

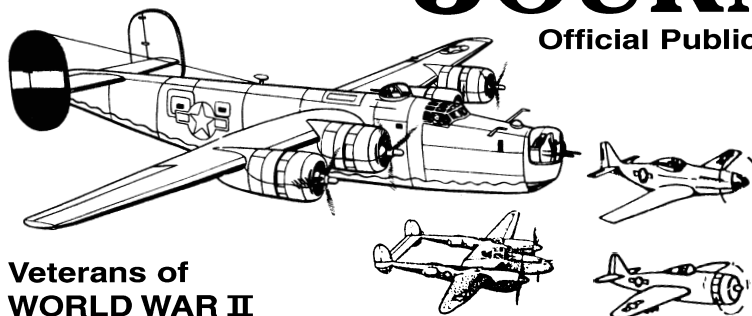
**Decided at the
Philadelphia Convention:**

GEOFF GREGORY
New ZADA Leader

Future Conventions:
SAN ANTONIO 2005
(definite)
SAN DIEGO 2006
(probable)

THE JOURNAL

Official Publication of the



**Veterans of
WORLD WAR II**



Volume 43 Number 2

Summer 2004

..... Yankee Doodle Do or Die

BY JO HADEN GALBRAITH • COURTESY OF "BRIEFING"

After a week's holiday in the English Cotswolds, my husband and I headed for the Lake District where our reservations in the Leeming House awaited. The hotel is most picturesque. It was the Fourth of July and, despite the spectacular scenery, we were feeling a little homesick, having never been away, much less out of the country, on Independence Day.

Being raised in the South and suckled on God and Country, we found ourselves pining for fireworks, hot dogs, and good old Uncle Sam. Realizing that the Fourth would fall during our stay in England, we brought along sweaters, embellished with the Stars and Stripes to wear for the drive north. With Old Glory waving gallantly across our chests, we made the journey with somewhat melancholy hearts.

Upon arriving, we were cheered by the sheer beauty of our hotel nestled among emerald green hills with breathtaking views of the lake. After settling in, we dressed and made our way to dinner. Seated alone, in the Lemming House's quietly elegant dining room, we enjoyed a wonderful,

if somewhat subdued, meal. Feeling privileged to be sharing this lovely holiday, neither of us acknowledged to the other that the effects of such sedate grandeur left us feeling farther and farther away from our beloved homeland.

After dinner, in a last ditch effort to honor the day, we ordered the traditional British, as well as favorite American July 4th dessert, strawberries and cream. As we recapped our trip over berries and tea, a distinguished looking couple, who had been sitting at the table next to ours, suddenly approached us. In a soft, sweet voice, an elegant woman smiled and quietly said in a proper English accent, "Happy Independence Day." We were stunned. Guessing that our American accents had given us away, we beamed with gratitude and thanked her for the gracious gesture. She then replied in the same soft voice, only this time with an infectious twinkle in her eye, "You know, I'm a corrected copy." How we thought, did this adorable English woman know that babies born on the Fourth of July were

anointed honorary Yankee Doodle Dandies? Sensing our utter surprise, she explained with this charming story: "I was born in London during the Blitz of World War II. At that time the hospital was overflowing with soldiers, and one entire wing was devoted solely to the American GIs. Born only minutes after the stroke of midnight on July 4th, I was pronounced the first arrival of the day. My nurse carried me in my swaddling clothes to the American wing, where she lifted me like a trophy over her head, and paraded through the halls singing Irving Berlin's 'I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy.' Upon seeing me, the GIs burst into a thunderous applause, whistling and cheering my arrival."

Caught up in the joy of this charming woman's tale, we laughed heartily and wondered if she knew what a gift she had given two weary Yanks longing for hearth and home. We thanked her again for sharing her story, and as she turned to go, in the same refined voice she left us with these parting words: "Quite an auspicious beginning for a Limey, wouldn't you say?" ■

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



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FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

BY DICK BUTLER (44TH)

My tour as president was completed on 29 May at the Philadelphia convention. A new president was elected at that time and assumed office. Our energetic *Journal* editor, Ray Pytel, required that items for this issue of *The Journal* be submitted to him by 15 April. Obviously, an incoming president, whoever he might be, would not be able to get his first message in this issue which should be received by the members in late June. Therefore, this message by me appears under the above byline.

It has been a great honor for me to serve as president of our Association for the past twenty-one months, and I thank you for allowing me to do so. It has been a very active and interesting period for me, and I very much appreciate the help I have received from the other Association officers and group vice presidents. While I experienced some differences of opinion regarding operation of the Association by a few members, I believe we were still able to continue to adequately accomplish the purposes of the Association as stated in our bylaws. Most importantly, we continued to support both financially and with a sense of common purpose our one-of-a-kind Memorial Library in Norwich, England. That was always my primary objective during my tenure as president.

As I reported in my article in the last issue of *The Journal*, I had the opportunity to attend an Annual General Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust. As I stated in that article, I was most impressed at that meeting with the business-like manner in which it was conducted and the hands-on involvement in the operation of the Library by the Governors. All of the Governors are experienced individuals who are obviously dedicated to the operation of the Library and to its longevity. I am confident that there will be similarly well qualified, dedicated individuals serving on the Board of Governors long after we are gone.

It is only natural that our membership is declining at the rate that it is, and it is inevitable that at some time in the not too far distant future that it will be necessary to fold the Second Air Division Association tent. I sincerely hope that such will be put off as long as there is at least a small group of members who are willing to keep the fires burning. But when that is no longer possible, hopefully The Heritage League of the Second Air Division will be able to step up, not stumble, and not only be able to continue the legacy of the Second Air Division but also that of the Second Air Division Association. For the Second Air Division Association has a legacy of its own that should be preserved. There most likely would not be a living memorial for the almost 7,000 of our comrades who lost their lives in B-24s and fighter aircraft defending freedom in World War II were it not for its support over the years by the Second Air Division Association. There certainly would not be a 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian on duty at the Library were it not for the foundation established by the Association. And a very important part of that legacy is the relationship that has been established over the postwar years between Association members and the citizens of Norfolk and East Anglia. The foregoing are just a few examples of the Association's legacy which must be preserved.

Again, I thank you for your confidence and support of me. I shall continue to serve our Association to the best of my ability in whatever capacity where I might be of help. I ask that you continue to remember and support our men and women of the armed services who are serving on active duty in so many places around the world. Many of them are serving in difficult and very dangerous places. We should particularly be concerned and praying for those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. They are facing unusually barbarous enemies. They are protecting this land of ours by meeting those enemies on their territory much as we met the enemy on his territory during World War II. And please remember the families and loved ones of those men and women who are serving elsewhere. Those left alone are also serving, just as our loved ones did during our absence in World War II. May God continue to bless America. ■

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 Library of the Norwich Millennium 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.

New Members of the 2ADA

93rd BG

John H. Sherman

448th BG

Charles Mathison

453rd BG

Vincent J. Pale

458th BG

Wayne W. Gamble

Executive Vice President's Comments

BY GEOFF GREGORY (467TH)

May I begin by expressing my hope that each of you had a joyous Easter/Passover, and a happy springtime. I must also apologize for my lack of any real or current new information. Since I am writing BEFORE the convention, I can only express what I expect to take place in Philadelphia, and a few follow-ups from the past.

It is my opinion that the most important topic to be discussed is the work of the Legacy Committee. This committee, formed by President Butler, comprised of past presidents and chaired by Chuck Walker, has spent many hours and has given much thought to the legacy of our organization. Some of the questions needing to be discussed are: legal requirements, how and when and the disbursement of residual funds. I look forward to seeing the reactions of the members of the Executive Committee to these discussions.

I have frequently mentioned in previous articles that we are fortunate to have had the leadership of such a fine and capable man as Dick Butler serving as president of our 2ADA at this particular time. He is an articulate, thoughtful, loyal man, and has done an outstanding job for us. Fortunately he will continue to serve the 2ADA as a member of the Executive Committee for another three years.

At this writing, our friend, and treasurer, Bill Nothstein is at home recovering from four heart bypasses, two strokes, and one repaired aneurism. What an ordeal! Thus, I have not asked Bill for an up-to-date tally on the donations to our appeal for funds needed to ensure the perpetuity of our 2nd Air Division Memorial Library. This program — which I am proud to chair — has accumulated, since its inception four years ago, over \$200,000 to the financial

health of the Memorial, as well as the support of the Fulbright grantee. A point of extra pride is the fact that, to my knowledge, we may be the only organization in the world to support and finance a Fulbright scholar.

We are informed that at least three members of the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust will be in attendance at our Philadelphia convention. We welcome their participation. We will be anxious to hear the report of Matthew Martin, Chairman of the Board of Governors. We hope to hear an optimistic view of the new fundraising project recently initiated in England, as well as their future plans for the Memorial.

The Gregorys sincerely hope that a whole bunch of you will be coming to Philadelphia. We know that you will enjoy this historic city — one of the birthplaces of our great country. ■

NOTES & NEWS FROM THE HONORARY PRESIDENT

BY JORDAN R. UTTAL (HQ)

The legacy that the Second Air Division Association will be leaving behind consists of much more than financial and physical assets. Indeed it includes all of the programs we have initiated or helped to create. I submit the following thoughts on three of them:

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BOOKS

This program was started almost twenty-four years ago to provide the opportunity for our members to honor someone dear to them by supplying funds for the purchase of books in their honor. Back then this served two purposes; first, that stated above; and second, the need for more books was far greater then than it is today at our 2ADA Memorial Library. This fine gesture of affection or appreciation is still available.

We have not pushed the program in the last year or two, but the funds keep trickling in and the books purchased are welcomed by the recipients or their families and by the Library. Recently, I had the pleasure of sending over funds from seven donors, and, as noted above, when you have the occasion to make such a donation, it

will be welcome.

Just send me a check for \$35.00 per book, made out to 2nd Air Division Association along with appropriate details about the honoree, and your wishes will be carried out. Any questions? Just give me a ring or drop me a note (with your phone number).

FRIENDS OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL

At the forthcoming convention in Philadelphia, the group VPs will be furnished with an up-to-date list of the English "Friends" who are available to assist visiting veterans or their family members. In addition, this organization is always at the disposal of the Board of Governors for whatever help may be required to carry out various missions.

Your dues for 2004 are still the same for the time being: \$6.00 for singles and \$10.00 for couples. Please make your checks out *to me* and I will remit to them in pounds which saves conversion charges. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

ROLL OF HONOR

As noted in previous issues, the final ad-

dendum list of 170 names approved by the group VPs is now being prepared for inclusion in the master copy of the Roll of Honor in the 2AD Memorial Library, and in the few existing copies in England and here. It is hoped that a copy of the 170 names will be presented in Philadelphia, by Chairman Matthew Martin who is bringing it with him from Norwich. Our thanks to Vice Chairman Hilary Hammond for his continued efforts on behalf of the Roll of Honor.

ONE MORE THOUGHT

With reference to matters connected with the history of the 2nd Air Division and the 2nd Air Division Association, requests from you pertaining to subjects you would like covered in *The Journal* will be appreciated by our Historian. (THAT'S ME!!) I am at your service. ■

WARNING:
Dates on calendar
are closer than
they appear.

Report of the 2ADA Representative on the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

NOW FOR A REPORT on the 8 April Governors meeting. This is the budget setting meeting. The budget for 2004-05 looks like this:

EXPECTED INCOME	Budget 2004-05	Budget 2003-04	Actual 2003-04
Capital Funds	35,000	38,000	
Endowments	8,000	8,000	
Donations	2,000	1,000	
Interest	2,000	1,000	
	47,000	48,000	50,594
LIBRARY EXPENSES			
	46,900	47,103	49,012
Surplus	100	897	(1,582)
	47,000	48,000	50,594

Chairman Martin reported on his meeting in London, where he discussed the manner in which the Fulbright Portfolio is invested. He has prepared a paper on this subject which he will present to the Executive Committee

Chairman Martin announced the selection of the next 2ADA/ Fulbright Scholar, **Alexis Ciurzac**. She has glowing references. Besides, her dad flew B-24s and earned the DFC with two Oak Leaf Clusters. Alexis is the librarian at Palomar College near San Juan Capistrano, CA. She will arrive in Norwich in mid-August.

There has been quite a turnover in Governors during the past year. **Virginia Musgrave** and **Bill Wuest** have resigned, and now Ted Inman is leaving the directorship of Duxford Air Museum and the Trust for a very challenging reorganization post in South London. These Governors are to be commended for their dedicated service, and we wish them well in their future endeavors. **Christopher Bigsby**, Professor of American Studies at East Anglia University, and **Ben du Brow** have accepted appointment as Governors.

Lord Lieutenant Timothy Colman is to retire in the fall. He has contributed substantially to our Memorial Library and will certainly be missed. His replacement as the Queen's Representative in Norfolk has not yet been named. The Governors voted to place an "American Tree" in the arboretum of his estate.

Paul King HAS BEEN NAMED SHERIFF OF NORWICH! He says he will not be carrying a six-shooter or wearing a Stetson hat. This is quite an honor for Paul and I do not mean to make light of it. He will wear the fancy hat and "chains" of the office with dignity.

T/Sgt. Jason Axberg, 106th ARW Historian at Mildenhall, has offered an impressive array of 1932-1984 hardbound books to the Library. **David Hastings** is working with T/Sgt. Axberg as to suitability and space requirements that will be needed.

I stopped by our satellite library in Long Stratton on my way back to London. It is a small library with a fine plaque dedicated to the 2nd Air Division. The books we have donated to the library are clearly marked on the outside as well as with a bookplate on



the inside of the cover. The satellite library at Dereham will be closed for about one year for major remodeling.

"Friends" Chairman **David Neale** reported that the memorial has been placed in the Norwich Airport. It is in good view of those using the airport. David reported that the "Friends" membership is 160 Brits and 85 Americans. He already has sixty reservations for the next Thanksgiving Dinner. David is doing an excellent job as head of the "Friends," and of course he has had the excellent help of his wife, **Pearl**. We thank them both.

It is anticipated that six Governors may attend our Philadelphia convention.

I hope you all have a happy and healthy summer. ■

The Editor's Contribution

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

Several last-minute bits of information “too late to classify” came just after “the books were closed” on the Spring *Journal*.

1. **Bill Dewey** announced that a reunion of 445th BG Kassel mission survivors and all 445th BG veterans are invited to attend a Kassel mission seminar and reunion at the Sheraton Hotel, Kansas City, October 5-10, 2004. The panel will be moderated by the famed 8th AF historian and author **Roger Freeman**. Contact Bill Dewey, P.O. Box 215133, Auburn Hills, MI 48321, phone 248-364-2187.

2. Well-known Southern author and columnist **Starr Smith** sent me a preliminary manuscript of his latest book, *Jimmy Stewart's Greatest Role: Bomber Pilot*. This is not about his movie career — it covers mostly his 8th AF combat and subsequent military career, leading to being Brigadier General in the Reserves. We will have a review of the book in a future issue.

ANSWER TO THE SPRING QUIZ

The picture is of London-born **Elizabeth Taylor**, several years before her 1945 first “great” movie, “National Velvet.” Remember that one?

SUMMER QUIZ

Here are ten questions from Yankee Air Force's “Hangar Happenin's.” You should be able to answer them without too many errors. Answers in the Fall issue.

1. How long did the 100-year war last?
2. Which country made Panama hats?
3. From which animal do we get catgut?
4. In which month do the Russians celebrate the October revolution?
5. What is a camel hairbrush made of?
6. The Canary islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
7. What was King George VI's first name?
8. What color is a Purple Finch?
9. Where are Chinese gooseberries grown?
10. What is the color of the black box in a commercial airliner?

Ed. Note: The report is that most of their members “failed” the first time! ■

19TH ANNUAL 2ADA SOUTHWEST REGION REUNION DINNER 27 MARCH 2004

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

It is with great pleasure that we, the committee (**Chuck Walker**, chair; **Geoff Gregory**, **Ray Lemons**, **Bob Renn**, and yours truly) can report that we had a great gathering. We had 105 paid admissions (about ten more than 2003) of 2AD veterans and family members, further strengthening the bonds of friendship made during our service together in England. Not only was the dinner exceptionally good, but the program for the evening was very well received.

Registration started shortly after noon outside the hospitality room, where refreshments were available along with memorabilia. The bar opened at 16:30 along with an appetizer table, and exactly at 18:30 Chuck welcomed the attendees, who looked very elegant. Here's how it went:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Linda Wittig** (Heritage League officer and daughter of the late **Moose Allen**). Our cherished “Eight Candles for Remembrance Ceremony,” which I was honored to conduct, was followed by introduction of Association officers present and introduction of the dinner committee.

The invocation was reverently done by **Bob Touby** (445th BG) ...AND THEN WE ATE !!! AND IT WAS GREAT !!!

After dinner, Chuck, as our 2ADA representative on the Board of Governors, gave a report on matters relating to our 2nd Air Division Memorial Library. It was pointed out that:

(a) **Tahitia Orr**, our current 2ADA/Fulbright Scholar, has been doing a great job interfacing with local schools, civic groups, and the faculty and American students at the University of East Anglia. Her two-year tour ends this coming August.

(b) Her successor has just been named with the approval of the Board of Governors. She is **Alicia Ciurczak** from Palomar College. Unfortunately she cannot make it to Philadelphia, but will meet with President **Dick Butler** before she leaves for England.

(c) Our Memorial Trust Board of Governors has launched an appeal for £600,000, directed primarily at our English friends. So far they have raised almost half of that, and of course contributions from this side will be welcomed. It is hoped that our combined efforts in this direction will get our Capital Fund to the desired level to assure perpetuity.

(d) Thanks were expressed to the hotel staff, to the City of Irving for the name tags they furnished, and to **Suzie Horlock**, **Terry Gregory**, and **Jean Lemons** for their administrative assistance.

(e) Three members who did not attend, and three others who did, were thanked for their financial assistance to the Door Prize Fund, which was supplemented, as always, by the committee members. The combined funds enabled the purchase of *seventeen* door prizes which were duly drawn.

(f) The Corgi model B-24 worth over \$100 was raffled off and won by **John Lamar** (489th BG). Corgi is sold out of the models, but will do another run if sufficient interest is shown.

(g) For entertainment, we presented **Marty Westerman**, a fabulous magician who entranced the audience with his sleight-of-hand tricks. He really knocked us for a loop . . . GREAT SHOW !!!

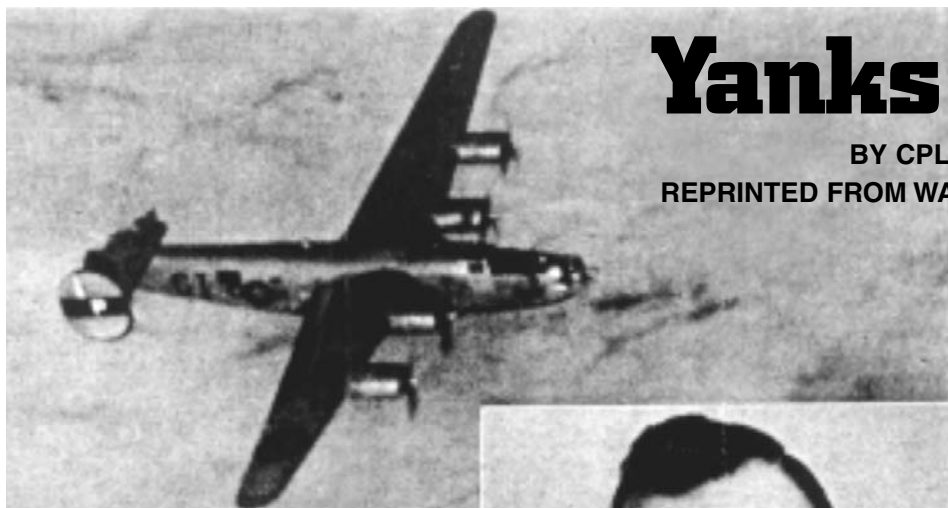
(h) An informal poll was taken by Chuck, and the audience indicated approval for another dinner reunion for next year. (**FLASH — Reservations have been made with the hotel for 26 March 2005 — make a note now, please.** Perhaps we can up the attendance over this year???)

Like I said, guys and dolls, a good time was had by all. ■

Yanks in Britain

BY CPL. EDMUND ANTROBUS

REPRINTED FROM WARTIME: "YANK" THE ARMY WEEKLY



Above: The crippled Liberator which Lt. Albert J. Novik (right) kept aloft four and a half hours while fog obscured landing fields.



On January 16, 1945, 1st Lt. Albert J. Novik of Tarrytown, N.Y., dived from the flight deck of his fuel-less Liberator headfirst through the bomb bay and saved his life. His leap gave him enough speed to clear the plane while it was still gliding.

On February 16, a month later to the day, he had to bail out again and tried to maneuver a second time. But the plane nose-dived before he could make it, throwing him up against the ceiling, where he stuck, looking down at a fire sweeping through the fuselage and thinking that at any moment he would be dead.

This was the climax of four and a half bad hours for Lt. Novik. He had been flying with a squadron in the 392nd Bomb Group when, a few seconds after dropping his bombs, another Liberator in a higher formation had moved in on top to obtain a more compact bomb pattern. It came too close and dropped six bombs through Novik's left rudder.

Minus a huge chunk of its tail assembly, Novik's Liberator dropped 500 feet, becoming so nose-heavy that it took all of Novik's strength at the wheel to keep it from diving.

Novik, however, decided to continue over the target so that he could stay with the formation as protection against enemy fighters. In this way he managed to struggle back to England, but was unable to land because clouds had closed in over the home base and emergency landing fields. Together with the rest of his group, Novik was ordered to go back and land in France. Realizing that his ship would never make it, he decided to land in England if he could.

It was getting harder and harder to hold the ship in the air. Novik was under a tremendous strain, and the back of his neck was ridged like a weight-lifter's. "It was a

good thing," says the navigator, F/O Wade Hampton of Toronto, Ont., "that we had a strong, as well as a good, pilot."

For two hours they looked for a suitable field but all were fogged in, and at last they decided to head towards The Wash and bail out.

It was a painful decision. The ship had flown 70 missions without an abort. Everyone knew it was in fine mechanical condition; the fact that it could fly without a left rudder was proof of that. Someone recalled that the crew chief, S/Sgt. Eugene S. Goldsby of Los Angeles, was up for an award for the way he'd taken care of his ship.

The gunners bailed out first, then the navigator, radio operator and engineer.

After that, Novik climbed out of his seat while the copilot, 1st Lt. Jack H. Graves of Birmingham, Ala., hung on the controls. Then, standing, Novik took over, holding the plane steady while Graves jumped. The elevator trim tabs, which normally keep the plane in level flight, were not working, and the automatic pilot could not be used because the slight shake it would cause when it went into control would probably be enough to crash the plane. Novik found that even a 10-degree turn made the ship shudder as if its tail was breaking.

When the copilot hit the silk, Novik gave him thirty seconds to clear the ship and

then prepared to jump from the flight deck through the bomb bay, as he had done a month previously. But the second he let go of the wheel, the plane dived like a Thunderbolt. Novik was thrown against the ceiling and pinned there while the plane dived 7,000 feet.

"My first impulse," Novik said, "was to try and beat my way out through the fuselage. I thumped with the sides of my fists, but the air pressure was so strong it was an effort even to move my arms. It was the sensation you have in a dream when you are running from something and your feet get bogged down in quicksand."

Dying did not occur to him — just then. "And yet," he says, "just about this time a guy gets very religious. You start praying to something super-human because you know nothing human can help you."

It was fire that made Novik give up hope. Spread-eagled against the ceiling, he saw flames sucked in from a burning engine, spread through the fuselage, and fan up towards him as if he were on a spit, being grilled alive. At that moment he lost his fear because he no longer thought he was going to live. He smelt his hair being singed. He felt, as he now put it, "eccentric and care-free." He was not delirious or suffering pain.

Then, suddenly, he was dropped from the ceiling, as a wing, or something, came off, changing the direction of the plane. He began to claw his way through the fire up to the bomb bay. He says he didn't feel that he was escaping from death, but from death in a particularly violent form.

Somehow he dragged himself to the bomb bay and fall through, and just as he cleared the bomber it exploded over his head. He pulled his rip cord but only two feet of chute came out. He pulled again, this time with both hands, and the chute opened. He was now about 700 feet from the ground.

Looking up, Novik saw burning pieces of the plane floating down like enormous flaming leaves. He put a hand to one eye and when he took it away it was covered with blood. He thought he had lost the eye, but that did not seem important. All around him burning debris was falling, great chunks of it catching up with him and passing within a few feet of his parachute.

(continued on next page)

OSS CODE NAME: CARPETBAGGER

BY JIM HANFORD • REPRINTED FROM YANKEE WINGS

During the months of the German occupation of western Europe, the Allies provided strong support to the various resistance groups. Single-engined Lysanders of the RAF Special Duties Squadrons clandestinely delivered and retrieved Allied agents under the cover of darkness. These agents, known as “Joes,” were tasked to coordinate acts of espionage and sabotage with the local Resistance groups. They were trained by, and reported to, the British SOE (Special Operations Executive) in London, which was responsible for the coordination of Resistance activities with Allied strategy. By the end of 1944, 293 agents and other personnel had been carried to France, and over 500 had been returned to the secret airfields at Tempsford and Newmarket.

In 1942 the American OSS (Office of Strategic Services) was organized under the dynamic leadership of Col. William Donovan, to supplement the SOE operations under the code name “Carpetbagger.” The B-24 was selected for these operations because of its long range and roomy fuselage.

Liberators assigned to “Carpetbagger” operations first had to be modified. The ball turret was removed, and in its location a metal-shrouded circular hatch, called a “Joe Hole,” was provided for the agents to drop through. At just under sixteen tons, the Liberator was too heavy to land on the improvised landing strips in occupied Europe. The nose turret, if installed, was also removed. In its place a greenhouse provided a good view of the drop zone, and enabled the bombardier to assist the navigator in pilotage. Additional navigation equipment included the British radio-navigational aid, GEE, a U.S. Navy homing system which was effective up to 100 miles; and a radar altimeter of extreme accuracy for use in making drops. Blister windows were installed to improve the pilot’s visibility, and flame dampers were added to suppress engine exhaust fumes. Waist guns were also removed, and black-out curtains covered the waist windows. Finally the entire exterior was painted non-glare black. With the aircraft blacked out in flight, a “Carpetbagger” B-24 was practically undetectable at night.

“Carpetbagger” operations commenced in January 1944 from Tempsford under RAF guidance. Crews had been drawn from two

squadrons of the 479th Anti-Submarine Group, which had been disbanded the previous year. For administrative purposes, they were attached to the 482nd Bombardment Group (Pathfinder) at Alconbury. On March 28, 1944, the “Carpetbaggers” were established as the 801st Provisional Bombardment Group. In August, the group was redesignated the 492nd BG (Heavy), taking the designation from a recently disbanded B-24 bomb group. While two squadrons operated from Watton, the majority of the group operated from Harrington.

Like Tempsford, Harrington was sealed off from the public, and its 3,000 personnel were told little of the operations there. Even administrative and operational personnel who serviced the aircraft were not officially told the actual mission, but rather that it was connected with Pathfinders.

All operations over enemy territory were conducted during total darkness. As a result, the crews of four officers and four airmen began briefings at 1:00 p.m. Afterward the crews drew up their own flight plans. Routes normally consisted of dog-legs, no longer than 30 miles each, to avoid known anti-aircraft guns and to discourage interceptions by night fighters. Each crew then turned in its flight plan to Group Operations, which established takeoff times. The longest flights took off first, and at least ten minute intervals were allowed between planes entering the same area.

Few landing zones had radios to assist in either identification of the LZ or in coordination of the drop, hence most offloading operations were coordinated with lights or fires on the ground. The final approach was made at slow speed and 400 feet altitude (600 feet if “Joes” were dropped). The bombardier controlled the time of drop, using the LZ lights for reference. If all material could not be dropped on the first approach, a second pass was necessary.

Such missions were fraught with danger. One Liberator returned to Harrington with over 1,000 bullet holes, resulting from a tangle with two night fighters. On April 27, 1944, 1st Lt. George Ambrose was flying “The Worry Bird” on a mission over France. While pushing a package through the “Joe Hole,” Jim Monier, who was on his first “Carpetbagger,” slipped and tumbled through the opening. It is believed he

rode the package parachute down, for although he was badly injured, he survived the fall, and the war, as a POW. The next night “The Worry Bird” was shot down with only two survivors.

There were four “Carpetbagger” squadrons in the operation by the end of May, 1944. The need for greater coordination between the Resistance and the Allied invasion forces resulted in the formation of special liaison teams, code named “Jedburghs.” The “Carpetbaggers” dropped one hundred three-man teams, composed of two officers and a radio operator, just prior to and shortly after D-Day, and their effect was significant.

During the period January to May 1944, twenty-five black Liberators were lost on “Carpetbagger” operations, and another eight were so severely damaged by ground fire that they were scrapped. By the war’s end, some 4,500 tons of material and hundreds of “Joes” had been dropped. There were other operations mounted with B-24s to assist the Underground in Scandinavia, but that is another story. ■

YANKS IN BRITAIN (continued)

But, looking down, Novik saw that the real danger was on the ground, for parts of the burning plane had landed on the spot he was headed for. Only by luck he landed in a tree, which saved him being roasted in the wreckage of the plane.

Men have been hurt more turning over in bed than Novik was during his seemingly interminable brush with death. His face had been burned and his hair singed, and it was the hand he put to his eye, and not the eye itself, that had been cut. As a matter of fact, his fingers hurt more than anything else; they were numb for three days after from straining on the wheel during the four and a half hours he had struggled to keep his plane in the air.

All in all, it had been a happier landing than the one Novik had made a month before. On that occasion two of his men had jumped through the nose-wheel hatch, hit something, and been killed. This time they all landed safely and were in good condition to stand by when the colonel presented Novik with the DFC. ■



HARDWICK

Open Letter to the 93rd

BY JOHN L. LEE, JR.

Spring has returned to Florida, and as you read this, summer will be here. We'll be getting our bags unpacked from the 93rd reunion and re-packed for Dayton. I'll have a detailed report of the happenings in Philadelphia when we meet in Dayton, so we're hoping many of you will be there.

As you may remember, I had asked for some of you to share wartime memories and experiences. This month, **Bob Stahl**, a bombardier who was assigned to the 409th Squadron at Hardwick, remembers the way it was for him:

"After meeting **Ben Kuroki** at the Colorado Springs reunion and hearing a little of his history, it made me feel how little I had contributed and how much he and all the rest of the 93rd members had already done while I was still in high school!

"I graduated from high school in 1943 on my 18th birthday, and two weeks later I was at Keesler Field AFB, Biloxi, in basic training. (At least that is what they called it; KP and latrine duty.) We didn't see a uniform until we were over there two weeks. Our one set of civilian clothes was starting to get pretty tacky by then. We finally did get some fatigues and oversize shoes, but a half hour after I got outfitted I was almost court-martialed for not saluting a 2nd Lieutenant. I didn't know what that gold bar meant.

"After we left Keesler, we went to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, to be 'educated.' Our barracks was in the football stadium because they didn't have a football team. Not many students. We did get a chance to train in Piper Cubs while there.

"Then came Nashville Classification

Center where we were psychoanalyzed, re-programmed, run through a short-arm inspection, and then finally classified. Hallelujah, I was to become a bombardier! I really wanted to be a red-hot pilot and fly in the great blue yonder, but why complain, at least I didn't wash out and I would still be flying.

"Next we went to Tyndall Field, Panama City, FL to learn aerial gunnery. Starting out we used shotguns to try to kill all those clay pigeons and finally graduated to the 50 caliber guns at Apalachicola. Leaving Tyndall we arrived at Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, AL, the little 'West Point of the South.' Here we were supposed to learn how an officer conducts himself! We got square meals and all that other chicken stuff. We were even treated to a 'shave off' haircut for a tune of \$3.50 from our own pockets. It was a three-minute haircut! I enjoyed the 'Burma Trail' the most, but on two occasions we had to witness two 'drum outs' for cadets caught cheating or lying.

(continued on next page)

New Jet Me-262 Makes First Flight

BY KIRK GORMLEY, AVIATION NEWS AND VIEWS FROM EAA

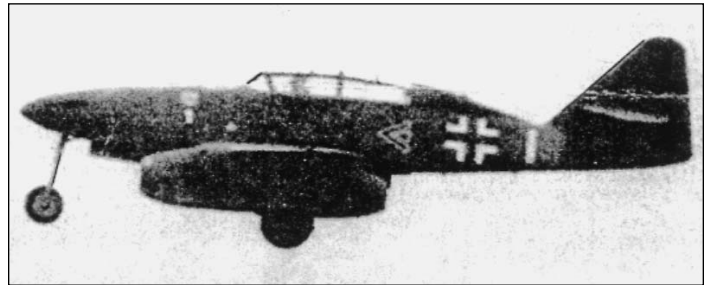
Fifty-six years after the first combat jet flew, an all-new Messerschmitt Me-262 made a 35-minute first flight in Everett, WA on December 20, 2002. Flown by test pilot Wolfgang Czaia, the jet is the first of five that a small group of engineers is planning to build. "A pleasure to fly," Czaia wrote in his flight-test report. "Overall, a great first flight."

Operated by the Luftwaffe at the end of WWII, the Me-262 was the world's first operational jet aircraft. The Germans built more than 1,400 of them; 300 saw combat and there are eight known survivors. Capable of 540 mph in level flight, the Me-262 was nearly untouchable when pitted against Allied bombers and escort fighters. Only sheer numbers enabled the Allies to prevail against what was then the world's most advanced aircraft. On March 18, 1945, 37 of them faced 1,221 U.S. bombers and 632 escort fighters.

The Everett Me-262 Project was started in 1993 as Classic Fighter Industries. Its president, aeronautical engineer Steve Snyder, wanted aircraft that were representative of overall production Me-262s. Snyder contracted with Herb Tischler's Texas Airplane Factory in Fort Worth to restore an original Me-262 and build five new ones for potential buyers. When the two had a falling-out, Snyder turned to Bob Hammer, a Boeing exec in Seattle. He agreed to take the project if it would be moved to the Pacific Northwest.

In early 1999, ten 18-wheelers delivered parts from the original, and five new 262s, to Everett's Paine Field. When Snyder was killed in an F-86 crash later that year, the owners of the first two factory-new aircraft agreed to finance the project. With a price tag of approximately \$2 million apiece, minus engines, three remained unsold. "White 1," the 262 that flew December 20, 2002, belongs to a Phoenix attorney. "Red 13" is to be shipped to a private party in Germany.

Two of the five new aircraft are two-seaters, one is a single-seater, and two can convert from one to two seats. General Electric J-85



engines replace the original Jumo 004 engines, and other modifications include reinforced landing gear, added braking capacity, and a modified throttle assembly.

With the Me-262 project for eight years Czaia flew F-84s and F-104s for the German air force before moving to the U.S. in the early 1970s. Well acquainted with Luftwaffe pilots who flew original 262s, he relishes his test pilot duties. "This airplane is a dream to fly. It's very stable and quiet." A failed hydraulic line off the No. 1 pump affected the braking ability of "White 1" after landing, but the flight itself, made with gear down, went smoothly.

With an L-39 chase plane at the ready, "White 1" made a 14-second takeoff roll at 94 percent power. The nose wheel lifted at 90 knots and at 100 knots the aircraft took off from Paine Field's Runway 34L at 2:00 PM. Czaia retracted the flaps at 150 knots and increased speed to 170. He put the aircraft into a 1,500-rpm climb at 150 knots and leveled off at 10,500 feet.

Czaia called in to report "excellent control feel and response in all three axes, as well as excellent trim response on the stabilizer." The aircraft, he ascertained, could be trimmed hands off without wandering into a bank or pitch. The aircraft stalled at 100 knots. Touchdown was at 100 knots. ■



2nd Air Division Library Echoes

BY TAHITIA ORR, 2ADA/FULBRIGHT LIBRARIAN

It is hard for me to believe that my time in Norwich is almost up and there will be a new 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian coming over in August. **Alexis Ciurczak**, the incoming librarian, seems delightful and I am looking forward to meeting her. I've got tons to do both here at the Library and out in the greater world to keep myself busy over the next few months. My list ranges from redesigning the web page to visiting the Grimes Graves flint mine and volunteering at the gardens at Blickling Hall. Being here at the Library has been a wonderful experience and has changed my life forever; my heartfelt thanks go out to all involved.

Work with the BBC People's War Project continues, and by the time you read this, we will, in conjunction with BBC Norfolk, have hosted a Baedeker Raids day here in The Forum on the 29th

of April. A Blue Badge guide will be coming to give two rounds of talks on the raids and her personal memories of the war. She is a fount of fascinating information and I've learned a great deal of detail about Norwich from her. Then folks will be invited down to the Library for a tour and the opportunity to transcribe their wartime memories for the People's War website. We see working with the People's War project as a way for the Memorial Library to reach out into the greater community. Indeed we've had quite a few people come through the doors who'd never been here before and have since come back! It's also a good way for us to share our expertise with technology with an age group that hasn't gotten on the Internet bandwagon the way those in the U.S. have. You can check out this project at: www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ww2/.

We are starting to see more Americans walk through the doors as spring progresses. Just in the past week, we've had five groups of visitors, both veterans and family groups. They join the increasing numbers of Norfolk community groups touring the Library as part of Forum-wide tours. **Derek Hills** and I gave seven tours during March, talking to about 100 people in all. This has been a good way to show the Library off, and we've noticed several return visitors from these groups. The Forum marketing officer has been doing a great job in setting these tours up, and we are beginning to work with her on promoting the educational outreach work done by the Memorial Library and the 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian.

On the whole, things are perking along nicely here at the Library. Jenny and Leslie are busy answering questions, processing books and arranging base visits; Derek has meetings with suppliers, answers reference questions and deals with personnel details; and I buy books, visit community groups and schools, and work on a myriad of projects. Every day we make little adjustments and changes, from setting up book displays to adding new leaflets and brochures to our display boards. The Memorial Library is truly a living memorial, and we are all proud to be part of it. ■

OPEN LETTER TO THE 93RD (continued from page 9)

They told us that it was the infantry for those two poor souls, anything to keep us 'in line.'

"Finally we got to Carlsbad AFB, NM, for bombardier and navigation training. I made it through all that, and even after accidentally dropping a load of practice bombs out in the wastelands somewhere and then getting reamed out, I finally graduated on 2 September 1944. And now I was a hotshot flight officer. Big Deal!

"I met my new crew in Lincoln, Nebraska, and from there we traveled to Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho for crew training. When we completed that phase, we left Topeka, Kansas for England on the Queen Mary during the Christmas holidays. We arrived at Hardwick the first week of January. After training flights and much practice, we flew our first mission on March 2, 1945 to Magdeburg. It was probably a milk run to some old-timers, but to us it was the Big One. We flew two different Magdeburg missions that I recall, but also one to Berlin where we dropped incendiaries. On one of these missions the Cadle crew had to bail out. They landed in Russian-held territory. I think they all made it back, but that crew will have to tell their story. Hearol Veteto, the bombardier, was a classmate of mine at Carlsbad bombardier school.

"I do remember a milk run mission to Bordeaux, France to try to roust out a bunch of Germans who were holed up there and surrounded by the Allies. We used a new type of bomb. It was in a waxed paper container cylinder and filled with an oily jelly-like substance. I think we used a phosphorous fuse of some

sort to set it on fire. These must have been the forerunners of the Napalm bomb.

"When the lead bombardier exercised his bomb bay doors to make sure they were not frozen, all of his bombs went out! And, everyone else toggled out also. We were still a half hour from Bordeaux and all we did was burn up some French forests. Big fire!

"I did get in 21 missions while in the 409th Squadron and in the 329th when I went up to lead. I stayed in the reserves after WWII and in 1952 was recalled during the Korean War. I was in B-29s this time.

"Now that all of you readers have suffered through my monologue, why don't you get into action and let us hear about your backgrounds. Veteto and I became school teachers, but what happened to all of you?

"In January **Cal Davidson**, **Don Morrison**, and I spent a few days in Dayton to check on hotel accommodations for our reunion. We chose the newly renovated hotel "The Double Tree by Hilton" in downtown Dayton for our headquarters. Dottie and I hope to get acquainted with many of you there."

— BOB STAHL

Thanks, Bob, for giving us a few laughs along with your memories. And for encouraging others to write.

A big thanks also to Cal and Don along with Bob for setting the plans for our meeting in Dayton. Registration form and full details are in the Spring *Ball of Fire*. ■

FIRST WAAC BATTALION ARRIVES — 557 STRONG AND THE AIR FORCE GOT 'EM ALL!

A FLASHBACK — REPRINTED DIRECTLY FROM THE 2ADA NEWS LETTER, VOL. 16, NO. 1, MARCH 1978

So read the headlines in the Stars and Stripes of July 25, 1943. Wave weary though they were, the WAACS made an impressive sight as they marched to their barracks to the tune of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" played by the 2nd Air Division band.

This first contingent included girls who only a few months previously had been students, secretaries, models, telephone operators, chorus girls and the good-looking kid who served them "off the arm" in Max's Diner on U.S. Highway No. 1.

Their trip to England was something to remember. Less than a day out of New York the soldiers aboard the WAAC transport had established lines of communication which would have made Marconi sit up and take notice.



Certainly didn't take the Joes and Janes long to 'mix it up'.

Lengths of lines weighted with tent pegs were swung outboard carrying messages to the portholes of the WAACs' cabins. "I come from Des Moines. I am a sergeant. Who are you and what do you look like?" They read. Internal communications were established via the ventilator shafts.



Poor Jackie Hanify calls out for somebody to come and play with her. Down boy!

When they first arrived by train at their base the WAACs demonstrated their military training and discipline by taking exactly 12 minutes to adjust packs, clear the platform and start marching to their barracks. Can't remember any of us ever doing it that fast!

First order of business for the WAACs was a trip to London to attend a course in Communications School. They had two special coaches on the train, and as they passed through town after town Civilians gaped, soldiers, sailors and airmen of the United Nations cheered and waved.



Sgt. 'Smokey' Layfield sits down to teach two WAACs (Hazel Bliss left and Evelyn Cohen right) the fine art of poker. Little did he know that Evelyn had mastered that art some years previously!

London, the WAACs decided, was just the place they had been wanting to see for a long time. WAACs, the GIs who happened to be around the neighborhood when the girls moved into their billets decided, were just the people they had been wanting to see for a long time.

Within a few minutes of moving in — and the billets were in a house that looked like a de Mille set before the depression — Joes and Janes were doing balcony scenes that Romeo and Juliet never even thought of.

The WAACs had fun. They liked London and being with the soldiers. The Red Cross took them on tours of historical places and bombed out areas. The soldiers took them on tours of Pubs and dances, but at 6:30 every morning they stood reveille like everybody else.

The WAACs soon proved themselves to be a formidable and efficient force, and in no time at all they had gained the respect of everybody they worked with. Once settled into their particular job — plotters, typists, teletype operators, all vital cogs in the machin-

ery of the 8th Air Force — they were given one day of indoctrination at a heavy bomber base.

They watched salvage operations on a Liberator that had crashed; They went to the briefing room where combat men explained the briefing procedure; They had a guided tour through a Liberator; They visited the ordnance shop where they examined the machine guns; They had a guided tour through the control tower, AA defenses and ammunition dump; They then returned



Fire Drill — (1 to r) Ginny Bowdoin, Hazel Bliss, Anita Going, Jean Young and Doris Ogden.



As pretty a chorus line as I've ever seen. Can't name them all but our chief honcho, Evelyn Cohen, is number five in from the right.



General Kepner, along with a few thousand others, was on hand to greet the WAACs.

to the interrogation hut and waited for the planes to return from that day's mission, after which they talked to the men about their experiences. After all this they returned to their home base eager to get back to work now that they knew how important their job was.

The job they did is history, but it will never be forgotten by those men who were fortunate enough to work along with them. Our only wish now is that more of them will re-join the 2nd Air Division via the Association. ■



BY CLARENCE A. LUHMANN

Editor's Note: Check page 6 for message from Bill Dewey.

Recently a 445th veteran and very good friend passed away. He was **Arthur Lundberg** of South San Francisco, California. I met him in Santa Ana, California at preflight school. From there we went all through training at the same bases. We went to B-24 training in Casper, Wyoming, then on to the Eighth Air Force and the 445th Bomb Group.

When **George Collar** died on Sunday, March 13, 2004 in Tiffin, Ohio, the 445th Bomb Group and Kassel Mission Memorial Association lost one of its most loyal and enthusiastic advocates.

George was a bombardier in the 702nd Squadron, arriving with the **Reg Miner** crew shortly after D-Day. He flew 29 mis-

sions with six different pilots, and his last mission was the disastrous Kassel Mission of 27 September 1944. Flying with pilot **Jim Schaen**, his plane was badly hit by fighters, and George bailed out before the plane went down.

Captured by German civilians, he was almost killed when saved by the village burgomeister and marched to the local jail. He was selected along with two other prisoners to pick up the wounded airmen and mangled bodies from the 445th's wrecked planes until after midnight. Weak with fatigue and hunger, George hauled 225-pound former Nebraska football player **Gerry Kathol** up two flights of hospital stairs.

George and most of the surviving 445th officers were incarcerated at Stalag One near Barth on the North Sea until the Russians freed the POWs in May of 1945.

In 1987 George located former POW **Frank Bertram**, his original navigator, and through him contacted **Walter Hassenpflug**. Working with Walter, the German historian of Bad Hersfeld, and with **Bill Dewey**, they founded the Kassel Mission Memorial Association. Together with the German people and former Luftwaffe pilots, an impressive memorial was erected in the Hesse State Forest at the place where the 445th lead plane crashed.

George will really be missed. He had an amazing memory and with his archives, was a constant resource for us and a willing conduit for historians and next of kin

seeking information about the Kassel mission, the highest known group loss in military history.



In the winter edition of *The Tennessee Fly-over* there was an article that is good reading for everybody, not just for veterans:

Veteran's Day, November 11, 2003 has now come and gone.

We should all remember:

It is the VETERAN, not the preacher, who has guaranteed us freedom of religion.

It is the VETERAN, not the reporter, who has guaranteed us freedom of the press.

It is the VETERAN, not the poet, who has guaranteed us freedom of speech.

It is the VETERAN, not the campus organizer, who has guaranteed us freedom to assemble.

It is the VETERAN, not the lawyer, who has guaranteed us the right to a fair trial.

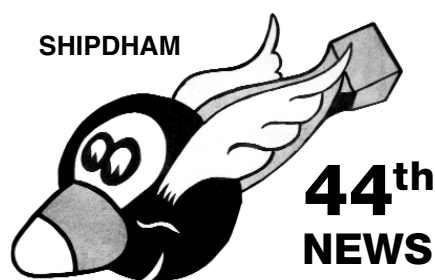
It is the VETERAN, not the politician, who has guaranteed us the right to vote.

It is the VETERAN, who salutes the Flag, who served under the flag.

Eternal rest grant them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.



There is a memorial planned for San Diego with a B-24 replica like the one at the AF Academy. They are looking for donations. *Editor's Note: See story on page 30.* ■



BY GEORGE A. WASHBURN

We have all enjoyed reading the many stories about our combat exploits, but there are also many interesting stories about events on the ground at the base, such as the following. **Cynthia Harmonowski**, whose late husband, **John**, was a 66th Squadron Ploesti veteran, has many interesting stories about her experiences while working in the officers' club's administration office from mid-1943 to the summer of 1945, when Shipdham was turned over to the RAF. **Lt. William Rider** was the Club Officer and **Sgt. Bowman** and **Cpl. McGee** were on the staff. Cynthia often says that Sgt. Bowman taught her more about ac-

counting than any of the school courses she took. She remembers going over to the flying officers' club with Sgt. Bowman each month, where they set up a table and collected club dues. She also made announcements over the "Tannoy" (P.A. system, if you've forgotten)!

Towards the end of the war, Cynthia had an exciting event. **Capt. Jim Clements** (on his second tour) walked into the office one day and said, "Skip, would you like to go for a ride today?" Cynthia looked over at Lt. Rider, who said, "Off you go." They picked up a flight suit and parachute, and upon arrival at the plane she noticed a civilian in a business suit getting on board. When up in the air and leveled off, Capt. Clements directed **Lt. Boykin** to give up his copilot's seat to Cynthia. So, with directions, she steered the Liberator around the Norfolk countryside for about fifteen minutes. Jim then told her that she would have to give the seat back to Lt. Boykin as they had to go in to land. On leaving the plane, the civilian approached and asked if she enjoyed the flight. As she says, "Being a

teenager, full of my own importance, I told him I really liked it and actually flew the plane, but, of course, had to give it back to Lt. Boykin for landing."

A few days later an Army Jeep drove past her mother's home in Garveston and threw a newspaper onto the lawn. Her mother retrieved it and was shocked to see the headline: "Secretary Takes to the Air." The article quoted every word that Cynthia had said!!! Obviously, this was a pre-arranged public relations event. At the many reunions that Cynthia has attended, Jim Clements (now deceased) would refer to her as his pilot!



We are saddened by the recent loss of some of our members and regular reunion attendees . . .

. . . **Lolly Owens**, who was always a welcoming face at the registration desk and did so much for our 44th reunions.

. . . **Bill Cameron**, past 67th Squadron C.O. and Ploesti veteran.

(continued on next page)

458th BOMB GROUP

HORSHAM ST. FAITH



BY RICK ROKICKI

MEMORIAL AT HORSHAM ST. FAITH

Group VPs have been advised that this *Journal* will be sent out after the 2ADA convention in Philadelphia and will be in your hands around the July 4th holiday. All the above because of the last-minute update for the memorial dedication at the Horsham St. Faith airfield. The date remains the same, July 29, 2004, because **Christine Armes** found that that date was one of the very few available to us for the Battle of Britain Team for a flypast of the Lancaster, Spitfire, and Hurricane. Knowing how the weather can be, we should pray that it stays in our favor. The flypast is a thing of beauty; the sound of the Rolls Royce engines and seeing the original WWII aircraft will stir many fond memories. Ceil and I have experienced this three times in the past.

I was hoping to have a photo of the engraved stone in time for this issue, and should that happen, I will impose on our gracious editor to include it here. Christine assures me and all members that everything is moving along as planned and hopes that many of us will attend. We all owe a great debt of gratitude to this dear lady. I'm sure that very few understand what a great undertaking this has been. I was told of the problems and some of the difficulties that she had to overcome, but she persevered and accomplished her goal. A million "Thank You's," Christine!

CORGI B-24 LIBERATOR, PLUS . . .



Shortly after the Spring *Journal* went past the "proof" stage, I was advised by the Corgi Classics marketing director that the 250 B-24 models made for the 2ADA had been sold out. This was one of their most successful sales offerings, and all were gone in less than seven weeks. I asked that they repeat with another "run" of 250. In mid-April they advised that they had 86 unfilled orders for the B-24 and this apparently justified further production. However, the earliest that they can expect delivery is sometime in November, 2004.

As mentioned, the B-24 model was in 1/72 scale (wingspan 18"). I asked Corgi if they had WWII fighter aircraft in that scale. They just started a new line a few months ago; it is not even in their catalog yet. I requested and received the models listed below, which I will take to the convention to display: ME-109, Code 474-N4001; FW-190, Code 470-N4001; Hurricane, Code 471-N4001; Spitfire, Code 472-N4001; and P-51 Mustang, Code 473-4001. All of the above are in camouflage; the P-51 is in O.D. The 2ADA discounted price is \$15.98 plus \$4.98 S&H. Also available: P-51 Mustang, silver, 352nd FG (more detailed) Code 77-N4001 (as shown in photo) and P-47 Thunderbolt, O.D., 56th FG (more detailed) Code 143-N4001 (red ring cowl). Both above \$23.98 plus \$4.98 S&H. When ordered with the Code number you will get the discounted price as shown above.

The NEW NUMBER assigned to the FUTURE B-24 is 239-4002. This will get you the 2ADA B-24 model, still \$100.00 plus \$6.98 S&H. Remember, this model will not be available until November.

Here's how to handle your order. All above except the B-24 are in their warehouse. Send to: Corgi Classics, P.O. Box 910, Norwalk, CT 06852-9893. They have given me an Internet address of www.corgionline.com. A section will be set up on their website called "As recently seen in our ads..." All you need to do is type in the Code and you will see a picture of the item and be able to order over the Internet and receive the 2ADA discount.

The following telephone number will be answered by Amanda Streeter and is given her only to answer any questions you might have. It CANNOT be used to order any models. She may rue the day she agreed to allow her number, but I had dozens of calls that I had to refer to her. The phone number is 312-302-9912, fax 312-427-1880. If you order by mail, send your check, money order or credit card number at the same time. If they run out of stock they will return payment or hold until backorder is filled; your choice.

ON FINAL

George Reynolds has new book in print entitled *Spacecraft and Earthquakes Plus*. Soft cover, ISBN 1-4134-0562-2, published by Xlibris. It can be ordered by calling 1-888-795-4274. The book size is 8.5" x 5", 160 pages. The price is \$20.99. This book is a result of documenting events and analysis on earthquakes, volcano eruptions, and freakish weather from 1981-2002. The connection to spacecraft launching is compiled and effects shown by environmental changes. The author connects cause and effect into a statistical account.

Latest word from **Duke Trivette**, our Wright-Patterson Museum contact, is that the memorial we initially dedicated in 1987 is still at the stone mason's. No word as yet whether a new stone will be made or the original repaired. The crack at the apex of the gray granite is the area involved. See the Winter 2002-2003 *Journal*, page 19, for photo.

Remember to keep your nose up in the turns . . . ■

44TH NEWS (continued from page 12)

. . . **George Apgar**, who met his wife, **Beryl**, at a 44th reunion in England in 1992 and they can be remembered as that spry couple who could "dance up a storm" at our reunions.

Our condolences to all the families.



The 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association 2004 reunion will be held on Labor Day weekend in San Antonio. ■



446TH BOMB GROUP

FLIXTON-BUNGAY UPDATE

BY LINK VEAZEY

As I write, there are only about thirty-eight days before the 60th anniversary marking the end of World War II. If you are like me, the days of long ago seem so very, very long ago.

Although I retain some very significant happenings in my memory, I often have to search through my memory to achieve some semblance of "total recall," if there is such a thing.

I meet, monthly, with a group of veterans to have a meal together and to enjoy hearing the experiences of another veteran who has been selected as speaker of the month. We enjoy sharing these experiences and discussing the days when we served in the uniformed services.

The purpose of the organization, "Task Force Patriot," is to memorialize the events of the past to ensure that all citizens, es-

pecially young people, learn that our freedom was not free, but that many others have paid the price so that we may have the lifestyle which we enjoy today. Additionally, we serve our communities by providing food and assistance to those who are in need. We also assist at funeral services for other veterans, in absence of active or reserve units. Attending our last meeting, among others, were three ex B-24 crew members and about ten high school ROTC students.

My suggestion to all veterans is for you to stay busy, within your physical abilities, by serving those less fortunate than yourself.

As we grow older, I have adopted the philosophy that if we do not use what we have, we may lose it. Have a Happy 60th Anniversary — and remember that if you don't use it, you will probably lose it. ■

KETTERINGHAM HALL DIVISION



BY RAY STRONG

I have been rummaging through a lot of old files and newsletters and journals hoping to find an idea for something for this issue of *The Journal*. **Jim Reeves** sent me some things, and I will publish most of them in the next HQ Newsletter. But one struck me as especially interesting. It is a picture taken at Ketteringham St. Peters Church in July 1990. You can see several pictures and a write-up about our visit to the church in Newsletter No. 6 dated September 1990. HQ decided to raise some money for the fund for the church organ which was in need of extensive repairs. We raised \$1,608 and this was converted into £863 sterling. If you do not have Newsletter #6 and would like a copy, just send me a note or an e-mail and I will send you one. There are fifteen pictures in Newsletter #6. My e-mail address is: rstrong2@nc.rr.com.

But also at this occasion, we were presented with an 8th Air Force insignia painted on some boards from a box that contained something shipped from the USA. I believe that this was placed in the Hard-



Pictured with the insignia in 1990 are (from left) Ray Strong, Dorothy Krogmann, and James Reeves, who were all based at Ketteringham Hall during the war, churchwardens Mary Parker and Daphne Reeve, and the Archdeacon of Norfolk, the Ven Peter Dawson.

wick museum and, as far as I know, it is still there. The picture and a short article were published in the *Eastern Daily Press*, Monday, August 6, 1990, as follows:

"A wartime insignia left behind by American airmen in their Nissen hut haws found a new home in the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room at Norwich Central Library. It was presented to the division's headquarters staff during a return visit to their base at Ketteringham, near Norwich.

"They packed the village church for a service led by the Archdeacon of Norfolk, the Ven Peter Dawson. A cheque for more than

800 pounds was presented to the organ fund by former association president Ray Strong.

"On behalf of the village, churchwarden Dr. Mary Parker presented the HQ staff with the insignia of the 8th Air Force, painted on wooden panels made from bomber spares crates. It was found in a Nissen hut, and re-assembled and framed by George Evans, who as a young boy witnessed the Americans' arrival in the village in 1943.

"After planting two American red oaks in the churchyard, the veterans made a nostalgic return to their old base at Ketteringham Hall for lunch as guests of Team Lotus." ■

Russia's Women Combat Pilots

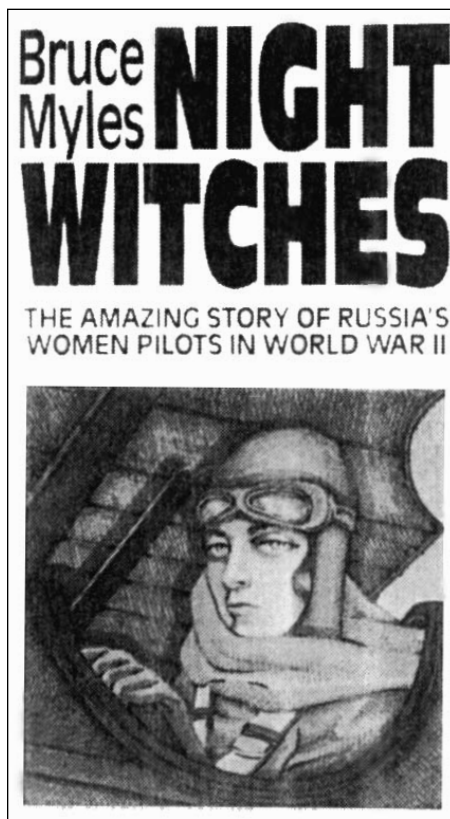
BY JIM HANFORD • REPRINTED FROM YANKEE WINGS

Subtitled “The Amazing Story of Russia’s Women Pilots in World War II,” *Night Witches* by Bruce Myles is a significant addition to the aviation history of WWII. Just a few people are aware of the American and British women pilots who served respectively in the WASP and ATA organizations, and probably even fewer are aware (at least outside Russia) that Russian women also served as aviators in the Great Patriotic War, as WWII was known in their country. The major differences between the experiences of the US/UK women and their Russian counterparts were that the latter flew combat aircraft on combat missions, and that their units were completely staffed by women — air crews, ground crews, and command structure.

The entire book is a result of a discovery while on the way to looking up something else. As Myles was researching the air war on the Eastern official history of the Soviet Air Force he found a few paragraphs on the use of women in combat. He was further surprised to learn that they fought not in ones and twos, or in limited engagements, but that entire regiments were raised and served continuously in combat over periods of months and years. They became aces, were decorated for bravery, and sustained casualties.

Further investigation produced references to women flyers in limited-circulation German books on the air war in the East. Ultimately Myles made several trips to the Soviet Union, and interviewed between twenty and thirty survivors, singly and in groups, making cross-references between accounts to establish their authenticity. He also had access to their regimental histories and works written by the women themselves, but never published outside the Soviet Union.

What emerges is an account of female volunteers who answered a desperate call in 1941 to serve in the Russian Air Force. The majority of them reported for training in October 1941 at Engels, a small country town north of Stalingrad. There they had their indoctrination into military aviation. Their first experience was in making over



their standard (male-sized) uniforms. Most of them were already experienced civil aviators. By April 1942, they had completed the equivalent of primary and basic training in the Polikarpov PO-2 biplane, and were assigned to their operational units.

The cream of the class would make up the 586th Fighter Regiment, flying the single-seat Yakovlev Yak-1. The rest were assigned to the 587th (Day) Bomber Regiment, equipped with the twin-engine Petylakov Pe-2 light bomber, or to the 588th Night Bomber Regiment. The latter flew the same type aircraft on which they had trained — the open cockpit PO-2.

As one might expect, Russian men were continually amazed when encountering these combat-trained women, but Myles does not dwell too much on it. One amusing incident occurred the day before they were scheduled to graduate from flight training. The male commandment ordered them to cut their long hair. All of them complied except one, a mechanic with thick and lustrous corn-colored hair which extended to her waist. As the others cut off

their long tresses, she sat on her bunk combing her hair. The next morning several of her colleagues appealed on her behalf to their female squadron commander. Major Raskova, who was a renowned Russian aviator prior to the war, wore her own hair in a bun. She agreed to overlook it as long as the girl kept her hair securely pinned up beneath her beret at all times.

Two days later the women stood for a surprise inspection by a general from one of the air armies. Passing through the ranks, he stopped in front of the mechanic. Looking her in the eye he raised his hand and whipped off her beret as well as her hair clasp. Blown by the wind, her long hair tumbled down. The other women gasped and wondered what the general would do. Throwing back his head, he roared with laughter and summoned Major Raskova. “Why haven’t all the girls got their hair like this?” he asked. “A girl without hair is like a horse without a mane.” It was of little comfort to those whose long tresses were pressed between the pages of a book, but it encouraged them to let their hair grow again when they got to the front.

Much of the book is anecdotal, describing their experiences through individual eyes. That the majority of them were tested far beyond their Western counterparts is apparent. After graduation in May 1942, the 586th and 587th Regiments were soon fighting for their lives over Stalingrad, and in 1943 over Kursk. The 588th entered combat on the southern front. As a result of their performance under fire, they received the prestigious designation of the 46th Guards Regiment. As the ground war ebbed and flowed the aviation units moved too, occasionally shifting between fronts. The women endured austere living conditions just like their male counterparts. The only difference was that the women somehow managed to keep their billets a little cleaner.



Myles, Bruce: *Night Witches*: (Presidio Press: Novato, CA): 272 pages, illus.

In 1990 this work was republished in soft-cover form by the Academy Chicago Publishers of Chicago, Illinois. ■

Since 1987, I have attended most reunions. I have come to know, love, and respect the veterans. I have heard their stories. My father has begun telling his story. What was "modern history" forty years ago is a little farther in the past (not too much farther into the past as I am still that little girl). History has become interesting, exciting, worth studying and remembering. Part of the reason history has become what it has, is the stories and information included in *The Journal*, the bomb group newsletters, in our *Heritage Herald*, and in books written by the veterans themselves. The Heritage League is committed to honoring these veterans, aiding in preserving their stories and their memorials.

We Heritage League members try to take every opportunity to spend time visiting with veterans and their families. Heritage League members have a common bond, as those veterans are our fathers, mothers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or special friends. In addition to the 2ADA convention, members attend bomb group reunions and the regional get-togethers, listening to stories and learning.

Last fall the 44th Bomb Group held its reunion in Washington, D.C. Our communications vice president, **Brian Mahoney**, in conjunction with **Beth Ertz** and **Bera Dordoni**, daughters of **Julian Ertz**, came up with a unique idea. Heritage League members in attendance became the informal group "The Heritones" and sang background to a special version of "On Eagles Wings" sung by Bera accompanied on the piano by Beth. This idea carried forward and was repeated at the 2ADA Southern California brunch held at the end of February.

Beth Ertz was the coordinator for us. Members gathered in the morning before the event to practice. When "The Heritones" were introduced, a wonderful group including **Scott Ertz**, brother of Bera and Beth, came forward to sing background for Bera. I apologize that space does not allow me to list all who gathered to sing. "The Heritones" consisted of approximately 26 children, spouses, grandchildren, friends and relatives of our veterans. This was an especially poignant tribute, an example to us all, as **Jackie Bromm** and **Candace Calder** traveled some distance from their California homes to sing with us. Their father, **Fred Bromm** (445th), had died just days before. Fred had been on the committee that organized the Sunday brunch.

For me, another memorable part of the brunch was being given the privilege by

YOUR HERITAGE LEAGUE

BY IRENE HURNER

Bud Chamberlain and the committee of joining in the candle-lighting ceremony. Thank you.

In March, Heritage League members and officers, secretary **Linda Wittig** and associate secretary **Brenda Tudyk** were able to be in Dallas for the annual 2ADA Southwest Region Reunion Dinner. This event gave members time to visit and look at memorabilia with other veterans and families.

During our business meeting in Philadelphia on May 28, reports were given, new officers were elected, and time was allowed for members to just visit. We look forward to these times when members can share their stories and interests.

A wreath was laid at Cambridge during Memorial Day ceremonies and at Normandy during D-Day anniversary ceremonies. **John Gilbert**, a member of the Friends of the Second Division and of The Heritage League, represented us at Normandy, while another member of The Friends took a turn for us at Cambridge.

With a vision towards the future, some veterans, their spouses and friends created our organization to carry on many of the activities of the Second Air Division Association after it ceases to exist. The laying of wreaths to honor fallen veterans is an activity that our members feel is of importance and should continue. It is one of a variety of items that bears consideration. For this reason I appointed an *ad hoc* transition committee during the past year, charged with making specific recommendations to the Executive Committee and to the membership on activities that should be supported when our veterans no longer can. The Executive Committee in collaboration with members worked last year to restate its purpose, goals, and vision so that there will be a clear understanding for all who come into contact with The Heritage League.

Other opportunities to share knowledge and develop friendships will be increased by one new event this year. Group VP **Lloyd**

Prang and the 453rd Bomb Group will be meeting in Kalamazoo, Michigan this fall. The Heritage League will meet October 8-11 alongside the 453rd BG. We are looking forward to visiting and getting to know one another. Information can be obtained from our officers, in *The Heritage Herald*, or on our website. I look forward to visiting with you at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Kalamazoo. ■

METFIELD / NORTH PICKENHAM



491st BOMB GROUP
POSTREMUM ET OPTIMUM

the RINGMASTER REPORTS

BY HUGH M. BENNETT

By the time you receive this issue of *The Journal*, the 57th Convention of the 2ADA will be history. One of the issues discussed: How much longer will we be able to get together?

In the April 2004 issue of the VFW magazine is a very good article on the G.A.R. (The Grand Army of the Republic). The Civil War ended in 1865 and they had "encampments" over a period of 84 years. In 1949 they had their 83rd and last get-together in Indianapolis, Indiana. With only sixteen Civil War veterans still alive, only six men were able to attend. Although they were willing to go to the last man, it was time to call it quits. Growing up in the Finger Lakes of New York State, I remember reading about James Hard every Memorial Day. He never missed a parade. At 108 years of age, he was one of the last six who wanted to go for one more; that's what I call dedication. At this rate, in 2032, if there are six of us left, we can get together in a great-grandson's back yard.

My personal opinion is that the 491st should work with the 2nd Air Division Association and have one group reunion together each year down to the last man. It's a good possibility that there will be a few able-bodied veterans left in 2025.

The 491st will be in Savannah, Georgia in October, and hopefully we will have a good turnout. Until then, may God bless all the survivors of the Second Air Division. ■



SEETHING

The 448th Speaks

BY KING SCHULTZ

Upon discovering that several 448th types who belong to the Second Air Division Association were not aware of the Seething Tower Museum & Association, Pat Everson has written the following history.

The Memories Live On

BY PATRICIA EVERSON

"Stanmare", Seething, Norwich, Norfolk NR151AL, UK

SITUATED IN South Norfolk, England, Seething is a small village approximately ten miles from Norwich whose inhabitants through the years average between 350 to 400.

In 1942 construction began on an airfield which was to become Station 146 Seething. Land from the villages of Seething, Mundham, and Thwaite St Mary was used. Advance units arrived from America to help prepare the base in mid-1943 and in November the 448th Bombardment Group (H) and its support units started their journey over to England.

The impact on the surrounding villages was tremendous as over 3,000 young Americans and their huge B-24 Liberators took up residence close by. The children especially were excited, and no doubt also some of the local girls!

The skies were always busy, as our area had many American and British airbases. The local people invited the GIs into their homes and children from local schools were invited to parties on the base. Several dances took place. Airmen on their bicycles became a familiar sight on the narrow country roads, stopping to ask the children where the local pub was and "Have you got a big sister at home?" Young boys used to run errands, picking up washing from the base and getting friendly with Americans. Gifts of gum, candies, and the comic strip pages were very popular. During their time on Station 146 several weddings took place between the GIs and local girls.

The B-24 Liberators and crews flew off on their missions, 262 in total. Local people would look out for them coming back. Damaged aircraft crash landing, explosions as some crashed, and strafing by enemy aircraft were, sadly, all-too-familiar sights and sounds. Nearly 500 men were lost from the 448th BG during WWII.

Then came the night in 1945 when the sky was lit by a display of brightly coloured flares and rockets as they celebrated the end of the war in Europe and then prepared to leave.

The world seemed such a dull, drab place for most of the children after their friendly American neighbours had left. The base was transferred to the RAF and became a storage and breaking unit for bombs and armament, with large piles of bombs on the now deserted runways.

Then in 1960 the **Waveney Flying Group** was formed and bought part of the old base that contained the derelict control tower and sections of the original runways. The T2 hangars were no longer there, so they built a hangar to house their light aircraft

and work parties cleared the runways. Through the years several air shows took place and were very popular, but due to rising costs the last one was in the early 1980s.

While over in Norwich with a 2ADA convention, veterans of the 448th BG Association called at their old base, and they discussed later providing a memorial stone at their old base and Seething village. They contacted Waveney Flying Group and both Seething church and village authorities; then the plans commenced to welcome back "home" the 448th veterans.

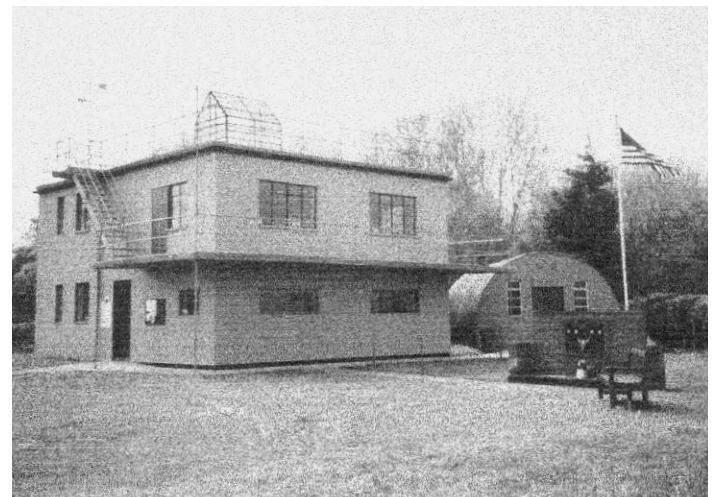
In 1984 two splendid memorials designed by **Bob Harper** in America were unveiled; one on the old 448th base and another in Seething village churchyard.

A large group of veterans, their families and relatives of those killed or missing from the 448th BG were joined by local people and those villagers who had lived around the base in 1943-45 at a service in the village church followed by a reception.

During their visit the veterans were upset at the sad state of the old control tower, and led by **Lt. Col. Leroy Engdahl** they contacted chairman **Bob Marjoram** and the committee of Waveney Flying Group who agreed for the tower to be restored.

In 1985 a small team from Waveney Flying Group led by **Min & Ralph Whitehead**, with **Mike Page** and **Judy Speed**, started work. They were joined later by **Ron Everson** and **Jim Turner** from the village. Sadly Min Whitehead didn't live to see the work completed.

Funds were sent over from America and various fundraising ideas helped; these included plaques with pieces of the runway mounted on them. After two years of hard work, the big day arrived in 1987. The 448th veterans, families and friends arrived back at the base, and after a dedication ceremony the veterans walked to the



tower where Lt. Col. Engdahl cut the ribbon and declared the tower open, a very emotional time for all.

Later that year **The Station 146 Tower Association** was formed, and it was decided to hold special open days on the first Sundays in the months from May to October.

In 1984 **Patricia Everson** had started writing to members of the 448th asking for their memories of their time with the 448th and the loan of photographs to copy and return. From that day **"The 448th Bomb Group Collection"** was "born" and since 1987 it has been on display in the tower on open days. The collection now consists of over 50 albums of personal stories and wartime diaries, and hundreds of photographs.

Through the years much more restoration and various improve-
(continued on page 20)

WHERE ARE THE LIBERATOR SURVIVORS?

BY JIM LORENZ (466TH)

Some time ago, the December 2002 issue of *Aeroplane*, a British monthly publication by IPC Media Ltd., London, was given to me by a Southwest Airlines pilot who found it in his ready-room. I was overwhelmed to find in it a 20-page story by Robert F. Dorr on the most complete histories of the B-24 I have ever seen. He also repeats an article by R.F.M. Nielsen, which originally appeared in "The Aeronautical Engineering" section of the November 19, 1943 issue of *The Aeroplane*, which covers in detail the structure and equipment of a standard RAF Liberator Mk II and gives many Consolidated detailed schematics. His list of the some 32 variants of the B-24 with the improvements and changes is noted in the chart below. The "II" was the precursor of our B-24s — 140 of these were built in 1940 for the RAF. As I recall, the B-24D was the model we all trained in (some 2,696 were built). I can well remember July 4, 1944, when our crew went to Topeka, Kansas to check out and to accept for the U.S. Army Air Forces, a brand new Ford B-24J model #44-50718 (list price \$325,000 — no discounts!) and flew it to England. This model had lots of improvements — what sheer luxury — after flying the war-weary D model.

In his article Mr. Dorr makes many comments and quotes such as:

"Although often overshadowed by the slower but more famous B-17, the B-24 Liberator performed outstandingly in several operational theatres."

"Derided initially by its detractors, who compared its boxy appearance with Boeing's more elegant Flying Fortress, the B-24 nevertheless contained some well-thought-out engineering — it was not 'the box the B-17 came in'."

Although it was built in greater numbers than any other Allied bomber (19,276), only a handful of Liberators still survive. Only 13 complete B-24s are listed, with only two still in flying condition: Consolidated LB-30, AM927 — Diamond Lil — operated by The Commemorative Air Force, and Consolidated B-24-J-85-CF 44-44052 owned by The Collings Foundation. I was completely unaware of those B-24s in Canada and India. Ten other complete B-24s are on display at places noted in the complete listing of the "Last of the Libs" by Robert F. Dorr (*see page 19*). This is an excerpt from the December 2002 issue of *Aeroplane*. Both the editor and the author have given permission to reprint.

B-24 Liberator variants

XB-24/XB-24B	Prototype 39-556 first flew December 29, 1939. Fitted with turbosupercharger and re-serialised 39-680, XB-24B first flew February 1, 1941	B-24J	Small modifications to B-24H including autopilot and M-9 bombsight. 6,678 built by Consolidated, Ford, Douglas, Convair and NA. RAF Liberator VI
YB-24	7 ordered March 1939 by US Army for high-altitude research. Six built as LB-30As for RAF and one with armour and self-sealing fuel tanks to Army Air Forces	XB-24K	One B-24D converted to test single fin and rudder
LB-30B	20 B-24As built for US Army, diverted to RAF as Liberator Is . Fitted with self-sealing fuel tanks	B-24L	Tail turret and waist gun revisions. Built at Ford (1,250) and Consolidated (417)
Liberator II	As Liberator I with 3ft nose extension and Curtiss electric propellers. 140 built for RAF. Of these 46 served in Army Air Forces as LB-30s	TB-24L	Converted from B-24L, with chin, ventral, dorsal and tail barbettes for B-29 crew training
B-24A	9 built. Assigned to US Ferry Command	B-24M	As B-24J with Motor Products tail turret. Built at Ford (1,677) and Consolidated (916)
B-24C	9 built. Fitted with turbosupercharged R-1830-41 engines, self-sealing fuel tanks and powered turrets	XB-24N	One B-24J converted to single tail arrangement
B-24D	As B-24C but fitted with R-1830-43 engines and Spriggs/Berry ball turret on B-24D-140s. 2,696 built. PB4Y-1 in US Navy service	YB-24N	7 built at Ford with single tail and other modifications
Liberator III	As B-24D for RAF service. Ball turret deleted	B-24N	Orders for 5,168 cancelled
B-24E	As B-24D but with tunnel gun. Built at Ford (490) and Consolidated (144) and fitted with R-1830-65 engines. 167 built by Douglas with R-1830-43s	XB-24P	One B-24L equipped for Sperry fire-control tests
XB-24F	One B-24D fitted with thermal de-icing equipment	XB-24Q	One B-24L fitted with GE radar-controlled rear turret
B-24G	As B-24D but built by North American (NA) in Dallas. Fitted with nose turret from number 26. 430 built	PB4Y-2	US Navy version with single fin, named Privateer . 736 built plus 39 constructed as RY-3 transports
B-24H	As B-24G with armament modifications. Built by Ford (1,780), Convair (738), and Douglas (582)	C-87	Transport version of B-24D for 25 passengers
		C-87A	As C-87 with 10 berths
		RY-1/2	8 US Navy C-87/C-87A transport conversions
		AT-22	5 C-87s converted for flight engineer training
		XC-109	One B-24E converted by Ford into tanker
		C-109	208 B-24J and Ls converted into tankers
		XF-7	One B-24D converted for photo reconnaissance
		F-7/F-7A/B	B-24Ds converted for various camera configurations
		XB-41	Single B-24D with 14 guns for bomber escort

Manufactured in greater numbers than any other Allied bomber, only a handful of Liberators still survive. ROBERT F. DORR details those remaining.

Navy Versions Not Listed

Consolidated LB-30 AM927, registered as N22905 and named *Diamond Lil*, is operated by the Commemorative Air Force and is the oldest Liberator existing in the world today. Damaged while on delivery to Britain, it was returned to the factory and emerged as a C-87. After VJ-Day it spent ten years as an executive transport, later flying as XC-CAY for the Mexican National Oil Company. *Diamond Lil* has flown for some years in the markings of the Ninth Air Force.

Consolidated B-24D-10-CO 41-23908 was operating with the 21st Heavy Bombardment Squadron in January 1943 when bad weather forced it to land on uninhabited Great Sitka in the Aleutian Islands. Recovered in 1995 and restored with some parts from a PB4Y-2 Privateer, the fuselage is on display at Hill Aerospace Museum in Utah, and the wings are expected to follow in late 2002.

Consolidated B-24D-160-CO 42-72843, *Strawberry Bitch*, is displayed at the USAF Museum, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. This aircraft flew 59 wartime missions with the 512th BS, 376th BG "Liberandos". After 13 years in storage in Arizona, it was flown to the museum in 1959.

Consolidated B-24M (PB4Y-1) 44-41916 was delivered to the US Navy at MCAS Cherry Point in North Carolina. Converted to a transport, it was sold to a private company after the war, eventually ending up in Bolivia as CP-576. The aircraft was recovered from La Paz in the early 1980s to Castle Air Museum in Atwater, California, where it still resides painted in the markings of the 329th BS, 93rd BG, 2nd Air Division, Eighth Air Force.

Consolidated B-24M-10-CO 44-41956, the last surviving Liberator to have served with the RAAF, as A72-176, is at Werribee, Victoria, where static restoration is nearing completion (see *News*, November 2000 *Aeroplane*).

Consolidated B-24J-85-CF 44-44052 belongs to the Collings Foundation and is widely seen in air show appearances on the warbird circuit. The aircraft served in the Indian Air Force (IAF) as KH191. Later, as a warbird, it was painted as *The All-American*. In recent years it has appeared at airshows as *The Dragon and his Tail*, representing B-24J-190-CO Liberator 44-40973 of the 64th BS, 43rd BG, considered to have the most colourful nose art of all time.

Consolidated B-24J-90-CF 44-44175 is displayed at the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, Arizona. Today it is called *The Bungay Buckaroo* and carries the markings of the USAAF 446th BG on one side and those of the IAF on the other. In the past it was painted as *Shoot You're Covered* of the 7th BG in the CBI theatre. The aircraft was a Liberator Mk VI which served in the RAF as KH304 from 1944 to 1946, and later in the IAF as HE877.



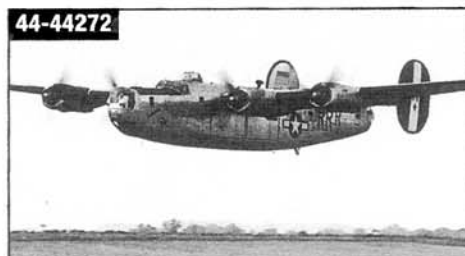
44-44052



AM927



44-44175



44-44272



44-48781



44-51228



c/n 6907L

Consolidated B-24J-90-CF 44-44213 operated with the RAF in the Far East as Mk VI KH342. Struck off RAF charge on April 11, 1946, the aircraft was given the IAF serial number HE924, and is on display at the Indian Air Force Museum at Palam, New Delhi.

Consolidated B-24J-95-CF 44-44272 belongs to Kermit Weeks's Fantasy of Flight Museum at Polk City, Florida. Painted as *Joe* of the 566th BS, 389th BG, the aircraft displays "50551" on the inside of the port fin. Originally assigned to 215 Sqn RAF in India, it flew with the IAF until being bought in 1973 by David Tallichet Jr. As a warbird it was initially painted as *Delectable Doris* of the 389th BG.

Ford B-24J-20-FO 44-48781, named *Laden Maiden*, is displayed at the Eighth Air Force Museum at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana.

Ford B-24L 44-50154, property of the National Aviation Museum in Canada, was delivered to the RAF as KN820 in 1944. It subsequently served with the IAF as HE733/M. It was later donated to the Canadian museum in exchange for a Westland Lysander. It was flown to Canada and officially handed over in June 1968.

Ford EZB-24M-21-FO 44-51228, belonging to the American Air Museum at Duxford, has probably been on display longer than any other Liberator. It was at Lackland AFB, Texas, from at least 1955, originally in its post-war USAF markings and later painted as *The Blasted Event* of the 329th BS, 93rd BG (RE-Z). It is currently on display in the colours of *Dugan* of the 392nd BG.

Ford B-24L-20-FO c/n 6907L was built as KN751 for the RAF, and was struck off RAF charge in April 1946 and acquired by the Indian Air Force for maritime patrols as HE809, retiring in December 1968. The aircraft was donated to the RAF Museum by the Indian Government, and flew to Lyneham in July 1974. In January 1976 it moved to its permanent home at the RAF Museum, Cosford, where it is still on display.

■ There are also a number of incomplete Liberator airframes in various locations around the world, including **LB-30 AL557** stored in Colorado with basic fuselage and wings intact, and the remains of **Consolidated B-24D-25-CO 41-24301** *Lady Be Good* at a police compound in Tobruk, Libya.

USAAF Air Transport Command

EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK: "OFFICIAL PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE USAAF"

The Army's great aerial transportation agency was the Air Transport Command. Whenever men, planes, and supplies had to be delivered in a hurry or whenever there was no other means of getting them where they were needed, the Air Transport Command took on the job. Under wartime conditions transport or combat planes crossed the Atlantic on an average of one every 13 minutes, the broader Pacific, every hour and a half; and, in one year, more than a billion pounds of high priority cargo, passengers, and mail were carried to war theaters around the globe.

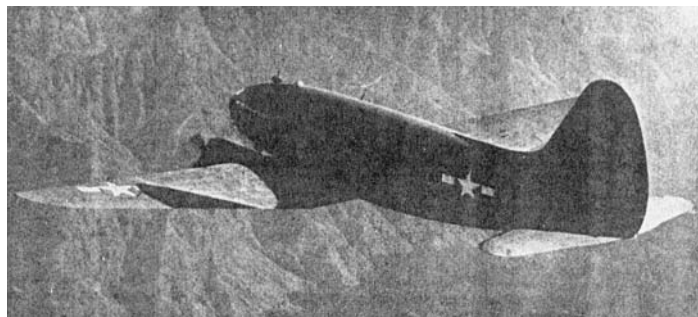
The ATC began as the Air Corps Ferrying Command on May 29, 1941 with two officers, one civilian, a world map posted in a Washington office, and an assignment to assist in delivering military aircraft to the countries then fighting for democracy. Within a year, airfields, isolated stations, and lonely weather and communications outposts had been built on deserts, tropical islands, and arctic wastes. The first ferry delivery reached Montreal on June 9, 1941. The first transatlantic flight — from Washington to Prestwick — departed on July 1. A trip to Cairo was undertaken in September, followed by a round-the-world journey touching Washington, Prestwick, Moscow, and Singapore. From the first contract in August 1941, fullest use was made of the skill and experience of the commercial airlines flying under contract to the War Department and dependent for control upon the ATC.

After America entered the war, many civilian transport pilots were commissioned as officers to ferry military aircraft. Experienced commercial airline executives donned uniforms to serve on the staff of veteran flyer Lt. Gen. Harold L. George, who had assumed command of the Ferrying Command on April 1, 1942.

By June 1942, ATC routes touched all six continents. Routes were inaugurated to Alaska in April 1942, and in June, when the ATC took its present name, B-17s were delivered on short notice to participate in the Battle of Midway, and personnel and munitions were rushed to Dutch harbor to check the Japanese in the Aleutians. In July the first plane landed at Ascension Island, base on the South Atlantic route, P-38s were flown to the United Kingdom in August, and A-20s to North Africa with the U.S. landings in November. In December the ATC took over the route from Assam to China, flown since April 1942 by the 1st Ferrying Group



At ATC base in Greenland a TWA-flown Douglas four-engine C-54 takes off. This ship, used for long overwater hops by commercial airlines under contract with the Army, is the type in which President Roosevelt returned from the Casablanca conference and made the Teheran-Cairo trip of 1943. Powered by four Pratt & Whitney engines, it is capable of carrying heavy loads to any part of the globe.



An ATC C-46 flies "the Hump" between India and China, making routine a feat almost unheard of in pre-war days.

of the Tenth Air Force.

By 1945 the ATC, with more than 200,000 members in uniform, was flying with clocklike regularity routes that were considered unflyable before the war. To supply the Fourteenth Air Force and the XX Bomber Command, it carried fuel, bombs, jeeps, five-ton trucks, and 12 1/2-ton roadscrapers over the towering Himalayas, achieving during July 1945 an average of one plane every 1.3 minutes over the Hump. By the war's end, ATC operated 11 divisions, delivering at airplane speed to every front the critically needed items on which global victory was to hinge. ■

THE MEMORIES LIVE ON (continued from page 17)

ments by the small "Tower Team" has resulted in a well-cared-for building that, as veterans have remarked, "looks better than it did during wartime." Several large 448th reunions have taken place, the last one led by 448th BG President **Cater Lee** in 1998. Also, many private visits by veterans and their families over the years have been special.

Various tour groups visit the tower, and increasingly now it is relatives of the veterans coming over to see the tower, memorials, and the Second Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich.

The Station 146 Tower Association has members around the world and publishes three newsletters a year giving the latest news and articles.

If you would like to join us, the dues are \$10 a year. Please make your check out to "Station 146 Tower Association" and send to Membership Secretary Jim Turner, The Beeches, Brooke Rd.,

Seething, Norwich NR151DJ, England.

Several committee members have changed over the years due to deaths and people moving on, but a small group have been involved from the start. This unique building is a living memorial to the men based at Seething and is the only Second Air Division control tower open to the public on a regular basis.

A new addition is the Nissen hut built near the tower. It is hoped to eventually have extra displays there when funds allow the building of cabinets, etc.

On the Open Days the tower is a very busy place, and visitors enjoy the wartime memorabilia and learn through the personal stories and large photographic display a little of what life was like for Americans based in England during WWII.

Visit <http://www.seething.org.uk> and click links to 448th, or e-mail patricia.everson@lineone.net, as *your* information and memories are still needed. ■

ATTLEBRIDGE TALES



BY JIM LORENZ

MAIL CALL

I had a letter from **Les Willis**, a 2nd Air Division history buff who lives in Sprowston, England, concerning our 466th "Flying Deck" orchestra. Les noted that in a copy of our 200th Mission Party handout,

the program listed music by "The Flying Yanks." He states he knows that the Ketteringham Hall band played at various group parties; and their history indicates they played at the 466th's 200th Mission Party. Les is curious to know if anyone recalls where "The Flying Yanks" band was from. Another name for our "Flying Deck"? Or was it just error? Send me any comments and I'll get them to Les.

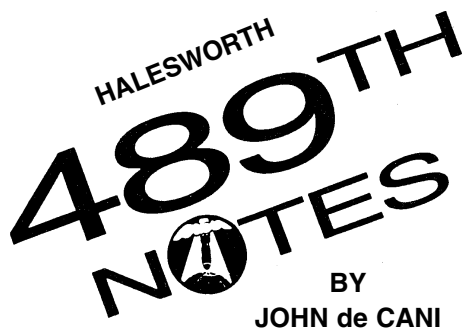
We had an e-mail from **Norma Beasley** on March 2 advising that 2ADA Treasurer **Bill Nothstein** (466th BG) had five heart area bypasses and a valve replacement on February 16; he had some complications after the operation and was still hospitalized for rehabilitation. I talked with his wife on March 23. She reported that recovery was slow and that they would be moving him to a care facility soon. I'm sure the Nothsteins would appreciate any cards and/or notes you might care to send them.

466TH BG MEMBERSHIP

I have just received the February/March details on our members. As of last fall, we had 240 members and 24 associate members; as of March 2004, we have 225 members and 14 associate members. Most all of these just stopped paying dues. We'll have further information at the May 2004 convention in Philadelphia.

SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944

Don't recognize this bill? Most of us were in England during this period — and I sure don't remember being concerned (or even knowing or caring) about this bill. We surely all do know now its other, unofficial, name: "GI Bill of Rights of 1944"! I recently attended a lecture on Arizona history and learned that Arizona **Senator Ernest W. McFarland** was the father of this bill. *(continued on next page)*



BY
JOHN de CANI

This issue of *The Journal* should reach you shortly after the 489th Bomb Group Association meets during the Second Air Division Association convention, May 27-28-29 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Philadelphia. Our most important task at this meeting is to elect four officers of the 489th BGA for the coming year. These officers are: Group Vice President (currently, **John S. de Cani**), Assistant Vice President and 489th BG Newsletter Editor (currently, **Charles H. Freudenthal**), Secretary (currently, **Charles H. Reeves**), and Treasurer (currently, **John P. Lamar**).

Since the election process begins with nominations of candidates for these offices, in early March I asked **H. "Mickey" Baskin**, **C.N. "Bud" Chamberlain**, and **Neal Sorensen** to serve as a nominating committee. They agreed and selected Bud as their chairman. Because I have been asked and have agreed to be a candidate for the position of Executive Vice President of the 2ADA, I told the nominating committee that it would not be appropriate for me to also be a candidate for Group Vice Presi-

dent. Early in April, Bud called me with the nominating committee's report. Herewith, the nominees:

Group Vice President: **Mel (Emilio A.) Pontillo**. Assistant Vice President and Newsletter Editor: **Charles H. Freudenthal**. Secretary: **Charles H. Reeves**. Treasurer: **John P. Lamar**.

All candidates have agreed to run and to serve if elected. The only new face is Mel Pontillo's. Mel was Bud's engineer and, of course, comes very highly recommended. His address is 837 Childs Ave., Monaca, PA 15061-1318. The addresses of the remaining candidates are as they appear in the Newsletter masthead. Thank you, committee, and thank you, nominees.

The following is NOT a paid commercial message: On page 1 of the December, 2003 Newsletter, Charlie had an item headlined "CORGI MAKING 250 B-24 MODELS FOR 2nd AIR DIVISION MEMBERS." I received an ad for this model in the mail. The price was \$100 plus \$7 shipping and handling. I ordered one without markings and I am delighted with it. It came carefully packaged and almost completely assembled, along with a good-looking stand on which to mount it. Only the tail skid, landing gear, and nose turret had to be glued into place. (No glue was supplied.) When I put together model airplane kits as a boy, I invariably got my thumb glued to my index finger. I was lucky this time. The model is proudly displayed in the center of my bookshelves, set off handsomely by my vast collection of statistics books.

WYATT PORTERFIELD SUCCUMBS

The following obituary was submitted by **Hap Chandler**:

Wyatt Porterfield joined the Army Air Forces at age 18 and was in combat with the 489th Bomb Group a year later. He flew a tour of 30 missions in record time, including two on D-Day. His awards included the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with clusters, EAME with battle stars.

He died 20 January 2004 after an extended illness resulting from stroke. His devoted wife of 53 years, Joanne, and his family were in constant attendance until his death.

For 47 years he owned and operated Porterfield Building and Developing Company developing residential and commercial properties in the Athens, Georgia area. An avid golfer and horseman, he belonged to the Senior Golfers Association, Athens Country Club, past president of the Athens Kiwanis Club, past president and director of the Athens Home Builders Association and The Belle Meade Hunt Club. He was an avid Georgia Bulldog fan. He served his church, Prince Avenue Baptist, as a deacon and Sunday school teacher.

He was an enthusiastic member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society and the Second Air Division Association. He and his wife attended reunions in England and the United States. In 1987 he returned for the first time since the war to his wartime base at Halesworth. It was a deeply moving and sentimental occasion for him. Television station WXIA recorded this return in their moving documentary "The Last Mission". ■



HETHEL 389th Bomb Group Green Dragon Flares

BY FIELDER NEWTON

As the saying goes, "time goes fast when you are having fun," and so it is with those of us fortunate to have the health to do so. When you receive this *Journal* the 2ADA convention will have taken place, with old friendships renewed and plans for future gatherings in the making.



The original tandem twin was the German Dornier Do335 built during WWII. Claudius Dornier patented the tandem twin concept in 1937. Only a handful of the Do335s were built by the end of the war.

I read with interest an article in *FLYING* magazine about tandem twin prop airplanes that were first produced for general aviation by Cessna in 1964. Did you know that this concept was patented by German designer Claudius Dornier in 1937? This first true tandem twin design was the German fighter-bomber Do335 Arrow, which went into production near the end of WWII. It had a report-

ed airspeed greater than 400 mph and only about 30 were built. In all probability none of these planes were used in combat, and two were brought to the United States for evaluation. With their reported airspeed they could have given our bomber streams more trouble than the early German jet fighters.

The 389th is proceeding with our plans to support the B-24 models that are to be placed in the Air Space Museum at Dulles airport as well as the one in San Diego's historic Balboa Park. In fact, our check for the one in San Diego has been submitted. As you know, both of these models will memorialize our beloved bomb group. These commitments are important to us in preserving our history on American soil. It is equally important for the 389th men to support our British friends who work tirelessly in restoring and maintaining the Chapel. They have unselfishly done all the work on their own without asking for support from us. We have given two donations in the past, but they have been minimal to the monies they have raised. In a letter received from **Fred Squires** on April 5, we learned that the chapel roof has to be replaced and they must raise £2,000 to do the job. In addition to this, display cases are needed for the museum. **THEY NEED OUR HELP!!!** Since the 389th was never organized as an association, we have never had to pay any dues as many of the bomb groups do and must fund our projects through donations. I am asking for each one of our 600 plus members, if possible, to please send a check for 10, 20, or more dollars to fund these worthy projects in our behalf. The pound at this writing is worth about \$1.80, so to fund a £2,000 roof it would take about \$3,600. You have been loyal in the past in funding projects and supporting the newsletter with generous donations, and we ask again for all you can do to help with these current needs. Get behind our British friends and send your donation, large or small, to treasurer **Allan Hallett**, 249 Highland Avenue, Leominster, MA 01453. **THANK YOU.**

Happy Summer, and keep 'em flying. ■

466TH ATTLEBRIDGE TALES (continued from page 21)

My data is taken from a 1994 Arizona Historical Society *Journal of Arizona History*, in which an article by **Dr. James E. McMillan** appeared. Permission was granted by the Society and the author for excerpting this article:

Earnest W. McFarland, Second Class Seaman, never entered combat, as he nearly died at the Great Lakes Naval School in Illinois. Doctors there performed rear entry lung surgery to remedy complications from a severe bout with pneumonia. He well understood the problems that confronted World War I vets as he arrived in Arizona in 1919 — jobless and penniless ex-serviceman. He slowly improved his lot to become a lawyer and entering politics. Other veterans were less fortunate; he recalls the Great Depression and the bitter Bonus Marchers — in 1932 — ineffectively protesting unkept congressional promises.

Senator McFarland began looking at possible Federal assistance in April, 1942 for the some estimated 11 million to be ex-servicemen after [World War II]. He consulted existing veterans' organizations (Veterans of Foreign Wars, DAV, Order of the Purple Heart), various congressional committees, and presidents of colleges and universities. The bill had the usual variety of congressional reviews and changes, but one of the five main parts of the bill — a cash bonus for servicemen — was separated out and passed in and signed in February, 1943.

Meanwhile, Sen. McFarland got an exemption for playing cards shipped overseas to servicemen and free postage for overseas soldiers.

He stated, "It is our belief that we should take care of our veterans when they come home, not ten years after the war."

Eventually, Sen. McFarland did get most of his points passed, unanimously in both the House and Senate, and signed on June 22, 1944. He stated, "I operate on the assumption that we were trying to help the returned veteran help himself." Thus, when we all returned to the U.S., I'd guess most of us were delighted to find we could go to college — or any vocational school — with tuition and books paid for (not just a loan) and could get low cost, long term loans to buy a home, farm, or business. Later he also co-authored the Korean War GI Bill, passed in 1952.

To quote Professor McMillan, "the famous GI Bill of Rights was, without a doubt, the single most important piece of domestic social legislation to come out of WWII; it has bettered the lives of nearly 50 million ex-servicemen and women, along with additional millions of dependents."

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE 466TH BOMB GROUP

The 466th BGA will be meeting alongside the 8th Air Force Historical Society, at the Western Crown Plaza Hotel, Kansas City, Missouri, October 5-10, 2004.

Most of our 2005 meetings are on hold until we can determine whether the bronze B-24 will be completed for installation in San Diego on Memorial Day, 2005. ■

The 8th AF's Unique Use of Napalm

BY EDWARD L. SQUIRES (44TH)

We had been using a Napalm-filled 100 lb. incendiary bomb since the early part of the war, but our first indication that another use for the agent was contemplated came with an unannounced truck convoy carrying 40,000 gallons of the stuff in 55-gallon drums.

Shortly afterward, we received a direction from Second Division Chemical Section HQ to try to develop a means of transferring the material, a gelled gasoline of about the consistency of Jello, with whatever equipment and facilities that were available to us on station. A demonstration meeting was scheduled a couple of weeks later at one of the installations, I forget where, to evaluate the resultant methods and decide on one for 8th AF SOP.

The Chemical Munitions section of our 806th Cml. Co. A0 came up with a means of using the standard refueling pump, which was available in some quantities in each squadron supply, by modifying it with a very short intake pipe and a high pressure setting. The only problem was the high risk involved, since the gasoline-driven engine and pump had to be positioned directly over and in contact with the drum of highly inflammable napalm. The engines were, however, equipped with spark arresters, and to our

knowledge never were the source of an accidental fire. This transfer method was adopted, and we conducted instruction seminars in its use at Shipdham for the entire 8th AF.

Since napalm had not, at that time, been previously dropped from heavy bombers, Group Armament, with the assistance of Group Ordnance and our Chemical Company, were asked to develop an operational system that would work. The Armament section of the 44th BG, headed by a sergeant whose name escapes me, first tried using



**MAMA MIA!
SACRE BLEU AND GOLLY GEE!**

the standard 400-gallon bay tanks, fitted with cable slings attached to the bomb racks, as droppable containers. Our Cml. section filled two of these tanks in place in the bay of a B-24 for a drop test over the Wash. The drop was not successful, the tanks becoming lodged in the bay opening, and the aircraft returned to the base and circled while all of us involved tried to determine if the plane could land safely. It was a close thing, but the plane did land after some anguished moments without the tanks jarring loose and exploding on contact with the runway — an eventuality which was quite possible. This method was, of course, discarded.

After some experimentation it was determined to use 100-gallon paper maché wing tanks, positioned on the bay bomb racks much the same as a 1000 lb. GP bomb. As I recall, two on each side of the rack. One of the problems attendant with this system was the fact that filling procedure was limited to not more than a few hours prior to mission because these tanks soon became soaked



EASY WHEN YOU KNOW HOW!

through, flabby and unsafe to use. This necessitated a plan for filling a great number of tanks in a very short time on each station.

Again, our 806th Cml. Munitions Section devised a plan, including the use of additional personnel recruited from Group Armament and Ordnance, for accomplishing the task in the few hours allotted us. Once again this plan was adopted and sent out as SOP for 8th AF.

Another problem connected with this sort of droppable container was the method of ignition on impact. This was accomplished by using a standard white phosphorous grenade set in the well of the tank, and fitted with a British All-Ways fuse in place of the usual spring-loaded detonator. Since these versatile little fuses were armed immediately upon the withdrawal of the arming wire and exploded upon an impact from any direction, it was necessary to devise an extremely long arming wire to ensure that the tanks were well clear of the bay before withdrawal. This was done by winding standard arming wire from a spool around a spindle attached to a breast drill. This formed a coiled spring of the proper length, which was encased in a fuse can with the ends of the coil protruding from either end of the can through holes punched in the top and bottom of the can. This encasing of the extremely long wire was a must to prevent tangling, and worked like a charm.

If my memory serves me well, I believe the load order came through about noon of the day preceding the mission. Things went quite smoothly in filling the wing tanks at the bomb dump and transporting them to the aircraft. It was perhaps midnight or shortly after when loading was completed, and an hour or so later before final checks on each load were made.

As a security measure to ensure ignition on a target, a percentage — I seem to remember it being 10% — of the aircraft on the mission were loaded with 500 lb. GP bombs. Only two Divisions carried napalm, the 2nd and 3rd. I am not sure if the 1st Division took part in the operation at all.

Many missions had been flown against this fortification on the point overlooking and dominating the port of Brest. All types of HE, including armor-piercing ordnance, had been used with no apparent success in dislodging the German occupants. Word was, that after this saturation raid using napalm, the Free French were able to walk in and occupy the fortification without firing a shot. ■



492nd BOMB GROUP HAPPY WARRIOR HAPPENINGS

NORTH PICKENHAM

BY WILLIS H. BEASLEY

The 492nd Bomb Group held their first "stand alone" reunion in Salt Lake City, Utah from April 28 to May 2. It was also a time to remember the 60th anniversary of the first combat mission flown by the 492nd Bomb Group on May 11, 1944 to Mulhouse, Germany and missions on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Seventy-four members including the veterans' spouses, children, grandchildren, and friends attended the reunion. It was great to see so many second and third generation children there.

Space does not allow for a complete listing of all the attendees. However, a few members are being recognized as follows:

Joseph Dalton, crew chief in the 859th BS, came for a first time ever reunion as did **Charles Hanline**, navigator on the Kilpatrick crew. Red Cross Girl at North Pickenham **Ruth Register Coleman** and her daughter **Tina Woods** attended. Crewmates **Willie Sparks** and **Charlie Bunnell** met for the first time in many years. They were also best men at each other's wedding. **Ernie Haar** and **Lew Brown**, also crewmates, were there. **Floyd Kingsley**, another member of the Haar crew, became ill and couldn't make it. **Robertson Scott**, son Roby and granddaughter Summer met with **Robert Bradley** and wife **Dorothy**. The two men were on the same crew. **Walter Mundy**, past 2ADA president and member of the 467th Bomb Group and his wife **Ruth** were guests.

Thursday was to have been for golf. However, it rained and snowed so it was canceled. A few people took the City Tour. That evening we went to the **Mormon Tabernacle** to hear the choir. Because the choir was recording, we were ushered into a soundproof room where we could see all 367 choir members and 110 members of the orchestra, but they couldn't hear us. The manager of the choir, **Scott Barrick**, came in to talk with us and told us all about the choir. All are volunteers between ages 25 and 65. They try out and are put on a waiting list.

On Friday morning the sun came out as we had hoped, and we boarded coaches for the museum at Hill Air Force Base to see the planes, especially the restoration of the B-24 now in progress.

James Upscomb, producer, director, and

recipient of many awards for his productions, accompanied by **Harry Mena** and **Gerald Hartley**, came to the reunion for the purpose of making a documentary of the 492nd Bomb Group. Jim has been on PBS and the Discovery Channel. Among his credits are documentary films for National Geographic and Granada Films. He worked hard to interview all of the veterans. With clearance from the museum he was able to get a great photo of **Ernie Haar** in the cockpit of the B-24.

This photo made the front page of the Deseret News as well as a photo of **Harry Orthman**, **Ed Alexander**, and **Dick Rosenberry**. **Bernie & Rae Murtaugh**, **Bill Beasley**, **Allan Blue**, and **Bob Bradley** were interviewed. Their stories were printed in the paper. We had great news coverage in the paper as well as on Channel 5 television. **Diane Castro**, director of conventions at the Best Western Plaza Hotel, obtained enough copies of the paper so that everyone had one. **Doug Kim-Brown**, son of **Lew Brown**, paid for these copies. Diane Castro was a tremendous help to us throughout the reunion.

After touring the museum we boarded our coaches for a delicious lunch at the Hill Air Force Base Officers Club. **Chaplain 1st Lt. Brendan Parker** and **Wing Commander Col. Sebastian Romano** greeted everyone and joined us for lunch. Following lunch we moved to the chapel for a memorial service.

With the help of Chaplain Parker, the program began with the Posting of the Colors by the Base Honor Guard, which was followed by welcome remarks from **John L. Moore**, member of the 858th Bomb Squadron. Chaplain Parker gave the invocation. Col. Sebastian Romano welcomed everyone and spoke to the service the 492nd had given to their country and the sacrifices the group had made in the 89 days of their existence. Remarks by 492nd Bomb Group veterans **Robert L. Cash**, **Ernest J. Haar**, and **Harry Orthman** followed. **Willis H. "Bill" Beasley** made closing remarks and presented a token of appreciation on behalf of the 492nd BG to Chaplain Parker and Commander Romano.

Chaplain Parker observed a moment of silence before making final comments and

the benediction. We gathered outside for the "icing on the cake." Only two days earlier the Pentagon had approved a fly-over with the missing man formation for our group. After the F-16s flew over, a 21-gun salute was fired and Taps was played.

We boarded the coaches and headed back to the hotel and the buffet dinner. Our menu was "down home cookin'" of meatloaf, fried chicken, mashed potatoes, cornbread, green beans, salad, and cherry cobbler. Entertainment was by the members themselves. **Diane Castro** led a "jug band" tryout to see who could play a tune by blowing into an empty bottle. The music was "Old McDonald Had a Farm." The band was comprised of **Andy Anderson**, our grandson **Justin Beasley**, **Robert Bradley**, **Joseph Dallan**, **Howard Heckmann**, **Sam Miceli**, and **Brian Mahoney**. A conch shell-blowing contest followed. Three judges picked **Lew Brown** as best conch shell blower. The prize drawing followed, with "Grab Bag Master" **Howard Heckmann** in charge.

On Saturday morning a trip to the Kennecott Copper Mine was arranged by **Craig Beasley**. Craig was to be the tour guide, but unfortunately, his work made it impossible for him to attend the reunion. Craig was in Toronto. His wife **Dorothy** served as the tour guide and did a fine job. Craig's friend **Ray Hanson** met us at the mine. He told many interesting things about the copper mine. Everyone was given a "slug" — that is the end product of the copper processing.

A short business meeting was held prior to the banquet. I was elected as Group VP again, with **Howard Heckmann**, assistant; **Tom Floyd** as backup; **Allan Blue**, historian; and **Sam Miceli**, chaplain. Co-editors of the Happy Warrior Newsletter are **Norma & Bill Beasley**. We voted not to join any group for their reunion and will plan a stand-alone in Tucson in 2005.

An impressive memorial service given by the VFW/DAV/American Legion Post in Salt Lake City preceded the banquet on Saturday night. Following dinner, the same group gave the history of the American Flag, followed by a flag folding ceremony. The flag folding ceremony represents the same religious principles on which our country was founded. These men do many charitable deeds in Salt Lake City, one of which is helping the homeless. **Diane Castro** played Taps at the end of the ceremony.

A lovely wall hanging made by **Frances Gramberg** (daughter of Howard Heckmann) was presented to Norma and me.

(continued on next page)

492ND (continued from page 24)

Fran also made the table decorations featuring the Beehive for the Utah State Emblem.

Chip Henneman set up his display of WWII memorabilia which he has collected over time. He was there to share time with the veterans.

Allan Blue gave everyone a surprise gift of a CD of his piano playing. He is not only a writer and expert on the B-24, he is an accomplished pianist.

This "first time" stand-alone reunion was very successful. Everyone had fun and left the reunion with warm feelings of camaraderie as we had hoped. It was a meeting of old friends once again and the making of new ones. It was very rewarding to see so many second and third generation children there. They are our legacy. We need to preserve our history, and they seem eager to do that for us.

Norma and I are going to miss the 2ADA convention in Philadelphia this year. We will be attending the graduation of grandson **Matthew Beasley** from the University of Wisconsin and the high school graduation of grandson **Kevin Beasley**. As printed in the last *Journal*, this makes only the second 2ADA convention we have missed out of the last 17.

"32 CO-PILOTS"

Charles R. "Dick" Bastien has published his book entitled *32 Co-Pilots*. The book was for sale at the reunion. Copies are available at \$25 each including shipping. Send your request for a copy to Bill Beasley at 1525 South Garfield Street, Denver, CO 80210-3022 or to Dick Bastien at 2174 Tower Road, Woodbury, MN 55125-1670.

MEMORIAL DAY – MAY 31, 2004

Norma Beasley arranges for wreaths to be laid for the 2ADA in all thirteen American Battle Monument Cemeteries on Memorial Day in memory of the War Dead and Missing of the Second Air Division. **Roger Freeman**, one of the Governors of the Memorial Trust, will lay the wreath in Cambridge Cemetery for the 2ADA this year.

Russell Ives will lay a wreath in Cambridge Cemetery for the 492nd BG. **Ferdinand Dessente** will lay a wreath in the Ardennes Cemetery for the 492nd BG as well as the 2ADA. **Enrico Schwartz** will lay a wreath in the Netherlands (Margraten) for the 492nd BG as well as the 2ADA. Enrico will also lay a wreath in the Henri Chapelle Cemetery for the 492nd Bomb Group and the 2ADA. ■



WENDLING

392nd

BY OAK MACKEY

In the Spring issue of *The Journal* we reviewed the 392nd Bomb Group Memorial dedication ceremonies in September of 1945. We talked of how donations were collected to create the memorial and to create a trust fund to ensure care of the memorial and the plot of land on which it stands. Now, let's fast-forward to 1987. The trust fund is no longer sufficient to provide adequate care, the landscaping has fallen into disarray, the concrete base of the memorial is disintegrating, and water sometimes stands on the grounds. Something must be done pronto. So it was that **Col. Lawrence G. Gilbert**, president of the 392nd BG Memorial Association and 392nd Group C.O. at war's end, called for a big-time pow-wow to occur at Tulsa, OK, June 25-28, 1987. **William H.** and **Jerry Richards** of Tulsa volunteered to chair the host committee. They arranged for excellent hotel rooms and food, they provided entertainment, and coordinated the entire program. By June 25th, 138 Crusaders and 87 wives and guests had checked in to have some fun and to attend to business. There was a hospitality room open at all hours, cocktail parties, and excellent food provided at breakfast and dinner. There was a shopping tour for the ladies, a bus tour for all on Saturday, and a banquet and dance to end the festivities.

But it was at the business meetings where the real purpose of this convention was revealed. Col. Gilbert chaired all meetings; assisted by **Carroll W. Cheek**, chairman of the memorial committee, former 392nd BG pilot and successful businessman, and **Gil Bambauer**, group treasurer. **Bernard Glettler** and **Col. Robert E. Vickers, Jr.** had also participated in advance planning meetings. There was to be a fundraiser of major proportions. \$60,000 was needed right away so work could begin on refurbishing the memorial and grounds. The memorial must be set aside so dirt fill could raise the level of the site; a new and more adequate landscaping scheme must be started. **Tom & Jill Scott** of Beeston had most generously donated land for a parking lot located adjacent to the site. That too must be landscaped and surfaced with gravel. An adequate base of granite must



Carroll Cheek & Lawrence Gilbert, 1989

be purchased to replace the old concrete one. There had been planning meetings in England as well. Carroll Cheek had traveled there to meet with the Beeston Parish Council and British officials of the Wendling area to coordinate plans with our British friends and to contract for the work to be done.

Additional money must be provided for the trust fund to ensure perpetual care for the memorial. It is difficult to estimate the exact amount needed for this purpose, but a goal of \$90,000 was suggested. This brings the total money needed to \$150,000, a daunting goal for the 392nd BG Memorial Association whose membership in 1987 was about 500. I do not know the actual amount collected, but I do know that sufficient money was raised to do the necessary work at the memorial and add a substantial amount to the trust fund. To this date, care and maintenance of the memorial and grounds have been near perfect. Our British friends are very proud of the memorial, and although the trust provides the money, it is they who provide the loving care. For this, we thank them sincerely.

The photograph of Carroll Cheek and Col. Lawrence Gilbert was taken at the rededication ceremonies at the memorial in October of 1989. There will be more about that in the next *Journal*.

Takeoffs are optional; landings are required.

Independence Day is coming soon on July 4. Participate with vigor. Adios! ■

Air Force Memorial Report

BY AL ASCH (93RD)

This information was obtained through a telephone conversation with Colonel Pete Lindquist, Vice President of Operations for the Air Force Memorial Foundation. The key to measuring the progress for the development and construction of our Air Force Memorial is that groundbreaking will take place this September 15. Invitations will go out this July but admissions and seating will be on first-come first-served basis. The ceremony will be 30 to 45 minutes in length with an Air Force fly-over, music, and a few words from a dignitary.

Completion date is planned for mid-2006 with the dedication in September of that year. The Foundation staff has been very busy with the detailed planning with the Centex Corporation to complete the final requirements and specifications for the bidding and contracting with the selection of the prime and sub contractors this summer. The Department of Defense (DOD) is on schedule for their work in site preparation.

There is only \$3 to \$4 million dollars remaining to be collected to have the full amount for the project cost of some \$35 million. The Foundation staff is in the process of developing the program to re-

ceive donations for the shortage. The listing at the site for the large sponsors such as the 2ADA with its \$25,000 is part of the design work. The staff visualizes the names of these organizations chiseled in a smooth granite slab and arranged in pylons near the visitors' reception and seating area. In this connection, individual donors who give at least \$10,000 will also receive permanent recognition at the site. One can donate cash or negotiable securities by directing your stock broker for the transfer to the Air Force Foundation account they have with Smith Barney, 1051 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036. Contact at Smith Barney is Julie McIntire, tel. 202-861-5078. The Air Force Foundation account number with Smith Barney is: 179-41366-12-190. The transfer code from your brokerage firm to Smith Barney is: DTC #0418. If you should transfer securities to this account, make certain that you notify the Air Force Memorial Foundation by e-mail to afmf@airforcememorial.com or by regular mail to: Air Force Memorial Foundation, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. Checks should be mailed to this address as well as made payable to the Foundation. If you have any problems, call Col. Pete Lindquist of the Foundation:

703-247-5859.

The Foundation has completed its website and the database is up to date. They are asking for our input of text and images, and some of the best will be used as inscriptions on the granite walls at the site. I suggested that a very short item about the Ploesti raid would qualify. Col. Lindquist agreed it would receive a careful review. Cal Stewart, co-author of the book *Ploesti*, has agreed to develop material for the website. Perhaps the first mission flown by the 2AD with B-24s as part of the 8th AF would be compelling enough in making history and featuring the B-24. All individuals are invited to submit items by use of the website: www.airforcememorial.org. If they are not used at the site, I believe they will remain in the database for retrieval by anyone having access to the Internet.

WWII MEMORIAL DEDICATION

The WWII Memorial staff has sent me tickets for special seating at the dedication ceremony May 29th with an invitation to visit the reception tent. I will be representing the 2nd Air Division Association and the 93rd Bomb Group to the extent that associations and group organizations can be recognized. ■

"From Young Boys to Fighting Men" A Story of Combat Veterans of WWII

BY LARRY VALIS • BOOK REVIEW BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

This book contains 320 pages with 69 photos. It has the stories of eight combat veterans who recall humorous parts of their military careers, as well as some of the tough action that they saw. For some, it wasn't easy, but I found it very interesting how they would lapse into the present tense as if they were right back to some 60 years ago.

As stated in the section entitled "About the Book," every one of these eight men was just a young boy when he entered military service. Most had never been far from home, yet each one found himself thousands of miles away, facing death on a daily basis.

Marine PFC Silas Barnes leads off with the tale of his being bayoneted and captured on Corregidor and his POW work on Japanese ships and in a Japanese lead

mine. He tells of his breaking up of the "Domi Room," where American prisoners were placed because they were conducting a food-trading scheme, starving their fellow POWs.

Sergeant Roland Hartman of the Big Red One tells of his three invasions, his 443 days in battle and how he opened Exit E-1 off Omaha Beach on D-Day. You can read about his first hot meal at the front after D-Day; about the blood, coffee and mashed potatoes when the tree burst round landed nearby.

Paratrooper J.K. Horne was 25 miles off target when he jumped in southern France and only 120 feet above the ground. It was a good thing that he was a record-setting runner at jump school.

Alex Malko, Jr., USMC, was one of six Malko brothers who served in the military

in WWII, all of them assigned overseas. Going to Saipan from Bougainville to visit his brother's grave wasn't easy.

Machine gunner Charles Edgar Van Lieu felt that by removing the tracer shells from his weapon he saved his life, but he still had four narrow escapes from death in one day. The Russian lady "cabinot" escapade deals with bartering for vodka and stealing back the Jeep they traded to the Russians.

Charles Cooper highlights the 70 missions he flew as a top turret gunner on a B-25. Their first night in Corsica was the deadliest raid the Germans ever conducted on their base. He and pilot Ver Keljik formed a lasting relationship.

Don Valis' catapult duty on the aircraft carrier *Randolph* was marred by a Japanese kamikaze bomber and an American
(continued on page 28)

100 MISSIONS FOR C-CHARLIE, THE OLD VETERAN

BY THADDEUS C. POPRAWA (389TH) • REPRINTED FROM THE 2ADA JOURNAL, 1978

In the accompanying photograph, you can see the smiling faces of the Jerry Kincl crew of the 564th Squadron, 389th BG after we had completed the 100th mission for “C-Charlie, The Old Veteran.” This memorable achievement took place 10 March 1945 on a mission to Paderborn, Germany — the 18th mission for our crew.

I can’t remember anything unusual about the mission itself; however, at that stage, the missions were generally all alike — long, grueling, exhausting affairs. On this particular mission we were airborne for 7.5 hours. We were pretty busy at this time of the war; in the space of 25 calendar days, we flew 13 missions (no record by any means, but it kept us hopping). My memory fails to recollect anything significant about these sorties, except I’ll remember the ones to Berlin and Magdeburg — the belt got cinched a little tighter on those runs.

I will recreate this 100th mission for “C-Charlie” from my navigational log. (When the 389th disbanded from Hethel in June ’45, I went into the squadron office and absconded with my file containing all of my mission navigational logs.)

0715 Stations; (that meant that briefing was at 0545, breakfast at 0445, and reveille at 0400 — those were the days); 0803 take-off; 0845 formed up; 0944 left English coast Control Point 1; 1024 over Holland, CP2; several changes of course now followed; 1100 received code word “rot gut” over the air, meaning the primary target was open; 1153 at the I.P.; 1154 start dumping “chaff”; 1155 bomb bay doors open; 1206 bombs away!; moderate flak, completed 180° turn to right; 1215 regrouped and on course for home; 1353 Dutch coast out; 1435 English coast in; 1442 orders to proceed on instrument let down; 1502 peeled off individually; 1506 broke out of the soup at 2500 feet; 1528 landed at Hethel.

So ended the 100th mission for “C-Charlie, The Old Veteran.” I am sorry to report that I have no further information on the old crate; I don’t know if it successfully survived the war. All I know is that after our brief taste of fame (having our picture taken by the group photographer) we returned to normal duty. We didn’t get pulled back to the States for a bond-selling tour, getting kissed by Hollywood starlets, etc. We kept slugging out the missions; completing our 30th on 25 April 1945, when we went on a week’s flak leave to an



Standing (L-R): Bill Wilttrout, nose gunner; Ted Poprawa, navigator; ground crew member; Dave Thomas, copilot; ground crew member; Jerry Kincl, pilot; ground crew member. **Kneeling (L-R):** Bill Hausman, radio; Stan Kupecki, engineer; Leo Brown, waist gunner; Walter Paskins, waist gunner; George Justice, tail gunner. We regret that the names of the ground crew members are unknown to us.

English castle at Knightshayes. The leave ended just in time for us to celebrate VE Day in London. (We may have been a few days AWOL, but nobody seemed to mind.)

As far as “C-Charlie” goes, she was a good old bucket of bolts. She served well, and the taxpayers got their money’s worth

on this plane. I don’t know any of her history. Who was her original crew? (By this time, no crew was assigned to any particular plane — we flew planes at the discretion of the C.O.). At any rate, “C-Charlie” deserves a salute for her accomplishments and a tip of the hat in the memory book. ■

She’s lucky she wasn’t a doctor

Three nurses died and went to heaven, where they were met at the Pearly Gates by St. Peter.

He asked the first one, “What did you do on Earth and why should you go to heaven?”

“I was a nurse in an inner city hospital,” she replied. “I worked to bring healing and peace to the poor suffering city children.”

“Very noble,” said St. Peter. “You may enter.” And through the gates she went. To the next, he asked the same question, “So, what did you do on Earth?”

“I was a nurse at a missionary hospital in Africa,” she replied. “For many years, I worked with a skeleton crew of doctors and nurses who tried to reach out to many peoples and tribes with a hand of healing and with a message of God’s love.”

“How touching,” said St. Peter. “You, too, may enter.” And in she went. He then came to the last nurse, whom he asked, “So, what did you do back on Earth?”

After some hesitation, she explained, “I was just a nurse at an HMO.” St. Peter pondered this for a minute, and then said, “OK, you may enter also.”

“Whew!” said the nurse. “For a moment there, I thought you weren’t going to let me in.”

“Oh, you can come in,” said St. Peter. “But you can only stay for three days.”



NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY LLOYD W. PRANG

The March issue of the 453rd Newsletter has been acclaimed one of the best ever published. The editors, **Wilbur & Jeane Stites**, are to be congratulated for their efforts in putting this issue and the many others together. However, the many members who sent letters and articles are also to be congratulated for their *esprit de corps*. The enthusiasm exhibited by you guys via your letter and article writing ability is outstanding. Jeane mentioned she had to add extra pages, from 32 to 36 pages, for this issue to accommodate all the letters, photos, and other information that needed to be included. There were some letters that didn't get published because of lack of space. With the amount of material available, Jeane is already working on the September issue. Please continue sending your stories and letters. Here's one that can't wait until the September Newsletter.

Wes Bartelt decided to change his designation from "The Polish Pilot" to "The Polish Patient." This happened after he was supposed to undergo a three- or four-way bypass operation that he mentioned in his February 10 e-mail. On March 21 he wrote that the main lines to his heart were not blocked and the surgery was off. The problem was that his heart was worn out and was pumping only half the amount of blood that it should be pumping. He asked to be advised if anyone happens to have a spare heart in the shop or just around the house somewhere. Next, in typical Wes fashion, he says "come to visit and bring your truck," because his oranges are ripening and he can only eat one a day! A few weeks later he wrote that he was taking his heart on a test drive to Texas to attend a reunion of his 44D flying class. He plans to be gone for three weeks, and signed the e-mail "The Polish Pilot." What a guy! It's good to have you back, Wes.

Paul Layzell, the owner of the Old Buck Airfield, planned a celebration on February 5, 2004 in memory of the 60th anniversary of the first mission of the 453rd BG. Although he admitted that February was not the best time of the year to return to Old Buck, he asked for information regarding anyone who was on that mission. We were able to provide the names and

addresses for eighteen crewmen. **Hunton Morgan**, a top turret gunner on the **Bill Penn** crew, said he's like to go but had a trip planned to go to Old Buck in June of 2004. **Leon Helfand**, navigator on the **Alvin Lein** and **Jim Munsey** crews, wrote to Paul thanking him for the invitation as well as the idea of a 60th anniversary celebration, but explained why it wasn't possible for him to attend. I think the local people who frequent the base attended the affair, but I've had no other word regarding the attendance of the original eighteen crewmen.

Here's a good story about pilots that has been making the rounds on the Internet. In his book, *Sled Driver*, SR-71 Blackbird pilot **Brian Shul** writes:

I'll always remember a certain radio exchange that occurred one day as Walt (my backseater) and I were screaming across Southern California 13 miles high. We were monitoring various radio transmissions from other aircraft as we entered Los Angeles airspace. Though they didn't really control us, they did monitor our movement across their scope. I heard a Cessna ask for a readout of its ground speed. "90 knots," Center answered. We weren't the only ones proud of our air-speed that day, as almost instantly an F-18 smugly transmitted, "Ah Center, Dusty 52 requests ground speed readout." There was a silent pause, then a response. "525 knots on the ground, Dusty." Another silent pause. As I was thinking to myself how ripe a situation this was, I heard the familiar click of a radio transmission coming from my backseater. It was at that precise moment that I realized that Walt and I had become a real crew, for we were both thinking in unison. "Center, Aspen 20, you got a ground speed readout for us?" There was a longer than normal pause. "Aspen, I show 1,742 knots." No further inquiries were heard on that frequency.

An SR-71B Blackbird, on long-term loan from the U.S. Air Force Museum, will be on display at the Kalamazoo Air Museum during our 453rd mini-reunion, October 8-11 this year.

REUNIONS

The 453rd had a great one in New Orleans last year, with more than 100 people in attendance. We're in very good shape for

Kalamazoo, with 80 people signed up as of April 8. **Evelyn Cohen** tells me we have 30 people signed up for the Philadelphia convention of the 2ADA. People who have never attended any reunion are continually popping up and saying they've had a good time. Still there are those who say they don't come because they hardly know anyone who attends. I know the feeling very well. That's how Irene and I felt back in the 1980s when we first attended. Now, it's like a family affair, and we look forward to seeing **Mo & Ludie Morris, Jim & Dorothy Dyke, Mac & Martha McDowell, Bert & Claire Biel**, and their "kids" and many others. Yep, the kids and grandkids are joining us in greater numbers with each reunion. Even our daughter, Betty Eskew, who never used to attend, is coming with us now. Sadly, a few members of the "family" are beginning to feel they're getting too old to travel anymore.

During each reunion we ask the question, "Do you want to go to another reunion?" So far the answer has been a resounding "Yes!" What's going to happen in the future? When will the phrase "Time, Gentlemen, Please" be heard? I don't know! For now, it's "Cheers, Gentlemen, Thank You!" ■

BOOK (continued from page 26)

P-38 crashing into their ship. Their Divisional Officer in charge of catapulting and arresting gears narrowly escapes death by the sailors under his command.

Pilot Ken Valis and his B-24 crew (446th BG) were the 12th bomber over Normandy on D-Day. But they almost didn't come back from the raid on Politz. Their squadron dance was called off when the bus load of new Catholic nurses arrived to find a fight — between the two highest ranking Catholic officers on base.

The book sells for \$19.95 plus \$4.50 shipping & handling. Checks should be made payable to Larry Valis or Glenlaw Books and mailed to: Glenlaw Books, 2314 East Doublegate Drive, Albany, GA 31721 — or to Glenlaw Books, 208 South Branch Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844. For further information you can contact Larry Valis at 229-432-6161 or 229-439-9796. His e-mail address is Lawmil@Mchsi.com.

SPECIAL TO 2ADA MEMBERS — Donation will be given to the 2ADA Library Fund if you mention you are a 2ADA member with your order. ■

How We Hauled Gas . . . to Patton!

BY TOM SWINT (467TH)

Back in the summer of 1944 during World War II, the Allies had invaded Europe. The tanks were hung up for a month or so in the hedgerows of Normandy. Then they broke out and armored columns were streaking across Europe with a German army in retreat.

There was just one problem; maybe two. They ran out of gasoline. The Germans sensed this and stiffened their resistance.

During all these exciting times, I was at a heavy bomber base near Norwich, England, flying milk runs or group support over France.

One morning an officer shook me in my sack and asked if I had any infantry experience. Still rubbing sleep from my eyes, I told him I was a doughfoot for a year before I came to the Air Forces. He grunted:

“OK, you’ll do. Get dressed.”

Now for an exciting mission you would have expected something more dramatic than that.

I dressed and reported to Group Operations. There I learned our bombers were going to be used to haul cans of gasoline to the tanks that were stalled in northern France.

As a sergeant, I was to take an advance party over in the first plane and guard the cans of gasoline the bombers would ferry from England to San Quentin, France.

There was one other very big problem. The runways had holes, and landing a B-24 bomber loaded with hundreds of jerry cans of gas was no joke. One bad landing and everything would go boom.

Getting our first flight down onto French soil was like walking on eggs. Oh, yes, I almost forgot the most important part. We had assumed the base was secured.

When our Liberator bomber zoomed in for a landing, I could see men in gray suits running like crazy for the roads leading away from the base. I was so scared with all that explosive aboard, it never crossed my mind that those were Germans.

I didn’t really think about it when I was lining the planes up for unloading on an apron as far from the landing runway as we could get. Then one of the unloading crew came up and said it sure was odd. There was still a fire in a cookstove in the underground bunker where the Germans had lived.

It didn’t take us long to unload the gasoline cans and pitch tents along the apron. The colonel told me our group was to scrounge up wheelbarrows and get a detail busy pouring rocks into those bomb craters before one of those B-24s crashed and blew us all to kingdom come.

After the officers flew back to Rackheath in their big silver birds, we started to explore the base. French kids materialized from nowhere. They eyed us and we eyed them. The little boys wore dresses. (This seemed odd to me.) The older people made sign language and we soon learned that the Germans actually were fleeing when our squadron was circling the field that morning.

None of us spoke French. But Phil Wuertemberg, a Texan, spoke Spanish. Wart, as he was called, soon learned that the American infantry was still about 30 miles away. The Frenchmen had seen no tanks. They showed us a warehouse where the Germans stored supplies. We found cans of sausage and some delightful bitter-sweet chocolate.

On the next flight of gasoline, we were better organized with a crew to guide the bombers around the chuck holes and another group to unload the plane. The air crews did not have to dismount.

Wart told me if we could get a few cases of lye soap from the base back in England, he thought he could swap it to the French farm women for fresh vegetables to go with our C rations (and

German sausages).

One of the air crews delivered a packet of French money from our escape kits. It turned out that the peasants around the base would rather have soap and sugar. Wart, who had been a lowly Jeep driver in England, was now a Texas wheeler-dealer in onions, eggs, and ripe tomatoes. Several bottles of vin rouge and vin blanc materialized.

We had two crews of civilians hauling rocks to fill the bomb craters. We paid them in paper money and C rations.

The word spread fast when we learned that the shops in the village near the base had lots of French perfume and face powder. Being ambassadors of good will, we really set up the first European Common Market. Wart traded G.I. soap for vegetables and perfume. We then swapped the perfume and lipstick to air crews, who took them back to England. The English girls had been several years without cosmetics.

“Oh, ho, ho, Henry Higgins, just you wait . . .”

Our paradise lasted about a week. Then a squadron of 9th Air Force P-38s (fighter planes) was moved to the base to protect the gasoline. The fighter pilots had been in France longer. They could *parlez vous*, and we could only use a sign language and a few winks. Guess who took over?

When the foot soldiers arrived in late August, we had the runways repaired, a functional black market in perfume and G.I. soap, and several thousand gallons of fuel for the armored columns.

The French baker was delivering long loaves of bread to our mess tent and the priest was worrying about the young girls.

When the first American infantry officer rode up in a Jeep, we expected praise and stood at attention. He looked at me and said:

“Where the hell you guys been? Dammit, don’t salute me. There may be Krauts around here.”

I was sort of glad to return to England. Our war was better. ■

Visiting the American Cemetery at Madingley

SUBMITTED BY HOWARD TEMPERLEY
(Former Governor, 2AD Memorial Trust)

***Three thousand Americans lie here
Who came across the sea to fight,
Neat and trim in Cambridgeshire,
Under crosses marble white.***

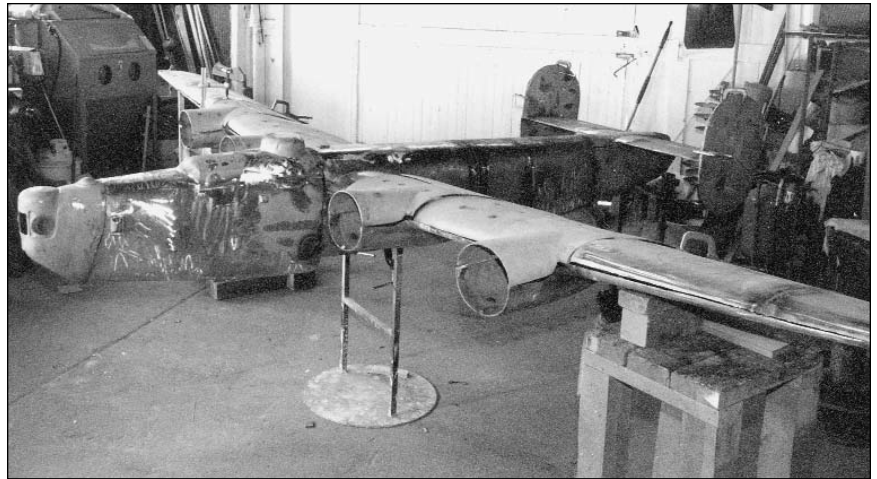
***From the Prairies and the Plains
From East and West they came to die
And here interred are their remains
Underneath an English sky.***

***And on the walls five thousand more
Lost at sea or in the air
Who never made it back to shore
And whose remains lie who knows where.***

B-24 BRONZE #2: Under Contract and Underway!

The B-24 monumental bronze destined for Balboa Park, San Diego, is well on its way! Warbird sculptor Robert Henderson, creator of the first bronze B-24 housed on the Honor Court at the United States Air Force Academy, has signed a contract with the coordinator of this project, George Welsh, of the B-24 Liberator Club.

Projected to be dedicated in September 2005, this 1/6 scale Liberator is identical to the memorial in Colorado Springs. Welsh will be collecting all donations to the project and is encouraging participation of all WWII veterans, bomb groups, and loved ones who would like to see this lasting legacy become a part of San Diego's historical park.



An example of the B-24 model in production for Balboa Park in San Diego.

Welsh can be reached at (760) 789-8901 or e-mail: b24club@earthlink.net. Additional information is available at www.warbirdcentral.com.

A FINAL RESTING PLACE WHERE IT ALL BEGAN ...

Meanwhile in Colorado Springs ... LAST CHANCE at USAFA

An invitation is extended to all WWII veterans to participate in the next bronze warbird memorial to be placed on the Honor Court of the United States Air Force Academy on September 9, 2004.

The plaque affixed to the C-46 memorial will include names of WWII veterans as well as the warbirds they were associated with. Groups Memorial Inc. of the AAF has received numerous requests from veterans and loved ones who did not participate in past warbird memorials.

This is a final chance to remember and be remembered. For more information, call 1-800-305-1738 or log on to www.warbirdcentral.com. ■

32 CO PILOTS Combat Men of the 2nd Air Division

BY CHARLES R. BASTIEN (492ND)

With a primary wartime goal to weaken the enemy through strategic bombing, the 8th AF, nevertheless, flew tactical missions against troop concentrations, as well as bridges, rail lines and canals to interdict supply. After D-Day, the 8th flew low-level missions to re-supply paratroops dropped behind enemy lines, to supply our own troops on the Continent with fuel and supplies. While this book covers parts of the spring, summer and fall of 1944, the 492nd BG ceased operations after August 7th due to high losses. "No BG in WWII lost as many aircraft and crew members in a three-month period." The remaining crews were dispersed and the survivors tell their stories from their new stations. Many of the 700 men and women tell their own personal, often incredible, histories. 293 pages; perfect bound; catalogue #03-2106; ISBN 1-4120-1729-7; US \$32.00. *Ed. Note: See the 492nd BG column on page 25 for additional availability of this book.*

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TRACER AMMO:

Maybe not as much help as you thought!

REPRINTED FROM THE "BADGER NEWS"

In the military, past practices often take on a life of their own and soon become venerated truths. A fundamental truth in World War II, that may not have been so true, was that tracer ammunition in machine guns aided the gunner's accuracy. In fact, tracer ammo may have actually been more a hindrance than a help.

Tracer ammunition, the bullets that leave a colorful trail behind then so the gunner can tell where his rounds are going, came into wide use during World War I. U.S. units generally had a tracer as every fifth round in a belt of machine gun ammunition. Quite naturally, this practice was carried over to WWII. After all, what was good enough to kick the Kaiser in the pants, was also good enough for the Fuhrer's rear end. However, WWII exposed some problems with tracer ammunition.

One problem was that fighter pilots flew in enclosed cockpits and it can get pretty nippy at 30,000 feet or so. Sitting in what was essentially a sealed environment, wearing headphones and suffering the roar of a powerful engine, a German fighter jock couldn't hear the sonic "crack" of a bullet whistling past his ears like his daddy could in an open cockpit biplane in WWI and take it as a warning. Because he flew in a cocoon of sorts when GI Joe opened up on him, Fritz had no idea he was being stalked. At least he didn't know **until** he saw a single tracer bullet rocket past his canopy. Suddenly, he suspected someone up there didn't like him and he would take evasive action. Since most air-to-air combat kills were the result of surprising the other guy, sneaking up behind him and hammering away with your guns, tracers let your enemy know he was a target and encouraged him to take corrective measures, and fast.

To further aggravate things, most U.S. fighter groups placed fifteen or so tracer rounds near the end of ammo belts to let the fighter pilot know he was about out of ammunition and needed to call it quits for the day. Sadly, the enemy quickly figured this out, so the bad guys could also tell when the good guys were nearly out of fight. At this point, he who had previously been an opponent became "easy pickings." As far as anyone knows, no one has ever tried to determine how many pilots never made it back to base because the enemy was "reading the mail," watch-

ing for that grand finale that was intended to make it safer for the fighter jocks.

Still, the biggest problem was that the guns used in WWII were a good deal larger, more powerful and consequently had a much greater range than the weapons used on the wood and fabric kites of WWI. In theory, this meant that the enemy could be engaged at a greater distance. But since the tracer rounds had a hollow base to accommodate their "flare," they had different flight characteristics at full range than the regular rounds in the belt. As the tracer chemicals burned themselves out in flight, the weight and balance of the bullet changed and this would change the trajectory. As a consequence, through no fault of the shooter, the tracer bullets had a slightly different flight path than the rest of the rounds. Since the fighter pilot expected the tracers to show him where his round were going, he concentrated on the glow of the tracer stream and consequently got relatively fewer rounds on the target.

Before the Second World War, there hadn't been enough air-to-air combat to uncover the shortcomings of tracer ammunition, and since pilots didn't train by shooting live ammunition at each other, it wasn't until after a year or so of on-the-job training in WWII that it was determined what should have been an asset was actually a liability. When tracers were no longer used, the kill ratios of the fighter groups tended to increase and their losses declined.

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

Ed. Note: Gunners attempting to defend their bombers during a mission experienced the same problems with accuracy as did their Little Friends. See "Guns R Us: New Trigger-nometry," page 26 of the 2ADA Journal, Vol. 42, No. 4, Winter 2003-04. Had their bomber stood still, when they fired their guns, they would not see the misleading tracers "going around the curve" and appearing to be going into an enemy plane – they were really seeing the tracers from the side as the gunners flew away from their firing position. ■

Folded Wings

44th BG

Maurice G. Hall
Edward K. Mikoloski

93rd BG

William L. Whitney (389th)

389th BG

Robert E. Gilbert
Stanley A. Janners

392nd BG

Edmund S. Twining, Jr.

446th BG

Paul Halecki

448th BG

James D. Conrad, Sr.
Henry Kunstler
Julius Rebeles

453rd BG

Charles W. Cleary
Leonard T. Cole

458th BG

Adolph B. Clachko
Daniel J. Desjardin
Allen C. Hilborn
Robert B. Lowry
Raymond Metz

491st BG

Albert K. Fischer
Harold F. Patterson
George A. Risko

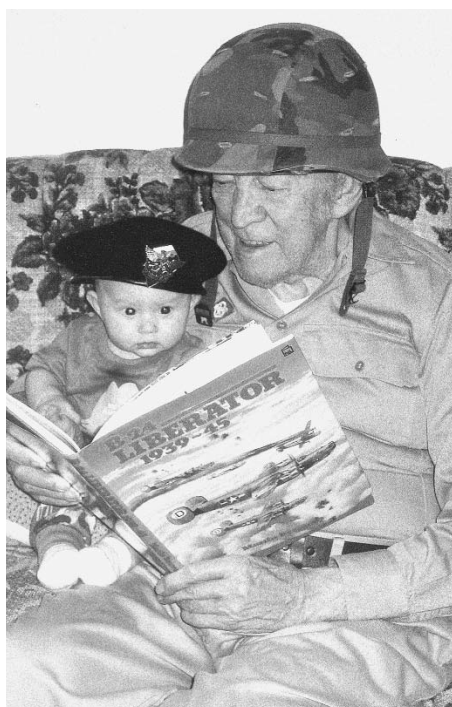
492nd BG

John M. Fabrizio



To the Editor:

This picture was taken by my granddaughter and features my great-grandson and myself:



I know, certain artistic liberties were taken, but it is still a very interesting pic. My caption is: "60 Years Ago I Was..."

Herbert L. Paustian (93rd)
7508 Quartz Avenue
Canoga Park, CA 91306-3041



To the Editor:

Our book, *The Two Squadrons*, is now in publication. This is the story of the original 859th Bomb Squadron of the 492nd Bomb Group that spent "89 Days" at North Pickenham and when the Group was reorganized, became the 788th Bomb Squadron (2nd Organization) of the 467th Bomb Group. The book is large, 8.5" x 11" in size with easy-to-read print, over 560 pages, more than 250 photographs, with personal accounts, diaries, data and detailed in-

formation from over 200 "who were there." Cost to Association members will be only that of its publication, \$70 per copy, post-paid. Books are ready for immediate shipment. **Production is limited** — if you would like to order a copy or desire more information, don't tarry!

Robin C. Janton
23573 Pole Ridge Road
Laurelville, OH 43135
(740) 332-1271



To the Editor:

When our crew left for overseas, after picking up our plane in Topeka, Kansas, I have a copy of our Secret (at that time) Orders, dated April 1, 1944. We actually left West Palm Beach on the morning of April 3rd. The order listed our crew, Lt. Rudolph Kremer's, and the following three other crews: Lt. Kenton W. Morris's crew, who shared our hardstand at Old Buck (453rd BG); Lt. Harrison L. Saunders' crew, and Lt. Claude E. Harris's crew. The order stated that we all were to report upon arrival to the Commander, Eighth Air Force Service Command, ATC Terminal, for assignment to the Eighth Air Force.

Now I know that Lt. Morris was with us at Old Buck but was wondering if anyone remembers the crews of Lt. Harrison Saunders and Lt. Claude Harris, and which base they were assigned to?

It took our crew eighteen days to get from Florida to England via the southern route.

John Hildebran (453rd)
P.O. Box 191
Moyers, OK 74557-0191



To the Editor:

I was reading the very interesting article in the latest *Journal* telling about how position firing came about.

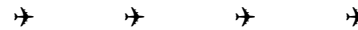
I feel that I was one of four who took part in that test. Off the top of the roster we were called for that mission, Gordon Adams, Glen Allen, Curt Agarjanian, and myself.

We were flying a YB-40 serial no. 42-592504 for nine missions with two engineers from Cal Tech in California. They were in the radio room and we took turns flying in the Martin top turret in the radio room. We were wired with brackets on each wrist. An AT-23 stripped B-26 flew by with a sleeve target with a radio in the sleeve. We would fire at the sleeve and they could tell whether we were leading or trailing the target.

It was very interesting for us and also we flew in a B-17. I was assigned a B-24 for combat.

I thought that you might be interested in my story about position firing. I never fired a shot in combat, so I don't know how much I learned from the test, Fort Myers, Fall 1943.

Everett S. Allen (458th)
133 W. Main Street
W. Brookfield, MA 01585-2828



To the Editor:

I have been asked if it is possible to trace an airman, or possibly some relation, who served with the 389th BG stationed at Hethel during 1944. His name is George Edward Brown, who possibly lived in Yorks-ville, New York post war.

A rather vague piece of information regarding this person is that he was possibly involved in a crash landing on 22 April 1944. Records do indicate a B-24 piloted by Lt. Foley crashed in the airfield on the night of 22 April, but whether or not Brown was a member of the crew is not known to me.

Les Willis
39 Coughtrey Close
Sprowston
Norwich, Norfolk
NR7 8AT, England



To the Editor:

I seek to find someone who knew my father and who might give me some insight. His name was Carl E. Nordberg, Jr. He died at age 80 in 1999. He lived his entire life in and around Holden, MA, where I live now.

He flew out of Tibenham as a navigator with the 445th Bomb Group, 702nd Squadron. I have substantial paperwork that he kept. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with 4 Oak Clusters and the European African Middle Eastern Theatre Ribbon with 3 Bronze Stars. (I don't appreciate what these mean, but his discharge papers have this written on them. I actually possess most of his medals.) He was at Tibenham from June 18, 1944 to March 23, 1945.

Any help would be appreciated. I'm trying to put together an album of his life.

Peter D. Nordberg
213 Lovell Road
Holden, MA 01520-1622



To the Editor:

Here's a picture you might use in *The Journal*. It was given to me by Lt. Col. Sterling A. Bryant from the 15th AF (455th BG, 740th Squadron). Seven men were killed. The plane had delayed action bombs aboard.

James H. Reeves (HQ)
Box 98, Thomasville Road
Moultrie, GA 31776-0098

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

I am a member of our local history group and am researching the crash landing of a B-24 Liberator on land at Cokeham Green Farm, West Wittering, farmer Mr. D. Scott. I believe it may have been on 8 June 1944 when two other B-24s force-landed at Selsey. I also believe that it may have been from the 95th Combat Wing, 489th Bomb Group. The aircraft apparently ran out of fuel after an extra deep penetration raid into occupied Europe.

My purpose in writing to you is to hopefully obtain confirmation of the date above or the actual date if different. Also would it be possible to have the serial number of the plane, and the fuselage number displayed on either side? Also, what was displayed on the tail fins and the crew's emblem on the front of the aircraft? Would it be possible to have the pilots' and crew members' names?

I consider this event to be part of our village's history. I was a boy of 11 years of age at the time, and remember several of us boys reaching the plane long before the military and police. We were well received by the crew, one of whom may have been injured but I'm not sure in my memory if that was so. I recall we were given candy and chewing gum, a great treat as we were on rationing for confectionary. We were allowed to inspect the waist guns and play on them! The nose guns were off limits because they were still armed and cocked. The clouds descended for us boys when the military and police arrived and we were sent away!! The crew was eventually driven away and the plane was dismantled and taken away on an aircraft transport, presumably back to Suffolk.

J.H. Steel
19 Jolliffe Road
West Wittering,
West Sussex,
PO20 8ET
England

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈



Photo submitted
by James Reeves

To the Editor:

Reference is made to the showing of the B-24, S-Bar240, on the back cover of the *Winter Journal*. According to Ernie Barber, 240 flew 57 missions without an abort.

Satterthwait (that's me) was the navigator on the Wood crew, not the bombardier. The copilot was John McCormick on the Wood crew who was later killed on a make-up mission with the Barns crew. Woods was from Chicago, which was involved in naming 240 the "Windy City Belle."

The model of the 240 was assembled by a friend of mine and presented to me on my 50th wedding anniversary in 1996. My wife took the photo of the model which was later sent to Ernie Barber. I am the only known living survivor of the Wood crew.

The Wood crew became a lead crew with the 579th Squadron and flew their 25th mission as group lead to a target at Beroun, Cze. on April 17, 1945. The crew received a citation for meritorious achievement from Gen. Leon Johnson for destruction of the target.

Donald R. Satterthwait (392nd)
10555 Keats Avenue
Clovis, CA 93611

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

Ed Wanner asked if anybody had read about Phineas Pinkham as a youngster.

I did, and I'm pleased to advise that Pinkham flies again! I purchased a copy of the "Phineas Pinkham Scrapbook" last year. It contains nine of the Pinkham stories, right out of the old "Flying Aces" magazine.

Copies are available from: Aviation Book Division, The Seamaster Company, Drawer T, Duxbury, MA 02331-0621.

In Pinkham's fractured French: "Adoo!"

Norman Cook (445th, 492nd)
44 Laurel Oak
Covington, LA 70433-5718

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

Our crew was one of the late arrivals to the 489th Bomb Group. Our first mission was September 28, 1944 to Kassel, Germany. What a reception! I had never heard of that town, nor had I seen any reference in the newspaper with the heading of Kassel until last week. On the same day I received the *2ADA Journal* an article in a Memphis paper with that heading caught my eye. A man there had been charged with killing

(continued on next page)

LETTERS (continued from page 33)

and eating another man. Maybe things are tough there.

A gunner and flight engineer who has written a book lives in Colliersville, Tennessee. His book, *A Reason to Live*, makes interesting reading. He was in the 445th Bomb Group and had completed 30 missions before the wipe-out of 37 crews on September 27. Had I known that at the time, I probably wouldn't have been receptive to riding the tail gun position when my regular position was the nose turret.

There are only two of us left of the Salsgefer crew, Al Clemens and myself. I was the oldest member, the only married one, and the only one from the South. I had a commercial pilot's license and had started as a flight instructor when called to active duty on October 15, 1943. Do you think they didn't need gunners?

Milton A. Hall (489th)

Ed. Note: Hey, the 445th lost 30 B-24s that day — let's not exaggerate!

I don't know what benefit you would derive from getting shot in the back — and maybe, just maybe, they needed instructors less . . .



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B-24 GOES TO UXBRIDGE

BY ALAN SENIOR (446TH)

Those of you 446ers who were on the tour for the dedication of our airfield memorial in September 2003 will recall the conversation and fun we had with docent Chris Wren regarding his complete omission of the B-24 in his lecture, although he included a large segment on the "other" four-engine bomber. And then later, upstairs, looking at his exhibits which included most all of the WWII airplanes; all, that is, EXCEPT our B-24!! This caused another conversation with Chris Wren. He agreed with us ("us" being John Farrington and myself) that he would be glad to display a B-24 if he had one. We asked, if he was sent a museum-quality model, would he display it prominently? He said he would.

Well, that day is here! It has taken months longer than I had anticipated back in September 2003 to locate a professional model builder. I asked Linda Mason, Special Visits Officer, Duxford Imperial War Museum (AAMB) if she would make inquiries for

me. Because the museum is in England, it would be perfect to have our B-24 made in England and delivered to Chris Wren at Uxbridge. No chance for the mail mashers to do their number.

She located a RAF pilot, Nigel Wharmly, who has been building and flying radio-controlled models for years and who is considered a master model builder! Here is the extraordinary part — Uxbridge is where he reports for his RAF service! He will hand deliver his/our model to Chris at the museum (Battle of Britain Operations Room, Royal Air Force at Uxbridge).

I have had two telephone conversations with Nigel about the details of the B-24, as he wants it to be just perfect!! He will take some pictures for me to include in a future issue of the BBE and *The Journal*.

Ed. Note: Please see the letter below, written by curator Chris Wren and received by Alan Senior shortly after this article was written. ■

19 April 2004

Dear Alan:

Thank you for your letter dated 23 March 2004. Please accept my sincere apologies for the time it has taken me to reply. You will be delighted to know that I have received the B-24 model, and it is now on display in the museum. Nigel Wharmly is to be congratulated on his expertise in creating a wonderful exhibit. Please accept my most grateful thanks for your kindness in donating this aircraft which certainly enhances the display of models, artifacts and memorabilia. Please be assured, I am now a B-24 man. Remind me, was there an aircraft called the B-17 which played a minor role?!!

Nigel came with his family and spent some time in the Ops Room. He also met Eric Thale, a friend of mine who was a Lancaster pilot. Eric flew on 33 operational missions including the attack on Dresden on the night of 13 February 1944. He continued his flying career after the war with BOAC, flying Stratocruisers, Constellations, Britannias, and finally VC10s. Needless to say, he and Nigel found plenty to talk about.

You will be pleased to know that the Ops Room is as busy as ever. I have had over 2,000 visitors this year and, on the basis of visits planned throughout the year, it would appear that I will exceed last year's total of 8,000.

Once again, thank you for donating the B-24. I will send you photographs of the model once I have had them printed. Please give my kind regards to Joyce, and I do hope that you will both make a return visit to the Ops Room at some future date.

Yours sincerely,
Chris Wren, Curator
No 11 (Fighter) Group
Battle of Britain Operations Room
Royal Air Force Uxbridge Middlesex UB10 0RZ

To the Editor:

George McGovern's story seems to resurface periodically. I first became aware of it in Steven Ambrose's *The Wild Blue* and in a TV interview with Dan Rather.

Apparently air crews were not given much information on the bombs that they were carrying. They never had an armed bomb on the plane. Bomb fuses were all made with little propellers called arming vanes. The bombs were not armed until the arming vanes had rotated a required number of times. During shipment and installation there was a pin inserted through the vane to keep it from rotating. In addition, when the bombs were put on the racks in the planes, arming wires were put through the vanes. The wires attached to the racks. As the mission approached the target, the crew was supposed to remove the pins, but the arming wires still kept the bombs unarmed. When the bombs were dropped, the arming wires remained on the plane and the bombs were armed only after the arming vanes had rotated the required number of times.

If McGovern and crew had been apprehensive about dropping an armed bomb on innocent people, they could have reinstalled the pin and the bomb would have dropped harmlessly. Alternatively, they could have returned it to their base safely.

At Rackheath (one of the few times they carried 2000 pound bombs) we got a call from the tower to remove the bomb from the runway so the rest of the mission could land. A bomb had hung up in the bomb bay and had been jarred loose by the impact on landing. Another yard bird and I picked up the bomb and took it to the revetment.

Frederick R. Porter
Corporal, Ordnance Section
790th Bomb Squadron (Ret.)
698 Greengate Drive
St Johns, MI 48879-2100

Editor's Note: We knew it when we were flying, but 50-60 years later it makes a better story this way.

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To the Editor:

Here is something that may be of interest, and I would like to hear from anyone else who was involved, if they are still alive and members of this organization:

Our crew was on leave when the war ended, and upon our return from London someone came in our barracks and asked if there were any radio operators and

I said I was. I was told to come with him and I went, still in my uniform that I was wearing on leave.

We were taken to another base, I don't remember or even know if I knew at the time, but there was a full crew apparently picked up at random. I know the officers were concerned about what was going to happen; if we were going to the Pacific or if this was a special parade or some presentation. We were fed and overnights at the base where we were taken all of us in an officer's quarters. The next morning we were taken out to a 24 that was ready to go. I noticed when I got on board that there were boards across the bomb bay in rows. The E.M. that was the flight engineer was given specific orders that he was to be with the bombardier and to make sure that the bomb bay doors were never to be opened. And they both were to watch the switch to make sure that no one touched it. I then asked the pilot if we were under radio silence, and he told me that I knew as much as he did about what we were doing.

A couple of ground brass climbed aboard. I know that they were not familiar with flying, as they had a helluva time just getting in the plane and then they asked where they were to sit. It was somewhat uncomfortable, me asking a full bird colonel to get up out of my seat and find someplace else to sit or squat.

Someone came over and asked if anyone wanted chutes, and I and some of the others said yes. They threw six or eight chutes in but no harness. I guess they expected us to share and hold on quite well. Some more well-dressed brass, not combat crew brass, these brass had all kinds of ribbons on but no P.H. or Air Medals or DFCs, and they tossed a sealed envelope to me to give to the pilot and copilot. They then called the navigator, who was a 2nd Lt., the pilot was a Major or Lt. Col. I think, and they spread the maps and orders out to see where we were supposed to go.

They finally decided it was a small field south of Hamburg or Hanover, I am not sure which. Turns out the navigator had never flown a combat mission and the pilot and copilot were really PO'd about having to fly it themselves. I was basically of no help, as I couldn't get the radio to change bands. All I got was music from some station or the other, and upon telling the pilot this and offering to get off to lighten the load, he said no, that I might as well see some German soil since I had never been shot down.

Well, anyway, we took off, and it was a

good flight, clear and we were probably at a thousand to two thousand feet. Other than one mission to drop supplies, I had never flown that low before. The flight was uneventful other than some bickering between the two pilots. Finally, after circling several German airports it was decided that they had found the right one. Lots of sullen Germans were around when we landed, which was to be expected. The ice was broken when a carton of Camels was discovered and distributed. Most of the Germans spoke English, and they were as puzzled as we were as to why we were there.

Finally a group of men came in to the area in a German army bus (I guess it was German; I could not read the signs on the side.) The men were loaded into the plane and then seated on the boards in the bomb bay. I would guess that there were twelve to fifteen of them. All the crew were really jittery about the bomb bay situation — one little slip and the whole group would be dumped. I don't know if they were speaking German or not. My mother spoke German sometimes when she got excited about something, but nothing like they were speaking. The men were not starved-looking; they were not well fed but they looked as if they were normal. They had suits on of a type, somewhat mismatched pants and coats, and the one thing that we noticed was they were wearing fairly good shoes, high-tops like my father used to wear on the farm.

The flight back was without any event, but I think that all of us in the crew were jumpy as to the bomb bay falling open. We landed at a different base than the one that we took off from. When we got there the men in the bomb bay got out after we did and there were some staff cars waiting for them. Funny thing, they never asked us for cigarettes, food, or anything. All of us thought this was unusual. An officer asked us where we were from and the pilot told him, and he said that we would be taken back as soon as he could get transportation. I never had any further contact with any of them, but I did see the pilot in Hawaii when I was coming back from a tour in the Pacific.

I just wondered if any of the crew is still alive and kicking. It would be interesting to know who had the priority to get this type of treatment, and so soon after the war.

Lee Hall (93rd)
Rt. 3, Box 3941
Alton, MO 65606

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

A B-24 Commemorative Stamp!! Yes! At Long Last.

BY ALAN SENIOR (446TH)



Depicted on the stamp is "Red Ass," the B-24 of the 446th Bomb Group that led the 8th Air Force on the first D-Day mission.



My mission, which began in 1999 when I was appointed Second Air Division Association Stamp Chairman, is now completed. Oh Happy Day!

The stamp, issued by the Isle of Man, U.K., commemorating the 60th Anniversary of Operation Overlord, depicts a B-24 of the 446th Bomb Group leading the Eighth Air Force on the first D-Day mission and is coupled with the British glider, Horsa, the first aircraft to land in France on D-Day.

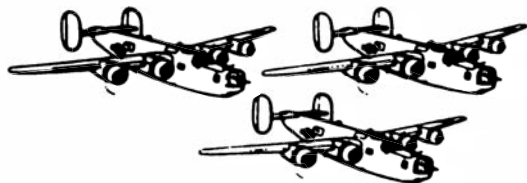
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2. You may also order from Alan Senior, 610 Salerno Street, Sugarland, TX 77478. I will place an order with IOM, UK upon receipt of at least 10 paid stamp orders. Be advised that it may take up to three weeks to receive your stamps. Air mail from the U.K. to me is 7-8 days, and I will then mail them to you.

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EIGHTH AIR FORCE
RAY PYTEL, JOURNAL EDITOR
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