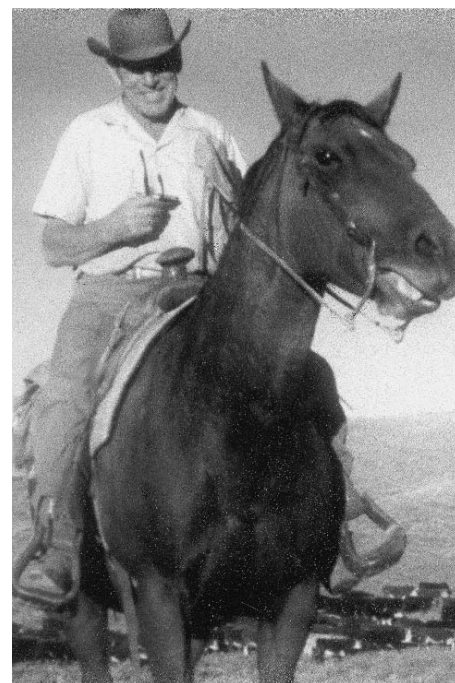
Col. Rendle led the 392nd past D-Day and over 100 missions, and on June 20, 1944 left the 392nd to take command of a new bomb wing, the 95th, which would call for the rank of B/Gen, but the wing was deactivated in the fall of 1944.

While on that assignment, he had a narrow escape while flying a P-51. The engine quit on takeoff and he parachuted out at 400 feet.

The 8th AF, in an attempt to employ their heavy bombers tactically, sent Col. Rendle and a party to the Continent in the fall of 1944. Their aim was to set up a bomb line just at the infantry front line, that with the aid of radio beacons and artillery firing colored bursts, would indicate a safe release point for the bombardiers. The resulting carpet bombing just behind the enemy line was to disrupt them and facilitate our infantry advance. Capt. Leroy MacTavish, the 578th's communications officer, was temporarily relieved from duty with the 392nd to take part in this venture. The whole operation came to a halt when the Germans, in a surprise attack in the Ardennes, made it impossible to implement the plan.

After WWII, Col. Rendle was chief of staff of the 15th Air Force at Colorado Springs.

He retired from the Air Force in 1949 and returned to Rawlins and was a rancher there. He also was involved in other real estate ventures, among which was the acquisition of



Mr. Irvine Rendle, cowman and rancher, is pictured here in postwar days, on his ranch near Rawlins, Wyoming.

a somewhat small and modest ranch which he aptly named the Oleo Ranch (the cheap spread). He was a director of the Rawlins Federal Savings and Loan Association and was a member of the Rawlins-Carbon County Planning and Zoning Commission.

Col. Rendle died at the age of 64 in his home in Rawlins from a heart attack. He was survived by his widow, Ruth E. Rendle; three sisters, Mrs. Eleanor Espy, Mrs. Georgiana Sweet, and Mrs. Marjorie Vail; and his step-mother, Mrs. Lillian Rendle.

His body was cremated and the ashes were spread over his ranch near Rawlins. ■

OPEN LETTER TO THE 93RD (continued from page 13)

National Cemetery, stop by our 93rd memorial plaque and tree to pay your respects to those we lost during WWII. They are near the Kennedy gravesite.

93RD BG REUNION

Planning is moving along very well for our 93rd BG reunion at Colorado Springs, the second week in October. More details have been published in our newsletter, *The Ball of Fire*. I am pleased with the help I am receiving from other members, e.g., Harry and Louise Kelleher, Bob and Mike McKeever, and Cal Davidson. Contracting has been completed for the memorial plaque, the gifting certificate has been sent to the Academy, and the logistics are well in hand with Harry. Hope to see you all at both reunions. ■



BY FRED A. DALE

I have had a cornea transplant in one of my eyes and am getting along good. The doctors have suggested that I should have the other eye done also. I'll have to think about that very carefully.

A big thanks to Ray Pytel for contributing and keeping the 445th BG news going.

Chuck Walker has also been great in keeping me up-to-date on things about the 445th.

I recently received a letter from Mr. Paul Vermilya, who is looking for information about his father, Carl Eugene Vermilya, who was a pilot/photographer/assistant crypto security officer. Carl was in the 703rd Bomb Squadron, 445th BG. He flew D-Day as a photographer. If you have any information, please contact his son, Paul Vermilya, via e-mail: p.vermilya@wpinvest.com.

We have a request from Jean-Pierre Tron, 4 Rue des Voliges, 95500 GONESSE, France:



Trust Librarian Derek Hills poses with Viola and Richard Ramp and the 445th BG B-24 Liberator cross-stitch they presented to the Second Air Division Memorial Library.

"On April 10, 1944, the 445th BG participated in a raid on Bourges, airbase and factory. Several U.S. planes were shot down. I am looking for witnesses to this raid and a 445th BG historical account including the participating squadrons and squadron leaders' names. The 445th BG also participated in raids on May 23 and June 4 to Bourges or (and) Avord airbase. I need this information to complete the Bourges and Avord airbase historical account."

And a note from Memorial Trust Librarian Derek Hills to Viola and Richard Ramp of the 445th:

"I am writing to thank you for your gift of a cross-stitch picture of a 445th BG Liberator, which we will display in the 2AD Memorial Library.

"It is a wonderful picture and is a tribute to the 400 hours spent in its creation.

"As promised, I have enclosed a photograph of the occasion when it was presented. Best wishes."

If anyone in the 445th Bomb Group has a story or a happening that relates to the time you were in England during WWII, please write it up and send it to me. I'll make every effort to see that it gets into the *Journal*. ■

WHO DUN IT?

SUBMITTED BY RAY SHEWELT (355TH FG)

In March 1945 the 355th Fighter Group at Steeple Morden had the honor of a visit from all of the top brass in Europe: Gen. Spaatz, Lt. Gen. Doolittle, B.Gen. Auton, and others. The occasion was the presentation of the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) to Lt. Col. John A. Brooks III, C.O. 2nd Scouting Force and Lt. Col. Sid Woods, 4th Fighter Group.

Men of the group put on a big program at the officers' club that night and a good time was had by all. The visitors spent the night on the base, and since our five-star hotel was closed for renovation, they bunked with the various squadrons. General Spaatz was to be quartered with the 358th Squadron with Major Walter Gresham, Ops Officer and Major John (NMI) DeWitt, Ground Executive Officer. DeWitt, more commonly known as NMI, had been a World War I pilot and was a friend of and had flown with General Spaatz. NMI had been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for the destruction of a balloon. (I have a copy of the orders.)

After the festivities at the club, they retired to quarters and proceeded to undress to go to bed. The lights were turned out, and shortly they heard General Spaatz mumbling. What in the world could the problem be?

Would you believe it! Somebody had *short-sheeted a four-star general*. ■

Advertising Can Be Fulfilling

BY RICHARD LEDERER

An ad appeared in the personals section of a city newspaper: "Professional man, 45, head on a stick, seeks similar woman." Investigation revealed that the ad writer had creatively reinterpreted what an advertiser had actually dictated, which was the word *hedonistic*.

The mother of all classified errors/audio errors may be this one from the *San Diego Union-Tribune*:

I SEE YOU NURSE WANTED:
RN with I See You experience or
experienced RN willing to be trained
in I See You techniques. ■

458th BOMB GROUP

HORSHAM ST. FAITH



BY RICK ROKICKI

MEMBERSHIP

Once again it's time to mention that a number of our members have failed to renew their membership. Being advised by families or crew members that someone has passed away is appreciated and necessary to mark their passing in our "Folded Wings" section. However, it's the "no response" or "mail returned" that has always been a problem to our Association. Within the last three months I have had seven "mail returned." Over the last year I have written more than a dozen notices to those who did not respond to Evelyn Cohen's second dues notice. As of this writing, no word yet from them. The question in my mind is, how many have made their "last flight" without us being able to add their names to "Folded Wings"?

"FOREIGN AID"

Very recently I replied to two requests for information regarding plane crashes and targets in France. Both were from French historians, and the information they requested was readily available from several books in my library. One of the writers, Jean-Pierre Tron, sent me a well-illustrated aviation magazine called *Les Copains D'avord* with lots of color photos. Of course, it was all in French; and my understanding of that language is limited to two phrases, which in English translate to "I am hungry" and "I am thirsty," so it will go to our local public library.

SCREENPLAY

Here's "one for the books," or screen. Several weeks ago I received a phone call from a Los Angeles writer who was a partner in a screenplay written about the B-17 and the 96th Bomb Group at Snetterton-Heath. It was a total surprise to me, and when I told him I was in the 96th, he said, "I know." My "tour" was from October 3 to December 24, 1943, before my transfer to the 458th.

After a long telephone conversation, he asked if he could send me a ten-page summary for a critique of the planned screenplay. When I got the material, it was very easy to find many technical faults. When I mentioned this, I was advised that as a movie, much of what I was critical of was "necessary content" for drama. I mentioned that if this were written as a book, it wouldn't be very good; but as a screenplay, what do I know? The average movie viewer (non-WWII 8th AF veteran) would probably go along with the premise. I must add that a pretty female has a very prominent role in this saga which has somewhat of a surprise ending. If anything comes of this, I shall be sure to let you know.

CLIPPED WINGS

In going through many yellowed newspaper clippings that were in a box I hadn't opened in years, I found the following:

"When evaluating any personal opinion of a particular aircraft, one cannot overstress the importance of individual attitude. Take 1st Lt.

Earl S. Kimball, for example, en route to the ETO as a replacement crew. Kimball and his crew were trying to locate and land at Marrakech, French Morocco, in darkness when their B-24 brushed the side of a mountain. The impact tore seven feet of the wing off, including several feet of the aileron. He kept the aircraft flying until he could find a level spot to put it down. This he did without further damage to the aircraft or injury to the crew. Daylight revealed he had landed in such desolation that a road had to be built to the plane in order to repair it. Tired of waiting for a wing panel, Kimball dismissed the crew except for the copilot and took off that emergency field for Marrakech. In subsequent weeks, after unsuccessful attempts to get a new outer wing panel, they again flew it to a repair station." The article doesn't say where the new panel was fitted. Also, I was unable to find the name of the newspaper that printed the article, but I think it was a Washington, D.C. paper, dated December 7, 1976.

In March of 1985, I did an article titled "Mid-Air Over Cromer." This happened on May 17, 1944, and the aircraft was #183, "Briney Marlin," piloted by Lester Martin, copilot "Tommy" Thompson. In this case the collision of the right wing lost almost ten feet, being driven down 90 degrees from the horizontal. Martin and Thompson brought the aircraft back to Horsham St. Faith. Both are members of the 2ADA, but I couldn't find Earl Kimball in any of our past rosters.

I've always felt extremely lucky to have had a very capable pilot up front who got us back. As a replacement engineer, first on the B-17 (assistant) and then on the B-24, I can't ever remember flying with the same pilot more than once. When my kids offered to pay the \$300.00 for a short flight in the Collings B-24 in Frederick, MD, I said I would give them three hundred for me not to get back into the aircraft. I figured my luck just might have been near the "run-out" phase. Restored military aircraft of our era can and have been the cause of three friends making their last flights in a P-38, an AT-6, and a Fairchild PT-19. So keep your nose up in the turns, and don't forget to take your pills!

IMPORTANT LAST-MINUTE NOTE FROM CHRISTINE ARMES

For the Attention of 458th Bomb Group Veterans of Horsham St. Faith, Norwich, Norfolk, England, WWII:

Unfortunately, and very sadly, the site in Fifers Lane, Horsham St. Faith, Norwich, where RAF and USAAF personnel were housed, has now been sold to a construction company. The officers and the sergeants mess, cook house, etc., are being demolished and new homes erected.

However, it is intended that a memorial plaque in honor of all the airmen who were based at Horsham St. Faith be erected at the site. It was my hope that the plaque would be erected on a wall of the officers mess which was to be an enlisted building, but alas, due to extreme vandalism it also now has to be demolished.

I have been in touch with seniority at the construction company who have kindly offered a part of their land (position of our choice) where a memorial can be erected to serve as an everlasting honor to the brave airmen of the Royal Air Force squadrons, the 56th Fighter Group, and the 458th Bombardment Group (Heavy) of the Eighth Air Force, who fought for our freedom while stationed at Horsham St. Faith during World War II.

In the past when I have erected memorial plaques in honor of WWII servicemen, I have personally funded the costs; but now I have to say that due to the ever-increasing costs of masonry, etc., I certainly would need help with funding this one.

May I ask any of you who are interested in erecting this memorial plaque to please contact me as follows and I will be happy to give you any further information you may require: Mrs. Christine P. Armes, 5 Primrose Court, Thorpe St. Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk, NR7 0SF, England; telephone 011 44 1603 700776. ■

Mitch

This abbreviated article by Anthony Sommer originally appeared in the pages of AHI 28 years ago. Besides Mitchell's own writings, readers should check out Mitchell, Pioneer of Air Power, by Isaac D. Levine, and The Billy Mitchell Affair, by Burke Davis.

There was no military escort at the funeral of General William Mitchell in February of 1936. An American Legion post fired the last salute while its bugle sounded taps in the chill winter air at a small cemetery near Milwaukee.

Mitchell said in his "Last Message," published in *Liberty* magazine in April 1936, two months after his death:

Americans have not yet had things brought home to them as the Europeans have. Their cities have not been bombed. If we organize properly we might be able to prevent such an eventuality. To let our national defense organization fall down and become weak in policy and methods is to extend an invitation to a well-armed adversary to come and fall upon us.

In 1912, Mitchell, then 32, became the youngest member of the General Staff, where he spent three years analyzing the Balkan Wars.

Mitchell's first exposure to aviation had come several years earlier as an observer at the 1908 Army trials at Fort Myer, Virginia. Although he witnessed the crash of a frail biplane which fatally injured Lieutenant Thomas Selfridge and seriously injured the pilot, Orville Wright, Mitchell was impressed even then with the potential of the airplane.

It was not until 1916, however, that Mitchell learned to fly — at his own expense — from a civilian instructor who taught him on weekends. A major then, he was one of the highest ranking flying officers and a natural choice for making an inspection of military aircraft in use by the French and British pilots over the Western Front. He toured Allied airfields and saw service in the trenches with French infantry locked in a bloody stalemate along a front stretching for hundreds of miles.

In his report on both communications and aviation in Europe, Mitchell advocated for the first time a separate air force because of the strategic importance he saw in flying machines ranging far behind enemy lines. Although his proposal was turned down, Mitchell was still in Europe when America entered the war, and he was put in command of all United States air forces arriving at the front.

Initially there were, in fact, no American air forces. American pilots, flying French and British machines, were used as replacements in the squadrons of the Allies, and American ground forces were integrated into the lines with existing Allied infantry units.

After a bitter dispute with the American commander, General John Pershing, Mitchell

won out and was given a separate sector of the front as his area of operations. Promoted to brigadier general, Mitchell was then able to reassemble his pilots into a single American air service. They continued to fly French and British aircraft because, despite promises to darken the skies of Europe with American aircraft, U.S. airplane manufacturers were unable to design a single aircraft of the quality then fighting over the Western Front.

Mitchell became a legend among Allied pilots, flying missions with American airmen deep behind enemy lines. He constantly visited his airfields, either flying his own plane or, when the weather was too poor, driving a purchased Mercedes racer, the fastest in France. Later the French government presented him with a Renault racer to avoid the embarrassment of having a German car carrying an American commander behind their lines.

The end of the war cancelled Mitchell's most farsighted plan. He had assembled a fleet of Handley-Page bombers and had begun training an entire infantry division for a parachute attack behind enemy lines.

Returning to the United States, Mitchell was named assistant director of the air service on March 1, 1919 under a non-flyer, General Charles T. Menoher, who allowed Mitchell wide latitude in developing his own plans. But the General Staff had other ideas, and even as Mitchell fought to improve the air service, its numbers were cut back and development of new aircraft came to a virtual standstill. American pilots continued to fly machines which had been obsolete when the United States entered the war. A sense of frustration enveloped Mitchell, but his arguments remained within aviation and military circles.

Assistant Secretary of War Benedict Crowell was one of the few high government officials who saw potential in aviation. At

Mitchell's urging he headed a special mission to Europe in 1919 and its seven members called for an effort to move America from the weakest major power in aviation to the forefront. Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, however, read the report with great dismay and buried it deep in his files, where it remained suppressed until Mitchell made it public in 1925.

In September 1920 Mitchell began a more emphatic program, carrying his message to a broader public but purposely choosing a rather select-readership journal, *The Review of Reviews*. He had broken out into open debate and the three pieces written for *Review of Reviews* issued a clear challenge to the military establishment and to the Navy in particular to fully test the potency of the airplane as a major weapon. Airplanes, he wrote, could sink the largest battleships.

The Navy could not ignore the dare. Tests were scheduled for June and July 1921. The air service first dispatched a submarine, a destroyer, and a light cruiser, all obsolete, to the bottom of Chesapeake Bay. For the main event, one of the most heavily armored ships in the world, the captured German battleship *Ostfriesland*, was chosen.

With Mitchell leading them, a flight of Martin MB-2 bombers swept over the bay dropping their 2,000-pound bombs in the water around the battleship. Its hull split by the concussion of the underwater blasts, the *Ostfriesland* went down in twenty-five minutes. Senior American naval observers wept at the sight.

Later that same year, Mitchell's pilots similarly sank the battleship USS *Alabama*. In 1923 further tests were ordered and two other obsolete battleships, the *Virginia* and the *New Jersey*, also were sunk. Although no drastic changes in the air service came about, Mitchell was confident he had won support

(continued on page 36)



"Ostfriesland" sinks after bombing by planes in Mitchell's demonstrations of air power.

The 448th Speaks



SEETHING

BY LEROY ENGBAHL

Much has happened since our group's reunion in Shreveport, Louisiana, where we had a great time and a great reunion although our attendance was smaller

than usual. Some said that since we were having our 2002 reunion in New Orleans, they would go to that one. From the numbers signed up for New Orleans, it looks as if that's the case.

The New Orleans reunion will be over when you read this; held April 10-13 at the Doubletree Hotel in nearby Metairie, LA.

448TH REUNION IS ON FOR 2003: APRIL 2-6, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

After several people indicated to me that they were not ready to "hang it up," I said I would see what I could do to arrange a group reunion for 2003. After some effort I came up with a very nice 23-story Holiday Inn Riverwalk in downtown San Antonio, for a good price considering its location. You

can step right out of the hotel onto the riverwalk, and it's close to lots of action.

After I came up with this deal, I mailed a letter with a photocopy of a picture of the hotel to about 150 members who had attended at least one of our last four reunions. The replies have been good, many saying "Count me in" and "If my health holds up and the creek don't rise." A few have health problems and are pretty much restricted to their homes. Time and age get to most of us in one way or another. Several have lost their spouses, some recently and some several years ago, but those of us who are still in pretty good health wish to carry on these reunions for a few more years so we can be with our buddies that we served with in WWII. ■

It is time to get my column in for the Summer issue of the *Journal*. I have been trying to get things on my desk better organized, and in the process I have come across some things that had gotten lost on the bottom of the pile.

This is from a note I had from Alan Senior: "For your members who were unable to attend the dedication of the new Memorial Library, the commemorative poster with explanatory narrative will bring the event closer, allowing the feeling of being there." See the back cover of this issue of the *Journal* for a picture of the poster and information on how to order one. It is only \$6, and the proceeds go to the Memorial Trust.

You wouldn't believe the number of letters Evelyn Cohen received complimenting her on the events in Norwich last November. If I put out a Newsletter in the fall, maybe I can include a summary of some of them.

This is from an e-mail that I received from Joe Meyer back in September:

"Hi Ray: I was a latecomer to Ketteringham Hall, being assigned there in April '44. I was in training and crossed over with the 100th Bomb Group (B-17s) in June '43; our base was at Thorpe Abbott, not far from Norwich. I was assistant S-4 with the 100th and was later assigned as air-sea rescue and personal equipment officer. At 2nd Air Division my boss was Major Moffitt and I assumed the duties in the new office, which had been created, overseeing air-sea rescue and in-flight equipment. My driver was a corporal named Hercules (Herc), and we traveled many a mile in our open Jeep to and from all of the bases included in the Division. Herc's last name escapes my memory, but I would like to know if you might possibly have any recollection or information about him. Also, my secretary was named Helen, but here again I cannot recall the last name. (At 81,

KETTERINGHAM HALL DIVISION



BY RAY STRONG

I guess I can use my age as my excuse.) She was a very pleasant young lady and nice to work with.

"Ray, I commend you for the work and effort which you have put forth in the newsletters. Keep up the good work and let's stay in touch. Best wishes always, Joe Meyer."

Does anyone remember Herc or Helen? If so, send me an e-mail or regular mail note and I will pass it on or send you Joe's address.

The following is from a note I received from Jim Marantos:

"Hi, Ray. Thanks for your work in putting out the Newsletter. Great stuff, bringing back old memories of Ketteringham Hall and 2nd Air Division. I especially enjoyed your resume of your activities at the recent 2ADA convention in Norwich. I was saddened to hear that Jack Nye passed away. He was my boss at 2AD HQ. Hope the enclosed check will help keep the Newsletter alive. Wish I had something of general interest for the newsletter. My memories of WWII days have dimmed with age. Warmest regards, Jim Marantos."

Hey, Jim, how about telling us what you did with your life after WWII? Most of us are interested in what happened to everyone after leaving Ketteringham Hall.

One of our WACs, Gladys Hathaway Veynar, recently passed away. There is an effort being made to raise \$1,000 to establish a book

endowment fund in her memory. If you would like to contribute, send a check, made out to the 2ADA, to Bill Nothstein, 2ADA Treasurer. His address is on the inside front cover of each *Journal*.

I received a roster recently of the members from Headquarters, from Rick Rokicki who maintains the records on a computer file. You will not be surprised, I am sure, to know that the HQ list continues to grow shorter. The list contains 115 names. It includes 21 associate members. Not too many years ago, Headquarters had almost 200 members. The decline is to be expected. The total membership of 2ADA reached almost 8,500. It is now just a little over 5,500. How great it is for those of us still on that list to have been around long enough to see the new 2nd Air Division Memorial Library completed and honoring the 6,700 who gave their lives flying B-24s over Europe. Every communication from or about the Memorial Library emphasizes the extensive use being made of the 5,000 books and of the large amount of material in the archives being used by researchers. Let us hope that we will be around a little longer and that we will be able to leave the Memorial Trust and the 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian adequately funded for existence into perpetuity.

I suspect you got so interested in reading about the trip to Norwich in the February HQ Newsletter that you didn't notice my plea for a few dollars to beef up the Newsletter Fund. I received just two checks! If each one of you would send me at least \$5, I think I can guarantee at least a couple more issues. Make checks payable to me, as the account is in my name. I still have a few things that I cannot fit into this column, and I am putting them in the Newsletter folder for publication in September after we return from the 2ADA convention in Baltimore. ■

In March of 1945, a city in neutral Switzerland was bombed. Since that day I have periodically pondered whether it was really a mistake, or if it was intentional. At every reunion of the guilty party — the 466th Bomb Group — that I have attended in recent years there has always been a debate over what happened that day. In discussions with Lt. Col. “Jake” Jacobwitz, who was leading the bomb group that day, he swears “it was a mistake.”

Thirty years ago when my duty in the U.S. Air Force was Chief of Operations of the North American Air Defense (NORAD) Command Center located in Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado Springs, Colorado, I learned that one of the intelligence officers on the staff had been with the 8th Air Force Intelligence section responsible for selecting targets during World War Two. Over a cup of coffee one day I asked him about the Basel bombing — informing him that I was on that mission. His only comment was, “That is need-to-know classified information” — even though my security clearance was TOP SECRET. I was surprised I did not receive a more direct answer — after all, it was now 1967. Whenever an answer to a question is evasive, it always makes me believe the truth is being withheld.

During the past year there has been considerable information released by the international news media raising serious questions about Switzerland’s neutrality during World War Two. There have been accusations that the country stored Holocaust gold for the Nazis and reports of Allied personnel being able to evade and seek refuge in Switzerland. With these factors, and having seen German troops there, I feel my opinions of some 50 years ago have much justification and merit.

MARCH 5, 1945 NEWS RELEASE (NEW YORK TIMES)

“U.S. bombers drop explosives and incendiaries on Basel, Switzerland. There were casualties, Basel being evacuated. Swiss radio charges the attack was deliberate; identified the incendiaries as British. 8th AF announces bombers mistook Basel as a German target.”

MARCH 6, 1945 NEWS RELEASE (NEW YORK TIMES)

“Lt. General Spaatz conferred with Swiss High Command, Berne, on prevention of future bombings.”

MARCH 9, 1945 NEWS RELEASE (NEW YORK TIMES)

“The Swiss Government announced that four of its nationals were killed and many injured, and extensive damage was caused when

The Day We Made “SWISS CHEESE” out of the Railyard at Basel

DONALD H. GOEDE
recalls the day when the 466th
bombed a railyard in Switzerland.

REPRINTED FROM FLY PAST

*In March of 1945, a city in
neutral Switzerland was bombed.
Since that day I have periodically
pondered whether it was really a
mistake — or intentional.*

planes of undetermined nationality bombed Basel, Switzerland.

“A broadcast communiqué stated that large fires were started by incendiaries dropped, rails were cut, and fifty freight cars were destroyed and the freight station was damaged by high explosive bombs.”

(Note: It was later reported that the U.S. Government paid \$70 million in reparations.)

DIARY: MISSION NO. 5

March 4, 1945: 0330 hrs wake-up, 0400 hrs breakfast, 0500 hrs briefing, 0620 hrs takeoff, estimated time of return 1415 hrs. Target: jet airfield in southwestern Germany near Freiburg. Flak expected to be light. Aircraft assigned: “Paper Doll.” Bombing by radar, not visual due to the lousy weather over England and all of Europe. Have known other missions scrubbed when weather was much better. Bomb load ten 500 lb M-17 incendiaries. Total aircraft on mission, twenty-eight. Formed over France. Clouds made us change forming altitude from 12,000 ft to 17,000 ft. There was a break in the layers of clouds at that altitude. One flight climbing to bombing altitude went into a layer of clouds with seven aircraft in formation and came out with four. Expected to hear mission scrubbed. Lt. Colonel “Jake” Jacobwitz, commander of the 786th Squadron, was in the lead aircraft and Colonel Ligon, 466th group commander, was flying deputy lead. Approaching the briefed “identification point” (IP) to start bomb run on target, over the radio came “That is not the IP.” Radio silence

went out the window. Transmissions between aircraft jammed the air, questioning the IP and the bomb run towards target. Earlier one formation had broken off and went home with their bombs, and the formation of four aircraft picked Offenburg as a target of opportunity. Nine aircraft followed group leader to target.

DEBRIEFING

Target bombed was not a jet airfield but a marshalling yard. There was an uncertainty whether it was Freiburg, Germany or Basel, Switzerland. The critique was extensive. Intelligence was waiting for reports and photos from reconnaissance aircraft to confirm target and damage.

EVENING, MARCH 4, 1945

Announcement over the Public Address System (PA): “All crews on today’s mission report to Operations Briefing Room.” On the dais was Colonel Ligon, Lt. Colonel Jacobwitz, and the group intelligence officer. Colonel Ligon dropped the ‘bomb’: ‘Gentlemen, today we bombed Basel, Switzerland, by mistake.’ There was a brief moment of silence and then an exchange of comments amongst the crew members of “I told you so” and “Oh, God, no.”

The briefing was then turned over to the intelligence officer. The curtain covering the map wall and projector screen opened. The projector was turned on, revealing the target bombed. It was a marshalling yard. All bombs from the nine aircraft were within a 1,000 foot circle of the center of the target — 100% results. The explosions that followed the bombs confirmed that the rolling stock in the marshalling yard contained ammunition, and the aerial photos identified German troop train cars in the target area.

When the intelligence officer presented the results and facts of the bombing, the mood of the assembled aircrews did a 180 degree about-face. Neutral Switzerland was not so neutral after all. German ammunition and troop trains were being routed through Basel. The question, then and now — was the bombing of Basel a mistake? Or — because of intelligence information compiled by the Allies revealing Switzerland’s violation of neutrality — did we bomb Basel under the pretense that it was a mistake caused by the weather? Then and now my conscience does not bother me for bombing a supposedly neutral country. ■

2ADA FILM LIBRARY — REVISED 6/02

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

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"Royal Air Force Tribute to the Second Air Division,
 8th USAF, by Royal Air Force Coltishall Honor Guard
 and Royal Air Force Wyton Military Band"
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XI	Some of Our Airmen Are No Longer Missing 2ADA March AFB Memorial Service, 1984 The Superplane That Hitler Wasted — ME-262		\$3.00
XII	The Story of Willow Run Preflight Inspection of the B-24 Flying the B-24 (This tape donated to 2ADA by the 467th BG in memory of Adam Soccio)		\$3.00
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Order from: H.C. "Pete" Henry, 164-B Portland Lane,
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My Favorite Charity Story

BY MAJOR BERT F. ALEXANDER, USAF, RET. (93RD)

In March of 1944, after completing a combat tour with the 93rd Bomb Group, I was assigned to a combat crew replacement training center in Cluntoe, North Ireland. There was a break between classes, so Skip Adams, also from the 93rd, and I caught the bus for Belfast. As we got off the bus in Belfast, it was usual for a crowd of pretty young girls to meet the bus and thrust a canister at us collecting money for some charity — hospital, orphanage, etc. Relief from their persistence was only after we made a donation and received a small pin or ribbon which we called our "Safe Conduct Pass." Though Skip and I had made our way through most of the crowd of solicitors, they were still persistent. So we slipped some coins into the next can and got our "Pass." As we brushed on past, I got a glimpse of the label on the can where we dropped our coins. On down the street, I asked Skip if he knew what he had contributed to. He replied, "Some hospital or orphanage." "No, you will want to see where your money goes." We went back and I grasped the wrist of a startled little girl to bring the can where Skip could read the label — "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Russian Horses." Skip said, "Well, I'll be damned," as we walked on. (There were thousands of Russian soldiers suffering cruelty as well, but little chance for that money to reach them.) ■

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The 21st Annual Southern California Reunion Dinner

BY DICK BAYNES (466TH BG), REUNION CHAIRMAN

The 21st Annual 2ADA of Southern California Regional Reunion Dinner was held at the Los Alamitos Race Track on February 23, 2002 (it's always the last Saturday in February). This was a good location — on the border of Los Angeles and Orange Counties.

They even had a horse race in our honor, and if we had given the members time to bet on the race, they might have picked the horse named "Flight," but he came in third and paid \$2.40 to show. **Walter Mundy** (467th BG), president of the Second Air Division Association, and **Dick Baynes** (466th) and **John Rowe** (448th), both members of the dinner committee, left the meeting to view our **2nd Air Division of Southern California Race**. We saw "Joy of Jazz" win the race, which paid \$10.00 to win; then a picture was taken of the three with the winning horse as well as its owner and friends.

Our speaker for the evening was **Brigadier General Robert Cardenas**, a member of the 44th Bomb Group and a distinguished

(44th), **Dick Peterson** (389th), **Fred Sparrevohn** (93rd). *Normandy Campaign*: **Larry Bachman** (392nd), **Mac Meconis** (466th), **Byron Calomiris** (491st). *Northern France Campaign*: **Fred Gerritz** (466th), **Tom Nelson** (492nd), **Larry Keerew** (448th). *Ardennes Campaign*: **Frank Gibson** (448th), **Paul Cool** (445th), **Bill Lundquist** (492nd). *Rhineland Campaign*: **Vince Padilla** (448th), **Dick Hoover** (392nd), **Bill Sparks** (492nd). *Central Europe Campaign*: **Larry Kimbrough** (489th), **Mort Schecter** (467th), **Bob Young** (389th). *All Comrades & Loved Ones Lost in the War and Since*: **Angie Anapol** (65th FG), **Dick Hawes** (303rd FG), **Jim Myl** (351st FG). Alternates were **John Foster** (489th), **Walt Meyer** (489th), **Carl Rambo** (445th), and **John Rowe** (448th).

After a fine dinner, our master of ceremonies, Academy Award winning director **Delbert Mann** (467th & 491st), introduced **Walter Mundy** (467th), president of the Second Air Division Association,



L-R: **Walter Mundy** (467th BG), 2ADA President; **Brigadier General Robert Cardenas**, speaker; **Delbert Mann** (467th & 491st), master of ceremonies.

combat leader and test pilot. He flew the mother plane, a B-29, that carried the X-1 to altitude when Chuck Yeager first broke the sound barrier. He also described his experiences of flying the first version of the "flying wing," the YB-49, early predecessor to the B-2.

As members arrived for the evening, they were greeted by **Dick Butler** (44th), executive vice president of the 2ADA, and **Rex Tabor** (466th) and directed to the registration table where **Margaret Baynes** (466th) and **Agnes Rowe** (448th) checked them in and handed out name tags. **Patti Quintana** (466th) was also there to encourage members to buy raffle tickets.

C.N. "**Bud**" **Chamberlain** (489th), a past president of the 2ADA, conducted opening ceremonies. The operatic voice of **Maria Gunnarsson**, wife of **Frank Grew** (448th), led us in singing the National Anthem, and **Malcolm "Mac" Dike** (466th) gave the invocation. The traditional lighting of the Eight Candles for Remembrance took place with the following participants and **Nick Kuklish** (466th), marshal. *Air Offensive – Europe*: **Dick Boucher** (445th), **Joe Abernathy** (467th), **Neal Sorensen** (489th). *Ploesti Campaign*: **Elmer Reinhart**



Lighting the 3rd Candle: **Byron Calomiris** (491st), **Mac Meconis** (466th), **Larry Bachman** (492nd).

who brought us up to date on the Association's activities. **George Welsh** of The Liberator Club announced the kick-off of the campaign to raise money for the **B-24 Memorial – San Diego**, the project to place a bronze B-24 model in Balboa Park, San Diego, California, the home of the B-24.

After the speaker, a raffle was held with some great prizes. **J. Fred Thomas** (392nd), a past president of the 2ADA and originator of this regional reunion dinner, had a fine committee of **Harry Orthman** (492nd & 44th), **Richard & Peggy Learman**, and **Patti Quintana** (466th). Proceeds of the raffle will go to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich, England; the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia; and the B-24 Memorial – San Diego.

Committee members who planned the dinner were: **Dick Baynes** (466th), chairman; **Fred Bromm** (445th), **Bud Chamberlain** (489th), **Mac Dike** (466th), **Julian Ertz** (44th), **Delbert Mann** (467th & 491st), **Jack Pelton** (445th), **John Rowe** (448th), **J. Fred Thomas** (392nd). ■

JUST HOW DID WE ALL GET THERE AND BACK?

BY ORVILLE P. BALL (445TH)

Over the years, I have enjoyed the *Journal* and the interesting nostalgic stories concerning traumatic events in the lives of flying personnel of the Second Air Division, Eighth Air Force, during World War II. Rarely mentioned has been the role of aerial navigators and their contributions toward the execution of a successful mission. The focus usually centers on pilots and copilots, and rightfully so. The navigators, to be sure, served as aerial accountants armed with pencils and prudent judgement with a minimum of excitement and glamour.

We all remember that only the lead ship and deputy lead in each squadron contained the lead navigator, pilotage navigator in the nose turret, and the radar technician (bombardier or navigator). All other trail aircraft included a navigator who tracked the mission, recorded important mission events on his flight log, and was prepared to guide his aircraft back to England should an abort be necessary. Both lead ships per squadron also included capable bombardiers in case their aircraft was required to move into a lead ship role from a deputy lead position. Aborts were not rare, and the redundancy of two lead ships per squadron served the Second Air Division well during combat missions.

I graduated from the Hondo (Texas) navigation school in June of 1944. Training included pilotage-dead reckoning, radio, celestial with an important emphasis on meteorology. Stars and the sun were substitutes for G.P.S. satellites. My immediate assignment following graduation was to join my B-24 crew already in training at Westover AFB in New England. Navigators were in short supply at this time, hence my late arrival. The pilot of my crew was Craig Belcher and the copilot was Harry Meck. My first training flight involved a mid-air collision between a P-47 who was engaged in simulated fighter runs with aerial gunners firing camera guns. The fighter stalled into the lead ship (we were flying deputy lead) and much of the collision debris impacted our plane. We lost the inboard port engine and our plane was doused with oil. The skill of Belcher and Meck brought us safely back to Westover. This may have been unintentional practical training for combat. My injuries consisted of a serious underwear problem. When asked for a return course to the base, my immediate analytical response was — fly south and follow the Connecticut River. Big deal, we were up flying the next day. So much for non-combat hazards of flying.

We shipped out to England from New York in a converted New Zealand cruise ship, part of a large convoy. On board were about 200 Army nurses and an equal number of flying officers. My recollection of the 11 day crossing to Liverpool was — war is hell!

We were assigned as a replacement crew to the 701st Squadron, 445th Bomb Group at Tibenham. Our bombardier had been reassigned before leaving New York because the pattern bombing technique of the 8th eliminated the need for bombardiers except in lead ships. All we were required to do was toggle our bomb load when we saw the smoke markers leave the leadership.

During our first mission, I became mesmerized with events occurring outside of our aircraft. Being in the nose compartment, I could clearly see the black puffs of smoke in our vicinity from anti-aircraft guns on the ground. We flew right through these collections of dissipating black smoke without the snap, crackle, and pop of shell fragments impacting our sturdy B-24. Looking down through our plexiglass nose, I could even spot the orange flashes of the guns themselves. We were targets. Consequently, my first flight log was rather incomplete, a fact the squadron navigator later brought to my attention. Thereafter, my performance improved, but it was still difficult not to look down at the German landscape and blink when the black puffs appeared in the sky ahead of us. This was a totally new life experience, almost beyond my young psychic capability to deal with. Was I scared and apprehensive — you bet! A mental adjustment was required in order to continue to perform my navigation tasks and to cope with this problem. In a short time, every task became the synergist to overcome the curiosity to observe the happenings around us.

Preflight preparation includes course lines on maps, a careful review of contemplated weather conditions, and locating alternative targets. Once our group left the rallying point above East Anglia and joined the bomber stream, the responsibility of the navigator really began. As the crew reported important events, the time, place, and description, they were entered into the flight log.

After about 10 missions with the Belcher crew, I was transferred to a lead crew which contained a primary bombardier, a nose turret pilotage navigator (either a navigator or bombardier trained in obtaining visual fixes), and a Mickey navigator who operated the radar equipment, the lead navigator whose

desk was positioned behind the pilot rather than the nose compartment and across from the radar operator. If the weather was clear with no cloud obstructions, then the nose turret navigator would furnish pilotage fixes as I needed them. Otherwise, the radar operator would supply fixes as required. The lead navigator would plot pilotage and/or radar fixes as requested, re-plot course leadings, recalculate speed and direction, and advise the pilot or command pilot of necessary changes. The primary objective was to place the lead ship — squadron — group at the I.P. on time with an accurate heading to the target. However, the route to the I.P. and the return to Tibenham was a zig-zag course with many changes in heading in order to avoid flak gun concentrations; that is, as we perceived them to be located. The planned course and changes in compass headings were usually different by necessity.

The lead and deputy lead ships also had GEE receivers. Along the English coast, a series of master transmitters triggered electronic pulses from two slave transmitters, very much like the Loran navigation aids of later dates. The GEE receiver, located on the lead navigator's desk, interpreted these transmissions; and with the aid of prepared maps, the receiver scope values could be plotted as a definitive fix. Of course, the Germans soon began to jam the transmissions, and this navigation aid usually became unusable as you proceeded into the Continent. In fact, the enemy didn't even afford us the courtesy of radio transmissions through France, Belgium, and Germany; which prevented the use of radio fixes as a navigation assistance. So, combat navigation over enemy territory was confined to dead reckoning, visual pilotage, and radar fixes, and GEE signals if they weren't jammed. This was a continuous process.

The role of a lead navigator was critically important, hectic and busy with a focus on the next change of course and continuously recalculating wind speed and direction. When hostilities came to an end in mid-1945, I had finished my 30 missions and helped pack supplies and equipment for the move of the 445th back to the States. I managed to save most of my mission maps with all of my notes entered during each combat mission. Occasionally, I study these memorable documents and re-fly each of my lead flights. Talk about nostalgia!! One note on a flight map indicated "heavy flak, 88s and 105s, the

(continued on page 26)

For a lot of Eighth Air Force bomber crew members in WWII, high flight time began long before high flight time. To give you a sense of the feelings one experienced inside the body and the mind prior to the culmination of a mission, we'll start with the evening meal, prior to a bombing mission the next morning.

In the lounge just outside the mess dining room was an alert notice board. By 1900 (7:00 p.m.) each evening those on flying alert for a mission could find their names listed. If your name was up, you were restricted to the base. If not, you could go into town (midnight curfew) to Norwich or nearby, if not otherwise restricted. The evening meal was the main one of the day, and unlike a lot of other Army meals, I remember the food as good and plentiful. A typical supper might have been roast lamb, mashed (powdered) potatoes and gravy, canned fruit, brussel sprouts, delicious fresh-baked brown bread (heavy), and an apple crumb cake to finish it off. Beverages in order of popularity were milk, coffee, and tea.

After eating I'd go right out to the alert board. Approaching it with apprehension I'd look for my name and others, perhaps holding my breath. If you saw that you were on alert, you'd exhale and turn on the mindset to immediately accept it. If not on alert, the exhale was perhaps the same, but the heart-string wasn't plucked, and relief instead of resignation took over. No other information was available. You knew not what time you were to fly, where to or why; if you were primary to go, or just a standby substitute. Options for the evening were to sit around the club lounge, go to the base movie (two shows/evening), or to the little library on base. Most often we'd just head on back to our room, talking and relaxing. Fear of the unknown morrow didn't come till later. Perhaps if you hadn't written letters for several days, and in view of the mission ahead, a couple of V-mails would get written. We teased each other, played practical jokes, and laughed a lot. This was normal for us, mission or not.

I was a 458th BG navigator at Horsham St. Faith, a pre-war RAF base which wasn't given over to 8th Air Force bombers until 1943. Most all of the buildings were a permanent brick type. There were five fine hangars and an adequate control tower. The airmen and officers were separated for quarters and dining facilities. I ate with all crew officers at the combat officers' mess. Pilot Pat McCormick's room was in that building, as were those of most first pilots. Bombardier Joe Schelzi and I shared a two double bunk

High Fright Time

BY HARRY CRAFT (458TH)

room with two other lieutenants, in what had been a married RAF officer's house pre-war, about a half mile from the flight line area.

All the rooms, except the unused kitchen and the cold-water-only bathroom, had double bunks and a few wooden chairs in them. If you were lucky, there was a dresser with

four drawers and a small table. There was no heating system except a fireplace in what was originally the living room. No fuel was provided, and precious little was obtained. The eight houses like this had had white wood picket fences around them, but months or more before we arrived the pickets were consumed in the fireplaces. From October through March you just dressed heavy, and slept under several G.I. blankets. There were sheets!

We knew from experience that wakeups were rarely before 3:00 a.m., and were as late as about 6:30 a.m. The tendency was to sack out early around 10:00 p.m. Prior to pulling

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WAACs TO GET GI PRIVILEGES WHEN THEY BECOME WACs

BY CABLE TO THE STARS AND STRIPES, JULY 8, 1943

WASHINGTON, July 6 (AP)—When the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps drops the "Auxiliary" and becomes an integral part of the U.S. Army sometime before September 30, as approved by Congress and the President last week, approximately 65,000 women will become eligible for V-mail and franking privileges, dependency allowances, disability payments and insurance facilities established for members of the Army of the United States, the War Department said today.

Members of the new Women's Army Corps will be entitled to all the benefits and subject to the same regulations as the regular Army, including overseas and flying pay.

WACs will not be able to claim husbands as dependents, however, it was disclosed.

September 30 is the date set for dissolution of the Auxiliary Corps, and at some time before that all WAACs signing Army enlistment papers will be transferred to the Women's Army Corps wherever they are stationed.

Most WAACs to Re-enlist

Because members of the WAACs volunteered for auxiliary service, the new Act making them part of the Army provides that they shall be free to refuse to enlist and can have automatic discharge with return transportation to the point where they entered the service.

Officers in Washington said "the great majority are eager to enlist" and there is no indication that the transfer will result in a drop from the corps' present strength.

Although the Women's Army Auxiliary

Corps was limited to 150,000 members, the new law enables the President to extend the corps' size. Recently Secretary Stimson said that 500,000 women in khaki were needed and that an intensified recruiting drive was getting under way.

Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, also indicated the WAC would be enlarged to 600,000 yesterday, at ceremonies at which Oveta Culp Hobby was sworn in as an Army colonel.

Members will assume ranks identical to those in the Army, such as lieutenants and captains; instead of present ranks of first, second and third officers.

In addition to receiving soldiers' benefits, the Army women will be liable to soldiers' discipline with the possibility of court-martial. The Act expressly provides that the authority of women officers applies only to the WAC and to Army groups specifically placed under their jurisdiction, however.

The life of the Women's Army Corps is set to expire six months after the end of the war, but the President or Congress could revise the time limit without passage of a new law.

The age range also has been changed to run from 20 to 50 years. The only specific enlistment prohibition is against women nurses and doctors, and the law states that the only women's corps in the Army shall be the Army Nurse Corps and the WAC. ■

Editor's Note: We dedicate this article in memory of 2AD WAC "Hathy" Veynar, who recently passed away.

As so often happened when a plane went down, we never heard of the fate of the pilot until word came from the Red Cross that he was killed in action or hopefully was a prisoner of war. Rarely did we ever hear the details of his loss. In this case, 55 years later we have the rest of the story.

On September 18, 1944, 110 B-17s were tasked to drop badly needed supplies to Polish guerrillas in an uprising in Warsaw. They were escorted by 64 P-51s from the 355th Fighter Group. The mission was known as Operation FRANTIC VII, the last of seven so-called shuttle missions to Russia wherein the bombers bombed, or in this case dropped supplies in Poland and continued on to land in Russia. Two days later they bombed in Hungary and continued on to Italy. The third leg was a bombing mission in France enroute to their home base in England.

In the Warsaw area, they were attacked by 109s from JG-51 (Moelders), and one B-17 and two P-51s were lost. (Four ME-109s were also shot down.) One B-17 and the P-51s of Lt. Joseph Vigna and Lt. Robert O. Peters of the 358th Fighter Squadron were lost.

Fast forward: In September 2000 I received an e-mail from a Polish Air Force officer, Jersey (Jurek) Boc, inquiring about the two pilots and asking for details from the records of the squadron such as the MACR (Missing Air Crew Report), the location of their crash, the Battle Order for this mission, and if possible, photos of the men and their planes. I complied with his request.

He replied, "I finally found the places of death of Lts. Peters and Vigna. According to Mr. Wisniewski, an eyewitness, Lt. Peters made a controlled crash landing 15 km NW of Warsaw, near the village of Wrona. After the crash, the pilot was still alive for about thirty minutes but indicated that he did not want to get out of the cockpit. (I suspect that he knew he was mortally wounded.) German soldiers surrounded the plane and didn't allow inhabitants to rescue the pilot. The plane was now burning and he died very soon. He was buried next to the aircraft and the grave was marked with four pegs." Due to the efforts of Jurek Boc and the local priest, a memorial service in honor of the two pilots was held in the village Catholic church on September 16, 2000, the 56th anniversary of their loss. The entire village was in attendance.

A case of serendipity: In February 2001

Finally, The Rest of the Story

BY RAY L. SHEWFELT
(355TH FG)

I received an e-mail from a young woman in North Carolina who was researching the loss of her father. She was two months old when he was lost. Mrs. Lynne Peters Anderson was the daughter of Lt. Robert O. Peters. I immediately put her in touch via e-mail with the Polish officer and he told her what he had found. Lynne's husband was planning a business trip to Warsaw, so she decided to accompany him. Jurek met her and took her to the scene of her father's crash, where there remain shards of the plane and .50 cal bullets. She met Mr. Wisniewski, who had been a 15-year-old boy working on the farm, and now she has a piece of the plane, which was lo-

cated with a metal detector.

The experience finally brought closure to Lynne and her mother, Mrs. George Griesse.

Unfortunately, Lt. Peters was shot down by one of the pilots in his own squadron when he slid into the line of fire. He was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) for shooting down five enemy aircraft on July 20 while escorting bombers.

Lt. Vigna crashed several kilometers away. He was thrown from the plane. His face was shot away and his legs badly burned. German soldiers and the pilot who had shot him down arrived. He ordered the corpse to be put in a body bag and Vigna was buried near the crash. The Luftwaffe pilot claimed Vigna's equipment as a trophy.

In September 2001, the 355th Fighter Group had its reunion in Pittsburgh, PA. John Anderson, Lynne's husband, had worked hard and enlisted the aid of his congressman and had been successful in securing on short notice a visa for Jurek Boc to come to the United States for a visit. Jurek, Lynne, and John were honored guests at our reunion. Jurek subsequently toured the Air Force Museum at Dayton; Washington, D.C.; and New York. ■

HIGH FRIGHT TIME (continued from page 23)

up the blankets there was little fright about tomorrow. With lights out, conversations over, and the blacked-out night ahead, the mind would talk to the soul, and wondering what was going to happen on the mission would take over — wondering, wondering! There was even a possibility the mission would be cancelled. Sleep came without much difficulty though, as the scratchy blankets enveloped you in sufficient warmth.

The blackness of night didn't pass — but the sleep and the rest did! Maybe five or six hours after falling off, I'd be suddenly wide awake, hearing a Jeep engine coming down the road when it was probably still 300 yards from us. We were in the sixth house in the row of eight. I could hear the Jeep engine slow and the brakes squeak to a stop at whatever house the squadron wakeup man would stop at first. You couldn't hear anymore until he came out of the first house, got in, started the engine up, moved to the next, braked and stopped again. By now I was wide awake, fully alert, ears straining, and heartbeat clearly increasing. You just knew that the other three sets of ears in the room were also tuned in to the Jeepster. He hadn't gotten as close as next door yet, but would he stop at our house? Lots of reasons could present themselves to keep everyone on alert from being called out: The number of planes demanded by the combat order, the number of planes in combat ready condition, the weather eliminating some targets, etc. By the time he stopped next door you were sure he wasn't next door—but here! But he wasn't — and then he was. I could hear his steps on the walk, and the front door opening and being shut. All ears now, and the heart is pounding—will he just call the two rooms downstairs, or will he come up? He calls them both, and then he's on the stairs. Will he skip our room (the second one)? No—the loud knock—"Schelzi, Craft, Davis, Jameson!—All up!—Breakfast in 30 minutes and briefing in one hour." A deep breath and a long exhale — the heart rate slows. The messenger's footsteps skip the other two rooms, and go down the stairs and out the door. Acceptance and resignation return. Job to do — gotta go to work. ■

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
BY AUD RISLEY



Another spring . . . I can tell because it is raining. When I awakened this morning I realized that I wake up hours before my body does. However, being awake is a good sign, and it beats the alternative, I decided years ago.

So it is with pleasure that I start on this message to all of you friends of the 446th. In cleaning out some files (that happens in the spring, you know), I found a note from the late Bill Booth, dated 8 September 1997, and in it he tells about his most recent trip to the museum at Flixton. He noted that Alan Hague put on a great tour of all the remnants of the airfields, ending up at the 446th museum at Flixton. And he said, "This is a *museum* . . . I was treated royally by the volunteers who keep our memories alive." He concluded that it is just "mind-boggling what they are doing for us."

Yes, that is true. That is why these dedicated folks are working so hard to make the Flixton memorial a reality. Oh, and it is a reality, thanks to the donation of land by Mark Haddingham and plantings that have been done already.

And now we are busily gathering funds to finish the project. Alan Senior, serving as project chair in the U.S., has solicited you, I have solicited you, and some have responded. But with your help, if you haven't helped already, this will be finished and a permanent remem-

brance that we were there . . . we did the job . . . we are appreciated.

If your check isn't in the mail . . . see that it gets in there today.

A generous donation was just received from Lou Deutsch, a navigator on Slim Wellborn's crew, in their honor. And others are coming in each day and will be acknowledged in the BeachBell Echo and/or Bungay Bull.

Of course, there is always the part of this article which notes those of us who have departed. I recently received word from Bud Wroe that the navigator on Lew Ahlin's crew, **Jesse Greenberg**, died on February 1. Also recently deceased is **Lt. Col. Ret. Eldridge (Dale) Howard** of San Antonio, TX. Please keep us informed of deaths of 446ers so that we may pass the word along.

As we prepare to gather for the 446th Annual Reunion in Dayton, Ohio, May 15-18, I plan to be there to be with old friends and hopefully some new ones. The deadline for this issue of the *Journal* comes before the event, but we will share some photos in the next issue.

Please keep in touch, Not much news this time, but I am sure things are happening that you might share with fellow 446ers. You can reach me by e-mail, risley446@aol.com, or via the U.S. mail even after the postage increase.

And remember . . . if that check isn't in the mail, see that it is. The memorial in Flixton will keep our memory alive for the town folk and for visitors to the area. It is hoped that the dedication will take place soon. If you have questions, contact Alan Senior or myself. Alan's e-mail is: alansenior@worldnet.att.net.

So, until we meet again . . . living here on Earth is expensive, but we get a free trip around the sun every day. And remember, birthdays are good for you: the more you have, the longer you live. ■

Colonel Ben Walsh Emcees Fifth Annual Military Ball

SUBMITTED BY CLAUDE V. MECONIS (466TH)

Colonel H. Ben Walsh, Ret. (389th BG) served as master of ceremonies at the Fifth Annual Military Ball held at the Bacara Resort and Spa in Santa Barbara, California on Veterans Day, in November 2001. The evening event was a special tribute to the Air Force, sponsored by Pierre Claeysens.

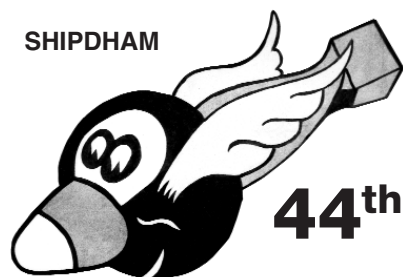
Over 600 guests, most in formal military uniform, were seated at flag-decorated tables honoring each branch of the service.

Special guests of honor were Major General William Looney III, USAF Commander, 14th Air Force; Major General Wilbert D. Pearson, Jr., USAF Commander, Flight Test Center; and Colonel Bruce Hinds, USAF (Ret.) Northrop B-2 Test Pilot.

Colonel Walsh served a full career as a commander and pilot with the Air Force dating back to 1940. He has received some 23 awards and decorations, including the Knighthood of the Royal Order from King Gustav of Sweden, the Croix de Guerre avec Palme from General De Gaulle, four Presidential Citations, the Cross of Liberty from France, and many other combat decorations, including the Purple Heart for wounds received in action. ■



Master of ceremonies Col. H. Ben Walsh and his British-born wife, Barbara, at the Ball at Bacara. Col. Walsh was a member of the 389th BG of the 2nd Air Division in England.



BY JULIAN S. ERTZ

The Spring 2002 edition of the *Journal* was most impressive with the copies of congratulatory letters to the Second Air Division Association from Queen Elizabeth II, President Bush, and First Lady Laura Bush on the occasion of the dedication of our newly constructed Memorial Library and the award of the Freedom of the City of Norwich.

In that issue, I took the liberty of introducing myself to the members of the Second Air Division Association. In looking over past issues of the *Journal* and *Eight Ball Tales* (the journal of the 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association), I re-read some outstanding poems. One of these was in the Winter 2001 edition of *8 Ball Tales*. It was entitled "The Eighth Memory" and recalled days during World War II when "The English Girls Loved You, The German Cities Hated You," etc.

We are again at war, even though it may be undeclared. The media people complain about not being informed by our leaders as to what is actually happening in Afghanistan and much is written by them in newspapers and magazines, and broadcast and televised as well. We read and hear much which may or may not be a true picture of what the actual facts are. Often we may see in the headlines that all is going great, but if we look in less prominent parts of the newspapers and magazines, we may get more truth.

This brings me to something I observed during WWII when headlines would trumpet our great victories but when we looked inside and read the smaller articles, we got a more accurate picture of our progress.

After having crashed overseas and returned from rehabilitation, I was sent to Harvard for Statistical Control Training. As I sat in class one day, I thought of the optimistic stories on the front page and the more accurate stories inside without headlines. So I wrote the poem which appears on this page, during a lecture at Harvard. Remember that this was written in 1944. ■

Thoughts About the Optimists

*The War is nearly over, the headline loudly blares
"All over but the shouting," say our reading debonairs
"Nazi lines are cracking," it says in black and white
German cities leveled with every air force flight.*

*"I'm gonna quit my war job," says Georgie Appleby.
"I want a good secure job, before they fire me.
"I'll be secure before it ends, I've salted mine away.
"It cannot last much longer; they'll give up any day.*

*Sure, they'll give up any day, boy, just look upon page 3
Where "truth will out," as Shakespeare said, Don't look so good to me.
Air bases gone in China; the Japs advancing on
The Nazis brace at Aachen; how come? We thought they'd gone.*

*We sank the whole Jap navy, we saw it there in print.
"In a week we'll have all Leyte," people said with eyes aglint.
Just mopping up, it won't take long — it's Tokyo next, Hooray!
Those lousy little yellow rats will never get away.*

*Another week — the paper says that Leyte's fierce fight
Grows bloodier each day because of Japs who land by night
But how're they landing troops there; I just can't understand.
If we sank their blasted Navy, how can they ever land?*

— JULIAN S. ERTZ, NOVEMBER 1944

JUST HOW DID WE GET THERE AND BACK? (continued from page 22)

radar box was hit and put out of action." The flak fragment came up through the bottom of the ship, passed between the legs of the radar operator, entered the radar, and our cabin soon filled with smoke from the damaged radar equipment. The radar navigator was Lawrence Vecchi who very efficiently pulled all the switches to the off position, the smoke disappeared, and Lawrence slept all the way back to the base.

Unlike today's aircraft which utilize a variety of sophisticated navigation aids, especially G.P.S., during WWII, navigation was fairly crude and rudimentary. The good judgment and continuous attention to available information by all of the lead navigators of the Second Air Division played vital roles in the success of each and every combat mission and the safe return of combat personnel.

With the end of the war, the base prepared immediately for the return to the U.S., and I was assigned to a composite crew to ferry a new B-24 back to Bradley Field in Connecticut, via Iceland and BW1 in Greenland. They issued a sextant to me for the trip home. I never took it out of the carrying case because I had forgotten how to use it for sun fixes. The flight from Greenland to Bradley Field encountered a severe storm front over the Davis Straits, and we lost two companion aircraft.

After the infamous Kassel disaster of September, 1944, we spent a great deal of discussion time specific to what went wrong. My memory recalls that the lead radar navigator probably picked up the wrong blip as the target area approached. This mistake led the 445th out of the bomber stream protection and into the German fighters. No one reacted to the mistake and you know the rest of the story. As a navigator, I can rationalize this error in judgment but still wonder today why the mistake in course change wasn't corrected by the other lead ships. I do remember the somber atmosphere at the 445th base for weeks afterward.

At this point in life, my memory has faded but the navigation maps I retained provide at least some factual recall. A lot of fine young men didn't make it through their combat tour, so I consider myself lucky to have completed my missions and return home without a scratch. Perhaps, we all owe a small vote of thanks to the lead navigators of the 445th, those brave colleagues armed only with a lead pencil and modest analytical talents. ■



492nd BOMB GROUP HAPPY WARRIOR HAPPENINGS

NORTH PICKENHAM

BY WILLIS H. BEASLEY

THE 2ADA SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REUNION DINNER, FEBRUARY 23, 2002

The 492nd Bomb Group was represented at the 2ADA Southern California Dinner held at the Los Alamitos Race Track by the following dedicated members: Patrick Byrne and sons Paul and Phillip; Bill Moorhead; Tom and Mary Ann Nelson; Harry and Sally Orthman; and Willie Sparks. We were unable to attend but were surprised and pleased when the phone rang and everyone had a turn talking to us on Bill Moorhead's cell phone. A personal note from each one was received the next week. Everyone had a great time.

Representing the 492nd BG in lighting the fourth Candle of Remembrance was Tom Nelson, and Willie Sparks did the honors for the sixth candle.

Tom Nelson has completed his book, *50 Years of Railroading in Southern California*. Sorry we weren't there to see it. Tom has worked diligently to get it published. He is an expert on trains and is to be commended for his work.

MEMORIAL DAY, MAY, 2002

Again this year, the 492nd Bomb Group will have a wreath laid at the Ardennes, Cambridge, and Netherlands cemeteries to honor the war dead and missing of the 492nd Bomb Group. We are very sorry that our good friends Henny Kwik (Netherlands) and Russell Ives (Cambridge), who have performed this service for the past several years, are unable to do so this year. Unfortunately, Memorial Day at Cambridge falls on Monday, May 27, and is not a bank holiday. Therefore, everyone has to work. Russell reports that the big air show at RAF Mildenhall, usually held on the Saturday and Sunday before Memorial Day, has been cancelled as well. Our appreciation to Ferdinand Dessente, who will lay wreaths for the 492nd and the 2ADA at the Ardennes cemetery.

In addition to the 492nd Bomb Group wreaths, Norma has arranged with each of the thirteen Battle Monument Cemeteries in Europe and the Mediterranean area to have a wreath laid on Memorial Day to honor the war dead and missing of the Second Air Division. The cemeteries are: Ardennes, Brittany, Cambridge, Epinal, Florence, Henri-Chappelle, Lorraine, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norman-

dy, North Africa, Rhone, and Sicily-Rome.

LOOKING FOR THE BEST AIR FARES?

If you have a computer, access the Web at www.orbitz.com. Get the best fare, and then contact your travel agent or the airline of your choice.

KINGMAN ARMY AIRFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

I was sent to Kingman Army Air Base upon returning to the U.S. from overseas duty. I was stationed there from January until May, 1945. A few years ago I was contacted by Kingman Army Airfield Reunions, but did not attend any of the reunions that were held from 1991 through 1995. The Fall issue of the Friends Journal of the Air Force Foundation, Inc. at Wright Patterson, Dayton, Ohio, had an article entitled "From Gunnery Training to Aircraft Storage — Kingman Army Airfield." I contacted Vernie and Quilva Honberger, members of the 492nd BG now living in Kingman, for additional information about the old base and its present status.

The Honbergers sent a wealth of information about Kingman as it is today. Kingman is now a far cry from when Norma and I came there as newlyweds. We stayed in a boarding house; one bathroom shared with seven other couples. We ate all of our meals out. There was a café in town called the Kimo Café, and there we listened to "Don't Fence Me In," "Mares Eat Oats," and "Little Lambs Eat Ivy" sung by the Andrews Sisters and played on the juke box. Hotcakes and coffee were 25 cents. The café is no longer there. The old cemetery behind the courthouse was a good place for a Sunday walk to look at the old headstones. Gasoline was rationed, so going very far was not an option. There was one movie theater, a Coca Cola Bottling Company, and the Commercial Store where you could buy everything including clothing, cooking utensils, and car parts.

Founded at the beginning of WWII as an aerial gunnery training base, it was one of the Army Air Forces' largest, training some 35,000 individuals. The airfield and Kingman played a significant role in that important era of America's history.

According to the Route 66 News, Winter 2002, through 1943 and 1944 the base continued to swell both in size, eventually reach-

ing 555 buildings, five swimming pools, and a massive firing range on the north side of Route 66; and in personnel, as more than 20,000 gunners graduated in 1944. Then, almost as quickly as it began, the base faded into historical obscurity. In early 1945, classes were scaled back, and in June of that year the base was temporarily deactivated. Starting in October of 1945, when the base was designated Sales Storage Depot 42, the Route 66 traveler heading west into the Huapapai Valley would have been amazed to see the silvery mirage in the distance transform into miles of warplanes. Depot 41 was designated as the central western location for the storage, sale, and scrapping of military aircraft. As such, a stream of aircraft, averaging 43 per day initially, were flown to the field. By December, the average per day had surpassed 100, and more than 4,600 aircraft, the largest concentration of military aircraft in the world, were soon lined up along Route 66. Before the decade of the 1940s had drawn to an end, this activity had drawn to a close. The final liquidation of the base included the sale of buildings, many of which found new purposes, such as the former Chamber of Commerce and Arizona Department of Transportation on Beale Street in Kingman.

In April of 2000, KAAHS entered into a lease agreement with the Kingman Airport Authority, for Hangar "E" which is the last original building on the airfield capable of being "saved." Since April 2000, an extensive cleanup, some repairs, and asbestos removal have been accomplished. The hangar itself will require extensive restoration to accomplish the ultimate goal — to preserve the history of Kingman, the airfield, Mojave County's role in World War II, and that of those who served there.

The airfield today serves as the Kingman airport, with modern, up-to-date runways that can accommodate jets, and it is part of a growing and prosperous industrial park: "Honoring all who have served and continue to serve America to Preserve Freedom."

An honor roll of names of all individuals who served at Kingman during WWII will be established as they are able to be collected and any information on them can be obtained. Presently they have over three hundred names. Any help they can get in developing this honor roll will be appreciated. Please contact Bob Feagins, Kingman Army Airfield Historical Society and Museum, Inc., 4540 Flightline Drive, Kingman, AZ 86401, phone and FAX: (928) 757-1892.

It is hard to believe that this little town of Kingman, in the middle of the Mojave Desert on Route 66, has become the home for many retirees and a mecca for tourists. ■

REMEMBER AXIS SALLY?

Reading some old magazines when cleaning out my files, I found an article on Axis Sally in the November 1995 issue of *World War II* magazine by Dale P. Harper:

"She was named Mildred Elizabeth Sisk, born November 29, 1900. Her parents were later divorced; her mother remarried and she was known as Mildred Gillars...She had graduated from high school in Ohio and attended Ohio Wesleyan University but did not graduate...Gillars worked at a variety of jobs — waitress, clerk — to further her hope of becoming an actress...In 1929 she spent six months with her mother, studying in France...In 1933 she returned to France as a governess, but moved to Germany in 1935 to teach English...then was employed by Radio Berlin as an announcer and actress...she liked this job and stayed with it until the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945...Gillars' propaganda program was known as "Home Sweet Home" and aired between 8 p.m. and 2 a.m. Although she referred to herself as "Midge at the Mike," GIs dubbed her "Axis Sally." Her broadcasts were heard all over Europe, the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the U.S. from December 11, 1941 through May 6, 1945...The Federal Communications Commission in Maryland had monitored and recorded all of her programs — which would provide the prosecution with damaging evidence at her trial...Most GIs agreed that Gillars had a sultry, sexy voice...and like her counterpart in the Pacific, Tokyo Rose, she liked to tease and taunt the soldiers about their wives and sweethearts back in the States...She would get the names, serial numbers, and hometowns of captured and wounded GIs and voice concern about them...Perhaps Sally's most famous broadcast, and the one which would eventually get her convicted of treason, was a play titled *Vision of Invasion* that aired on May 11, 1944. It was beamed to American troops in England awaiting the invasion of Normandy, as well as to the U.S.; Gillars played the role of an American mother who dreamed that her soldier son, a member of the invasion forces, died aboard a burning ship in the attempt to cross the English Channel. The play has a realistic quality to it, sound effects simulating the moans and cries of the wounded as they were raked with gunfire from the beaches. Over the battle action sounds, an announcer's voice intoned, "The D of D-Day stands for doom...disaster...death...defeat...Dunkerque or Dieppe." Adelbert Houben, a high official of the German Broadcasting Service, would testify at Axis Sally's trial that her broadcast was intended to prevent the invasion by frightening the Americans with grisly forecasts of staggering casu-

ATTLEBRIDGE



BY JIM LORENZ

alties...After the defeat of Germany, Gillars blended into the throngs of displaced persons in occupied Germany, seeking assistance from the Western Allies in obtaining food, shelter, medical treatment, and location of relatives and friends. After three weeks in an American hospital, she was interned at Wansel, Germany...In 1946 she was granted amnesty and released and obtained a pass to live in the French Zone of Berlin. Later, when she traveled to Frankfurt to get her pass renewed, she was arrested by the Army and kept there for more than a year...She was then flown to the U.S. and incarcerated in Washington, D.C. district jail in August 1948...Held without bond, she was later charged with ten counts of treason by a federal grand jury. Her trial began on January 25, 1949 in the district court of Washington...Prosecutor John Kelley noted...after being hired by Radio Berlin, she signed an oath of allegiance to Hitler's Germany...witnesses testified that Gillars had posed as a worker for the International Red Cross and persuaded captives to record messages to their families and relatives in order to garner a large listening audience in the U.S. By the time she finished weaving propaganda into the broadcasts, the POWs' messages to their loved ones were not exactly messages of comfort...playback of the messages showed that Nazi propaganda had been inserted between the GIs' messages...Her defense pointed out that Max Otto Koioschwitz, a professor at Hunter College, became romantically involved with Gillars when she was one of his students. Max returned to Germany, renounced his U.S. citizenship, and became an official in the Nazi radio service in charge of propaganda broadcasts. He thus was Mildred's superior...She said they lived together and he influenced her to make the broadcasts. The trial ended on March 8, 1949...the jury debated for several days...acquitted her on seven of the eight counts...they found her guilty on the count

involving the play *Vision of Invasion*. The judge sentenced her to 10-30 years in prison with a \$10,000 fine and eligibility for parole after ten years. Axis Sally was sent to the Federal Women's Reformatory in Alderson, West Virginia. When she became eligible for parole in 1959, she waived the right...She applied to parole two years later, June 10, 1961, and it was granted...Gillars taught for a while in a Roman Catholic school for girls in Columbus, Ohio and later completed her degree at Ohio Wesleyan in 1973. She died on June 25, 1988, at the age of 87.

MAIL CALL

We had a letter dated December 21, 2001 from Derek Hills, the Trust Librarian for the Second Air Division Memorial Library. He apologized for the delay in sending our 2001 466th BG book endowment report. He noted that they were very busy last year — on moving into the new Millennium Library. Since the opening in November, he says, "we have been overwhelmed by the positive use of the Memorial Library...we have had to add additional staff to cope with this increase in patrons."

The books purchased with our endowment fund are: *Five Finger Discount: A Crooked Family History*, by Helene Stapinski, and *The Wild Blue Yonder: The Men and Boys Who Flew the B-24s over Germany*, by Stephen Ambrose. Our book plates read: "Presented by the 466th Bomb Group, in honor of all who served at Attlebridge Air Field (B-24 Base), March 1944 — July 1945."

An e-mail to the Heritage League Web site regarding S/Sgt. James D. Brooks was forwarded to me. Terry Brooks states, "My father was a ball turret/waist gunner with crew 141 in the 466th BG, 787th Squadron. Some of his crew (Leon Appel's crew) are in the book *Wings of Morning*. Please e-mail me with any information: tb61038@aol.com."

I couldn't find any data on the Appel crew in the 466th Diary; Leon Appel is listed in the 2ADA book — but no data. However, Mrs. Sara Appel is listed in our 466th BGA roster, as is Laverne Young, so I gave Terry those addresses. Anyone with further data on S/Sgt. Brooks or the Appel crew, please contact Terry, or give me a call.

Chris Brassfield is the 466th BG and 466 BGA (an associate member of both) historian who sent me an e-mail: "Lois West is a schoolteacher in Philadelphia and is teaching a section about WWII centered on the book *Wings of Morning*. She would like some 466th B-24 vets to help with an e-mail interview by the students."

I contacted Lois and she e-mailed: "I am delighted that you will be 'joining our class

(continued on page 30)

A scrappy youngster from Oil City's tough Polish neighborhood on the North Side gave Oil City a measure of fame that no other native son or daughter has ever delivered — home to the nation's top living air ace.

Francis S. Gabreski, 83, 56th FG, died in Dix Hills, NY. He grew up on rugged Spruce Street, a clean and proud neighborhood that thrived on its ethnicity. His parents, who stuck by their name Gabryszewski as perhaps a tribute to their immigration here from Warsaw, Poland, owned Purity Market on Main Street.

In a visit back home in July 2000, Gabreski said his sturdy but strict upbringing sustained him during dangerous times.

"Oil City was like a little kingdom, filled with the greatest people a youngster could know. I was brought up by the (Catholic) sisters and the priests . . . and I wouldn't be what I am today if it wasn't for the Assumption School, my family, my friends, my pastors. Most of us came from immigrant families and those families worked hard and made America great," said the air ace.

His late brother, Max Gabreski, told the story years ago that some of the credit for his brother's survival as a combat pilot was due to prayer. "Our father was a very religious man," recalled his brother in a 1971 interview. "(He) prayed for his children, that they would be safe when in service and successful in life."

Francis, known as Frankie and also Beaver because of his habit of chewing on a sliver of wood, was a good, if not outstanding, student at Oil City High School. Encouraged by his family to go to college, he followed in his brother Ted's footsteps and enrolled at Notre Dame. But it was the Army pilots training near the campus who intrigued him more than his college studies, and Gabreski began taking private flying lessons on the side.

The invasion of Poland, his family's homeland, spurred him to quit college and join the Army Air Corps. Nicknamed Gabby by his fellow pilots, the cigar-smoking blue-eyed Gabreski was assigned to the air wing in Hawaii in late 1941. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, the young pilot was one of the few aviators who managed to get an American plane in the air that day.

Gabreski, by all accounts a superb fighter pilot and outstanding tactician, tore through World War II as he first flew with the Polish Air Force attached to the RAF in England while waiting for the U.S. to ready its fighter air wings. His next assignment was to England where he joined America's 61st Fighter Squadron. He scored his first aerial victory in August 1943 when he shot down a German Messerschmitt over France. Seventy-five missions later, flying British "Spitfires and later P-47 Thunderbolts, he was an air ace.

In the book *American Aces*, author Edward H. Sims described Gabreski, the top



In memory of the 56th FG's Colonel "Gabby" Gabreski

The leading 2AD American ace has 28 kills to his credit plus two on the ground.

His hometown is Oil City, PA. Before joining the Zemke Wolf Pack, he flew with the "Poles," receiving the Polish Cross of Valor. He holds every American award except the Congressional Medal of Honor.

BY JUDITH O. ETZEL

Reprinted from *The Derrick*, Oil City, PA

surviving aerial combat ace of World War II with 28.5 planes destroyed, as "the blue-eyed strong-jawed major from Oil City." His exploits became legendary as the media extolled his dangerous adventures. A fellow pilot in Europe told one reporter that Gabreski "had more guts per square inch than anyone who ever climbed into a fighter plane."

He was a risk-taker, by his own admission and others' descriptions, and was known for flying low and charging in tight. Gabreski would often return to the 8th Air Force base in England with telephone wire wrapped around his propellers and big scrapes on the plane's underbelly, gouged by treetops. Gabreski said he relied more on "his vision and instinct" than the sophisticated target sights.

At the age of 81, the pilot recalled every detail of a certain aerial skirmish with a German fighter plane over enemy lands. Gabreski said he hadn't forgotten any of it because it and all his other memories resounded with patriotism and a sense of duty that he held so dear.

"I had to ask the question: I love my parents, my brothers and my sisters, my country. Are they worth dying for? I said yes," said Gabreski in recalling his 27-year military service.

His service to his country would run a gamut of experiences — prisoner of war in a German stalag, commanding officer of a peacetime air unit, fighter jet pilot in the Korean War — and the medals and ribbons festooned his proudly worn uniform. In 1952, Gabreski was declared a jet pilot ace and joined an elite group of only seven American flyers who had been aces in both World War II and Korea.

The combined aerial victors of both conflicts elevated Gabreski to the number one air ace living in the U.S. Only two other World War II pilots, Major Richard Bong and Major Thomas McGuire, at 40 and 38, downed more planes respectively; scored more aerial kills than Gabreski. They were both killed in action.

A few days after Gabreski got his 28th aerial hit, he was granted a furlough to leave England and return to the U.S. for a brief rest. Reports have it that his bags were packed and on the tarmac when his squadron leader asked if he wanted to make one more run. Gabreski said yes and climbed into the cockpit for what would be his last World War II bombing run. He crashed, and after eluding the enemy for five days he was finally caught and imprisoned. He was freed ten months later by the Russians. Had Gabreski's plane not been shot down, he conceivably could have surpassed Bong and McGuire.

Along the way, the sturdy and affable Gabreski earned a degree from Columbia University, organized a relief mission to help orphan children in Korea, married a young Michigan girl he met in Hawaii, raised nine children, worked for the Grumman Corp., served as president of the Long Island Railroad, was inducted into the U.S. Aviation Hall of Fame, and wrote a memoir of his military service, *Gabby: A Fighter Pilot's Life*.

Oil City reveled in Gabreski's exploits and at the end of World War II raised \$2,000 for a wedding gift, hosted a parade, and treated him to a round of banquets as a way to show its admiration.

Remembering his youth in a hodgepodge neighborhood nestled within a small and vigorous town, Gabreski spoke with a quiet dignity when he returned home in July 2000 for a tribute to be shared with Oil City native and air ace George Carpenter. White-haired and a bit stooped, the beaming Gabreski said the gathering of children and grandchildren, all together for the first time in seven years, and in the very place where he grew up, was overwhelming.

"Oil City is my hometown. As far as I'm concerned, I am Frank Gabreski, the Purity Market driver, not a war hero. I grew up in the greatest town in the country. People with principles come from small towns. I hope I made my town proud," he said. ■

HALESWORTH 489TH NOTES BY NEAL SORENSEN

TWO MEMORABLE MEN

Our crew (Edward Shroyer, pilot) was fortunate to have two good squadron commanders during our time in England. We were first assigned to Major Lohela's 847th. Later, when the group reorganized, our crew was assigned to Major Harper's 846th Squadron. Each was outstanding in different ways.

I first met Major Lohela when he called a squadron meeting in the Quonset hut next to the one we bunked in. Rumor was that they had a good deal going on; a not too unattractive French Doxey who would work for food and beverage. Major Lohela verified it when he opened his remarks in the following way:

"I will not have the 847th Squadron turn into a whorehouse for refugees to work in their trade! If I hear of that happening again, someone will be subject to a court-martial. You are officers and gentlemen — so behave that way!"

There were a few smirks when the Major left, but a short time later the apparent chickens came home to roost. I was at the base hospital having a cyst cut from my neck. (Right where my flak suit kept chafing it throughout missions.) When Dr. Was said he was finished, I left the room by the nearest door. An NCO greeted me with these words: "You're in the wrong room, Lieutenant." I looked around and noticed eleven men from our neighbor barracks. "What brings them all on sick call?" I asked. "Sir," he said, "I'm afraid the Love Bug bit them!"

Major Harper endeared himself to his men by setting up a squadron fund of his own money for those of us who had a two-day pass to London at the end of the month when we were broke. The Red Cross fund had run dry due to airmen being shot down while owing them for loans. Major Harper would advance us twenty pounds for our expenses, which allowed for a spartan two days, but was better than staying on the base!

Two men, each memorable in his own way. Each dear to the hearts of those of us privileged to serve under their command.

CALIFORNIA VACATION

On January 15th, my wife Pat and I flew to Oceanside, California to escape the brunt of Minnesota's usually brutal winter months. Rumor has it this was one of the warmest winters in recent Minnesota history, coupled with a cooler-than-usual Oceanside season.

Oceanside sports year-round above-freezing temperatures, so the flowers and shrubs are spectacular. The grounds where we stayed had a wide variety of flowers with spectacular Calla Lilies that bloomed throughout our stay.

We fought the traffic on Freeway #5 to attend the mid-winter Southern California meeting of the 2ADA which was held February 23 at a lavish restaurant housed in a race track where night racing was being enjoyed. Seated by tables, we had the pleasure of being in the company of Mike and Bud Chamberlain, Rainee and John Foster, and the always delightful couple, Sharon and Jim Kiernan. There were two other men from the group, which in my present "senior moment" escape my memory. Bud opened the meeting with his usual competence, and a delightful evening ensued.

The featured speaker was General Cardenas, who was deeply involved in the first supersonic flights by Chuck Yeager and Dick Hoover, as he frequently flew the mother ship that carried the rocket plane aloft. Some of the anecdotes of his experiences with the Northrup Flying Wing can best be described as awesome. I checked to see if he had any cat's whiskers, because he certainly had nine lives!! Experimental aircraft are just that — experimental, with the failed experiments listed in the obituary columns.

There is still a strong effort toward placing a duplicate of the Bronze B-24 we installed at the Air Force Academy in 1998 in the Balboa Park area of San Diego. Bud Chamberlain, Dick Baynes, Jim Kiernan, and General Cardenas are working with the publisher of the Liberator Magazine, George Welsh. You will be hearing more about this in the future, I'm sure. They are working with Robert Henderson, the sculptor who did such an outstanding job for us in Colorado Springs. It is inspiring to see any effort to memorialize the B-24 Liberator and the stalwarts who flew them throughout the world in World War II.

A truly enjoyable time was spent at the ranch of Rainee and John Foster on the 15th of March. John and Rainee built their dream home on a 32.5 acre mountainside with spectacular views. Their home could well grace

the pages of *Better Homes and Gardens*, while the delicious meal that Rainee prepared would make a French chef weep with envy. It was a memorable event for Pat and me, as well as the other guests, Sharon and Jim Kiernan and Michele and George Welsh. Proving that you are never too old to learn, John introduced me to French 75's before lunch. Caution, induced by the impending journey back to the freeway through winding mountain road, limited me in my consumption of that delightful concoction. Now that I know the recipe, it will make the future in Minnesota more spiritual!

These columns are always written well in advance of the publishing date, so when this appears in print, I am sure that we will all be making plans for the 489th group reunion in Oklahoma! ■

ATTLEBRIDGE TALES (continued)

discussion' . . . the children will be interested in learning about your experiences. I am excited about the class. The author of *Wings of Morning* will be attending one of the classes; and I have a seventh grader building a model of the B-24. Our queries to you will be in early March."

I find these interviews interesting; I am the "designated WWII veteran" in our neighborhood for Chaparral High School — they must do an interview. Their first question usually is, "Why did you go to war?" More on this as soon as I get the questions.

No Ball Missions: A letter from Lionel Mallery, of Meriel, France, states he is "29 years old and interested in the history of the 8th Army Air Force in WWII, especially about the 2nd Bomb Division (later 2nd Air Division) B-24 groups in battle against the mysterious V weapons sites during the summer of 1944." I gave him the mission dates and targets for each of the fourteen that the 466th BG did. He wanted further data on the number of bombers on a mission, etc., which I also supplied to him. Anyone who wants to send No Ball comments to him — let me know. It's rather nice to hear from all these young history buffs.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The 2ADA Annual Convention will be held August 30 – September 3, 2002 in Baltimore, Maryland. The 8th AFHS & 466th BGA will meet October 2-6, 2002 in Norfolk, Virginia, and October 16-19, 2003 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. ■

448TH VETERAN HONORS HIS FALLEN COMRADES

REPRINTED IN PART FROM AN ARTICLE IN AMERICAN PROFILE MAGAZINE BY PAMELA ROHLAND

IT HAPPENED A LONG TIME AGO

On March 25, 1945, two young 448th BG American pilots died flying a mission over Germany. Yet, before they died, they saved the lives of their crew and residents of a village by steering their crippled plane out to sea.

One of those on board was 20-year-old Chester Labus, a young man eager to fight in the war. The idea of his own mortality hadn't quite sunk in until that day. "We didn't really think about death," he says.

Fast-forward to 2001. Labus is now 75 and one of only two of that ten-man crew still alive. For the last six years, the Wyomissing, PA (pop. 7,950) resident has been on a mission of his own: to have the flyers — Frederic W. Tod and Warren N. Peterson — posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. With help from the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense, he's also trying to locate the pilots' next of kin so they can be presented with Silver Stars, the Army's second-highest honor, which were awarded posthumously to the two pilots in 1997 through his efforts.

He's been helped in his quest by U.S. Rep. Tim Holden, who has kept the Silver Stars in his Reading, PA office. So far, Labus and Holden have located three of Peterson's nieces and nephews in California and are still searching for Tod's survivors — a search made difficult by the lapse of time between their deaths and the awarding of the medals. And last summer, Labus attended the unveiling of a memorial to the two pilots in the Swedish village saved from destruction by the rerouting of the plane, a ceremony he was invited to by the villagers.

Holden and Labus also wrote to former President Bill Clinton and the Secretary of the Army asking them to renew an earlier consideration for the Medals of Honor by a decorations board. That request has been forwarded to President George W. Bush.

Why now, more than half a century later? Maybe it's advancing years and the realization that the "Greatest Generation" soon will be a memory. Maybe it's to remind the world of the courage ordinary people are capable of in extraordinary circumstances.

On March 25, 1945, over northern Germany, Labus' plane was attacked by a German fighter while anti-aircraft batteries peppered them with flak. Huge holes appeared in the fuselage, and the plane plunged from 23,000 to 14,000 feet. Labus was wounded in the leg.



Chester Labus (448th BG) is devoted to honoring the pilot and copilot of this World War II B-24 Liberator.

PHOTO: DON FISHER

"At a time like that, you just think of the moment: What can I do to save myself," he says.

The crew tossed everything out of the plane to lighten it so they could make a run for neutral Sweden. "No one wanted to bail out over Germany. We'd heard so many stories about how they victimized crews," Labus says.

When they made it across the Baltic Sea, with large pieces of the wings and tail gone, the pilot and copilot told the crew to bail out. Then, with everyone else safely out and the plane swiftly losing altitude, they swung out to sea to avoid crashing into a Swedish village below.

THE PILOTS SACRIFICED THEMSELVES FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THE VILLAGE

The event of March 25, 1945 has been written about before, but now, after Nils Gosta Nilsson's investigations of the sources, the story can be correctly told.

Nils Gosta Nilsson, living in Falsterbo, Sweden, has tried to find out why the plane did not crash into the houses in the eastern part of the city. This is a story with dramatic ingredients, extreme physical achievements, and courage in front of death.

What happened to the plane and its crew has been described in different archives and personnel files, in interrogations and press material, but Nils Gosta Nilsson has collected all that material from all different sources and then published all that infor-

mation in a magazine about air history (The Magazine for Swedish Aviation Historical Society).

An American bomber was very close to crashing and destroying parts of Falsterbo city during the spring in 1945.

Eyewitnesses who were there could see that the plane in the last minute made a turn out over the Baltic Sea, where it crashed in flames about a quarter of a mile from the beach.

Chester Labus later started an action to have the two pilots of the aircraft posthumously decorated with a Silver Star.

This magazine article relates how a damaged bomber, a B-24 Liberator with the name "Eager One," came in over the Falsterbo peninsula from SW. It was flying at about 7,000 feet, and at the end only one engine was running OK. The pilot, Frederic Tod, gave the order to the rest of the crew to bail out. The waist gunner, Chester Labus, did as he was told, and so did the rest of the crew. In the plane were not just the two pilots. Before the navigator left the plane he could see how the two exhausted pilots tried to keep the plane flying. He heard how the copilot, Warren Peterson, said to the pilot that he should bail out first because he had a wife and a son of eight months. Frederic Tod gave the order: "I am the boss — bail out!" When the copilot left his seat and the controls, the plane started to spin down. The first pilot was still at the controls, but unable to steer the aircraft alone. Warren Peterson
(continued on page 35)

HISTORY...as you don't remember it!

This article is excerpted from *The Bride of Anguished English* by Richard Lederer.

Citizens of America start fracturing English and facts at an early age, as young scholars in our nation's schools. Witness this fractured chronicle of American history exam answers composed entirely of certified, genuine, authentic, unretouched student fabrications. Not a one, of course, was written by a grandchild of yours:

Christopher Columbus discovered America while cursing about the Atlantic Ocean. Little did he know that he had just begun history!

His ships were named the Nina, the Pinta Colada, and the Santa Fe. Columbus knelt, thanked God, and put the American flag in the ground. Tarzan is a short name for the American flag. Its full name is the Tarzans and Stripes.

Later, Jamestown was discovered by King James the One and named after him. King James persuaded the Queen to give him the land, and he sent a gang of settlers over here in 1607.

The Pilgrims crossed the ocean in hardships. This was called the Pill's Grim Progress. These people always wore old shoes with a big buckle on the top of them. The men wore pants that only came a little ways past their knees, and the girls wore funny bonnets.

The winter of 1620 was a hard one for the settlers. Many people died, and many babies were born. Captain John Smith was responsible for all this. The Pilgrims appointed Thanksgiving, and it soon became a national holiday all over the world.

One of the causes of the Revolutionary War was the English put tacks in their tea. The Boston Tea Party wasn't what we would think of if we thought of a tea party. It was a raid where they threw all the tea into Boston Harbor, which they all drank. Also, the colonists would send their parcels through the post without stamps. Paul Revere's Ride wasn't as famous as some people make it. He had to have the help of Longfellow on it. Mr. Revere started his famous ride in Lexington, which is in Philadelphia, and paddled by canew to Boston. Then he rode through the streets yelling, "Too warm! Too warm! The Red Colts are coming!"

During the Revolutionary War, the Red Coats and Paul Revere were throwing balls over stone walls. The dogs were barking, and the peacocks crowing. Finally, General Corn Wallace surrendered, and the war was over. When General Burgundy surrendered to Sara's Toga, the colonists won the war and no longer had to pay for taxis.

America was founded by four fathers. Delegates from the original 13 states formed the Contented Congress. Benjamin Franklin

and Thomas Jefferson, a Virgin, were two singers of the Decoration of Independence, which says that all men are created equal and are well endowed by their creator. John Hancott signed first because he was president and a very heavy man.

Franklin had gone to Boston carrying all his clothes in his pocket and a loaf of bread under each arm. He invented electricity by rubbing two cats backwards and declared, "A horse divided against itself cannot stand!" Franklin died in 1790 and is still dead.

George Washington led the United States to what it is today, while Ben and Dick Arnold were terrible traitors. Washington crossed the Delaware River, married Martha Custis, and in due time became the Father of Our Country. The difference between a king and a president is that a king is the son of his father, but a president isn't. Washington was a very social man. He had big balls, and everyone enjoyed them. His farewell address was Mount Vernon.

Soon the Constitution of the United States was adopted to secure domestic hostility. Under the Constitution, the people have the right to bare arms. After the Constitution was finished, Washington and Franklin added the bill for rice.

Mexico was conquered by Kotex. De Soto was one of the cruelest conquerors there ever was. When Indians got in his way, he just ran right over them. That's probably why they named a car after him.

In the middle of the 18th century, all the morons moved to Utah. In the early 19th century, Lois and Clark explored the Louisiana Purchase. They became well-known all over the world and in foreign countries. Traveling by stagecoach in the Old West was dangerous because you had a good chance of being stopped by bandits and being robbed and plundered. The two greatest marshals of the Old West were Wyatt Burp and Wild Bill Hiccup. General George Custer extinguished himself at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

Abraham Lincoln became America's greatest precedent. Lincoln's mother died in infancy, and he was born in a log cabin which he built with his very own hands. When Lincoln was president, he wore only a tall silk hat. He said, "In onion there is strength."

Lincoln was president during the Civil War. Matthew Brady, a filmer, took a picture of it. The Civil War was started by John Brown, a rabbit abolitionist, and Harriet Bitcher Stowe, who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabinet*. They caused the Southern states to succeed. After the Civil War, General Lou Wallace wrote *Gone with the Wind and Bend Her*.

Abraham Lincoln wrote the Gettysburg Address while traveling from Washington to Gettysburg on the back of an envelope. He spoke at the dedication of a dormitory for the wounded soldiers who died at Gettysburg.

He also freed the slaves by signing the Emaciation Proclamation. Lincoln debated John Kennedy in 1960. Kennedy won because he looked better than Lincoln, who had pallor due to his assassination.

On the night of April 14, 1865, Lincoln went to the theater and got shot in his seat by one of the actors in a moving picture show. At first, the president's wife didn't take notice of him slumped over in her lap. She thought he had just snoozed off as usual. The believed assassinator was John Wilkes Booth, a supposedly insane actor. This ruined Booth's career.

The 19th century was a time of a great many thoughts and inventions. People stopped reproducing by hand and started reproducing by machine. The invention of the steamboat by Robert Fulton caused a network of rivers to spring up. Samuel Morse invented a code of telepathy. Eli Whitney invented the spinning gin. Thomas Edison invented the pornograph and the indecent lamp. Macaroni invented the wireless telephone. Andrew Carnegie started the steal business. Goethals dug the alimentary canal. And Cyrus McCormick invented the McCormick Raper, which did the work of a hundred men.

The First World War was caused by the assignation of the Arch-Duck by an anahist. During the early part of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson urged the people to stay in neutral. He brought up the League of Nations, but it never did much except write a lot of letters, declare war on people, and try to beat peace into them. Then Wilson had many foreign affairs, and America entered the war. The unfortunate soldiers spent day after day up to their wastes in filth.

World War I made people so sad that it brought on the Great Depression. Then the New Deal tried to make sure that the stock market will never happen again.

Charles Limburger was the first man to ever cross the Atlantic alone. He wanted to go by regular airlines, but he couldn't afford to buy a ticket. When he got to Paris, all the French people shouted, "Bonzai!"

World War II happened when Adolph Hitler and the Knotsies had erotic dreams of conquest all over Europe. Hitler always liked to call himself Der Furor, but his real name was Messer Smith.

Franklin Roosevelt won a landslide and went over there and put a stop to Hitler, who committed suicide in his bunk. We dropped the atomic bomb on Kamakazi, a heavy industrial city, and three days later on Nicaragua. Finally, World War II ended on VD Day.

Martin Luther had a dream. He went to Washington and recited his Sermon on the Monument. Later, he nailed 96 Protestants in the Watergate Scandal, which ushered in a new error in the annals of human history. ■

During World War II, the United States operated just two squadrons that were assigned to “Snooper” duty — the risky job of finding and attacking enemy shipping during the nocturnal hours.

Today, Americans routinely fight at night, but in the 1940s, waging war in the darkness was a new idea, said former 1st Lt. Steve Perrone, 81, of Somerdale, NJ.

“During the war, the Air Force mantra was ‘precision daylight bombing by mass formations,’” Perrone said. “What we did wasn’t very precise, happened in darkness, and happened to us when we were flying alone.”

The 63rd and 868th Bombardment Squadrons served respectively in the 13th Air Force and 5th Air Force in the Southwest Pacific and flew B-24 Liberator bombers equipped with special radar to locate Japanese shipping.

“Our planes were painted black,” said Perrone, a bombardier in the 63rd Squadron. “We were there alone in a night filled with Japanese. We knew that if we detected another aircraft in the area, it wasn’t going to be ours.”

On rare occasions when more than one Snooper went to the same target, as when bombing Japanese oil fields in Borneo; Perrone recalled, “We each flew there individually, separated by a considerable space. We never flew in formation.”

In August 1943, shortly after the Allies went on the offensive on the southwest Pacific island of Guadalcanal, the 868th Squadron began operations. The 868th Snoopers covered vast distances from the southwest Pacific to the doorstep of Japan. They never stayed in one place for long as the Pacific island-hopping campaign progressed, and their history shows them operating from Munda (January 1944), Los Negros (January 1944), Noemfoor (August 1944), Morotai (March 1945), Leyte, the Philippines (July 1945), and Okinawa (July 1945).

Just one man, armament officer Capt. Robert H. Shively, had the distinction of serving in the 868th Squadron from its creation on Munda until the war was over.

The 868th began as a cadre of skilled airmen drawn from two line bombing squadrons. Their radar equipment and techniques came from a project at Langley Field, VA, and their radar-equipped Liberators were usually known as SB-24s.

The special equipment carried aboard the SB-24 included the SRC-717-B search and navigation radar and other specialized items not found on most B-24s.

Gen. George C. Kenney, commander of the 13th Air Force (and, in postwar years, the first head of Strategic Air Command), took a special interest in the 868th because his son, Bill, was a member.

The 63rd Squadron was formed in Australia and began Snooper operations flying

Another Job Well Done by the Liberators

BY ROBERT F. DORR



1st Lt. Steve Perrone was a bombardier with the 63rd Bomb Squadron, 13th AF, the “Snoopers.”

from Nadzab, New Guinea, in April 1944. This squadron, too, changed location as the war moved toward Japan, operating from Owi, Schouten Islands (July 1944), Tacloban, Leyte, the Philippines (November 1944), Clark Field, Luzon, the Philippines (March 1945) and Ie Shima (July 1945).

“Our specialty was attacking Japanese ships and convoys,” Perrone said. “We flew with a crew of ten. Our radar operator sat in a little compartment at the rear of the bomb bay in the waist area. His radar scope could pick up a ship or object 100 miles away — it could be shipping or a land mass — whereas my bombardier’s scope, hooked to my Norden bombsight, was only good for ten miles.”

The Snoopers confronted the fog of war — the military term for the confusion that arises in battle — while being tossed about inside a 30-ton, four-engine bomber in a world where the only light came from an instrument panel, gunfire, or the sudden bursting of flares used to illuminate a target. Perrone remembered taking off from Tacloban on the evening of December 6, 1944, to attack a Japanese convoy:

After being “delayed at takeoff by an arriving Navy Privateer [bomber] that experienced a collapsed landing gear on the runway,” and then by an attack on their base by a Japanese suicide aircraft, Perrone’s crew took off and headed out to sea.

“I don’t recall what time the Japanese convoy was picked up on radar, but it was the early morning of December 7. The first

bomb run was made through the center of the convoy,” Perrone said. “I was at the waist escape hatch with one or two crew members and assistant engineer Charlie Nunez to help release the flare. In dropping the flare, we realized that the flare arming cord, which was attached to the aircraft, had become entangled with Charlie’s foot or ankle and was pulling him out of the hatch. One of the crew grabbed him and held on until the flare released.

“When our bombs detonated beside a merchant ship, a wall of water surged over the deck, washing crewmen over the side. The light of the flare made this very clear. To this day, I can see the Japanese crewmen tumbling. We encountered no enemy fire at that moment, but when we made a second run, we saw muzzle flashes as they began shooting at us.”

This was routine business for the Snoopers. When the war ended on August 15, 1945, the 63rd and 868th Squadrons were credited with sinking thousands of tons of Japanese shipping, and inflicting heavy damage to a wide variety of other targets.

It was tough duty, but veterans of the Snooper squadrons are proud of their achievements and still meet regularly for reunions.

On his final combat mission, Perrone remembered, “I climbed out of our B-24 and kissed the ground.”

Editor’s Note: Robert F. Dorr, an Air Force veteran, lives in Oakton, VA. ■

Ploesti Raid Vets Honor Dutch Admiral

FROM THE LONDON EDITION OF “STARS AND STRIPES,” NOVEMBER 16, 1944

A score of U.S. officers and enlisted men at an Eighth Air Force Liberator base recently gave a silver humidor containing 200 American cigars to Rear Admiral L.A.C.M. Dorman of the Royal Netherlands Navy in appreciation of his services as senior officer while all were captives at a prisoner of war camp in Rumania.

Admiral Dorman was released with the flyers last August when Rumania capitulated. The Americans had been captured after the famous Liberator low-level attack on the Ploesti oil fields in August, 1943.

Attending the presentation were men of the 44th, 93rd, and 389th Bomb Groups, which participated in the mission, and Brigadier General Leon Johnson, who led the attack and is now a wing commander. ■



491st BOMB GROUP
POSTREMUM ET OPTIMUM
the
RINGMASTER
REPORTS

BY HAP CHANDLER

Your vice president, representing the Second Air Division Association, attended the January 25th meeting of the Board of Trustees, Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. After the board meeting we joined the crowd gathered in Savannah to celebrate the activation of the 8th Air Force. Not only was it a chance to renew friendships with many old friends, but an opportunity to meet with some 8th Air Force members who are legends in their lifetime.

We were particularly pleased to see John and Jean Guion and to join with them in greeting Jim and Bobbie Keck, who accompanied their son, Lt. Gen. Tom Keck, 8th Air Force Commander, to the museum.

**60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
 ACTIVATION OF THE 8TH AIR FORCE**

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum celebrated sixty years of continuous service of the Mighty 8th Air Force from Friday, January 25 — Sunday, January 27, 2002. A number of vintage aircraft, including a B-24, B-17, and P-51, were at a nearby airfield.

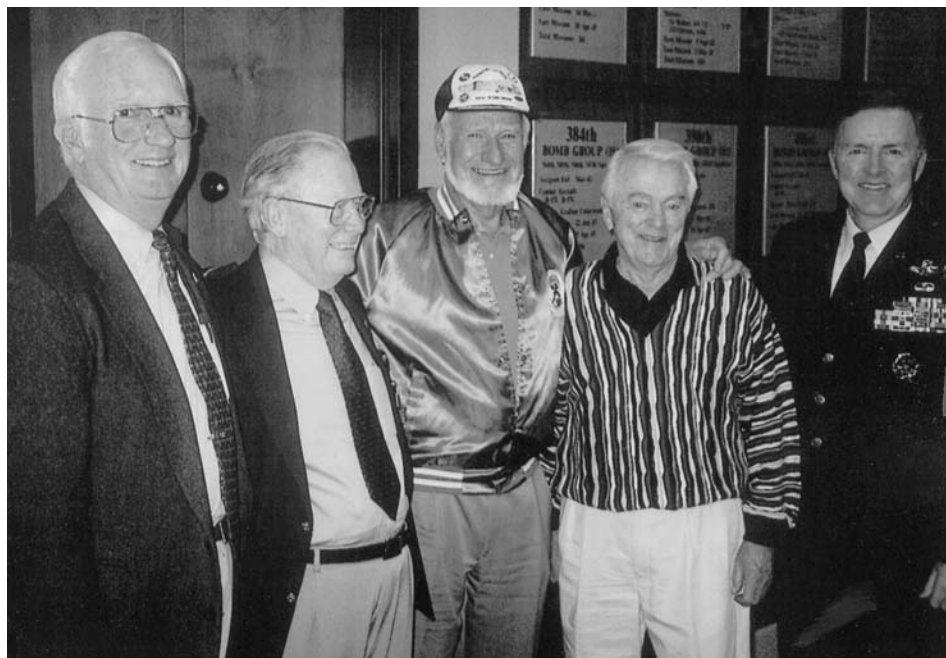
BIRTHPLACE CHAPTER

Festivities began Friday with a cocktail reception in the museum. The "Birthplace Chapter," a Savannah-based organization whose primary mission is support to the museum, hosted the reception. New officers were installed, and Ms. Yvonne Daley-Brusselman was the keynote speaker. She recalled stories of her mother, Ann, a Belgian underground worker who helped rescue scores of downed airmen during WWII.

Many Second Air Division Association and 491st BG members are among the charter members of the "Birthplace Chapter," most of whom are long-time volunteers at the museum.

The highlight of the weekend was the General "Hap" Arnold lecture series held on Saturday.

Among the speakers were Lt. Gen. Tom Keck, 8th Air Force Commander, and Brigadier General Paul Tibbetts, pilot of "Butcher Shop," the lead B-17 of the twelve who flew the 8th's first B-17 mission on August 17, 1942.



491st at 60th Anniversary of the 8th Air Force, January 25, 2002 at the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum. L-R: Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Chairman, Mighty 8th AFHM; F.C. "Hap" Chandler, 2ADA Past President; John Guion, 491st BG Vice President Operations; Lt. Gen. James E. Keck, USAF Ret., 458th/491st BG; Lt. Gen. Thomas A. Keck, Commander, 8th Air Force.

General Tibbetts is best known as the pilot of the "Enola Gay," the B-29 which dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. His grandson, Major Paul Tibbetts IV, was a member of the official party. He is a B-2 pilot, having flown missions to Afghanistan. He currently serves as Executive Officer to the Commander of the 8th Air Force.

ROGER FREEMAN

Roger Freeman, distinguished historian of the 8th AF, gave one of his arresting insights into the history of the 8th. He delighted the audience with his accounts of a 12-year-old growing up in the middle of a fighter base during World War II. Dick Kennedy, former 2ADA president and a Museum trustee, recognized Roger as the longest serving Governor of our Second Air Division Memorial Trust.

Veterans of the Eighth are deeply indebted to Roger for his comprehensive history of "The Mighty Eighth." He continues to pursue his life-long passion to fully document the air war in which so many of us engaged.

**COMMANDER'S PARENTS
 IN ATTENDANCE**

General Thomas Keck was joined by his mother and father, Lt. Gen. and Mrs. James E. Keck. General Jim Keck served in the 458th and 491st Bomb Groups in 1944-45. He was a lead crew pilot and squadron operations officer during WWII. His distinguished Air Force career culminated in his assignment as Vice Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Air Command.

**GENERAL THOMAS A. KECK,
 EIGHTH AIR FORCE
 COMMANDER**

The 8th Air Force Commander gave a brief report of President George Bush's flight to Barksdale on September 11th, following the Twin Towers attack. General Keck then covered the mission, equipment, and duties of today's Mighty 8th.

B-2 bombers assigned to the 8th fly missions of up to 44 hours from their Missouri base to Afghanistan. This is accomplished with a two-man crew. The bombers are combat-loaded with ordnance for as many as six separate targets. With today's equipment they are able to place bombs precisely on target. No more 1,000 foot CPIs are acceptable in today's force!

The B-2s fly on to Diego Garcia, a base in the Indian Ocean, where the crew is relieved and another takes their place for the return flight to home base.

Another feature of the air war is the rapid response of B-52 bombers usually orbiting overhead. With the B-52's sophisticated equipment, a spotter on the ground can bring bombs down on the enemy in short order. This is accomplished in minutes, rather than hours.

It was obvious to all that today's Air Force operations are far superior to the tactics and accuracy of our World War II efforts.

It was reported that a staff officer in the Pentagon reviewed the World War II 8th Air Force aerial offensive over Germany. His conclusion was that with today's weapons and

equipment, the same result could be achieved in just three weeks.

GENERAL PAUL TIBBETTS

Gen. Tibbetts is an American “treasure.” At 84, his bearing and demeanor are that of a man many years his junior. His description of how he was selected to lead the 509th Composite Group at age 29 is the stuff of legend. His recruitment, training, and deployment of the atomic bombers is a story that is just beginning to be told.

He spoke of his quick transfer from North Africa to the 2nd Air Force at Colorado Springs. There he was selected to command the 509th Composite Group (the atomic bombers). His group received the highest possible priority for personnel and equipment. His “super” priority was code-named “Paper Clip.” Paper Clip requisitions were to be handled in the most expeditious manner possible, with no questions asked. One requisition — for five C-54s — was denied by an officious Pentagon general. The culprit found himself reduced to his permanent rank of major within days by General Arnold personally. Tibbetts got his precious airplanes, necessary for the completion of his top secret mission.

His former 8th group commander, General Frank Armstrong, then Director of Operations at 2nd Air Force, let it be known that he was “going to Wendover and see what Tibbetts is up to.” Instead he found himself in the Second Air Force Commanding General’s office being told that if he pursued this trip he would need to get clearance from General Arnold personally.

That was one phone call General Armstrong did not make. Along with the rest of us, he learned of the atomic bomb on August 6, 1945.

As we listened to this man describe the actual drop of the bomb from the Enola Gay that cloudless morning, it occurred to us that, had it not been for this mission and the manner in which it was performed, many of us would not be here. Our lives would have ended somewhere in Japan as that nation rallied for one gigantic, suicidal “banzai” attack against the planned invasion of the home islands.

General Tibbetts’ story is contained in his book, *Enola Gay*, which is available in bookstores and online.

DR. DONALD MILLER & ALLEN JONES

Dr. Miller, an award-winning author and historian, spoke of his research into World War II. He is planning a book on the 8th AF.

Mr. Jones brought a remarkable series of photographs of the Normandy beaches, which

were exhibited in the museum art gallery.

On Sunday morning a memorial service was held in the art gallery. Chaplain Martin Loyley, whose father flew with the RAF, reflected on the tremendous sacrifices and courage of the men and women of the 8th Air Force over the past sixty years. The “Chapel of the Fallen Eagles” will be finished in time for the next memorial service in May.

6TH ANNIVERSARY: MAY 15-18, 2002

The SAC (Strategic Air Command) 2002 reunion is being held in conjunction with the sixth anniversary of the museum’s opening. A full agenda of events has been planned, which includes the dedication of the “Chapel of the Fallen Eagles.”

“FRIENDS OF ANDY LOW” CHAPEL WINDOW

A chapel window has been commissioned honoring Major General Andrew S. Low. The design for the window was furnished in loving memory of her father by Ms. Jessica Low Kalfian, Andy’s daughter. Bill Eagle-son, one of Andy’s wartime crew members, enlisted the aid of Frank and Jackie Thomas to raise the funds required.

When word reached General Low’s West Point classmates, they insisted on being included. Colonel “Tommy” Thompson, whose battalion liberated Andy from his German prison camp, is leading this effort.

Andy Low was one of our most effective Association presidents and leaders. After wartime service he became one of the outstanding members of the postwar Air Force. After a full military career he retired as a Major General. He will be remembered in perpetuity by this beautiful stained glass window.

SUMMARY

I continue to attend the quarterly meetings of the Museum’s Board of Trustees. Generals Shuler and Lyle have attracted a stellar group of local and national leaders to oversee the affairs of the museum. They have been particularly fortunate to recruit C.J. Roberts as president and CEO.

The calibre of the speakers and the excellence of their presentations at this sixtieth anniversary attracted an overflow crowd. The museum has an excellent catering staff and is constantly hosting activities for special occasions. Progress in the food service area is but one of the many upgrades being pursued by the museum.

Savannah has become the “Host City of the South.” Abounding in southern charm and coastal history, the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum has become a stellar attraction to visitors from out-of-state and overseas. ■

448TH VETERAN HONORS FALLEN COMRADES (continued from page 31)

was so exhausted that he probably could not release his Mae West, and he drowned in the ice-cold water.

Both the pilots could probably have saved their lives if they had bailed out together with the rest of the crew, but they chose to save the village of Falsterbo. If such a big aircraft had crashed on the buildings, there would have been a lot of damage and loss of human lives. But the two pilots made a different decision. They were buried in the city of Malmo. The plane had been bombing oil depots south of Hamburg from its base in England. The plane and the rest of its squadron had separated from the main formation and was then attacked by four Messerschmidt 262s.

Peterson bailed out, too low for his parachute to open, and died on the beach. Tod rode the Liberator into the waves and was killed. Peterson was 26 and single; Tod was 24, married, and the father of a newborn, his first child.

Labus went home and studied economics and business on the GI Bill at Temple University. In 1949, he married Anna Mae, a neighborhood girl. They had four children, and Labus enjoyed a long career at International Harvester.

Then, in 1995 during a reunion of veterans, the import of Tod’s and Peterson’s selfless actions struck him.

“Those two men gave their lives so the rest of the crew could marry and have children and grandchildren,” Labus says. “They also saved the lives of many civilians in that village.

“My war experience taught me that you shouldn’t waste time. You have to do what’s important in life. The Lord let me live so that I could do something important every day,” Labus says.

Now, Labus works toward having Tod and Peterson awarded the Medal of Honor — and has already been instrumental in their Silver Stars — even though it happened a long time ago. ■

Request for any pictures from people who knew pilots Frederic W. Tod and Warren N. Peterson: Would really appreciate any photos, letters, etc. since we never returned to our base, the 448th at Seething, and never received any of our personal effects, including photos of the crew from March Field, California; Seething; and other places in England. Contact Chester Labus, 815 Broadcasting Road, Reading, PA 19610.

MITCHELL (continued from page 17)

through public pressure to stage the tests. He had the attention of the policy-makers and, having discovered a new weapon in the art of mass persuasion, he just as quickly abandoned it, feeling there was no further need to go directly to the public.

Instead Mitchell used his Army pilots to demonstrate the capability of aviation. In May of 1923 Lieutenants John A. MacReady and Oakley G. Kelly made the first non-stop transcontinental flight in twenty-seven hours. A year later, Lieutenant Russell A. Maughn flew from Long Island to San Francisco in eighteen hours. On April 4, 1924, four Army planes set out to circle the globe. Two of them completed the flight on September 28.

But at about the same time, in 1923, Mitchell took an extended leave to study aviation in Europe and the Far East. He came back even more convinced that America was falling too far behind. The danger of war with Japan, second only to England in aviation progress, was becoming obvious to Mitchell. Unable to convince his superiors of the mounting threat, he again presented his case before the American people.

What had been a mere flirtation with the press now turned to an earnest endeavor. After first receiving permission from President Calvin Coolidge, Mitchell offered his writings to the general circulation magazines providing him with the greatest number of readers. On December 20, 1924, *The Saturday Evening Post* ran the first in a series of articles by Mitchell openly challenging the strategy of the General Staff who believed the United States could be protected by a battleship-oriented Navy.

He expanded his readership to the Hearst newspapers where he wrote: "Every other nation is developing aviation. We are slipping backward." He told readers of *U.S. Air Service Magazine*, "Neither armies nor navies can exist unless the air is controlled over them."

In *Liberty* magazine Mitchell wrote:

This will mean that you, Navy, must put on your diving suit and get out into the water, away from our shores and on the high seas. Your role of defense, close in shore, is a thing of the past. We can handle that now with our aircraft.

Air power says to the Army: You must provide for holding secure all land areas. You must take off your spurs and get in a motor car. You must provide yourself with the latest weapons — cannon, mortars, machine guns, and chemicals. We will keep the enemy out of the air above you.

Predictably, reaction in the War and Navy Departments was not favorable. Mitchell's term as assistant in chief was due to expire in early 1925, and those who opposed him

saw the opportunity to get Mitchell out of the inner circle of policy-makers. But the problem was complex — Mitchell was a brevet general officer. A popular war hero, he was embarrassing the military establishment while at the same time increasing his stature with the public, who gave him such titles as "Stormy Petrel" and "The Hard-Riding Cavalryman of the Skies." In his six years in office, Mitchell had flown more than 200,000 miles, personally testing all new Army aircraft, barnstorming at county fairs, courting the wealthy and influential at horse shows, appearing before congressional committees, and making news wherever he went.

It was finally decided to reduce Mitchell to his permanent rank of colonel and banish him to command the training school at Randolph Field, Texas. Mitchell protested to the President, but Coolidge now backed his senior military officers.

At Randolph, Mitchell continued writing, averaging an article a month. He had been making slow gains through his supporters in Congress, and finally a bill calling for a separate air force was passed, only to be vetoed by Coolidge.

On September 1, 1925, less than three months after Mitchell had been assigned to Randolph, a naval aircraft bound for Hawaii on a publicity flight went down at sea. The crew was rescued several days later, but in the meantime the giant dirigible *Shenandoah* with a crew of forty-two was torn apart in a storm over the Ohio River Valley. Its commander, Zachary Lansdowne, one of the twenty-eight killed, had protested the flight because of bad weather and structural faults in the airship. But the *Shenandoah* was on a tight schedule because of public relations appearances, and senior Navy officials ordered the mission to be flown.

For a day and a night Mitchell, troubled by critics of aviation who were trying to exploit the two disasters, worked on a 6,000-word statement which his legal aide warned him would only result in retaliation by the War Department. He released it at a press conference.

"These accidents," he summed up, "are the direct result of incompetency, criminal negligence and almost treasonable administration of the national defense by the War and Navy Departments."

The reaction was almost immediate. Mitchell was to be court-martialed under Article of War 96 for "conduct of a nature to bring discredit upon the military service."

"Officers are tried under it for kicking a horse," Mitchell told a reporter. But what emerged was a series of events that were to climax Mitchell's military career and place

him even more firmly in the public eye.

Whether he calculated in advance that this would happen is questionable. Once committed, however, Mitchell grabbed the opportunity of the rapidly unfolding drama to strike repeated blows for his cause. If he was to lose his military career, he would gamble it away for very high stakes.

Before Mitchell's trial there were two highly-publicized investigations, and in both Mitchell was a key witness. First was the inquest into the loss of the *Shenandoah*. So many questions were raised in the press that Coolidge was forced to form a commission to look into the many charges made by Mitchell.

The hearings before the Morrow Board were heavily influenced by the administration and the War and Navy Departments. But the board was obliged to allow Mitchell to give as much testimony as he wished. Mitchell's views and those of his supporters who were paraded to the witness stand as well as the release of the long-concealed Crowell Report dominated both the hearings and the headlines.

There were few who doubted Mitchell would be found guilty at his court-martial, but that did little to alter the high drama of the trial set in a converted warehouse. Mitchell, attempting to focus the validity of his incriminating statement as a defense, was allowed to bring forward many airmen and air power advocates who had previously been shackled by their superiors. The trial, which began on October 28 and lasted six weeks, provided the first honest look at the state of the nation's defenses. The list of air service officers testifying for Mitchell reads like a roster of the senior air corps officers of World War II. The appearance on the stand of Zachary Lansdowne's widow and Mitchell's own moving testimony climaxed the long, detailed, and emotional appeal of aviation's supporters.

With their actions closely monitored by the national press, the court, which included Mitchell's boyhood friend Douglas MacArthur, was forced to appear impartial. Their decision, however, already had been written. Mitchell was found guilty and suspended for five years. On February 1, 1926, after twenty-eight years in the service, he resigned from the Army. His new status as a controversial figure — a martyr, in fact, to his supporters — provided him now with the freedom to pursue his crusade without restraint.

In his writings he spoke of aircraft and aerial weapons then only just being conceived, and he wrote of war in the sky on a massive scale. Mitchell predicted events which must have appeared as science fiction in an era when military pilots still flew

in open cockpit biplanes with skins of stretched fabric over wood airframes held taut by stressed wire.

He told *Liberty* magazine readers in 1926 of air battles above 35,000 feet with superchargers delivering compressed air to airplane engines. Every one hundred bombers would be accompanied by two hundred pursuit planes. Airfields, he said, must be equipped to service hundreds of planes at the same time.

The United States, he wrote the same year in *Collier's*, would in the future be vulnerable to air attack unless an adequate number of pursuit aircraft defended her cities. An enemy gaining airfields in Alaska or Greenland could easily reach targets in the United States, and future aircraft would be able to launch attacks on America from Europe. In the early twenties Mitchell and his pilots had flown mock bombing raids against major American cities; he concluded that crowded urban areas such as New York would suffer terrible casualties in a real attack.

While still the assistant air chief, Mitchell had claimed that antiaircraft guns were useless and provided more of a danger to people on the ground (from falling fragments) than they did to attacking airplanes. The War Department challenged Mitchell, and in a test with towed targets, gunners were unable to puncture a single sleeve. Mitchell now told his readers this, adding that future aircraft may utilize "aerial torpedos" launched from bombers at great distances from their targets. He said, too, that several European nations were developing pilotless aircraft controlled by radio.

Although Germany was disarmed, Mitchell observed she was developing the most advanced civil airline and passenger and merchant marine in Europe. He predicted that the air and sea crews being trained could form the nucleus of an air force and navy.

He found very much alive the old German ambition to form in central Europe "one great German confederacy or empire, with a domain stretching from the North Sea and the Baltic through to the Black Sea and the Aegean and across Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf." Conflict, he wrote in a 1928 *Collier's* article, seemed inevitable. "Today Europe is armed to the teeth. There are probably more soldiers there than ever before."

Mitchell hit hard on the central theme throughout his crusade:

No other civilized country in the world today allows its army and navy to have control of its air power.

What we need is an organization specifically charged with the defense of the land, one specifically charged with the defense of the water, and one specifically charged with the defense of the air; all of these to work

under a common master, a single Department of National Defense which embraces them all.

His remarks about the Navy drew particular wrath from Rear Admiral William A. Moffett, the first chief of the Navy Bureau of Aviation and father of the aircraft carrier. Mitchell — incorrectly, as it turned out — believed aircraft carriers as vulnerable to air attack as battleships and labeled them "largely a delusion and a snare." Moffett characterized Mitchell as "unsound of mind."

But Mitchell was far from being totally wrong about the direction he believed the Navy should move. Submarines, he wrote readers of *The Saturday Evening Post*, "will be the future means of operating on the sea. In the future, surface navies cannot be the arbiters of the communications over the ocean." If Mitchell and Moffett agreed on one area, it was in a concept which never bore fruit: Both were strong advocates of the use of dirigibles. Moffett was killed in the crash of one in 1933.

Impressed by the aviation progress he had witnessed in Europe, Mitchell set out to educate his readers on the dawning potential of the airplane. An innovator himself, Mitchell had experimented with pressurized flying suits for high altitudes and to counter the effects of tight turns. In 1921 he had planned experiments with pressurized cockpits but could not find the funds. Neither concept was perfected for many years. Flying higher, faster, and farther was only a matter of advancing technology, said Mitchell in "What About Future Flying?" in the June 8, 1929 issue of *Liberty* magazine:

I do not think there is any limit to speed in the air except the point of fusion; for example, the burning of a meteorite when it hits the earth's atmosphere. I believe the pilot will be able to withstand velocities of up to 1,000 miles an hour.

The earth inductor compass, gyroscopic instruments, radio direction finders, great circle courses — all were being developed in Europe, he wrote. Work was still needed on a de-icing method for wings and propellers, perhaps using the heat of the engine. Another need was a method of air-to-air refueling and the development of crash-proof gasoline tanks which could be jettisoned to prevent fires in the event of a crash.

As early as 1926 Mitchell had warned readers of the Hearst newspapers that Japan held ambitions in the Pacific. When Japan invaded Manchuria in 1932, Japanese pilots were bombing targets 1,200 miles from their air bases. In a series of *Liberty* magazine articles in 1932, Mitchell outlined with remarkable clarity the strategy of a war still a decade away. He saw a war in the Pacific dominated by aircraft and submarines, and

island invasions with the sole aim of gaining land air bases from which to launch long-range bombing missions.

Isolationists branded him a jingo, but Mitchell continued. In the June 25, 1932 edition of *Liberty* he asked, "Will Japan try to conquer the U.S.?" and concluded that as the only other major power on the Pacific, the United States was logically Japan's ultimate adversary. "The Japanese are working almost with desperation to make themselves the strongest military power in the world," he warned.

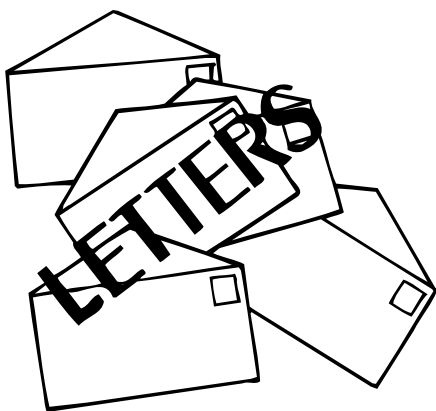
Mitchell predicted there would be three targets the Japanese would seek simultaneously. Hawaii and Alaska would be the major prizes. And the Philippines, the only major islands threatening the Southeast Asia coast on which Japan depended for many natural resources, would be the third. These three objectives "will undoubtedly be pounced upon at the first favorable opportunity," he wrote in mid-1932, pointing out that historically Japan never declared war before attacking. "In case of trouble, Japan will have the jump on us and could pull off the greatest surprise in military history."

A decade before Pearl Harbor, in magazines that entered a substantial portion of American households, Mitchell described the strategy for winning a war against Japan. The Japanese, he noted, were wholly dependent on raw materials from outside sources in Korea and Southeast Asia. Her link to them was the sea lanes which she controlled but which could be effectively cut off by American submarines.

"Japan is in no way afraid of our naval power," Mitchell claimed. The Japanese, he wrote, controlled a vast network of island bases reaching to within 600 miles of Hawaii. From these bases long-range aircraft could attack any approaching fleet. In order to gain superiority, American forces would have to seize these islands. Once American bombers gained these island bases, Japan, with its towns built of wood and hemmed in by mountains, would provide "the greatest aerial targets the world has ever seen. Incendiary projectiles would burn their cities to the ground in short order."

Mitchell continued his pronouncements against Japan in a lengthy 1933 series in the Hearst newspapers, in many magazines, and even in *Popular Mechanics*, where in 1935 he wrote, "History and destiny unmistakably point to the next contest being for the Pacific."

The course of World War II vindicated much of what Mitchell had argued, and during the war Congress restored his rank of brigadier general, later adding two more stars posthumously to make him a lieutenant general. ■



To the Editor:

It seems incredible that your laundry boy is in his '70s, or that the young airman I knew is even older. This photo was taken when you were over here in Norwich last. We are just off for a short holiday; I cannot go too far nowadays because of heart and knee problems.

I had a few Christmas cards from ex-residents of Hut 14 (Tibenhams-445th), but sadly these are becoming fewer. See you again!

Johnny & Jenny Wenn



To the Editor:

Phyllis DuBois, Richard Clements, Tony North, Mike Bailey, Christine Armes, and I would like to thank all of those who ordered copies of the *Folded Wings* of the 458th Bombardment Group booklet. A very special thanks to those who responded "above and beyond the call of duty" (as in a toll). They are: Lou Freiberg, Harold Knox, Howard Hill, James Schneider, Calvin Criswell, Mrs. Paul Dirker, Bill Cunningham, Herman Peacher, Dick Bateman, John Curcio, Harold Armstrong, John Luft, Gerald Allen, Harry Craft, John Kowalczyk, James Olney, William Kramer, and Chuck Mateer.

Proceeds from the sale of the booklet came to about \$600, and a check has been sent to the Second Air Division Memorial Library for this amount.

Regrettably, some typos and errors were in the finished product, but most likely the troops can decipher the correct data easily. The most notable of these were: Bert Betts advised that his ship, 42-52432 never had the nickname "Bachelor's Paradise" nor "Ole Satan." Chuck Mateer said that his ship, 42-51196-Q, was omitted from the aircraft listing. It flew more than sixty missions without an abort, returned to the ZI and scrap pile. My apology for the errata and sincere appreciation for the many nice comments for producing the booklet.

George A. Reynolds (458th AM)
4009 Saddle Run Circle
Pelham, AL 35124



L-R: Johnny Wenn, Ray Pytel, Shirley Suckow, Muriel Aldrich, Jenny Wenn, Bob Suckow

To the Editor:

As a former corporal in the Ordnance Section in the 790th Squadron, 467th Bomb Group, I do not expect to be considered an expert on ordnance. However, I did attend ordnance school at the Santa Anita Race Track and spent sixteen months at Rackheath loading bombs on B-24s.

In *The Wild Blue* Stephen Ambrose relates George McGovern's story of his crew's anxiety over an "armed" 500-pound bomb being hung up in the bomb bay of their B-24. Assuming the ordnance in the 15th Air Force was the same as the 8th, there was never an armed bomb in their bomb bay.

All of the bomb fuses were made with small propellers called arming vanes. The bombs were not armed until the arming vanes had spun around a number of times. During shipping and handling there was a pin inserted through the vane to keep it from rotating. It was the responsibility of the flight crew to remove this pin before releasing the bomb load. In addition, "arming wires" were hooked to the bomb release and inserted through the arming vanes to provide additional safety for the crews. When the bombs were dropped these wires (being held in the plane) were withdrawn and the vanes could spin freely, arming the bombs as they fell.

Obviously McGovern and his crew did not understand the mechanism in the bombs they were delivering. It would be interesting to know if other air crews were so uninformed.

Once when the mission was returning to

Rackheath we received a call from the tower to "Get that bomb off the runway so the rest of the mission can land." Since we didn't know the condition of the bomb, no one was interested in the assignment. A sergeant said, "Corporal, take a man out there and pick up the bomb." Another guy and I picked up the bomb and took it back to the revetment, obviously without incident. The 2000-pound bomb had hung up in the bomb bay and been jarred loose on landing.

Fred Porter (467th)
698 Greengate Drive
St Johns, MI 48879-2100



Mr. C.N. "Bud" Chamberlain:

I was delighted and highly honoured to receive the Millennium Building Medallion. It is a wonderful medallion which both celebrates the new museum within the Millennium Building and honours the 2nd Air Division. The commemoration service for the new museum was both memorable and touching.

Norwich International Airport, which was Horsham St Faiths during the war, very much respects the memory of all those who served in the war and in particular at this airfield.

Our very best wishes to everyone in the United States, from your friends in Norwich.

H.M. Lawson
Managing Director
Norwich International Airport



To the Editor:

I was sorry to read about the death of my former commander of the 467th Bomb Group, Colonel Albert Shower. My crew and I owe him a great debt of gratitude. On returning from a mission over Berlin I made a poor landing and blew out one of my tires. I was promptly told to report to him and he ordered me and my crew to spend the next day practicing ten takeoffs and landings. I am sorry to say that the crew who took our place on the next day's mission was shot down, but all survived to spend the rest of the war in prison camp. What a lucky mistake I made (for me and my crew).

William V.N. Washburn (467th)
11 Royal Crest Drive, Apt. #5
North Andover, MA 01845

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To the Editor:

The National D-Day Memorial Foundation, located in Bedford, Virginia, is actively seeking the personal reminiscences, diaries, journals, letters, and other items that reflect the individual experiences of the Allied forces that took part in the invasion of Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Persons who served with any military, naval, or merchant sea element of the Allied Expeditionary Force on D-Day, and the days that followed as the Allies moved ashore and inland, are encouraged to place materials of that sort with the Foundation.

They will be safely preserved in the Foundation's Archives and serve as a central resource in the planned Research Library at the National D-Day Memorial, where the lessons and legacy of D-Day live on for future generations. The Foundation is also interested in supplementing those materials with unit histories, ship's logs, rosters, flight plans, after-action report, general orders, maps and charts, etc. of military and naval elements that participated in D-Day.

If you are interested in having your materials, of either sort, become a permanent part of the National D-Day Memorial, please contact the Foundation at 202 E. Main Street, P.O. Box 77, Bedford, Virginia 24523, or call 1-800-351-3329.

For information about the National D-Day Memorial Foundation, the National D-Day Memorial, and its facilities and programs, visit the Foundation Web site: www.dday.org.

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To the Editor:

I have written a thirty-page short story about an experience our aircrew had during World War II that I would like to publish, but not as a small book or pamphlet. It would be best if it was included in a normal size book with several short stories by various WWII authors.

I would expect there are many WWII veterans out there who have a good story to tell, but it's not long enough to produce a regular size book. A book with about 15 to 25 of these stories would make a nice size book and should attract many readers.

My story is titled "Bailing Out — January 28, 1945." It is about that, in full detail, plus an item we found out about this crash in 1973 after four of our crew, with wives, took a trip to the crash site in Holland in 1972.

At this time I have seven stories, varying in size from ten to forty pages, from 8th Air Force veterans.

Frederick D. "Dusty" Worthen (93rd)
1211 N. Fairview Street
Burbank, CA 91505-2330

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To the Editor:

Does anyone remember the photograph below of The Mighty Eighth? Was there also a commemorative plate offered at one time? Is it still available?

H.C. "Pete" Henry (44th)
164 B Portland Lane
Monroe Township, NJ 08831

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To the Editor:

I am trying to compile a volume of humor from the standpoint of 8th Air Force members; the jokes as well as the song parodies. Interested members, please contact me.

James B. McCloskey (93rd)
1 Silver Sage Court
Cockeysville, MD 21030

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To the Editor:

The primary purpose of our trip to Europe was to attend the 54th convention of the Second Air Division Association of the 8th Air Force. This was a very special occasion. I don't often go to the reunions held in the States. The reunions held in Norwich I attend, because this is where it all began.

— NOTICE — 2002 CONVENTION OF THE 2ADA

The 2002 Convention of the 2nd Air Division Association **has been moved to Baltimore, Maryland.** Costs and all other details were contained in a third class mailing which you should have already received. If you wish to attend and have not received the information, please call Evelyn Cohen at (215) 632-3992.

I must first of all give many thanks to Evelyn Cohen for making all this possible. This is a wonderful, wonderful lady who spent many hours arranging the buses, schedules, hotel rooms, special tours, base visits, and the final banquet, besides scheduling air transportation from various cities in the United States to and from England and on to Europe for some. And more. And through all of this she listened to the people changing their minds on scheduling and every other matter relating to this, all with a nice attitude. Evelyn did a first class job and should be commended. My son Michael and I had a superb time, thanks to Evelyn.

As one can see in looking at the photographs we took, there is one thing that stood out. That was the people of East Anglia. They were tremendous. They lined the streets and behind barricades between the new library and the cathedral taking glimpses of us and giving loud cheers. There were no dry eyes on both sides of the barricades. They showed their sincere gratitude for what we did for them. BBC Television and the newspapers did a great job covering the event. No account of the event in the *Journal* can truly do justice to describing this great event.

(Editor's Note: Well, we tried...)

Walter Fitzmaurice (44th)
19 Cold Spring Road
North Reading, MA 01864

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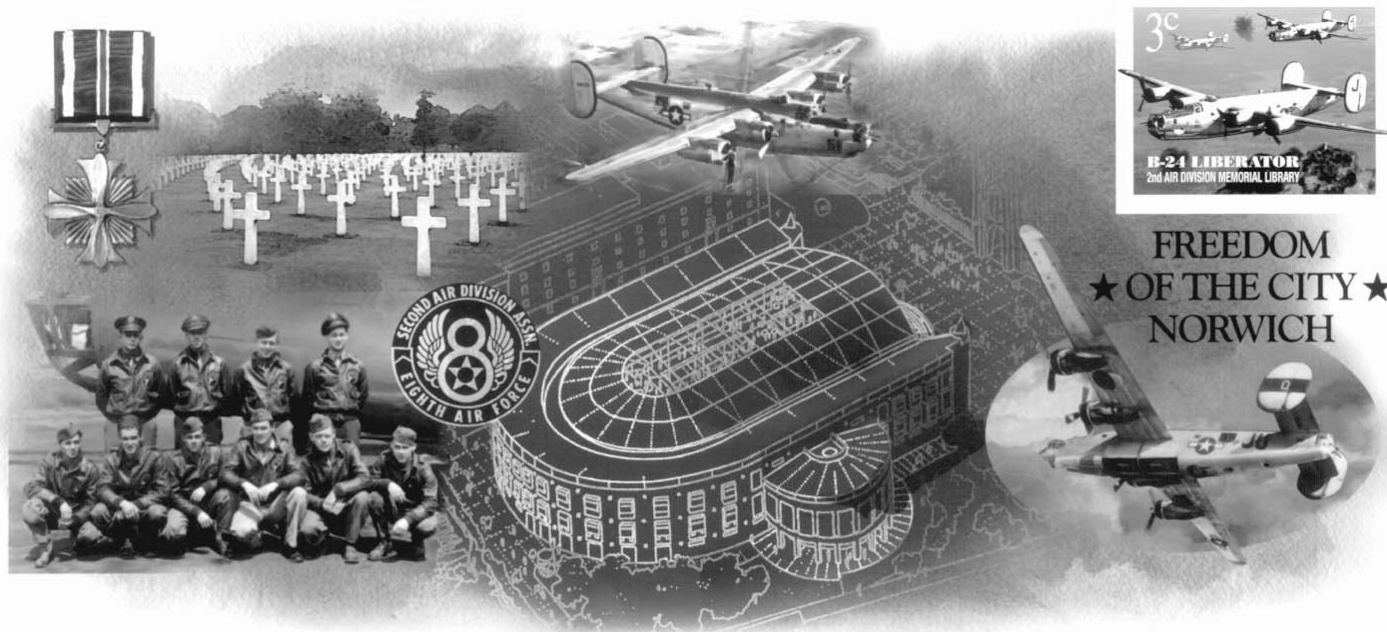
To the Editor:

Please note that the names of Pauline and Frank Bales of the 492nd and 467th should have appeared in the list of those who attended our Norwich convention.

Evelyn Cohen (HDQ)
2ADA VP Membership and
Chairperson, Conventions

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



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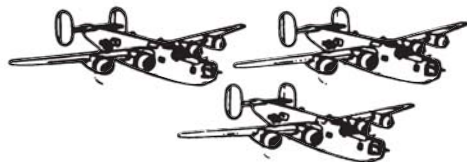
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RAY PYTEL, JOURNAL EDITOR
P.O. BOX 484, ELKHORN, WI 53121-0484



CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Address changes should be sent to:

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