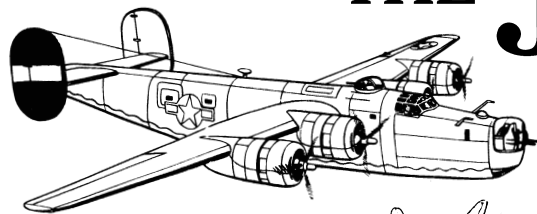


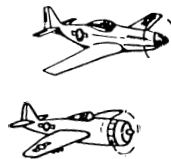
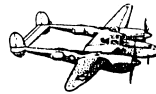
CONVENTION 2005

It's San Antonio this year.
Are you going?

SEE DETAILS ON PAGE 6.



Veterans of
WORLD WAR II



THE JOURNAL

Official Publication of the:



Volume 43 Number 4

Winter 2004

REPRINTED FROM

Plane Talk

JANUARY · 1945

UNTIL WE GET TO BERLIN!

Read the message to the folks at home on page 11.



Starting the Mission

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION



JOURNAL



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President's Message: HOWDY FROM TEXAS!

BY GEOFF GREGORY (467TH), 2ADA PRESIDENT

It's beginning to look and feel a lot like Fall around here; probably even more so with the Fall colors in Yankee Land.

Things are also happening in the 2nd Air Division Association — all of which will be discussed in San Antonio in May.

In particular, the Executive Committee has been asked to consider the possibility of financially supporting the new 2nd Air Division display in the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah. The display is designed to replace the aging 2AD "Wall," with a display built around the B-24D Nose, on loan from Duxford Museum in England.

I have sent a form to the Executive Committee concerning this, asking for an opinion of yea or nay, and to what extent we should contribute. Believe it or not, I have actually received replies from every member (subject to recount). As expected, there have been positive and negative responses. The majority, however, is in favor of our endorsement; with caveats to be discussed in San Antonio. Also, I anticipate listening to Matthew Martin present his ideas for streamlining the Fulbright Fund investments. These ideas have merit, and I hope the Executive Committee will look favorably on them.

Speaking of San Antonio, it is a choice location! You walk out of the lobby and you are on the River Walk! All the rooms have been just renovated this past summer; the food is good, but expensive as is usually the case with hotel restaurants, and the parking is expensive as well. However, there are many good restaurants all around the hotel and on the River Walk, and I understand there is a parking garage around the corner for half the price. There is Shilos — excellent German food for breakfast, lunch or dinner; Fuddruckers for burgers and hot dogs; Texas Café for CHICKEN FRIED STEAK; and of course, anything you want on the River. Tell those old bones they can still make it, and COME JOIN US! You will ENJOY San Antonio!

Speaking of making it: We plan to make "one more" trip to England this November — if the creek don't rise! We will participate in Remembrance Day activities; attending the Cathedral Service on Sunday, and laying a 2ADA wreath on the War Memorial marking Remembrance Day in Britain. I will attend the Board of Governors meeting in Norwich, and meet with members of the Fulbright Commission in London. And of course, I will eat fish and chips accompanied by a bit of English beer — when my wife isn't looking.

Prior to that, I will be entering the hospital October 4th for some corrective surgery, nothing major. The MAJOR problem is all the forms you need to complete before entering! THAT takes longer than the procedure! I bet I have filled out ten medical and personal histories in the last two days.

As for Jordan Uttal, he is slowly but steadily progressing. He is beginning to walk with his walker more each day, but still has help with daily therapy. I am still running a few errands for him; he now owes me about ten years' gas money!

That's about IT this time. Until the next time, take care of yourselves — YOU ARE SPECIAL PEOPLE! ■

❧ In Remembrance ❧
Colonel Ion Walker
467th Bomb Group
Co-Founder, Memorial Trust of
the 2nd Air Division

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

HDQ

Evelyn M. Cramer

445th BG

John T. Childers
Jack B. Dyson
William F. Leslie
Richard F. Parker

446th BG

Henry W. Kingsbery

448th BG

Albert E. Furlong

453rd BG

George S. Sowinski

491st BG

Gerson Zubkin

492nd BG

Albert J. Flyen (44th)

Last July I went to Washington with Joanna so that she could attend a professional meeting. We stayed in Room 570 of the Mayflower Hotel. There is nothing remarkable about the number 570, but there is something remarkable about the room. There is a plaque on the wall which reads:

**December, 1943, Room 570
Harry W. Colmery,
past National Commander,
American Legion,
worked tirelessly in this room
drafting the Servicemen's
Readjustment Act of 1944,
"The G.I. Bill."**

How much do we owe Harry? Where would we be without him? Without the G.I. Bill? We bought houses on the G.I. Bill. We went to school on the G.I. Bill. Speaking personally, I owe my entire career to the G.I. Bill. Because of it I was able to finish undergraduate school at the University of Wisconsin and go through graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania, earning a doctorate and staying on as a faculty member, retiring after fifty years. In undergraduate school, the G.I. Bill paid for the

\$150 out-of-state tuition (charged to all returning veterans, including Wisconsin residents), as well as for books, and provided a stipend of, I think, \$65 per month. I could not have gone to graduate school without having completed undergraduate school. I received a teaching fellowship at Penn which paid full tuition in the graduate school as well as a salary of \$2800 for the academic year. This salary increased annually as I progressed toward my degree.

Unquestionably, the G.I. Bill was one

THE PEEP FROM THE VEEP

**BY JOHN deCANI (489th)
2ADA Executive Vice President**

of the most important pieces of social legislation of the Twentieth Century.

The G.I. Bill has more than paid for itself. Those of us who took advantage of it probably multiplied our earning capacity by a factor of at least three — more likely, five. That means that we spent more money consuming and investing, and we paid more in taxes, than we would have without the G.I. Bill.

My memory of undergraduate economics is vague, but I believe that something called the Multiplier Effect took over, so that roughly eighty percent of what we spent was respent by the recipients, eighty percent of what they spent was respent, and so forth until the amount remaining became too small to perceive. This was obviously good for the economy and for the country.

Tom Brokaw called us "The Greatest Generation." Perhaps we were, but "Greatest" is not an adjective most of us would have chosen for ourselves. But what about Mr. Colmery? He was of our fathers' generation, and that generation gave us the G.I. Bill. If we were "The Greatest Generation," that farsighted generation certainly helped to make us so. ■



**BY ALEXIS CIURCZAK
2ADA/FULBRIGHT LIBRARIAN**

On September 1, 2004 I started my tenure as 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian at the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich, England. I received a very warm welcome from the staff, who are very knowledgeable and experienced. I hope my nearly thirty years as a librarian at Palomar College in San Marcos, California, as well as my military family background will help create a successful experience.

My dad, **Alexander Ciurczak**, is a decorated USAF Captain (Ret), who flew in B-24s during the war, in the Aleutian Islands with the 11th Air Force. He is also the founder of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society (www.dfcsociety.org), and by helping him with the initial organization, I gained valuable experience work-



Left to right: Alexander Ciurczak, Bud Chamberlain, Dick Butler, and Alexis Ciurczak.

ing with veterans. My dad and I were able to meet with **Richard Butler** and **Bud Chamberlain** in Riverside, California before making the trip across the pond, and Mr. Butler presented me with a commemorative medallion celebrating the rededication of the Memorial Library.

I am looking forward to continuing the work of the previous Fulbrighters; and will concentrate on working with area schools, bringing more students to the Library, and redesigning the website (www.2ndair.org.uk). Feel free to contact me by e-mail at alexis.ciurczak@norfolk.gov.uk. ■

The Editor's Comments

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

Well, I got back from Kansas City and the 445th reunion to be confronted by a stack of mail, a ream of faxes, and fortunately only a few phone messages on the answering machine.

About seventy 445th members and their families and guests participated in the grand reunion, a few tours of the Kansas City area, and a "President Harry Truman and His Wife Bess" presentation by the reenactors from the Truman Library in Independence.

About ten Kassel Mission survivors discussed their experiences at the Kassel Mission Symposium, which was strongly augmented by the showing of the Dzenowagis film "The Pride of the Nation," a detailed chronicle of the Kassel Mission disaster.

Bill Dewey, president of the Kassel Mission Memorial Association, announced that this was the final reunion and that the association is now being phased out. But a successor organization, the **Kassel Mission Historical Society**, is being organized by Dewey's daughter, **Linda Dewey**, and the son of **George Collar**, **Douglas Collar**. All interested persons, whether Kassel Mission survivors or one of their descendants, 445th veterans and their relatives, and historians and writers are invited to join. The Kassel Mission Historical Society, Inc. applied for non-profit corporation status as a 501(c)(3) Federal Income Tax-Exempt Organization in October, 2004. Purposes of the KMHS are: To perpetuate the memory and history of the Kassel Mission of September 27, 1944 by the 445th Bomb Group of the 8th Army Air Force, 2nd Bomb Division, 2nd Combat Wing; to fund and dedicate memorials to the Kassel Mission at appropriate locations; to publish and promote books, articles, and video productions about the Kassel Mission and the 445th Bomb Group, Tibenham, England, in World War II. Annual dues are \$15.00. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Kassel Mission Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 439, Glen Arbor, MI 49636, phone: (231) 334-3633, e-mail: kmhs927@charter.net.

ANSWERS TO THE FALL QUIZ

The five individuals in the picture are, from left to right: **Joe Dzenowagis, Jr.** (Mem-

orial Trust Governor), **Dick Butler** (former 2ADA President), **Chuck Walker** (Memorial Trust Governor and former 2ADA President), **David Hastings** (past Chairman and Memorial Trust Governor), and **Bud Koorndyk** (former 2ADA President and past Memorial Trust Governor).

Former 2ADA President Dick Butler comments: "The photo was taken 14 November 2003 when that motley crew visited the Lotus Automobile assembly plant located on the old Hethel (389th) Airfield. We were in the display room, and the car is a prototype Lotus that is scheduled to

be available for sale in the U.S. next year. The odd bicycle is one of several unique models built by Lotus. They are just used as playthings."

WINTER QUIZ

What pieces of equipment on a B-24 do these trade names represent?

1. Browning
2. Martin
3. Sperry
4. Norden
5. Emerson
6. Very
7. Hamilton

An Emotional Gauntlet

From Life in Peacetime America to the War in European Skies
by **Stuart J. Wright**

BOOK REVIEW BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

Stuart J. Wright tells the gripping story of a World War II American aircrew flying missions from England with the 453rd Bomb Group in a B-24 Liberator bomber they nicknamed "Corky." This is a true account based on years of research and correspondence with crew members and their families. Wright adds a dimension rarely explored in other World War II memoirs and narratives, beginning the chronicle during peacetime when the men of the aircrew are introduced as civilians — kids during the Great Depression. As they mature through the years of the Great Depression to face a world at war, questions are raised about "just" and "unjust" wars, imperialism, and patriotism. Jingoistic sentimentality is resisted in favor of objectivity, as the feelings and motivations of the crew members are explored: The Chinese-American air gunner had hoped to serve in the U.S. Army Air Forces to fight against the Japanese invaders of his homeland; the Jewish navigator felt compelled to join the battle against Nazi Germany.

In recounting the harrowing conditions and horrors of bombing missions over Europe, *An Emotional Gauntlet* emphasizes the interpersonal relationships within the crew and the spirit these men shared. As pilot Jack Nortridge regularly assured his crew, "If you fly with me, I'm going to bring you home." This book is a testament to their strength and determination.

"A compelling story. Wright establishes the strong spirit these men shared, based on their pilot's pledge that he would bring them back — back from each mission and back to resume their peacetime lives. An Emotional Gauntlet stands out for its integration of prewar civilian life with wartime experiences. To me, this is the very essence of America's story in the war, and I am glad to find a book that comprehends this and tells the story from this perspective."

— Jerome Klinkowitz, author of *Yanks over Europe: American Flyers in World War II*

"[An Emotional Gauntlet] describes each mission in great detail, including the D-Day invasion. It is very informative, descriptive, awesome . . . filled with humor, chaos, horror, and tragedy."

— Harriett Gustason, *Freeport Journal-Standard*

To order *An Emotional Gauntlet* (cloth, ISBN 0-299-20520-7) for \$35.00 plus \$4.50 shipping, contact:

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Second Air Division Association 58th Annual Convention – May 27-30, 2005

HYATT REGENCY HOTEL, 123 LOSOYA STREET (ON THE RIVERWALK)
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Friday, May 27	Registration Trip to Lackland AFB (Optional) \$30.00 per person with lunch Cocktail Party – Cash Bar Group Dinners
Saturday, May 28	Buffet Breakfast Ladies' Luncheon Men's Luncheon Cocktail Party – Cash Bar Buffet Dinner
Sunday, May 29	Buffet Breakfast Business Meeting Cocktail Party – Cash Bar Banquet
Monday, May 30	Buffet Breakfast

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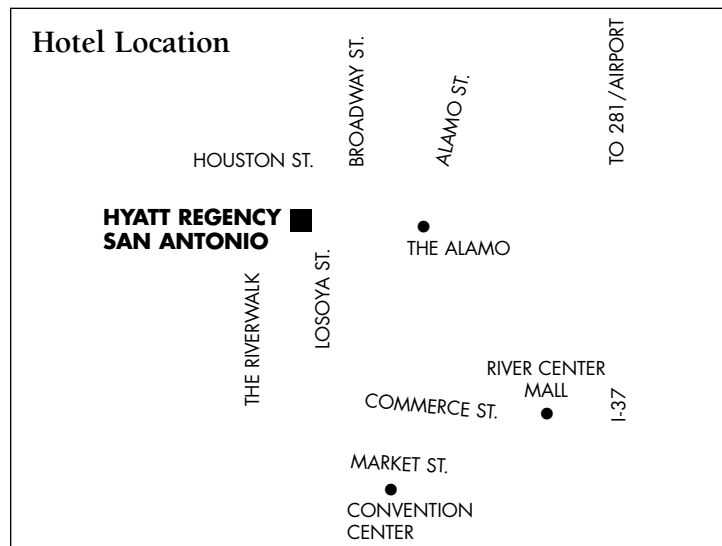
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The above costs include hotel for 3 nights and all events listed. All extra nights \$99.00 + tax \$16.58 = \$115.58 per night, and incidentals must be paid to the hotel on check out.

REFUND POLICY: 60 days prior to convention – \$15.00 chg per person. 30 days prior to convention – \$25.00 chg per person. IF FUNDS AVAILABLE – FULL REFUND.



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Phone Number: () _____ Group: _____

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Single _____ Double (King or D/D) _____ Triple _____ Quad _____ Non-Smoking _____ Handicapped _____

Name of 3rd or 4th person in Triple or Quad: _____

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

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

Editor's Note: Our condolences go to Chuck and his family on the recent loss of his wife, Maxine, after a lengthy illness.

This is a difficult time for me to be writing a *Journal* article, and the editor has been most kind in permitting me to send it in a few days late. This article will be short, as little has happened to report.

The last *Journal* honored the magnificent gifts that **Bernard Matthews** and **Theodore "Ted" Kaye** had made to our beloved Memorial Library. Now for the rest of the story:

At the 1990 convention in Norwich, we "HONORED THE VILLAGES." At the 445th at Tibenham, we asked the members of the lovely, little (old) All Saints Church what we could do to repay them for their kindness that day. It was agreed that our wives could make needlepoint covers for their kneeling pads. Some twenty-four were done, but one was special: Ted Kaye's wife could not do one, so Ted borrowed some needlepoint instruction books from the library and made one himself. It is not the most elaborate, but it is one of the most treasured. Few have shown such honor to our time in England!

A Governors' meeting will be held November 15, 2004 (too

late to be reported in this *Journal*) and will be attended by a larger than usual contingent of 2ADA members. **Geoff Gregory** and his wife **Terry**, **David Patterson** and his wife **Joan**, **Bud Koorndyk**, **Vicki Warning**, **Joe Dzenowagis, Jr.**, and myself and my grandson, **Andrew Horlock**.

Sunday the 14th is Remembrance Day in England, and Geoff is to lay a wreath at the City Hall Ceremony honoring the 2ADA as **Dick Butler** did last year. Geoff and Terry are to travel from the City Hall to the Cathedral and back in the Lord Mayor's party. They have also been invited to be in the formal Procession into the Cathedral. **David Hastings** has informed me that the Americans will be honored by viewing the City Hall Ceremony from the balcony and will be provided reserved seats at the Cathedral. Stay tuned to the next *Journal* to see how it all came out. I am always excited about traveling back to Norwich, and I anticipate this trip will be especially memorable.

This edition of *The Journal* is scheduled to be mailed after the first of January 2005, so I trust you all had a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season and that your spring flowers are bright and colorful. Stay well. ■

The Day Jordan Made a Big Splash - 14 Years Ago!

Editor's Note: I received a call from recuperating 2ADA Honorary President Jordan Uttal with the message that he hopes you had a wonderful holiday season and that he is coming along nicely, but pushing a "walker" between the living room and kitchen at the present. He said that he plans on being in San Antonio for the 58th Convention, and if I wished, I could reprint one of his past articles for The Journal. So here goes:

2ADA American Librarian Fund Progress Report

BY JORDAN UTTAL

Reprinted from the 2ADA JOURNAL, Summer 1991

We have *reached* our target, thanks to all of you who have contributed. Now, as I write this in late April for the Summer issue of *The Journal*, it seems to me that it would be best to give an up-to-the-minute accounting at the convention in Dearborn, in early July. Then we will give you the most accurate facts possible, in writing, in the Fall *Journal*.

However, good friends, *we have exceeded \$500,000*; and checks are still coming in every day. I am glad that is so, and I hope it will continue. Here's why:

When we embarked on our "Last Mission" drive at the Colorado Springs convention in June 1988, we had the feeling that it would take us three years to reach our target . . . and so it has! When we started, we were thinking in terms of 10% interest to fund the American Librarian (or Archivist, or Historian) and the British Aide. We thought that interest at that level on a fund of \$500,000 would do the job.

But, what has happened? Interest rates are down, and like it or not, inflation is still a fact of life. So, we must be realistic and try to get as much more than the original amount as we can. There will be no speculative investments of our fund, so, appreciation



cannot come from that source. As we see it, the only answer is to try to obtain as many more donations as we can (no matter what the size) from those of you who have not contributed.

The Executive Committee of the 2nd Air Division Association is agreed that there will be no more letters of solicitation from your Group VPs asking for funds for this purpose. Instead, we want you to know of the need, and leave it to you to help us build the fund as high as we can.

(continued on next page)

HETHEL



389th Bomb Group Green Dragon Flares

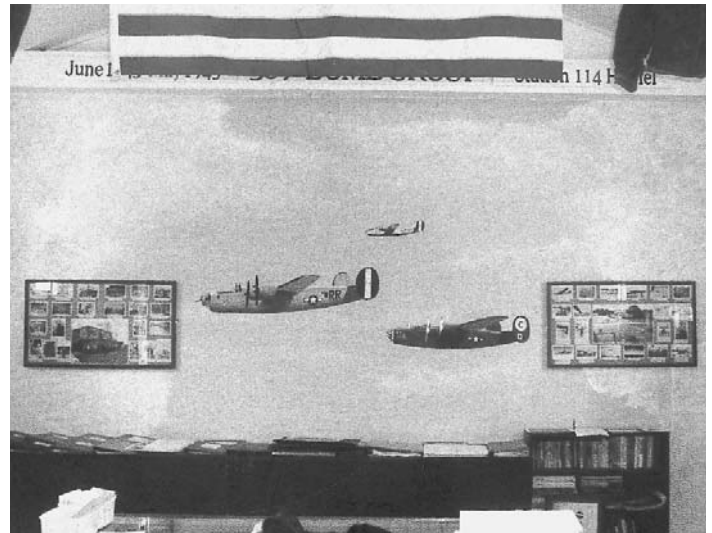
BY FIELDER NEWTON

Summer is gone and it is time again for the next *Journal* report. This will be a shorter one, as I am scheduled for back surgery on September 29th and do want to get this written before then.

As some of you know, **Paul Wilson**, one of the Brits toiling with the restoration of the chapel at Hethel, has been writing a history of the 389th. By the time you receive this *Journal* it should be in print, and in the Winter NEWS LETTER I will give you the information for ordering a copy. As many of you haven't met him, I am including in this report a picture of Paul standing next to the American Flag pole in front of the Hethel chapel.



Here also is a picture of the mural on the wall in the chapel opposite the crucifix. This is a great rendition of our beloved B-24s in formation. The mural was started by **Jonathan Smith** painting the B-24s, and then an artist, **Derek Smith** (no relation to Jonathan), painted the details on the B-24s and the background, making the scene look quite realistic. It was during our visit to Hethel while attending the 50-year celebration of VE Day, that I first saw the chapel when one end was open and being used as a sheep pen. Our fine English friends have taken it from this state to a beautiful chapel room and a museum to honor all of our fallen comrades. They have assumed the responsibility and the costs of this restoration as well as the labors. We, as you know,



have supported their work with our donations, the latest of which was for help in replacing the leaking roof on the chapel.

Received a memo from 2ADA President **Geoff Gregory** requesting feedback on the probability of the 2ADA and the individual Groups supporting the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum's replacing the 2AD Wall. Included in this project will be the placing of the nose section of our "Fighting Sam" as the focal point of an exhibit to be placed within the museum's Combat Rotunda. Highlights of the proposed design include a simulated Type T2 hangar surrounding the nose section, a large format screen displaying original combat footage, and placement of a figure outfitted as a bombardier inside the nose. In keeping with the use of new technologies in museum design, interactive components include a touch-screen program and a B-24 flight simulator. All these elements will present an interactive experience that enlivens the Combat Gallery with the complete B-24 story. The total cost of this project is \$125,000, and it has been suggested that the Second Air Division Association donate \$100,000 with the remainder to be supplied by the bomb groups. It is my understanding that each group will be asked to contribute \$1,000 or more. The decision of the 2ADA on endorsing the project and making a contribution will not be made until the May 2005 convention. My opinion is, that since this could be the only Second Air Division memorial of its kind in the USA, WE SHOULD SUPPORT IT.

Hope you all have had a good holiday season, and that your calendars are marked for the May 2005 2ADA convention in San Antonio. Keep 'em flying until we meet again, and God bless. ■

JORDAN'S BIG SPLASH (continued from page 7)

At this very moment, as I write this we are working with the Fulbright Commission, and our respective attorneys, to draw up a satisfactory agreement so that our Fund can be officially set up to carry out the clearly defined purposes for the establishment and operation of the 2nd Air Division Association Librarian endowment.

As chairman of the committee established to conduct our "Last Mission" Drive, I hope to be able to present that document along with the funds to our Association President at Dearborn. There will be a provision in the agreement which will permit us to increase the amount of the Fund... so... let's keep it growing.

It has meant a great deal to your Association officers, Executive Committee and the Group VPs and many individual members to have embarked on this mission and have it turn out so well.

Again... CONGRATULATIONS to all of you who have made this possible. THANK YOU! ■

458th BOMB GROUP

HORSHAM ST. FAITH



BY RICK ROKICKI

MEMORIAL AT HORSHAM ST. FAITH



Christine Armes with the new memorial at Horsham St. Faith

Thanks to the many who have written, called, and sent me news of the July 29, 2004 dedication. All agreed it was a beautiful day and everything went well. The 458th was represented by: **Clayton Wilkening, Jack & Evelyn Kingsberry, Elmo & Joanna Geppelt, Ardith Butler** (wife of **Dick Butler**), and **Jim Jeffers'** daughter, **Marilyn Walton**. There may have been others, but these were the only ones I had listed.

From **Andrew Hawker**, Memorial Trust Board of Governors: "It's a superb piece of work and beautifully located. The sun shown brilliantly and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Team not only flew over, but landed and taxied within thirty yards of where we were standing. **Christine Armes** and anyone else involved in bringing it to fruition can be very proud of the result of their efforts."

From **David Hastings**, retired Chairman of the Memorial Trust Board of Governors: "Just to let you know that Christine Armes did an outstanding job today with the new and beautiful Marker at Norwich Airport International. Bright and sunny day, huge crowd, Battle of Britain flight, Salvation Army Band, great lady vocalist, USAF Mildenhall Chaplain and Color Guard. Christine has made a really outstanding marker beside the Terminal building in the public viewing area. The area is paved, decorated with flower beds, and has two flagmasts. The marker itself commemorates all who flew from Horsham, and it was a joy to see so

many veterans, including some from the 458th. The dedication service, again designed by Christine, was deeply moving, and we can never thank her enough."

David supplied the first photos I received, just a few days after the event. The photo on this page of Christine and the memorial (marker) came from him. I have since received many more photos, from **Dick Butler**, **Clay Wilkening**, and **David Hastings**. There is a lot more to see in the area. There are two large benches purchased by Christine, two sections of iron grating salvaged from the combat crew area which she has transformed to make an area called "gates of heaven," which does have angel sculptures therein. This is truly a "one of a kind" memorial and setting, and we are most grateful to Christine for all the time, effort, headaches, and all the problems that can and did arise in this great undertaking. Again, many, many thanks, Chris!

GENERAL JAMES H. ISBELL

On August 18, 2004, at age 90, **B/Gen. James H. Isbell** folded his wings. Born in Union City, TN on June 2, 1914, he attended Union University and then enlisted in the Army to attend West Point in 1934. After graduating in 1938, he went to Kelly and Randolph Fields for flight training. In October 1943, he was scheduled to be the C.O. of the last Liberator group destined for Europe — the 492nd BG. In December, the 458th group commander was hospitalized and had to be replaced. Jim Isbell got the job.

After our 200 mission party, Wing sent him back to the U.S. on leave. His return to the 458th was negated by war's end. Jim Isbell then became instrumental in the birth of the Air Force Academy.

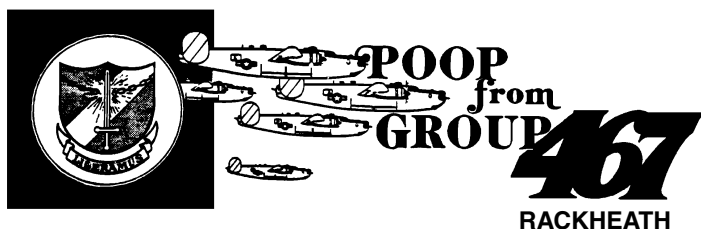
Col. Jim Isbell was not tied down to a desk and chair. He was a combat pilot and led the Group's first mission to a target in Frankfurt. His combat decorations included the Legion of Merit (2), the D.F.C. (2), the Air Medal, the Bronze Star, and the French Croix de Guerre, amongst other post-war decorations.

Known to many of the enlisted men as "Gentleman Jim," he attended our October 1987 memorial dedication at Wright-Patterson and was our guest speaker. He lived in Alaska and Palm Springs, CA, and then in retirement at Air Force Village in San Antonio, TX.

MEMORIAL AT WRIGHT-PATTERSON, DAYTON



Originally installed and dedicated on the Wright-Patterson Museum grounds on October 3, 1987, over the ensuing years our
(continued on page 12)



BY JACK STEVENS

We're well into autumn and we've been enjoying our usual San Diego blue skies, warm sunshine, and pleasant breezes. But we recently noticed the sun's been coming up later in the morning and setting earlier in the afternoon; so I guess that means winter is coming. And the mention of winter reminds me that many of you 2ADAers may be experiencing cold weather and snow when you receive this issue of *The Journal*. You'll have my sympathy, because I still remember winter from growing up in Worcester, MA, and going to college in Waterville, ME. (One night in Waterville, it got down to 35 below, and there was lots of snow on the ground.) When winter arrives here, our sunshine may be cooler than it is now, but a lot of people will still be walking around in their year-round shorts-and-sneaker ensembles.

Now it's October and we're back from another 467th Reunion; this time in Covington, Kentucky — across the Ohio River from Cincinnati. Like most of the members, we arrived on Sunday, the 3rd, checked into our hotel (the Radisson Riverfront), and then went to our group hospitality room where we caught up on things with old friends, registered, and picked up an envelope containing the reunion schedule of events, a roster of the attendees, and our identification badges (each badge was in a plastic holder, which very conveniently served as a carrying case for free-drink tickets and preference cards for our Tuesday evening meal entrees.) It was apparent that **Ralph Davis** and his son, **Bob**, with a big assist from **Vince Re**, had whopped up another great reunion, with well-coordinated events each day and a spacious hospitality room for in-between times of rest, relaxing, and remembering. Many members had brought their WWII memorabilia and diaries for display in the hospitality room. And our "across the pond" members **Watts** and **Wilkinson** also brought display items. The first copy of **Perry Watts'** 700-plus-page book of detailed information about the 467th Bomb Group was there, with its hard-bound red cover.

That evening, we attended a tantalizing "Taste of Cincinnati" welcoming reception and buffet, which **Lucille** and I (and several others) left early to rest up after our flights in "the friendly skies" and walking the Cincinnati Airport's long corridors from flight gate to baggage area and then to the ground-transport area.

On Monday after breakfast, some of us boarded a bus to the USAF Air Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, near Dayton, while other attendees boarded buses for a leisurely "Cities Area Tour" of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. These members enjoyed the opportunity to patronize several of the area restaurants and shops.

At the Air Museum, we wandered through its three very large hangars while viewing the approximately 350 air/space craft and a great deal of related memorabilia — including a replica of the 1903 "Wright Flier." It would take several days for a person to really appreciate all of that wonderful collection of planes and their related ground and flight equipment. Many of the fighters and bombers are arranged in typical combat-operating settings with mannequins wearing the uniform/garb of the day (and climate) for that period. I think all of us took advantage of the opportunity to view once again the B-24, "Strawberry Bitch," that **Colonel Shower** delivered to the museum.

For dinner that evening, we gathered in the Riverview Revolving Restaurant, high atop the hotel (18th floor), for cocktails and

a delicious buffet dinner. It was a novel and interesting experience to sit at our tables and watch the "rest of the world go by." We saw many items of interest we never could have seen from the ground or from the windows of our hotel.

Tuesday, after breakfast and throughout the morning and afternoon, buses shuttled between the hotel and the city of Newport so we could visit the aquarium there. I think that aquarium's collection must contain just about every size, shape, and color of marine creature in existence. And we found that Newport has a wide selection of fine eating places to choose from for lunch.

That evening, DJ **Chuck Drake** provided a musical background for our dinner (with the entrée each of us had pre-selected — chicken cordon bleu or pork loin crusted with rosemary.) Chuck later provided dance music, but most of us were content to just sit and enjoy the music, and our conversation, which never seemed to lag.

Wednesday was the day for group business. The Board of Directors met at 09:30, with President/Treasurer **M. Ralph Davis**; Vice President **Anthony Bell**; Secretary **Valerie Corvino**; Directors **Walter J. Mundy**, **Vincent C. Re**, and **John W. Upp**; and 2ADA Vice President **John E. Stevens** present.

President Davis (a) presented the group's current financial status and recommended group contributions to the 2ADA, the 8th AF Museum, and the San Diego B-24 Memorial, (b) named the sites that had been suggested for Reunion 2005 and/or subsequent reunions: Philadelphia, PA; Sacramento, CA; Frankenmuth, MI; and New Orleans, MS; and recommended that the membership be asked to indicate their preference for the site of Reunion 2005; and (c) reported that, following the death of **Maurice L. "Bodie" Malone**, **Paul V. Hatten** had agreed to serve the final year of "Bodie" Malone's term as Director. He then listed those directors whose terms were ending at this time: **Vincent C. Re** and **John W. Upp**, and requested each of them to continue as directors. John Upp agreed to serve as director for another three years and Vince Re agreed to serve as director for another five years. The board voted to approve items (a) and (c) and concurred that item (b) should be presented to the membership for its consideration.

The General Membership Meeting was called to order at 10:45 and President Davis presented the Board's thoughts and recommendations on Items (a), (b), and (c). Items (a) and (c) were approved by a show of hands. Item (b) [site for Reunion 2005] was discussed and **Eugene P. Weslock** made a strong argument for selecting Frankenmuth, MI, pointing out the many features and attractions of that area and he urged the membership to select Frankenmuth. More discussion followed and, by a show of hands, the membership selected New Orleans for Reunion 2005.

After lunch, the Board met again at 2:30 (with the personnel listed above). Director Bell informed the Board that there was concern that the duties of Vice President might affect his health situation. The Board voted to accept his resignation as vice president but urged him to continue as director. He agreed to continue as a Director for the remaining two years. The Board then voted to increase the number of Directors to eight and named **Andrew J. Wilkinson** and **Brian Mahoney** as Directors (with terms to be determined).

The Board extended its appreciation to Ralph's son, **Robert "Bob" Davis**, who, among the many other tasks he performs for his father and the 467th, set up and maintains the group's Web page (467bg.com) and, over the years, has handled many day-to-day tasks that have benefited the 467th Bomb Group Veterans Association. Ironically, as Ralph's hair has grown shorter, Bob has allowed his to grow longer.

That evening, in our best "bib and tucker," we gathered for the final cocktail hour and banquet of Reunion 2004. The cocktail hour went by too quickly. Then, we stood as **Reverend Gary**

(continued on page 12)

UNTIL WE GET TO BERLIN

A message to the folks at home in 1945

BY COLONEL ROBERT R. GIDEON, 15TH AIR FORCE • REPRINTED FROM "PLANE TALK," JANUARY 1945

I am not a literary man, so I can spin you no epic tales about the war. This is just the talk of a professional soldier to neighbors at home.

When I was graduated from West Point in 1939, many did not think too much of professional soldiers. When I went into the air forces in '41, many did not think much about the usefulness of air power. That seems changed now. War has educated us.

When I got home from the European front in December and the news of Germany's great counter attack began breaking, some of my countrymen seemed in real despair. I can only say this — the German strategy will prolong the war, which is just what the Germans want. It will magnify the war's cost to us. We shall not win cheaply, as some Americans had hoped. But — we shall still win.

The setbacks we suffered at the end of 1944 mean primarily that we shall have to do some of our work over again.

The work of our air forces in the year previous to December headed up to three strategic accomplishments.

For one thing, we mastered the Luftwaffe; by April last year our 8th and 15th air forces had flattened many of the enemy's aircraft plants, and reduced fighter opposition. In my own outfit, the 15th, Liberators have played a great part.

One outcome was that our ground forces could invade the continent in June without being decimated from the air — the first successful invasion across the Channel in history. German prisoners of war would tell us, "When we were in Russia they said our planes were in the west. Here they told us our planes were over Russia."

Second, we carried on the campaign heralded by the famous Liberator raid on Ploesti. We bombed the enemy's rich oil resources in Rumania and Poland.

Result: The Germans promptly faced fuel shortages for a mechanized war — shortages which have not prevented their counter attack, but have certainly handicapped them.

We also bombed plants making hydrogen peroxide. This, combined with potassium permanganate, is one of the fuels for the German robot bombs.

Finally, we hit hard at enemy lines of communication. As our own ground forces moved toward Germany, we have tried to hinder German supplies. For instance, in one day near the year end — on December 11 — we poured 6,000 tons of bombs on German railway centers. The Fifteenth Air Force flew up from out of Italy, and the Eighth out of Britain. They put some 1,600 of our heavy bombers in the air over Germany on one day. With fighter escort, that meant a flying army of more than 17,000 Americans in the air over Germany at one time.

The chart (*see box above*) shows the official AAF figures on the tonnage of bombs dropped on some of the greatest German centers in the period between December 7, 1941, and December 7, 1944.

All this represents what we call *strategic* bombing. You doubtless know the distinction: strategy wins wars; tactics wins battles.

From the time of the invasion, our air forces have done more and more tactical bombing in support of our ground troops. Whereas a strategic target may be an aircraft factory or an oil refinery, typical tactical targets are gun positions, bridges close to the front line, troop concentrations, staff headquarters, armored vehicle concentrations, and the like.

During the invasion, for instance, our tactical bombing was

CITY	TARGET	TONNAGE
BERLIN	general war supplies, traffic center	13,717 tons
PLOESTI	oil	13,098 tons
MUNICH	aircraft, chemicals	12,937 tons
VIENNA	general war supplies, traffic center	11,671 tons
MERSEBERG	synthetic oil	11,391 tons
COLOGNE	general war industries, traffic center	11,236 tons
HAMM	traffic, supply, power center	10,105 tons
BRUNSWICK	aircraft plants, steel works, etc.	9,431 tons
KASSEL	aircraft plants, locomotives, marshalling yards	8,656 tons
HAMBURG	oil, shipbuilding, aircraft	8,481 tons
LUDWIGSHAVEN	chemical, engineering, AFV, etc.	8,264 tons
KIEL	principal German naval base, etc.	7,662 tons
BUDAPEST	aircraft, supply, traffic center	7,007 tons
FRANKFURT	aircraft, motor vehicles, chemicals, etc.	6,642 tons
SAARBRUCKEN	coal fields, iron and steel supplies	6,476 tons
MUENSTER	industries, inland harbor, canals	4,741 tons
HANOVER	rubber, ordnance, oil refineries	4,697 tons
BUCHAREST	supply center Eastern front	4,403 tons
OSNABRUCK	iron, steel mills, railroad junction	4,357 tons
WILHELMSHAVEN	naval base, U-boat pen, etc.	4,130 tons

done on precise schedule. We would have fifteen minutes to bomb an exact target; then our ground forces would move in as we stopped. We would "take turns." Heavy bombers like the Liberators would knock out whole areas of approaches, from great heights. Then medium bombers would take over at medium altitudes. Then the fighters would move in, strafing and dive bombing.

Similarly, when the Germans counter attacked at the end of 1944, our airmen supported the ground troops by tactical bombing of this same kind, directed against the enemy's movements and positions. Our planes also rushed up ammunition and supplies to our ground troops, often dropping them from the air.

As the war proceeds from here on, tactical bombing will be of paramount importance. For our ground forces will doubtless be carrying the brunt of the attack, and it will be the business of our planes to lend them all support possible.

When the day comes — and it will — that we break across the Rhine and burst through the Siegfried line into the heart of Germany, such tactical bombing will doubtless continue to be vital right up to the gates of the enemy's capital.

This is a bad winter in Europe — some say the worst in a hundred years. That weather is one of the breaks that have gone against us. The Germans made their counter attack at a selected time when weather limited the effectiveness of our air power, and the longest nights of the year helped greatly in shielding their operations.

Meanwhile, in heroic measures — such as attempts to rebuild the Luftwaffe by conducting plane construction in underground factories — the Germans have shown the courage of desperation. Their renewed offensive in middle December, during which they brought out new airpower, illustrates this.

The fight is bound to be costly, bloody, and — on the enemy's
(*continued on next page*)

POOP FROM GROUP 467 (continued from page 10)

Griesser gave the invocation, and we joined voices in the Pledge of Allegiance and our National Anthem. We were served a delicious prime rib dinner, and throughout the meal, a four-man ensemble, **The FourTunets**, serenaded each of our tables with pleasant nostalgic harmony.

Then, the winners of our several raffles were announced and prizes awarded. **Nancy Horne** won the \$275 prize for her reunion sign-up on or before 1 August, and the raffle winners were: **Marian Lemmen**, who won the Cuddly Bear; **Jim Sherrard**, who won the Record Player; and **Fay Perkins**, who won the TV/VCR Player.

Ralph Davis introduced **Tom Griffin**, whom Vince Re, with his unique connection to the **Doolittle Raiders**, had recruited to be our evening's speaker. In a very low-key manner, Tom Griffin reviewed the condition of the United States at the time of Pearl Harbor, the president's tasking the military services to plan a strategic strike against Japan, and the development and implementation of the plan, with Army bombers flying from a Navy carrier. He described how he, one of a very few Army aerial navigators, and other Army Air Force men were selected and assembled as 16 five-man crews, with no information given about what they would be trained for, except that it would be dangerous and they could not discuss anything about it with anyone outside their own group. They were introduced to the B-25 bomber and, at Eglin Field, required to practice very short-field takeoffs and low-level flying.

He told how they were called to an assembly and informed what their mission would be, and then **Jimmy Doolittle** came

into the room and was introduced as the man who would lead them. They flew their planes across the country to San Francisco where the planes were loaded onto the aircraft carrier. And he described their travel across the Pacific, the task force's interception by Japanese picket boats, and the resulting decision to begin their flight hundreds of miles from their planned departure point to Japan. Tom was the navigator in Plane 9, and they did get to Chinese territory but it was nighttime and raining heavily. When they ran out of fuel, they bailed out and were lucky enough to be picked up by friendly Chinese and cared for.

Thursday, after breakfast, was a day of nostalgia and departure as old friends brought their luggage to the lobby and made one last visit to the hospitality room to say "So Long" to those who were still there.

President Ralph and son Bob, with a big assist from Vince Re, whomped up another great reunion, with well-coordinated events and delicious meals scheduled each day and a spacious hospital-ity room supplied with snacks and beverages.

On a personal note, I've been very happy and proud to have new member **Andrew Bohnenstiehl** and his delightful wife, **Linsey**, join us at San Antonio last year and again this year in Covington. Andy is the son of my radio operator, and in 1943, his father and I were in the 7th Anti-Sub Squadron, flying B-18s out of Jacksonville, FL and Trinidad, BWI, before we joined the 467th. We flew our B-24 bombing missions out of Rackheath, England and Lecce, Italy, and remained in touch until his death. Andy located me, via the Internet, a year ago and we got together then, in San Diego. ■

UNTIL WE GET TO BERLIN (continued from page 11)

side — merciless. As General H.H. Arnold has said, "I don't think the war in Germany will end until we actually get to Berlin." Perhaps guerrilla warfare will continue even long afterward.

Statistical summaries of bombs dropped cannot picture in any clear way the attack the Germans have been withstanding. What the enemy is experiencing must indeed challenge any average American to imagine.

Yet even this unparalleled attack has still not reached its goal — Unconditional Surrender.

As we continue on to our objective, Americans who feel that the war is a long way off might remember this: it is only an overnight's plane ride. That is, the siege of Germany is no farther off in point of time than was, say, the siege of Vicksburg from Washington some eighty years ago.

I left the war theater, for instance, one Saturday in December, on special assignment, and was in Washington the next morning.

The Christmas lights of my homeland looked good to me. I am not one of those who say our people don't know there's a war on.

To keep the actual war away from the shores of our homeland — away from our own cities — was one of the first objectives of all our military strategy. So it is good to see our homelights burning. ■

Important! General's Order Number One...

Bill Sullivan, B-24 crewman on the 11th Bomb Group's famous *Madame Pele*, tells Steve Birdsall that "on Kwajalein, space being at a premium, only a limited number of outhouses were constructed, but along the roads, the flight line, and maintenance area were 2" diameter pipes driven into the ground with a funnel on top to provide relief. Shortly before the invasion of the Marianas we received word that a hospital detachment with seven honest-to-God women nurses was being assigned soon. General Waldron came out with what is considered a classic in the realm of general orders: "DUE TO THE IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF FEMALE PERSONNEL TO THIS COMMAND, PROMISCUOUS URINATION AND USE OF THE PIPE URINALS WILL CEASE IMMEDIATELY." ■

458TH BOMB GROUP (continued from page 9)

memorial suffered a crack at the apex of the lower granite. Thanks to the efforts of **Gail Beams**, **Dan Dobbins**, and **Duke Trivette**, the replacement is now in place. It's taken twelve years for this to happen — a long wait, but the result is well worth it.

ON FINAL

George Reynolds writes that the softcover book on the *History of the 458th* has very few copies left. **Larry Graham**, who made the copies after the original was sold out, has advised George that he will be unable to print any more due to his wife's hot air balloon accident. His address: 8501 South Shartel Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73139-9309, tel. (405) 636-1693, fax (810) 283-1795, e-mail: route66@cox.net.

E.K. "King" Schultz of the 448th BG sent me a two-page newspaper story regarding Christine Armes and the dedication of our memorial at Horsham. It adds to the material I've received from **Clay Wilkening**, **Jack Kingsberry**, **Dick & Edith Butler**, and others. As a "P.S.," I learned that King was a 20-year veteran of the Maryland Air National Guard.

Always good to hear from **Alex Shanoski**, who never fails to add humor to his letters. Once he wrote that as a new flight engineer he attempted to use the waist gunner's relief tube as a communications device to the pilot. Wonder if he ever was in the RAF when the Brits used Gosport tubes?

If you have ordered and not yet received either the B-24 Liberator model (available in December '04) or any of the fighter aircraft models shown in the last *Journal*, please call, write, or fax me (info on page 2 under Group VPs).

Finally, as a gentle reminder, now that our memorial is in place, there still remains a balance on the total cost. If you have not as yet contributed, please consider doing so. As mentioned in the last *Journal*, Christine continues to seek support from the locals. Make your check out to Christine Armes and send it to her at: 5 Primrose Court, Thorpe St. Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 0SF, England. ■

My Cadet Days at the Marana Air Base, Arizona: A Reminiscence

BY ABRAHAM CLIFFORD SMITH (466TH)

Editor's Note: Lt. Smith's wartime reminiscences were submitted by his daughter with the following message:

"My father, Abraham Clifford Smith, died on February 16, 2001. I have enclosed a copy of his reminiscences about his experiences, including those as a B-24 pilot. He was a 1st Lieutenant with the 466th Bomb Group, 787th Squadron at Attlebridge. Later he also participated in the Berlin Airlift, and in total he received 65 points for medals alone, including the Distinguished Flying Cross.

"I am more proud than I can say to be the daughter of this remarkable man. I hope you will find the reminiscences interesting. My mother, Rhea Johnson Smith, also was a World War II veteran who served during the war as a Staff Sergeant in the Marine Corps. My father was as proud of her service as he was of his own. My parents are my heroes."

Karyn D. Severson, 901 N. Monroe St., #1506, Arlington, VA 22201



We arrived at Marana in early July. Marana was one of the emergency training bases developed in the rush to train pilots with little concern for comfort. The buildings were temporary shells without insulation, put up in the desert at the edge of the Saguaro (cactus) National Forest, west of Tucson. The temperature level was astounding. We arrived on one of the hottest days of the year, and after primary training at Hemet, CA, it was a shock. The living quarters featured regular Army cots, concrete floors, a clothes rack, and a foot locker. Showers and latrines were in a separate building about 75 feet from the barracks. An evening trip there was an adventure best undertaken in a pair of high-topped shoes, since the moisture attracted spiders, stinging beetles, scorpions, centipedes, and rattlesnakes.

One off-duty form of amusement involved quarters of the same type across the company street, a strictly off-limits area occupied by Army women (WACs). Going to and from the showers the normal style, on both sides of the street, was to wear only a towel. The game was to make sure no one made it across with their towel in place. This also was true across the street. As you see, there was very little in the form of recreation on the base. (The weekends in Tucson were something else.)

We flew basic trainers designated as BT-13s during the first half of flight training



and AT-6s for the second half. The BT-13 was called the "Vultee Vibrator," Vultee for the plane's manufacturer and Vibrator for the weird engine noise as its propeller switched from low to high pitch. If a house was buzzed at the right height and the propeller shifted at the right time, it could break windows. It was not a popular airplane with the civilians living in the area, especially during night flights when a house could be buzzed and no one could see the numbers on the plane.

The airfield was, to my knowledge, one-of-a-kind. Instead of a landing strip, it was one square mile of concrete on which you could land and take off on any compass heading. It was great because you never had a cross wind. This was important, because we had over 200 planes landing and taking off at each shift change. Rather than flying a pattern, we positioned our planes so that we entered what was called the "funnel" for a straight-in approach, with possibly fifty planes on the approach at one time. You positioned yourself in the funnel so you were far enough away from the plane ahead of you and to the ones on each side, then flew straight in and taxied to the end of the field at a fast clip so no one would fly up your tail. You then found a clear spot on the taxi strip and started the process all over again. It was a little like today's freeways.

My most persistent memories of Marana center on the heat, the bugs, and the snakes. If a person slipped when getting into a plane and touched the plane's wing, it would blister his hand painfully. Once,

while I was at Marana, one of the cadets bailed out of a BT-13. He told the washout board that while he was flying the plane, he looked down at the floor and saw a rattlesnake coiled up between the rudder pedals. He said, "There was only room for one of us in the plane, so I left." When the crashed plane was located and checked, they found a four-foot dead rattlesnake in the wreckage. The board decided his action was justified.

My memories of flying at Marana primarily concern a couple of goof-ups. One major goof of mine concerned an event when I was flying a solo practice session north of Marana, in an area also used by P-40s used for Advanced Training, from nearby Williams Air Base. The pilots in the P-40s loved to make simulated gunnery runs on the BT-13s. They were faster and more maneuverable.

I was in the area when a P-40 made a gunnery run on me and then flew alongside, did a snaproll, and then turned back to see what I would do. I dove to gain airspeed and did a snaproll. The P-40 made another pass and did a hesitation roll. I again dove for airspeed and did a sloppy hesitation roll. On his next pass he did a loop. You can do a loop in a BT, but you have to have fifty or sixty extra miles of airspeed to complete a loop. The P-40 was coming around too soon and I decided to try, even though I was short on airspeed. I was near the top of the loop when I stalled out, upside down and dead in the air, sliding backwards, and fell into what is called a hammerhead stall. As the wings suddenly develop lift just as the tail also catches air, it acts just like a hammer and HARD. The impact blew the sliding plexiglas cover off the plane, which hit the horizontal stabilizer and damaged one side. My helmet and sunglasses and the Form 201 flew out of the cockpit. The plane then flipped into an inverted stall. When I got control of the plane, I had about 400 feet of altitude left. The circus started at about 6,000 feet.

A report from a Williams instructor was colorful. He told my instructors that whatever the maneuver was, for hell sake don't ever do it again. I stood in a brace in front of all the instructors, and avoided a washout primarily because I was a Cadet Captain and got extra consideration.

The second event was later when we had changed to AT-6s. Of all the planes I flew in the service, I liked the AT-6 the best.

(continued on next page)

ATTLEBRIDGE TALES



BY JIM LORENZ

466TH BG BOOK ENDOWMENT

On August 17, 2004, I received a letter from **Derek Hills**, our Memorial Trust Librarian, informing us of two new books that have been purchased with the 466th BG Endowment: *The CIA at War: Inside the Secret Campaign Against Terror* by **Ronald Kissler**, and *Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary* by **Juan Williams**.

Derek also noted that our library has subscribed to the "N.Y. Review of Books" and they continue to develop references and art material. They are also extending the scope of our book stock and are particularly keen to reach out to the younger age group.

Just a reminder — Our book plates read: "Presented by the 466th Bomb Group, in honor of all who served at Attlebridge Air Field (B-24 base); March 1944 – July 1945."

ATTLEBRIDGE GUIDES

On September 29, 2004, I asked **Ted Clarke** to update me on things in general. He stated that he had not heard anything about a new rector at All Saints Church. I told him we had not heard anything from **Rev. Illingworth**; Ted replied, "Don't be too surprised, as he has not been in good health, and has not moved into his new residence yet."

Ted also wrote: "I have to inform you that I won't be handling any more arrangements in the future, for as you know, I am not driving as I had heart failure (not to be confused with heart attack) develop this year, so I'm restricted now as to what I can do. I had this coming on last year but didn't realize what it was all about. The Memorial Library handles the contacts now, so if anyone wants arrangements they can contact Jenny or Lesley [at the Library]. I don't think there will be any more reunions, for, as you say, age and health are great restrictors — as I'm finding out. Still, I have had a good run since 1982, when I first met **John Woolnough** although I had a short contact with him

in 1979 when he and Mary were wandering around looking for the old airfield.

"Could you please send the money for the wreaths, etc. direct to **Digby Horner**, as he has agreed to carry on. (*JHL Note: I will do this.*) Nothing else to tell you, apart from not looking forward to the winter. Keep me up to date on things, as I don't want to become a recluse just yet."

All of us who know Ted should send him an e-mail (tedclarke26@aol.com) or letter to thank him for his help and service as a driver and guide for 466th BG visitors for more than twenty-five years, and for coordinating our other guides. Thanks, Ted.

BOOK REVIEWS

ATTLEBRIDGE ARSENAL: The Men and Aircraft of the 466th Bomb Group, by **Earl Wassom** and **Chris Brassfield**, is to be published early in 2005. O.K., I can read your minds — and you are wondering how I can write a report on a yet-to-be-published book. Earl was a pilot in the 785th Squadron (1944-1945) and Chris is our 466th archivist and nephew of an 8th AF veteran. Earl and I were in the same luxury suite, with some eighteen other officers, at Attlebridge in 1944-45, and we are good friends. Thus I can review the book from Earl's descriptions as his work progressed.

The editors have, over the past few years, collected over 600 photographs — from 466th members — of commanders, ground personnel, and over 230 air crews and planes, pictures taken during WWII. Each crew photo has some commentary on dates of service, aircraft flown (usually four or five), and for some, a photo of their favorite B-24. Attlebridge was really a small city — with about 3,000 men — with all the services needed for the men and the planes. These included financial affairs, fire and police, supplies and food, medical care, housing, entertainment, B-24 maintenance, 3rd Strategic Depot, guns, ammunition, bombs, fuel, weather forecasting, communications, intelligence, chaplains, crew chiefs, and crew off-duty activities. All are covered in this neat book. This will be a hard-cover, 11" x 8 1/2" book with some 300 pages. To get the latest information on release date, pricing and shipping, contact **Turner Publishing**, www.turnerpublishing.com or 1-800-788-3350.

Behind the Lines: Oral History of Special Operations in World War II, by **Russell Miller**, was issued in late 2003 by St. Martin's Press, ISBN 0-312-26642-1. This book presents interviews with the survivors of the then top secret operations of the "British Special Operations" (SOE) and the American "Office of Strategic Services" (OSS — later called Central Intelligence Agency) agents in 1940-1945. Stripped-

down B-24s, under "Operation Carpetbagger," were used for these single-ship, low-level operations to drop supplies and special agents armed with a pistol, wireless set, cyanide pill, and a dash of good luck into occupied France. The British, French, and American men and women tell of operations in enemy-occupied areas conducting raids, sabotage, and organizing resistance groups during WWII. Agents tell of blowing up trains, tunnels and bridges, and there are accounts of capture, torture, and sometimes escape. An important facet of WWII in Europe.

OUR FUTURE

The 2nd Air Division Association and other groups are already winding down on activities and looking to the time to dissolve, as meeting attendance continues to drop. We will be discussing the future of the 466th BG at our next general meeting in 2005. Meanwhile, drop me an e-mail or a note on your thoughts about what items or actions we should continue and suggestions on how to do these.

2005 MEETINGS

The 466th BGA will meet May 19-23, 2005 at the Red Lion in San Diego, California. The 2nd Air Division Association will meet May 26-29, 2005 at the Hyatt in San Antonio, Texas, and the 8th Air Force Historical Society will meet September 27 – October 2, 2005 at the Sheraton National Hotel in Arlington, VA. ■

CADET DAYS (cont. from page 13)

It was capable of sustained inverted flight and was great for acrobatics. A great airplane. The occasion I am concerned with here was a buddy ride, two cadets flying together and alternating on the controls. I haven't a clue as to the identity of the other cadet. We were alternating on the controls, and when we were ready to change, a shake of the stick would signal for the other to take control. We had alternated several times and I had rocked the stick for him to take over and sat back watching the plane do a series of chandelle swings from side to side. We were losing altitude, and I finally came alive as to where we were. We were headed over a Japanese internment camp, at a low altitude. I asked him what the hell he was doing, and he said: "Me? I'm not flying this thing." For the last ten minutes, no one had had the controls. The internment camps were severely restricted air space. By luck, no one got the plane numbers for a report.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Coming Next, in Part II: *Combat Days With the 8th AF in a B-24*. ■

PLOESTI AFTERMATH

BY EARL ZIMMERMAN (389TH) • REPRINTED FROM THE 2ADA NEWSLETTER, JUNE 1973

After coming off the target at Ploesti, the condition of our plane left no doubt in our minds that we could not make it back to Benghazi. The navigator plotted a course for Turkey, and we headed for that haven flying right wing on Captain Mooney's plane. Captain Mooney was lead; the plane had one engine out, the bomb bay doors hanging open, and wounded men on board.

Upon reaching the vicinity of Izmir, two old P-40s, sporting a star and crescent, buzzed across our nose and lowered their gear. Mooney's plane could not maintain altitude, so we circled as his copilot landed in a wheat field. We then followed the other P-40 into a short landing field outside Izmir and burned out our brakes upon landing.

On August 2, members of the James and Mooney crews attended the funeral for Captain Mooney. We heard later that the German Consul complained to the Turks about the American flag passing by the German Consulate during the funeral procession. It bothered us not at all.

The next day, both crews left for Ankara by train. Upon arrival we were met by embassy personnel and other crew members who made it to Turkey from Ploesti. We were all quartered in the Turkish Military Academy on the third floor, and later moved to the Yeni Hotel near the center of Ankara. General R.G. Tindall, Military Attaché, and his assistant, Major Brown, were in charge of the internees, 64 in all.

Arrangements were made by the embassy for us to sign out on parole each day, during which time we had the freedom of the city. The parole period was from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., and we were given direct orders not to violate the parole at any time, even when attempting to escape!

While at the military academy we attempted a mass break and managed to get seventeen of the boys out. Two were caught near the Syrian border and returned. Although the attempt was not a complete success, it was well engineered. A fake brawl was started by about ten or fifteen of our lads on the third floor, and when the guards responded, they were promptly pulled into the fray, their rifles being held by the bystanders — us. When it was determined that some of the doors were left unguarded, everyone took off for the hills. I followed my pilot, but we got nabbed as we reached an exit on the first floor.

From that time, things more or less settled down, and the first month in Ankara was filled with dinners and cocktail parties.



Kimantas, 2nd left; Zimmerman, far right; & Turkish guards at Yeni Hotel entrance.

All of the boys wore new suits and were paid twice a week, which was designed to keep money in your pocket all week long. Some of the lads hit the Raki too much, ran out of money and almost starved to death.

We led a very leisurely life. Arise late, have breakfast at the Gar, attend classes (some of the boys took lessons in a variety of subjects), go swimming, play baseball or football at the park, visit the library or photo lab at the embassy, hang around the hotel and play chess, poker, ping pong, etc. On occasion we would be invited to use the rifle or pistol range or make a few practice parachute jumps from a 200-foot tower. After lunch, the theater or more goofing off, a late dinner, a few quick ones, and back to the hotel.

The Yeni Hotel also housed one German deserter, one Russian deserter, and seventeen Italian deserters. The Russian and the German taught the Americans how to play chess and held classes in their languages.

A few of the boys took the German to Karpic, the best restaurant in Ankara, for dinner a few times, and on one occasion sat near Franz Von Pappen, the German ambassador. We received orders, via General Tindall, that no American was to take any of the deserters out to dinner.

Three newspaper men, Ray Brock of the *New York Times*, Bill King of Associated Press, and Russell of the *New York Herald Tribune* made life a little more exciting for the internees. They threw many beer parties and joined in the baseball and football games along with some of the embassy personnel. General Tindall could be seen on many occasions sitting along the sidelines keeping score for the boys.

One of my "duties" while in Turkey was to operate a clandestine radio station sending reports to Washington via Cairo. My rig barely reached Cairo where the Signal Corps picked up my transmissions and fired off the messages to Washington at 150 wpm. Prior to my "arrival" in Turkey, mes-

sages took a long time to reach the Z.I.

The day finally came when we received permission to bid a fond farewell to Turkey. After signing the payroll at the embassy, we packed our belongings and headed for the train station. We waited until the train started to pull out, and jumped on board. The senior Turk officer in charge of internees simply saluted as the train left the station. We gratefully returned his salute.

The most amusing incident of the entire period took place at Camp Huckstep in Egypt. We were traveling under secret orders, accompanied by a captain from Intelligence with instructions to keep our identity, background, and destination secret. Upon our arrival the Quartermaster boys were told that we had been on a world tour when the war started and had finally



Earl Zimmerman at his clandestine radio.

been drafted into the Army while going through Cairo. To them we were still civilians headed for boot training. While being issued our new summer uniforms, one of the lads admired a set of staff sergeant stripes (his correct rank) and asked if he could have a set for his uniform.

The NCO in charge, an old-timer M/Sgt., took no notice of him and passed off his remark as a flip statement from a dumb recruit.

Our escort, the captain, advised the sergeant that our group could have anything we requested. The M/Sgt. protested, but to no avail. To add to the hilarity, a very lively debate took place among the boys regarding the relative merits of the Buck, Staff, and Tech stripes. (The Staff stripes looked prettier; the Buck stripes were more symmetrical; etc., etc.)

In the end, all the lads made the correct choice of their stripes, and during the alterations of their uniforms the M/Sgt. stood to one side, flabbergasted as the local natives sewed the stripes on the shirts.

We made the most of the situation, of course, and he replied that it was the damndest thing he had ever seen during his career in the Army. "Recruits picking out their own rank. Preposterous!" It would have been to us also, had we been civilians. ■



WENDLING 392nd BY OAK MACKEY

Do you remember Richard Reid, the fellow who boarded an airliner with a bomb built into his shoe and tried to light it? Did you know his trial is over? Did you know he was sentenced?

Prior to sentencing on January 30, 2003, U.S. District Court Judge William Young asked the defendant if he had anything to say. After admitting his guilt to the court for the record, Reid also stated his allegiance to Osama bin Laden, to Islam, and the religion of Allah. He went on to say, "I think I ought not apologize for my actions, for I am at war with your country."

I believe the following is an accurate record of Judge Young's ruling:

Mr. Richard C. Reid, hearken now to the sentence the Court imposes upon you. On counts 1, 5, and 6 the Court sentences you to life in prison in the custody of the United States Attorney General. On counts 2, 3, 4, and 7, the Court sentences you to 20 years in prison on each count, the sentence on each count to run consecutive with the other. That's 80 years. On count 8 the Court sentences you to the mandatory 30 years consecutive to the 80 years just imposed. The Court imposes upon you for each of the 8 counts a fine of \$250,000 for the aggregate fine of \$2 million dollars. The Court accepts the government's recommendation with respect to restitution and orders restitution in the amount of \$298.17 to Andre Bousquet and \$5,784 to American Airlines. The Court imposes upon you the \$800 special assessment. The Court imposes upon you five years supervised release simply because the law requires it. But the life sentences are real life sentences, so I need go no further. This is the sentence that is provided for by our statutes. It is a fair and just sentence. It is a righteous sentence. Let me explain this to you. We are not afraid of you or any of your terrorist co-conspirators, Mr. Reid. We are Americans. We have been through the fire before. There is all too much war talk here and I say that to everyone with the utmost respect. Here in this court, where we deal with individuals as individuals and care for individuals as individuals. As human beings, we reach out for justice. You are not an enemy combatant. You are a terrorist. We do not treat with terrorists. We do not sign documents with terrorists. We hunt them down one by one and bring them to justice. So war

talk is way out of line in this court. You are a big fellow. But you are not that big. You're no warrior. I know warriors. You are a terrorist, a species of criminal guilt of multiple attempted murders. In a very real sense, State Trooper Santiago had it right when you were first taken off that airplane and into custody and you wondered where the press and TV crews were, and he said: "You're no big deal." You are no big deal. What your counsel, what your able counsel and what the equally able United States attorneys have grappled with and what I have as honestly as I know how tried to grapple with, is why you did something so horrific. What was it that led you here to this courtroom today? I have listened respectfully to what you have to say. And I ask you to search your heart and ask yourself what sort of unfathomable hatred led you to do what you are guilty of and admit you are guilty of doing. And I have an answer for you. It may not satisfy you, but as I search this entire record, it comes as close to understanding as I know. It seems to me you hate the one thing that is most precious. You hate our freedom. Our individual freedom. Our individual freedom to live as we choose, to come and go as we choose, to believe or not believe as we individually choose. Here, in this society, the very winds carry freedom. They carry it everywhere from sea to shining sea. It is because we prize individual freedom so much that you are here in this beautiful courtroom. So that everyone can see, truly see, that justice is administered fairly, individually, and discretely. It is for freedom's sake that your lawyers are striving so vigorously on your behalf and have filed appeals, and will go on in their representation of you before other judges. We are about it. Because we all know that the way we treat you, Mr. Reid, is the measure of our own liberties. Make no mistake though. It is yet true that we will bear any burden, pay any price, to preserve our freedoms. Look around this courtroom. Mark it well. The world is not going to long remember what you or I say here. Day after tomorrow, it will be forgotten, but this, however, will long endure. Here in this courtroom and courtrooms all across America, the American people will gather to see that justice, individual justice, justice not war, individual justice is in fact being done. The very President of the United States through his officers will come into courtrooms and lay out evidence on which specific matters can be judged and juries of citizens will gather to sit and judge that evidence democratically, to mold and shape and refine our sense of justice. See that flag, Mr. Reid? That's the flag of the United States of America. That flag will fly there long af-

ter all of this is forgotten. That flag stands for freedom. We know it always will. Mr. Custody Officer. Stand him down.

These words from Judge William Young speak loud and clear. Additional comments from me would be of no value.

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum near Savannah has plans to update the Second Air Division exhibit. They have borrowed the B-24D nose section that was on display at the Duxford Museum in England for many years. This nose section is from a 389th BG, 566th Squadron B-24. Was it on the August 1, 1943 Ploesti mission? I don't know. In the new display, it will appear in the open doors of a simulated type T-2 hangar, a bombardier will be hunkered down over the Norden bomb-sight, there will be multiple B-24 artifact cases, a touch-screen with educational programming, a flight simulator, and a large projection screen showing B-24s in flight. This will be an interesting, first-class exhibit featuring the 2nd Air Division of the 8th Air Force. The museum will bear some of the expense; the 2nd Air Division Association may be asked to contribute. All of the above will be discussed and debated at the 2ADA convention in May in San Antonio.

Evelyn Cohen, our esteemed Membership VP, sent out dues notices for 2005 in November. It is now January, and I estimate that well over 90 percent of 392nd BG members have paid their dues. If you are among the very few who have not sent your check to Evelyn, please do so now. Let's go for 100 percent!

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ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE JUNGLE

Hearing about a dinosaur alive in the rain forests of South America, a professor launched a scientific expedition. After several weeks he stumbled upon a little man wearing a loincloth, standing near a 300-foot-long dead dinosaur.

The scientist couldn't believe his eyes. "Did you kill this dinosaur?" he asked. "Yep," replied the rain forest native.

"But it's so big and you're so small! How did you kill it?"

"With my club," the primitive fellow answered.

"How big is your club?"

"There are about 100 of us." ■

HALESWORTH 489TH NOTES

BY
MEL PONTILLO

Traveling was one of the activities which my late wife, Marcie, and I enjoyed very much. Every one of our travel destinations together was an adventure. We traveled abroad and in the continental United States and Mexico. Every time we came back from a trip, another trip would soon be in the planning stages.

The tours in Mexico were like traveling in another world. Our tour of the Hawaiian Islands was very interesting and most enjoyable. The European tours we liked the most were England, Ireland, France, and Italy (not necessarily in that order). The European cities we toured and liked the most were London, Paris, and Rome. We found the hospitality in Europe was

great and friendly, and noted that ancient history of Europe is intense and very interesting. Europeans in my opinion seemed to be very proud of their heritage.

One of our trips to England in 1990 took us to Norwich for the 2ADA convention, where we made many new friends and reacquainted with many old friends. This convention was remarkable, and way above our expectations. We had the pleasure of visiting the 2AD Memorial Library in Norwich. We were also able to visit Halesworth and see the remnants of our old 489th Bomb Group base, where a visit was made at the memorial at the end of the runway. This was very impressive. The runways had been converted to a turkey farm with real turkeys. When leaving England in 1944, it was difficult to imagine seeing all this a half a century later. This trip to England brought back many memories.

After the convention we toured Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and England. This was one of our better trips, from start to finish. Even the weather contributed to our delight. No rain for one whole month in Great Britain is difficult to imagine.

We liked the camaraderie and the friendly atmosphere that we experienced at all

the conventions and reunions that we attended. Since the meetings were in different cities and states most of the time, it enabled us to tour many places, which was an added bonus. The only place the 2ADA convention was held at the same place twice during my participation was Hilton Head, SC, which was luxurious, and deserving more of our time and participation. Both Hilton Head conventions, in 1989 and 1993, were in my opinion the best, but we liked them all.

In the U.S.A. our most visited and favorite place was Surfside Beach, which is adjacent to and south of Myrtle Beach proper. We managed to go to Surfside Beach two to four times a year to spend quality time at our beach house. It served as an excellent recreation spot for us. The residents' and merchants' mottos there are: "Have fun in the sun" and "Salt water and sunshine cures everything." In my opinion our classification on the beach would be "Beach Bums." We also tried to eat our way through all of the many restaurants, according to the merchants' advertising claim that there are supposedly 2,000 restaurants all along the approxi-

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SHORT FIELD LANDING... OR HOME ON THE PRAIRIE

BY EDGAR J. ALLEN • REPRINTED FROM "BADGER NEWS"

Ed. Note: Mr. Allen is the author of the book "Pilot From the Prairie." The story printed here was published in the Hettlinger County Herald in North Dakota in 1996, fifty years after the incident. It was riddled with typos and the B-24 became a B-52! The aircraft was severely vandalized over the years and finally wound up being sold for scrap like all those other grand old warbirds.

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While I was with the Sixth Ferry Group in Long Beach, California, I was required to ferry various types of aircraft around the country. These were mostly surplus aircraft being disposed of by the Army Air Force.

One such "opportunity" came on July 3, 1946. I, along with copilot Lt. R.G. Madrid and engineer T/Sgt. B.V. Mullen, received orders to proceed to Mather Field to ferry a B-24 to Dickinson, North Dakota. The aircraft was to be delivered to a Mr. George Koppinger who lived in New England, a small town thirty miles south of Dickinson.

We were flown to Mather in the afternoon of July 3rd and it took until noon of July 4th to inspect the aircraft and have a number of problems corrected by the limited maintenance crew that was avail-

able because of the holiday.

Since we were restricted to flying during daylight hours, we couldn't make it to Dickinson on the 4th, so we planned to go as far as Spokane, Washington and then continue on to Dickinson the next day. We thought this would work out fine because we reasoned Mr. Koppinger would be hard to find on the Fourth of July. Little did we know!

We arrived in Dickinson shortly after noon on July 5th and I called Koppinger immediately. When I identified myself and stated my purpose, he exploded and shouted angrily, "Where were you yesterday when I needed you?" I calmed him down a bit and eventually learned why he was so upset. He had planned an air show for July 4th and had advertised that he would have a "Giant Liberator Bomber" on display. His air show had fizzled because his main attraction was AWOL. He declared it was now too late and he was not the least bit interested in signing for the aircraft.

That put me in a bind because I had not been told of the requirement to be there in time for his air show. I was unwilling to tell my home base that I was not able to deliver the aircraft, so I tried to find a solution to the dilemma. I continued talking to Mr. Koppinger and learned he had a friend

who was willing to let us fly the B-24 into his small field near New England.

That gave me an idea, so I asked the man, "If we can put the aircraft into your field, will you sign for it?" He said he would, so I discussed it with Lt. Madrid and Sgt. Mullen and they agreed that I should try it. When I asked Koppinger about how to find the field and the condition of the landing area, he said it was just a wheat field and was less than a half-mile long.

We filed a flight plan with the local CAA authorities and took off for New England. When we arrived, we were unable to locate the field, so we circled the town a couple of times until we saw a line of cars on a road heading northeast out of the town. We guessed correctly that these folks were headed for the field where we expected to land. It wasn't long before we were able to identify the field, and from the small size of it, we could understand their desire to be on hand to watch the excitement.

We circled low over the field to assess our chances of making it. On the near end was a barbed wire fence about three feet high, which was strung along a small ridge. At the far end was a ditch about four feet deep and twelve to fourteen feet across. We made two low passes to look for holes

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Greetings, Second Air Division veterans, family and friends.

In the Fall 2004 issue of *The Journal* it was my pleasure to announce The Heritage League of Second Air Division's offer to meet with individual bomb group associations whenever they gather for regional and/or stand-alone activities. The League was graciously invited to join with the 453rd Bomb Group during their meeting October 8-11, 2004 in Kalamazoo, Michigan. It was a wonderful experience for League members; approximately twenty Heritage League members were in attendance. **Lloyd Prang** graciously included us in all of the group's activities and festivities. Thank you, Lloyd, and all of you group participants. We have been invited to join with two more bomb groups as they meet in the coming months. We shall pleased to join with all veterans at your pleasure; contact us through my address and/or phone number listed on page 2 of this issue.

As reported, we have revived the Heritage League essay contest, and wish to publish one of the entries herein. The following essay was written by **Ray Bohuslav**, eighth-grade grandson of **Alan Senior** of the 446th Bomb Group. Alan's ship was "Bachelor's Delight." Alan introduced his grandson to the B-24 Liberator and other WWII aircraft by taking him to various air shows and discussing with him issues concerning his role in WWII and the 2nd Air Division. Ray's interest is evident in his essay, which is a tribute to all 2nd Air Division veterans and your mighty ship, the B-24 Liberator.

My grandfather manned several gunner positions in a B-24 nicknamed "Bachelor's Delight" during World War II. His stories of the heroism and bravery displayed by the young men who made up the crews of every Liberator have inspired me to have a great sense of respect for those who served our country in the Second World War, especially for those brave men who flew the mighty B-24 Liberator.

As the United States rushed into World War II, Nazi Germany's early dominance soon made it clear that military prowess in the air would play a decisive role in the potential victory. The government hurried to produce fighters and bombers capable of controlling the skies and decimating enemy territories, and for a time the vaunted B-17 "Flying Fortress" was able to carry the load as the US' main heavy bomber. But as the war progressed, the need for a new, more capable bomber to fight alongside the B-17 became painfully obvious, and

THE HERITAGE LEAGUE OF 2AD SPEAKS!

BY BILLY SHEELY JOHNSON
HERITAGE LEAGUE PRESIDENT

once again the government looked to its engineers for the answer. Thus, the immeasurably important B-24 "Liberator" was born.

The B-24 was designed to have a longer range on missions, while being able to deliver a more powerful bomb load on its target than the B-17. Several models were built, with the most produced being the B-24J. The 24J model could fly at speeds of up to 290 mph, while remaining capable of sustaining long missions due to its 2,100 mile range. The versatility of the B-24 allowed it to perform many important jobs for the Air Force. As the Air Force took notice of the B-24's success, more and more Liberators started rolling off the production lines and into combat. By the end of the war, over 18,000 B-24 aircraft had been produced.

The B-24 has been largely overlooked in the years since WWII, yet the aircraft's performance and the sacrifices made by its crews are nevertheless historic. The young men who braved grueling conditions and tough jobs throughout the war flying B-24 missions symbolize the best qualities of American patriotism. Far too rarely are the pilots and crewmen who manned countless missions combat-ing their own fears while enduring the harsh cold at high altitudes and the relentlessly tiresome, time-consuming flights, recognized. Liberators flew in every theater of World War II, from the fighting over the Japanese-controlled Pacific to the multiple decimations of the Ploesti oil refineries of Romania.

The Ploesti raids are probably the most noted accomplishment of the B-24 in WWII. Taking to the air from bases in Egypt and Africa, Liberator fleets wrought destruction upon the oil fields on three occasions, with the final assault, flown by 15th Air Force B-24s, completely destroying one of the Nazis' most valued sources of fuel,

and dealing a serious blow to the Axis. On these missions, B-24 crewmen were forced to endure even harsher conditions. As the raids needed to be made at extremely low altitudes, the smoke and heat of the burning refineries below added to the laborious circumstances.

World War II remains one of the most important events in world history, and it took the efforts of every young man, like my grandfather, who served his country against the Axis invasion to secure the victory and preserve world peace. The B-24 and its crewmen were very much a part of the reason America and the Allies returned victorious, and it is about time they received the credit they are due.

We appreciate Ray's essay and his interest. Yes, indeed, Heritage League members will "keep you fellas flyin'." Veterans, don't forget to encourage your grandchildren to participate in the essay contest. If they aren't interested in doing so, don't forget to tape and/or write a diary of your experiences for your family's history. Be assured, they'll be interested some day.

The League's Executive Committee has been encouraged in receiving many wonderfully positive comments from members as they return their renewal applications. We will share some of these comments in subsequent issues of both the 2ADA *Journal* and the *Heritage Herald*. Due to space constraints in this issue, we share just one here as follows, written by **Keith Hartzell** in tribute to **E. Paul Hartzell**, 458th Bomb Group, 754th Squadron, and all of his fellow 2nd Air Division veterans:

"I am proud to be an American. Without your unselfish service, where would we be? I am lucky to have the greatest father, E. Paul Hartzell, who came from the 'Greatest Generation.' God Bless All of You!!!"

Veterans, the tributes shared herein support the Heritage League's pledge to you, as well as serve to reassure each of you of your continued personal value and an appreciation of your past service. Thank you for your continued service as you invested your lives in enhancing the quality of our lives following WWII. Your lives, and those of your fallen comrades, deserve to be honored into perpetuity by The Heritage League of Second Air Division. We shall do so in numerous ways, not the least of which will be through the continued support of institutions and museums dedicated to your history, memorial tributes in American Battle Monument sites, and in English communities which housed the bases of your bomb groups. ■

Confused? The “other guy” was Alexander P. de Seversky

CONDENSED FROM AN ARTICLE IN THE AUGUST 2003 AIR FORCE MAGAZINE BY PHILLIP S. MEILINGER

Ed. Note: Here is a follow-up to last issue's article "Igor" (Fall 2004 Journal, page 29).

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During World War II, Alexander P. de Seversky was one of the best-known aviation figures in America. He was a fighter ace, war hero, aircraft designer, and writer. His passion was airpower, and his mission was to sell the American people on its importance. He did a good job of it.

He was born in June 1894 in Russia and, graduating from the Russian Naval Academy in 1914, he transferred to the Navy's flying service.

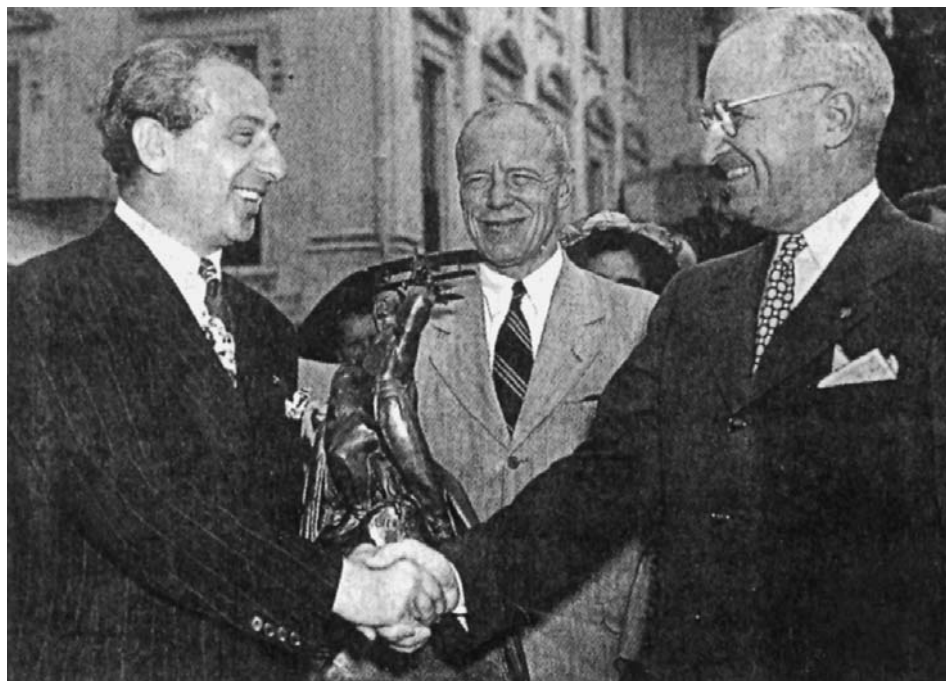
His first combat mission met with disaster. While attacking a German ship at night, his aircraft crashed into the water. The concussion detonated one of the bombs, which killed his observer and blew off his own right leg below the knee. Seversky, after eight months in convalescence, returned to duty with an artificial limb.

Assigned to a job in aircraft production, Seversky designed devices that made a pilot's job easier: hydraulic brakes, adjustable rudder pedals, and special bearings for flight controls. His inventions won him an award in 1916 for the top aeronautical ideas of the year.

Although this work was important, Seversky wanted to return to flying. He was told that this was impossible. Nevertheless, when a group of dignitaries arrived to witness the test flight of a new aircraft, Seversky replaced the scheduled pilot and put the aircraft through its paces for the assembled crowd.

Upon landing and revealing himself as the pilot, there was an uproar, with talk of a court-martial. But the Czar heard of the incident and, deciding Russia needed colorful heroes, intervened to have Seversky returned to flying duty.

There he did well. Over the next year he



In 1947, Seversky received a second Harmon Trophy, this one from President Harry Truman. The award cited his outstanding leadership and devotion to aeronautical progress. Standing center is Secretary of War Robert Patterson.

flew 57 combat missions and shot down 13 German aircraft.

After the October 1917 Communist Revolution, he was posted to Washington as an attache and elected to remain in America. He soon began working for the Army Air Service at McCook Field, Ohio.

Combat had taught him that bombardment aircraft were vulnerable to enemy fighter airplanes, so escorts were necessary. However, fighters had not the range to escort bombers all the way to the target and back. Air refueling offered a solution.

Seversky's superiors were not interested, but he revisited the idea at McCook Field. The result was the air refueling device used on the Question Mark flight of 1929 when an Air Corps aircraft remained aloft for seven days.

THE MAJOR

In 1927 Seversky became a U.S. citizen and, in 1928, was commissioned a major in the Air Corps Reserve. He was always proud of regaining military rank and for the rest of his life preferred to be addressed as “Major.”

He founded Seversky Aircraft Corp. in 1931. Over the next decade, he perfected a host of patents and designs, including split flaps, metal monocoque construction, fire-control units for aircraft guns, retractable landing gear and pontoons, and specialized aircraft flight instruments. His innovative SEV-3 amphibian set world speed records in 1933 and 1935, and a derivation of this model became the P-35 and later the P-47.

The P-35 was the first all-metal monoplane fighter with an enclosed cockpit to be mass-produced in the U.S. It incorporated such innovations as retractable landing gear and cantilever wings. It was also extremely fast: a civilian version won the Bendix Air Race in 1937, 1938, and 1939. Considering that contemporary fighter airplanes were barely able to keep up with the new B-17, this was quite a feat.

In addition, the P-35 had an unusually long range — it could fly from coast to coast with only two refuelings. Remembering his war experiences, Seversky rec-

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A predecessor to the P-47, the P-35 was the first all-metal monoplane with an enclosed cockpit. The long-range, extremely fast escort fighter won three consecutive Bendix Air Races in the late 1930s.

SEVERSKY (continued from page 19) ognized the need for fighter escorts. One solution was his air refueling device, but, in the late 1930s, such a practice was considered inefficient and costly. The question was: How to extend the range of aircraft without air refueling?

Designers thought a long-range escort fighter technically impossible, reasoning that an airplane with the necessary range would have to be so large that it would be like the bombers it was designed to protect — easy prey for enemy fighters.

Seversky, however, believed a long-range escort could be made possible by use of internal fuel tanks (“wet wings”), which would not sacrifice the attributes that also made a successful fighter. When Seversky suggested this to the then Air Corps, he was turned down. Air leaders would come to regret that decision.

Seversky was a talented aeronautical engineer (in 1940, President Roosevelt awarded him the prestigious Harmon Trophy), but he was not a skilled businessman. His corporation never made much money and was constantly behind in meeting its production orders. Seversky argued this was because his aircraft were so original they required new manufacturing techniques, and creating them took time. The old Air Corps — and, indeed, most of his senior colleagues in his own company — disagreed.

General Henry H. “Hap” Arnold, the Chief of the old Air Corps, liked Seversky’s airplanes. However, as war approached, he had an even greater attraction to aviation companies that were able to meet the challenges of greatly increased production. The Seversky Corp. had a part to play in mobilization, but only if it would restructure its senior management. In short, Arnold wanted Seversky out of Seversky.

CORPORATE PUTSCH

In May 1939, while he was out of the country, the firm’s board of directors removed The Major from the post of president, and, in October, it ousted him from the company entirely. The corporate name was changed to Republic.

In truth, Seversky’s removal from the business had positive results: Republic was reorganized. The P-47 Thunderbolt, descendant of The Major’s P-35, was built in huge numbers and would become vital to American air success in the war. On the basis of his track record, many have concluded that Republic would never have responded so effectively if Seversky had been at the corporate helm. In addition, unemployment left him with time for other pursuits. Specifically, he used his consid-

erable charm and communication skills to write and talk about his favorite topic: air power.

Seeing it as his duty to educate the American public about modern war, Seversky over the next decade produced two books, wrote scores of articles, and gave hundreds of radio addresses. Several campaigns in the European war left lasting impressions on him. First, Germany’s quick defeat of Poland in September 1939 convinced Seversky that airpower had come to dominate ground forces, and this lesson was reinforced by Germany’s campaign in France in 1940. Most of the world was shocked by France’s rapid collapse, but Seversky simply remarked that the Maginot Line had become the tomb for a nation that refused to look skyward.

Other campaigns gave different lessons: Norway and Crete demonstrated the superiority of airpower over naval forces. In both instances the Royal Navy, reputedly the finest in the world, had been decisively repulsed by the Luftwaffe. At Crete, for example, the Luftwaffe sank three British cruisers and six destroyers, while severely damaging several other major warships. Weakened by such staggering losses, the fleet was unable to prevent the island’s loss.

Seversky collected these thoughts and, in February of 1942, published *Victory Through Air Power*. The book’s purpose was twofold: to alert America to the challenges of a modern total war, and to offer a strategy based on airpower for fighting that new form of war.

Victory first took the reader through a brief — and selective — history of the war to that point. Seversky reasserted that airpower was the key to victory and that traditional forms of land and sea warfare had been eclipsed by the airplane. Seversky emphatically declared that war was undergoing a revolution and that America needed revolutionary responses. Unfortunately, the United States was not prepared for this challenge.

Seversky argued that American fighter airplanes were inferior to those of other belligerents. They had not the speed, range, altitude capability, or armament of front-line enemy fighters. Yet press releases emanating from the Army Air Forces and the government pretended American airplanes were the best in the world. Seversky rejected such claims with disdain.

He did not argue that airpower alone could win the war. Rather, he maintained the airplane had become the dominant and decisive element in modern war. The vital role of land and sea forces was to hold the enemy in place while airpower

pounded him into submission. In addition, the Army and Navy were needed to seize air bases from which to launch strategic air strikes against the enemy’s heartland.

In his book, Seversky rejected the notion that “popular will” could be a legitimate target. The war had demonstrated that the civilian populations have a surprising resiliency, and prewar predictions of how quickly urban dwellers would panic and break under air attack had been proved wrong. Seversky therefore emphasized industrial targets.

CATCALLS AND CHEERS

Victory Through Air Power provoked a mixed critical reaction. Soldiers and sailors characterized it as inaccurate and dangerous. On the other hand, the public’s response was enthusiastic. Because it was chosen as a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, it was guaranteed a wide and literate audience. More than five million Americans read it. Pollster George Gallup estimated that Seversky and his message were known to more than 20 million Americans — an astounding figure in pre-television days.

So well-known was Seversky that Walt Disney proposed turning *Victory* into a movie. The famed cartoon filmmaker said that, although millions had read Seversky’s book, many others had not. His ability to use visual images and cartoons would serve to educate them as well. Disney expected to lose money on the movie. However, he stated, “I’m concerned that America should see it, and now is no time to think of personal profits.”

Disney’s movie opened in July 1943. It showed The Major in his office, surrounded by maps, airplane models, and blueprints. There, he related his message of airpower’s importance in modern war. In 1933, Seversky had taken a Dale Carnegie course in an effort to improve his speaking skills. Nonetheless, in rehearsing the movie script, he stated that German troops landed on Norway’s beaches — pronouncing the last word as if it were a female dog. At that point, Disney decided The Major needed elocution lessons.

Superb graphics illustrated his ideas. Nazi Germany was depicted as a huge iron wheel with factories at the hub, pumping airplanes, tanks, ships, and other war equipment out the spokes to be used along the thick rim. Allied armies chipped away at this rim by attacking individual tanks and artillery pieces, but the Nazis simply redirected war material from one spoke to another to counter the threat; the rim was too strong to be broken. Aircraft then

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SEVERSKY (continued from page 20)

bombed the factories of the hub, destroying them and causing the spokes to weaken and the rim to collapse.

In another memorable movie sequence, Disney depicted Japan as an octopus with its tentacles stretched across the Pacific and encircling dozens of islands. Allied armies and navies attempted to hack away at these thick tentacles and free the islands, but it was futile. American airpower, represented by a fierce, powerful eagle, repeatedly struck the head of the octopus with its sharp talons, forcing the beast to release its hold on the islands and attempt to defend itself. It was unable to fend off the eagle and eventually expired under the attacks. Victory was achieved through the air.

EVEN HIROHITO

Although not a commercial success, the film had a significant impact. The Army Air Forces embraced the motion picture wholeheartedly. Winston Churchill saw the film and insisted that President Roosevelt watch it with him during their August 1943 summit in Quebec. Soon after the war, Seversky interviewed Emperor Hirohito, who claimed to have watched the movie and been deeply troubled by its predictions concerning the fate of his country at the hands of U.S. airpower.

A second Seversky book – *Air Power: Key to Survival*, which was published after the outbreak of the Korean War, prophesied that Korea would fester inconclusively for years.

Seversky continued to write until the mid-1960s, and The Major periodically lectured at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, instructing young officers in air power theory.

The Major died in 1974 at age 80.

Yes, Alexander P. de Seversky was able to capture the essence of the air weapon and then convey an understanding of that essence to millions of Americans like no one else before him or since.

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Phillip S. Meilinger is a retired Air Force command pilot with a Ph.D. in military history. His latest book is Airwar: Theory and Practice. He is currently deputy director of the Aerospace Center at Science Applications International Corporation. ■

Air Force Memorial Progress Report

BY ALFRED (AL) ASCH (93RD)

On 15 September 2004, **Dave Thompson**, his son **Jeff**, and I, all of the 93rd, attended groundbreaking ceremonies for the Air Force Memorial at the invitation of the Air Force Memorial Foundation. A flyover was planned but had to be cancelled because of rain and low ceilings. The B-24 was one of the aircraft scheduled. This national memorial, which is expected to be completed in two years, will be built adjacent to the Arlington National Cemetery in an area known as the Navy Annex, which is just a short distance from the Pentagon. The actual site will be on a hill where the three stainless steel spires, the tallest one 270 feet, may be seen from most locations in the Washington, DC area. The total monumental structure is to honor the selfless contributions of the airmen who distinguished themselves in the Air Force and is a sculptural representation of the tremendous achievement of American air and space power.

The Air Force Memorial Foundation has raised \$38.5 million and hopes to raise an additional \$3 million to complete the memorial. The program devoted a page entitled "Sponsorship Recognition" which included recognition of the 2nd Air Division Association and the B-24 Groups Memorial of the Army Air Forces. Each of these organizations donated \$25,000, and their names will be etched in the final structure of the memorial. There is still time for anyone to make a contribution by sending it to the **Air Force Memorial Foundation**, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209, or visit the Foundation's web site at www.airforcememorial.org.

The ceremonies were well done. **Major General (Ret.) Edward F. Grillo, Jr.**, President of the Air Force Memorial Foundation, was the master of ceremonies. **Mr. H.R. Perot, Jr.**, Chairman of the Foundation, summarized the history of the memorial as follows:

"The Air Force Memorial began as the brainchild of several leaders within the Air Force Association, later joined by leaders in the Air Force Sergeants Association. The project was formally launched in 1992 with the incorporation of our foundation. This journey has been both challenging and heartening. Our resolve has been strengthened as we look forward to that day when the powerful, graceful James Ingo Freed design will be completed on this magnificent site provided by the Department of Defense."



Other notables included Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, **Gerald R. Murray**; Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, **General John P. Jumper**; Secretary of the Air Force, **The Honorable James G. Roche**; Congressman, Virginia 8th District, **The Honorable James P. Moran**; Senior Senator, the State of Alaska, **The Honorable Ted Stevens**. There was some good-natured humor about the objections raised by the Marine Corps of our original site selection, which had delayed the project for some two years. Secretary of the Air Force James Roche best described the memorial: "The memorial will be inspiring against the backdrop of our capital city's landscape, evoking aviation images such as a space launch or the Thunderbirds 'bomb burst' aerial maneuver."

The project has good support from Congress and from the Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington County, and the Department of Defense. For example, the Arlington County of Virginia plans to provide several access roads, and the Arlington National Cemetery logistical support before and after construction. Indeed, we can all be proud of this memorial which is finally taking its place with the other monuments of our sister services.

Following the ceremonies, Dave and I met Mr. Perot at the reception. He remembered us from the time we delivered the checks, and thanked us again for the contributions of the Second Air Division Association and the B-24 Groups Memorial of the Army Air Forces. He said the donations came at a time when they were needed most. ■

60 years later, French government honors Nebraskans who fought in and around France

BY HERMAN HARNEY (458TH)



Those of us from Nebraska who served between June 6, 1944 and May 8, 1945 were recently given a "Certificate of Thanks" via the French Embassy in Chicago. We don't know why it was given to us here in Nebraska, but we do appreciate it. Chris Aponick of the *Lincoln Journal Star* wrote about it in the newspaper as follows:

U.S. soldiers flew bombing raids, stormed beaches, sieged German bases, and freed a country.

Sixty years later, those soldiers' accomplishments are still celebrated by the French. Even in Lincoln.

Nearly 400 World War II veterans, family and friends gathered in the Capitol Rotunda to receive "Thank You America" certificates from the French government for having served in or around France between D-Day, June 6, 1944, and May 8, 1945, when Allied troops declared victory in Europe.

Before the certificates were handed out, Governor Mike Johanns and Dominique DeCherf of the French consulate spoke to the veterans.

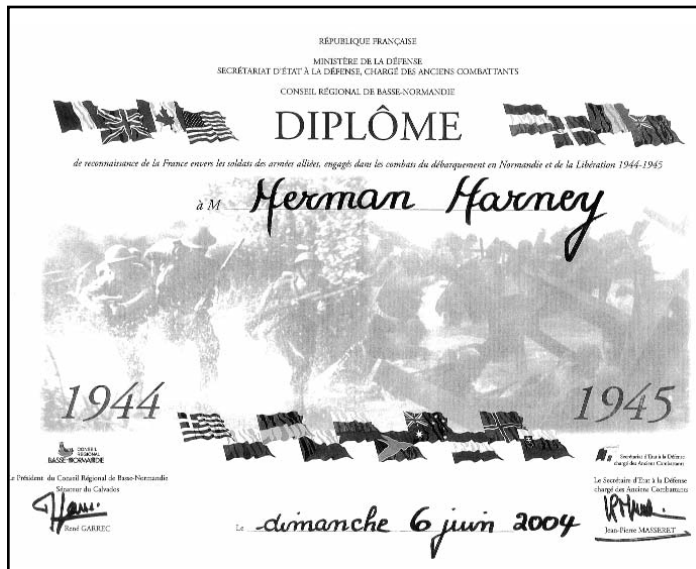
DeCherf thanked the troops. Johanns said the soldiers overcame a great challenge on D-Day.

"You defeated a terrible enemy and you freed a nation," he said.

This photo of our crew featured the "100th Mission" for the plane. Everyone in the back row, except Attenborough, is "flying with the Almighty," as is Pitard. The rest of us try to keep in touch via phone, and we had a reunion in Lincoln three years ago. ■



Standing (L-R): Crew Chief (name forgotten), Wm. Jackson (pilot), Kenneth Kidd (copilot), Robert Attenborough (navigator), James Hudson (gunner). Kneeling (L-R): Joe Schultz (engineer), Lew Hurtig (radio operator), Herman Harney (armor-gunner), Eugene Pitard (gunner), David Reid (gunner).



489TH NOTES (continued from page 17)

mately fifty miles of beach along the Grand Strand starting from the NC-SC border and all the way south to Pawley Island. This is a great place to relax and become rejuvenated. We have had many pleasant memories here at the beach with our family.

We always made our best effort to attend all of the 2ADA conventions and 489th Bomb Group reunions. We were fortunate to be able to attend all of them since joining the 2nd Air Division Association in 1987, until my wife was grounded with three blocked arteries that connect to the heart. Soon thereafter she had an open heart triple bypass operation, but she never recovered to her prior health. We made a few trips after the heart operation and it proved to be too much effort for her. So, for about three years we were both grounded. We had a three-year hiatus. I was the caregiver until the end. My lovely wife passed away in May 2003. After all that, I finally decided to continue traveling as long as my health permits me to do so. Traveling to me is entertaining, educational, and enjoyable.

I would like to make a few remarks about the 489th Bomb Group reunion in Charlotte, NC, September 29 – October 3, 2004. If you missed this one, you missed a good one. C.W. Kidd's family showed great love for C.W. to do this reunion as he would like it. C.W. Kidd was a good husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. His family came first, and he loved his family very much. He would have been very pleased with this reunion and very proud of all his family. We had a taste of ranch life at the Rockin K Ranch with a BBQ dinner and rodeo. The memorial service in Marshall Park was very touching. The entire schedule from start to finish was all very interesting and enjoyable.

On behalf of the 489th Bomb Group, many thanks are extended to Helen Kidd and to all the Kidd family for having this reunion. It was highly appreciated and enjoyed by all who attended. The next 489th BG reunion will take place in Little Rock, Arkansas. ■



HARDWICK

Open Letter to the 93rd

BY JOHN L. LEE, JR.

The 93rd Bomb Group reunion in Dayton was highly successful. It was an inspiration to see the young generation's participation. The future of the 93rd is very secure with this kind of enthusiasm. More than 180 of us enjoyed activities and renewing old friendships. The AF museum is spectacular, and we highly recommend a visit. Our special evening at the museum was highlighted by the open B-24. We boarded from the rear and inspected all areas. A dinner catered by the Officers Club, followed by special recognitions and awards, completed a wonderful evening.

A highlight of the reunion was a performance by the Glenn Miller Band. As some of you may remember, Glenn Miller played at Hardwick a short time before he disappeared. The band members were dressed in WWII uniforms and played for ninety minutes without a break. Exceptions to the uniform dress were two beautiful young ladies in elegant black dresses. Many murmurs of "Sr. Airmen didn't look like that when we were in the service" could be heard. Special recognition at this performance, which was open to the public, was paid to the 93rd. We were all seated in a reserved section. Following this tribute members were advised to turn around. The entire audience were on their feet applauding. I doubt there was a dry eye present.

Our farewell banquet was enhanced by our speaker who briefed us on the B1 program. It was certainly enlightening and encouraging that the Air Force has improved its capability to such an extent. Many door prizes were given to top off a most enjoyable evening. The reunion committee did a great job of planning, and we are all eager to meet again next year. At the time of this writing, San Diego appears to be the likely location of our next reunion. More details on this will be available in the "Ball of Fire." Some of us are planning a trip to Norwich for the 2005 celebration of the 60th anniversary of VE Day.

In response to my request for material to include in this column, Leo Hebert, a long-time dear friend, submitted the following experience of his first mission over enemy territory. Thank you, Leo, for a very interesting story. Hopefully it will spark memories for some of our fellow veterans who will also contribute.

Angel Over Magdeburg

BY LEO HEBERT

My recollection and introduction in 1943 to the U.S. Army Air Forces began with basic training at Greensboro, North Carolina; radio operator/mechanic school in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and then to aerial gunnery school in Yuma, Arizona. By that time the war in Europe and Japan was at its height, so I was forced to forget about going to navigator's school as planned. Uncle Sam needed crews to fly over enemy territory and deliver bombs of destruction to factories, rail yards, and other strategic targets.

I went off to Westover Field, Massachusetts to train with a ten-man crew on B-24 Liberators. This training was supposed to get the crew to know and understand each other, in order to work like a team on the upcoming missions. We didn't fly a plane to Europe, but traveled overseas with two air crews via a British troop ship, Aquitania, already loaded with about 10,000 U.S. infantry soldiers. My crew, under the command of Lt. Ollie Harmon, was assigned to the 93rd Bomb Group, 409th Squadron at Hardwick. After some formation training, etc., we were ready for our first mission, to Magdeburg, Germany in March, 1945.

The crew arrived at the tarmac, where the ground men were servicing the plane and loading bombs into the "Gambling Lady." Of course, we new guys were more than eager to get along with the mission. Yet despite all that stuff about teamwork with our crew, the Air Force decided to add another person to our flight. He told me he was a radar jammer, and that he would be spinning his coffee-grinder-looking equipment over enemy territory to mislead the German anti-aircraft guns about our flying altitude.

We took off to the wild, gray sky and across the Channel to our target. En route to the bombing run, the bomb bay doors were opened and I noticed many small shipping tags on the nose of the bombs,

flapping in the wind. So did the pilot, who called me (the radio operator) on the intercom and said to retrieve all those tags or we wouldn't get credit for making this mission. Never in all our training or briefing did I ever see or hear anything about these tags.

Now at 27,000 feet, with the bomb bay doors open and walking on a ten-inch-wide catwalk, my new job was to remove the tags and cotter pins. These items apparently kept a little propeller intact until it spun off, exposing the firing pin. I unplugged my heater wire, intercom, and air hose, and clipped on a portable oxygen bottle to my parachute harness strap. Unfortunately, the clip was broken and the weight of the bottle pulled my mask and hose away from my face, depriving me of needed oxygen.

Between pulling all eight tags, holding them tightly (along with three pairs of gloves in my hands) for dear life, and pushing the bottle up to get a whiff of air now and then, I was ready to come back to the radio room. As I was maneuvering on the catwalk between the bomb racks, asphyxia was taking its toll and I couldn't move one more step with the airstream blowing; the doors were wide open and I had no parachute. Remember that radar jammer sitting on the floor, grinding away? Luckily, he had been keeping an eye on my progress. He jumped up, grabbed my harness, and yanked me on to the deck. He then attached my oxygen hose, along with the heated suit. Everybody on board stayed at their posts, the bombs were dropped, and we headed back to England.

I really wanted to talk to our extra crew member and thank him for saving my life over Magdeburg. But with all of the excitement and confusion on landing, he just took off without a word, and I never saw him again. For that matter, we never had a radar jammer again.

I don't know if you believe in guardian angels, but I always will. Thank you, Lord, for sending one along on that mission.

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Thank you to those who called us during the weeks while we in Florida experienced the devastating effects of four hurricanes. Frances and Jeanne hit our area with full force, but fortunately we had only minor damage. We also believe in angels.

A belated wish that everyone had a happy holiday season. We look forward to the New Year with great enthusiasm and greater success for the 93rd BG. ■

KETTERINGHAM HALL DIVISION HQ

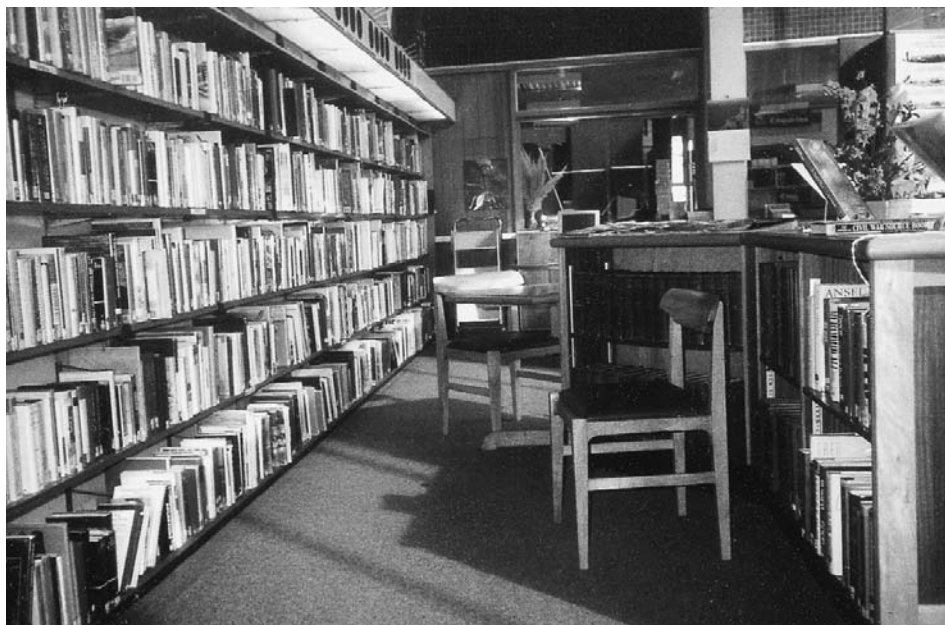
BY RAY STRONG

It is early October 2004, and our distinguished editor of *The Journal* is requiring our material for the Winter issue. I have looked everywhere for something of interest to put on the Headquarters page, but without any success. As you know, the Winter issue will not be put in the mail until after the holidays. This is to avoid the rush of all the Christmas cards and other mail that the post office must handle during December.

As I think I said in the last Headquarters Newsletter, Ruth and I were moving to a retirement community. It is the Cedars of Chapel Hill. We have now moved and are about to get settled in. It is different, but we are adjusting. It is smaller than what we were used to, but we find that it is just right for the two of us.

I have just run across a couple of snapshots taken from inside the original Memorial Library before it burned down with the rest of the Norwich Library. You can see how crowded it was in the original. Those of you who have visited the new Memorial Library know that it has much more space.

We still need to add to the funds for the endowment of the 2ADA/Fulbright Librarian. So keep on giving! ■



SHORT FIELD LANDING . . .

(continued from page 17)

and rough spots. We didn't see any, so we circled wide, went through the landing check and began a straight-in approach. That 2,500-foot, dirt field, with obstacles at both ends, did not look very inviting. I came in as low and slow as I dared, remembering that runway behind the touchdown point is useless. As we crossed over the fence, I chopped the power and we started to settle in, but it seemed like we were going to float forever. I thought about going around to make another approach, but just then we settled to earth with a thud.

The ground was speeding by rapidly and I knew I had to get the brakes on in a hurry, so I slammed the nose down and applied full braking. As we began kicking up clouds

of dust, we were watching the fast-approaching ditch at the end of the field, which wasn't very far away at the time. We were still going at a pretty good clip when I determined that our stopping point was either going to be in the ditch or beyond it. So, at the last instant, I released the left brake, applied full power to both left engines, and made a careening turn to the right while kicking up more clouds of dust. We missed that ditch by just ten feet.

We taxied up in front of the crowd, stopped, set the brakes, heaved a big sigh of relief, and shut down the engines. It wasn't until then that we could hear the applause of about a hundred of the townspeople who had come to watch the end of our trip. Mr. Koppinger came over and identified himself, and I said to him, "Well,

sir, here is your white elephant." He then asked, "Why do you say that?" And I replied, "It will stay here forever, because you'll never be able to fly it out of this field."

We stayed around for a while, answering questions and basking in the attention we were getting. Then Mr. Koppinger took us into town and, to my great relief, cheerfully signed for the aircraft. At that point, I wondered what his attitude would have been had we damaged the plane on landing. We had not discussed that possibility beforehand.

Later, Lt. Madrid and I agreed that we had gotten away with a very risky and unauthorized undertaking. But our home base never became aware that we had done anything but routinely deliver that aircraft to Mr. Koppinger according to our orders. ■



BY CLARENCE A. LUHMANN

We received a letter from **Merlin M. Shaver** telling us about the 445th Bomb Group Memorial in Dayton. The letter was sent to the editor of *The Journal* and he sent it to me. This is the letter:

Recently, three of my friends and I, all veterans, traveled to Washington, D.C. to visit the WWII War Memorial, which was very impressive. I hope many of you have a chance to see it. We also visited the Arlington National Cemetery where I found the grave of my great-grandfather, who died in the Civil War.

We then traveled to Dayton, Ohio to the United States Air Museum, which was also very good. In the Memorial Garden I located the plaque which read "445th Combat Group, 2nd Combat Wing." All of the other Groups that were around us in England were listed as "Bomb Groups." No one there could explain this discrepancy; the four people that I asked had no answer and to their knowledge no one else had asked about it. Has anyone got an answer?

All three of these places we visited were well worth the trip.

*Merlin M. Shaver (445th, 700th)
14174 Eden Street
Marshall, MI 49048*

Does anyone know why the plaque says "445th Combat Group, 2nd Combat Wing" when all the other groups are listed as Bomb Groups?

We have received a listing of the books that have recently been purchased for the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library with funds from the 445th Group Endowment Fund. The books are: *Airfield Focus No. 57: Tibenham* by David H. Kibble-White; *Sherman: A Soldier's Passion for Order* by John F. Marszalek; and *Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America* by M. Till-Mobley & C. Benson.

The Kassel Mission Reunion was held in Kansas City, October 6-9, 2004. I was unable to attend, but my thoughts were with them.

Now for some personal things. On Sep-

tember 27th I was hospitalized with heart problems. On the 28th I had emergency surgery to place a pacemaker in my heart to keep my heart on an even beat. Amazing what modern medicine can do now.

Following is an article written by Peter Belitsos in memory of his crewmates.

A Long Overdue Commemoration for a Great Crew

BY PETER S. BELITSOS (445TH)

On 31 October 1944, 1st Lt. **Edward T. Speers** and his crew took off on a training mission in hazy and icing conditions. The plane's last witness reported that the crew took off ahead of them and disappeared into a cloud bank. The plane and the crew was not seen again, nor was there any radio message received, bodies or plane wreckage found. 1st Lt. **William Moran**, the copilot, was my replacement. The tail gunner, **William A. Morris**, had flown the Kassel mission and made it back, but went down with this crew. I flew as copilot on **Palmer Bruland's** crew on the Kassel Mission, was shot down and captured and became a POW at Stalag Luft 1.

The only other survivor was 1st Lt. **Fredrick Warren**. Due to the weather conditions, he was stood down and assigned to

practice on the Link Trainer by the squadron bombardier. Fred hated time on the Link and loved to fly. As I think back, he loved the camaraderie of the crew in action. He visited with me when I got home from Stalag Luft 1 and told me he had requested to be allowed to go with the crew but the request was denied.

The Speers crew was formed in mid-February 1944 during transition training at Westover Field, Massachusetts. It remained intact, except for one early-on change at Westover. We flew together on all but the first of twenty-one combat missions, and countless training missions. At Westover Field, this included a grueling schedule of two-day or night flying, interspersed with a day of ground school, on a three-day cycle without a break from day one until three days before being ordered to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey for embarkation to England.

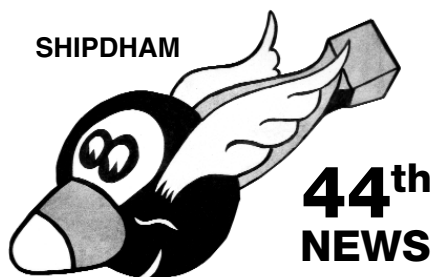
In one eleven-day period beginning August 5 (Brunswick), we flew nine combat missions and flew the formation assembly ship on one of our days off. The crew aborted only once, when a magneto misfired.

We went overseas on the Queen Elizabeth, landing in Scotland on D-Day, and took that long train ride through the beautiful British Isles countryside to Tibenham and the 445th Bomb Group.

(continued on next page)



Standing: T/Sgt. James R. Byers, engineer; name forgotten, was belly turret gunner, reassigned; S/Sgt. William A. Morris, tail gunner; S/Sgt. Robert A. Dittmar, waist gunner; S/Sgt. Albert Clark, waist gunner; T/Sgt. Robert M. Dickey, radio operator. Kneeling: 1st Lt. Fredrick Warren, bombardier; 1st Lt. Robert K. Rouse, navigator; 2nd Lt. Peter S. Belitsos, copilot; 1st Lt. Edward T. Speers, pilot.



BY GEORGE WASHBURN

The 44th Bomb Group's annual reunion was held at the Radisson Hotel in San Antonio, Texas over Labor Day weekend, September 3-7, 2004. Many thanks are due to **Ruth and Perry Morse** for organizing this reunion.

There were a little over 100 people in attendance. Each year, it seems that there are fewer veterans and more of their relatives and friends. We sure appreciate the participation and help of all these associates.

Leon Abbott, grandson of **General Johnson**, drove from Pensacola, Florida, bringing his equipment and showing the videos in the hospitality room.

Nancy and Dora Bass, whose uncle, **John W. Reasons**, was lost on the mission to Kjeller, Norway on November 18, 1943, requested information about him. From the database program, I was able to send

them something about his history. He flew his first three missions out of North Africa, over Italy. His fourth was his last, and he was a fill-in on another crew. His original crew all completed their tour, except for **Sidney Burroughs**, who filled in on **Dodson's** crew for that same Kjeller mission and were also all lost.

Another regular reunion attendee since 1993 was **David Webster**. As many know, he is a collector of memorabilia and has shown a particular interest in the 44th. I first met Dave in 1997. He had obtained an original A-2 flight jacket with the name **Donald McLean** on the leather name tag. Don was a waist gunner on my crew and had passed away. Dave brought the jacket, along with other items in his collection, to the reunion in Salt Lake City that year.

Dave recently returned from a tour of active duty in the Middle East, where he served with his Air National Guard unit as a flight engineer on a C-130. He made many trips into Iraq, and had some great photos of downtown Baghdad taken from his ship. We thank Dave for his interest in our group and for his service to our country.

Lois & Tony Cianci – Thanks to Tony for keeping the refreshments going in the hospitality room along with Perry Morse.

Jackie Roberts and her husband were deeply involved in making sure that all the

activities ran smoothly.

On Saturday, the bus tour of San Antonio included a visit to some old Spanish Missions and, of course, the Alamo, which was really crowded on this holiday weekend. On Sunday we went to Fredricksburg, about sixty miles north of San Antonio. This was the birthplace of **Admiral Chester Nimitz**, and is home to a fine naval museum which covers the war in the Pacific. Although Navy, an Army B-25 is displayed there — **Jimmy Doolittle** about to launch from the Carrier Hornet!

At the annual meeting, **Bob Lehnhausen**, who has been a prime mover in keeping this organization together, retired as president. **Roy Owen** stepped to the fore once again and agreed to serve as president for the coming year.

We were honored to have **General William Brandon** with us. He flew with **General Johnson** on the Ploesti mission. General Brandon lives in San Antonio, and at the banquet presented several awards.

Our 2005 reunion is planned for Tacoma, Washington, over Labor Day weekend. Tacoma is in **Paul Kay's** backyard, and he has agreed to organize this event. It was suggested that some might like to extend their trip and include a cruise to Alaska.

Hope everyone had a pleasant holiday season. ■

A LONG OVERDUE COMMEMORATION FOR A GREAT CREW *(continued from page 25)*

This was a great crew made up of very competent and truly wonderful young men. Lt. Speers at 26 was the oldest, a big brother and a great pilot and leader. He smiled and laughed a lot. He never raised his voice except when he gave it all he had when singing hymns during Sunday services. I never heard him reprimand anyone. He led by example. He had our complete respect. Above all, he was a great pilot. To paraphrase Senator **George McGovern's** attributes in his book *The Wild Blue*, we all felt confident that he could bring us home safely, under any dire circumstances, if it were at all humanly possible. He was looking forward to earning his captain's bars, becoming a B-24 instructor and going on to a career as a commercial pilot in civilian life.

On more than one occasion, Ed was assigned the slot in the formation that initiated the landing of the entire 445th after a mission. It was his job to make a tight, declining 180-degree turn from 500 feet and leveling off exactly on touch down, which he did perfectly. This maneuver was critical to keeping the formation as tight as possible given the proximity of the other landing strips in the area. Ed was married; and his wife, Betty, gave birth to their daughter, Susan, as I remember, a

few weeks prior to 31 October. I was privileged to be the crew's copilot. I was also married, to my wife Ida, who gave birth to our son, Stephen, a few weeks later. We visited Betty and Susan in Utica, New York shortly after we came home.

Ed's exceptional flying skills were recognized, as were the proficiencies of the navigator, 1st Lt. **Robert K. Rouse**; the bombardier, 1st Lt. **Frederick Warren**; and the rest of the rock-solid crew. Consequently, they were being considered by the 701st Squadron commanders for lead ship duty. Bob was a standout on dead reckoning. He was from California, married with no children, and lived next door to us on Armory Street in Springfield. We took several of our 48-hour passes together in London.

Fred, a Texan, was a physical fitness buff and an outdoorsman. He must have been good over the bombsight and the 50-caliber machine guns. He proved it to me on the skeetshooting range. He would hit the clay pigeons 95+ out of 100 while discussing how good he was with other firearms, including a six-shooter. On one occasion, when his shoulder ached, he shot from the hip, hitting the pigeons at about a three to four out of five clip. Fred talked the talk and he walked the walk.

He visited with Ida and me just after he returned to the States.

The engineer, T/Sgt. **James R. Byers**, and the radio man, T/Sgt. **Robert M. Dickey**, knew their jobs well and never seemed to falter. Jim was the crew comedian. He came up with timely quips that lightened up many flights. Bob was a perfect gentleman who never swore but was every bit of the heart and soul of the crew. On one of our missions, when a bomb did not release, Bob went out on the catwalk and after several minutes he managed to kick it loose.

The waist gunners, S/Sgt. **Robert A. Dittmar**, S/Sgt. **Albert Clark**, and the aforementioned tail gunner, **William Morris**, rounded out the crew. Dit, a contemplative, big strapping kid, appeared to be the first among equals of the three-man team. He was a good athlete and might have had a career in college and professional baseball. Clark and Morris were two great guys to be around, as was each and every member of Speers' crew.

This commemoration is, I'm sorry to say, too long overdue. But hopefully some members of the crew will be recognized by 2ADA or Heritage League members; and that, in some small way, will memorialize them. ■



492nd BOMB GROUP HAPPY WARRIOR HAPPENINGS

NORTH PICKENHAM

BY WILLIS H. BEASLEY

C-46 COMMANDO SCULPTURE DEDICATION AT THE U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2004

At the invitation of **Robert and Cheryl Henderson** we attended the dedication of the C-46 in the U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Honor Court. This dedication was sponsored by the China, Burma, India Hump Pilots Association. There were approximately 365 people in attendance for the dedication and the luncheon that followed in the Officers' Club.

The C-46 was developed from the new and unproved commercial aircraft design; the CW-20 first flew in March 1940. Deliveries of the AAF C-46s began in July 1942 for the Air Transport Command and Troop Carrier Command. During WWII, the AAF accepted 3,144 C-46s for hauling cargo and personnel and for towing gliders. Of this total, 1,410 were C-46Ds. The C-47 gained its greatest fame during WWII transporting war materials over the "Hump" from India to China after the Japanese had closed the Burma Road. C-46 flights on the treacherous air route over the Himalayas began in May 1943. The Commando carried more cargo than the famous C-47 and offered better performance at higher altitudes, but under these difficult flying conditions. C-46s required extensive maintenance and had a relatively high loss rate. In Europe, C-46s dropped paratroopers during the aerial crossing of the Rhine River near Wesel in March 1945. C-46s saw additional service during the Korean War.

Specifications

Span: 108 ft. 0 in.
Length: 76 ft. 4 in.
Height: 22 ft. 0 in.
Weight: 51,000 lbs. Max.
Armament: None
Engines: Two Pratt & Whitney
R-2800s of 2,000 hp each
Cost: \$233,000
Serial Number: 44-78018
C/N: 33414

Performance

Maximum Speed: 245 mph
Cruising Speed: 175 mph
Range: 1,200 miles

One of the WWII veterans whose name is on the C-46 is **Lt. Col. Wilbur W. Hurt**.



As a 26-year-old Major, Hurt was the Chief Pilot at Sookerating, India, flying the Hump to Kunming and other locations in China from 1944 until the end of the war. This treacherous flight path was known as "The Aluminum Trail" because of the many crashed aircraft littering the mountains. Major Hurt had the highest number of C-46 flying hours in his unit as a result of previously having been a test pilot in Reno, Nevada for the C-46. He helped develop proper techniques for mountain crossing and high altitude flying in twin-engine cargo aircraft without pressurization. Lt. Col. Hurt passed away on July 12, 2004. His story is representative of the thousands who are members of the special team that makes this memorial important.

About the Artist:

Robert Henderson, famed aviation sculptor, has many warbird sculptures at the United States Air Force Academy. He is the first and only sculptor to create monumental bronze airplanes. Mr. Henderson has become aviation's "chronicler in bronze." His goal is to indelibly set our significant American airplanes in history.

Mr. Henderson's airplanes dot the globe, in major airports and aviation museums. He dedicates his work to all those aviators and ground crews who have made this history. The C-46 is a special aircraft

to Mr. Henderson — due to the fact that he used to fly them.

(This information was taken from the dedication program.)

B-24 MEMORIAL IN SAN DIEGO

Robert Henderson is in the process of assembling the B-24 to be placed in Veterans Memorial Gardens, located in San

Diego's Balboa Park. The B-24 is from the foundry and is in metal. This is a 501(c)(3) project. Contributions of \$500.00 or more will allow your name to be placed on the B-24 Memorial. \$100 or more will list your name on the Donor Honor Roll on permanent exhibit inside Veterans Memorial Center, and all donations above \$50 will receive a one-year membership to the Veterans Memorial Center in San Diego, to commence upon dedication of the memorial. A few members have sent their check and contribution form to me. 492nd members, if you want to contribute to this project you can contact me at 1525 South Garfield Street, Denver, Colorado 80210, tel. (303) 756-4766; or B-24 Liberator Club/B-24 Memorial, 1672 Main Street, Suite E-124, Ramona, CA 92065, tel. (760) 788-3624.

"CELEBRATION OF LIFE"

The "Celebration of Life" Reunion of the 3rd SAD was held in Denver on October 7, 8, and 9. They said this would be their last reunion. At the invitation of the 3rd SAD, we attended the Thursday night and Saturday activities they had planned. **Ed and Carol Keller**, who live in Denver, were in charge of the reunion and did a super job. We were happy to see **Ken Godfrey** from Watton again. 492nd BG people will remember Ken from our reunion in Eng-

(continued on next page)



491st BOMB GROUP
POSTREMUM ET OPTIMUM
**the
RINGMASTER
REPORTS**

BY HUGH M. BENNETT

Since the last report in *The Journal* from the 491st, a lot has been going on at the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia. As I reported, **Hap Chandler** and I met with **C.J. Roberts** (museum C.E.O.) and his staff on June 14 and went over plans for the **B-24 Exhibit** that will enhance the Combat Gallery. **Shasta Ireland** worked diligently on the plans and sent me an advance copy that I sent to the president of the 2nd Air Division Association, **Geoff Gregory**, for his approval. Geoff has agreed that it is a worthwhile project and requires our support as members of the 2nd Air Division. He has sent copies of these plans to the VPs of all the bomb groups in the 2ADA. The only difference from my original report is that the original idea was that it could be done for \$75,000, which turned out to be too low when every-

thing was taken into consideration: price increases, cost overrides, etc. The final figure was set at \$125,000. The project will be started as soon as it is fully funded. Any money left over will be used wisely on future projects.

My wife, **Bea**, and I spent four days at the museum September 21-24, where I was invited to sit in on the board meeting on the 24th. It was very evident that the museum is in good hands under the leadership of C.J. Roberts. He and his staff have great plans for the future.

The English pub has been completed and is now operational. It's really authentic, right down to the dart board in the corner. The tables even came out of an English pub. It doesn't have a name yet, but I bet if someone gave \$100,000 to the museum that they would be able to do it. The pub was officially opened in the evening on September 23, 2004, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony followed by a buffet of English food and English beer. Remember the signs in the underground during the war? "*For goodness sake drink Guinness.*" I had a glass of that, along with fish and chips. The museum has an exclusive in-house caterer, Paul Kennedy Catering. They will be serving all the food in the pub, which, by the way, is the replacement for the original restaurant.

Members who served in England during the war will feel right at home here.

One of the projects for 2005 will be a **Fly Girls Exhibit**. This will honor those brave gals who ferried the replacement planes overseas. The museum gift shop is proving to be too big, and the plans are to reduce it by half and use the back half for the Fly Girls project.

Jerry Ivce did a wonderful job of making all the arrangements for the 491st reunion held October 20-24 at Pooler, GA, adjacent to the Mighty 8th AF Museum. The Bradbury Suites Hotel is a great place to hold a reunion of Air Force veterans; just step out the back door of the hotel, and you are on the grounds and parking lot of the museum. Can't get much closer than that! We also had plenty of time to go into Savannah and see the sights and do some shopping. Savannah is a great historical city; thanks to General Sherman for making a deal to not burn the city during the Civil War in exchange for supplying cannons for the Union Army. Everyone had a great time at the reunion and we look forward to San Diego in 2005. Thank you, Jerry, for an excellent job!

May God bless our troops and the USA. Hope everyone has a healthy and prosperous 2005. ■

CLEARANCE SALE!
B-24 Stamps (Isle of Man)

This is your last chance to obtain these B-24 commemoratives.



As advertised in the Summer Journal, we have a few sets of each:

B-24/Horsa sheet of 10 stamps: \$15
Four stamp mini sheet: \$4
Stamped envelope: \$5

SPECIAL OFFER!

A 10% discount applies to orders of 3 or more in any combination, postage included.

Order from:

ALAN SENIOR
610 SALERNO STREET
SUGARLAND, TX 77478

492ND BG (continued from page 27)

land in November 2001. Ken and Jan helped the 492nd with the group arrangements in Norwich and North Pickenham. Jan was unable to attend and was greatly missed.

When it was announced at the banquet that there would be no more 3rd SAD reunions, four members of the younger generation, "the kids," came forward and said they would make arrangements for a reunion next October on Cape Cod. They felt it was of the utmost importance that the veterans and their families meet again to share stories and friendship. Like the members of the Heritage League, these youngsters are in their 50s and 60s. They can do it!

"AN EMOTIONAL GAUNTLET"
BY STUART WRIGHT

A new book is now available. Go to <http://www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/books/3479.htm>. You may be able to find it in your local book store or have them order one. Ken Godfrey had a gift voucher for the prize drawing at the 3rd SAD reunion. Some lucky person won it. All members of the 453rd/2ADA will receive a 20% discount.

**B-24 EXHIBIT aka 2ND AIR
DIVISION EXHIBIT AT THE MIGHTY
8TH AF HERITAGE MUSEUM**

The Fall *Journal* has several references to

the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah and its B-24 Exhibit. Perhaps you have read all about it. The museum needs monetary contributions in order to complete the renovation and upgrade of the Second Air Division display.

The complete nose and flight deck section of "Fightin' Sam" has been received on loan from Duxford. The "Fightin' Sam" section will be incorporated into a completely redesigned 2nd Air Division exhibit. If you wish to make a contribution, please make your check out to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, Savannah, GA 31402 and mark it for the B-24 Project. Donations are needed and are tax-deductible. The museum is a 501 (c) (3) institution. You will receive a receipt for tax purposes.

492ND BG REUNION

The 492nd BG 2005 Reunion will be held in Tucson, Arizona, May 18-22, 2005.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

This issue of *The Journal* will arrive after the Christmas holidays; however, Norma and I would like to wish everyone a very happy and healthy New Year, Happy Valentine's Day ♥ and St. Patrick's Day ♣, which should take us up to Easter, 2005 🐣.



SEETHING

The 448th Speaks

BY KING SCHULTZ

Previously we gave you the story of "Eager One" which made it to Sweden but the pilot and copilot died upon arrival. This is the rest of the story, from Jeff Brett's "Liberators Over Germany."

448th's Mission to an Underground Oil Storage Facility

BY JEFF BRETT

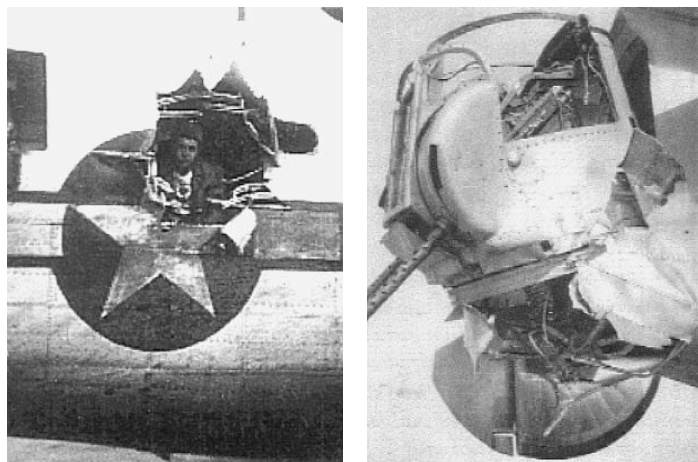
On 25 March 1945, 448th BG crews were awakened early, 1:30, for the briefing. John Stanford was one of the many men listening to the briefing that morning. "Gentlemen, your target for today is the underground oil storage depot at Buchen. The secondary target will be the marshalling yards at Osnabruk. You will carry twenty 300-pound General Purpose bombs." Lt. Robinson was the briefing officer and he continued with details of the mission. "He shows us areas where we can expect flak, and says we could come under attack by 100 to 200 single-engine prop fighters and 40 to 50 Me-262 jet fighters. He runs through the order of penetration and other miscellany — code word for the target is 'Hayride'; for the secondary 'Cornsilk'; the recall word 'Coke'; fighter call signs, 'Balance 21 and 22'; weather scout, 'Bootleg Rum'; code word for dropping chaff, 'Black Sheep'; time in the air, 6:40; and time on oxygen, 3:30."

Palm Sunday morning erupted with a roar as the propellers of the Liberators spun to life at Seething. After an uneventful assembly, the formation encountered trouble leaving the English coast. Clouds thickened as they neared the Zuider Zee, making formation flying difficult. The lead squadron elected to fly in a circle in an effort to climb above the clouds. Lt. Elmer Homelvig, flying OLD POP, struggled to stay with his formation as they entered the clouds. "We did alright for a few seconds. Apparently they increased their turn rate, and it's like snapping a whip, the guy on the tail end always gets the message later, and of course they increase their rate of turn. I lost sight of Tod (Lt. Fred Tod), and the only thing I could do was gradually increase my turn, hoping I'd catch sight of him before I ran into him. It wasn't more than a few seconds later that I saw a plane coming at me in the opposite direction, coming right at me. After we got on top of the clouds, Stalland was calling out giving his position, and in a few minutes, we found and caught up with him. Stalland had only two airplanes with him; I assumed they were Ray and Wikander. Tod was not with him, or had taken a different position. Stalland kept flying in a circle, and we kept picking up additional airplanes. We finally ended up with eight airplanes." The turn scattered the formation, leaving the 713th BS perilously out of position and lagging behind the remainder of the Group. Despite their scattered state the Group continued with the 713th vainly trying to make up time. By the time they reached the Wing Initial Point, they were still two minutes behind.

Just after 10:00 the sky filled with German fighters. A large force of Me-262s attacked the 448th with deadly results. Sgt. Clair Rowe, a gunner on SONIA, witnessed the jet attacks. He shot one of the attackers down before his aircraft was seriously damaged. "When he began the attack, I began firing as soon as I thought he was in range. I saw two puffs of smoke when he fired his cannon, which was followed by a loud explosion, and I was blown out of my turret. I immediately got up and put on my chute and

opened the escape hatch. We had no communication with anyone up front. Since the waist gunner was lying on the floor, I took over the waist gun. The explosion on the right side of the ship had knocked out our communication system and rudder controls. Our fighter escort then arrived, and we got home without further incident." When the cannon shell tore into SONIA, the plane dropped 1,500 feet, but the pilots were able to regain the formation. The shrapnel dug into Sgt. Rowe's right leg and foot as well as causing lacerations on his face. With several wounded crew members and a severely damaged plane, the crew of SONIA faced a daunting return trip.

Sgt. Ed Chu fought a raging battle in the tail turret of MY BUD-DIE. "Before the IP, Max, our copilot, called 'Bandits in the area.' I saw three planes approaching out of the sun at six o'clock level. When they got within range, I recognized them as Me-262s. I opened fire at approximately one thousand yards at the closer of the two, the third in trail. I continued firing until he broke away through the squadron toward two o'clock high. I observed no hits or damage to confirm hits, although my tracers appeared to go right into the jet. P-51s boxed one up in front of the squadron and he exploded. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see



Left: The cannon hole in the waist of SONIA that sucked Sgt. Clair Rowe out of his rear turret. Right: The tail turret of SONIA Sgt. Clair Rowe was in.

the plane on our left wing flying the left element, 'Purple Heart Corner,' peel off and in flames. No chutes were observed and the plane was later seen hitting the ground and exploding. We later were told that it was Steffan's crew. Another Me-262 appeared at six o'clock, and this time I opened fire at extreme range. My left gun jammed, the ammo locking up in the booster sprockets. P-51s kept this jet from the formation. 'Bombs were away' and they appeared to have landed in an open field. Four more planes approached from six o'clock level. They looked like jets and I opened fire at extreme range with my one remaining gun, but stopped firing when I recognized them as P-51s. There was a P-47 off to the right being shot at by some other gunners, but luckily they recognized it before it was hit. I recall swearing at those gunners under my breath not to shoot, as it was one of ours. P-51s and P-47s dove by our formation after the jets, one P-47 cutting real close to our tail. I saw a B-24 explode and another one spin down in flames, as jets hit a trailing squadron." It was the 713th BS still trying to catch the formation.

The first attacks hit the main part of the formation. Lt. Joseph Steffan and crew in TARFU II fell first at 10:17 after Me-262s hit them with cannon fire over Domitz, Germany. The navigator, Lt. Gerald Gottlieb, bailed out of the burning bomber after the interphone was destroyed. "I suspected the plane exploded after I left it because I was knocked unconscious for a short while and regained consciousness just before hitting the ground." The last time Lt. Gottlieb heard from his crewmates was during an interphone

(continued on next page)

448TH MISSION *(continued from page 29)*

check two minutes before the attack. Only he survived. The aircraft crashed near Langenhorst, Germany, and was totally destroyed.

After the initial pass, the fighters focused their attention on the straggling low left squadron. Cannon fire exploded in the flight deck of the lead aircraft, 42-50646 at 10:20, mortally wounding the pilot, Lt. Knute Stalland, and the copilot, Lt. Theodore Warner. F/O John Stanford watched from his nearby aircraft. *"The bursts moved up on Stalland's plane, and suddenly he is on fire — bright red-orange flames sweeping back from the left wing inboard fuel tanks. The plane drops fifty feet or so, recovers, slides off out of formation to the right about 200 feet, in a shallow climb. Then it pauses and starts to swing back towards the squadron. Someone jumps from the stricken bomber, his chute opening immediately, and boots flying off from the sudden jar. We are at 19,500 feet. It is 10:46."*

Suddenly, the right wing ripped off the fuselage and the plane exploded. The bombardier, Lt. John McHugh, bailed out through the nose wheel door escape hatch. Flames quickly engulfed the B-24 as it started its death spiral. The pilotage navigator, Lt. William Whitson, intended to follow Lt. McHugh but the plane exploded, blowing him clear. Although injured, he pulled the ripcord and was captured. The explosion also saved the radio operator, Sgt. Bobbie Glass. The force of the explosion rendered him unconscious just as he buckled his parachute. He fell ten to fifteen thousand feet before regaining consciousness. Amazingly, his parachute dangled from his chest harness by a single clip. He connected it and pulled the ripcord, only to be captured shortly after landing near Schnever-Dingen, Germany. These three men were the only survivors from the crew of twelve. A normal crew complement consisted of nine to ten men, but lead crews routinely carried twelve due to the specialized equipment.

DO BUNNY with Lt. Paul Jones and his crew went down next. On the first pass, Me-262s knocked out their number one engine with 20-millimeter cannon fire despite the curtain of lead from the B-24's fifty caliber machine guns. Subsequent passes by the Me-262 and a JG7 and flown by Luftwaffe ace Lt. Rudolf Rademacher further crippled Lt. Jones' Liberator. Two more engines ceased and numerous holes filled the aluminum skin of the plane. An exploding shell knocked the engineer out of the top turret and the plexiglass tail turret exploded in the face of the tail gunner. Somehow both escaped injury. Fuel and hydraulic fluid from the ruptured lines filled the inside of the aircraft, creating a potentially explosive situation. Also, the electrical system and intercom both failed. To the radio operator, Sgt. Chuck Blaney, the aircraft looked like a sieve from the inside.

"Lt. Jones ordered everyone to bail out, but with no intercom it was obvious that the word did not get out. Also, we were reluctant to jump because intelligence reports suggested that a crew's chances were amplified if capture as a group were at all possible. Single crewmen in the hands of angry German civilians were a poor risk in these times. Our navigator, Lt. Herman Engel, could see the heavy clouds of smoke caused by our heavy bombing in the Hamburg area. He was able to set a course toward Wesel on the Rhine where British paratroopers had landed just the day before. I guess that we never really expected to make the Rhine, even as we threw everything out of the plane that was not nailed down. Our copilot, Lt. Jim Mucha, kept his eye peeled on a safe place to set DO BUNNY in a soft landing. With minimum power and controllability, our candidate landing sites were always dead ahead. At 11:43 we were at 2,000 feet altitude and sinking fast. One sputtering engine does not provide much power to a B-24 even at minimum loading. The pilots had selected a perfect field to put DO BUNNY down. It was right on the edge of the town of Soltau. We came in wheels-up and all went smooth until one wing dipped and the plane broke up. It was now 11:48 and we had covered all of thirty-six miles of the 180 needed to reach the

front lines and freedom. The pilot, copilot, tail and ball gunners were able to get out of the aircraft and were immediately greeted by angry town folks with pitchforks. An SS officer appeared on the scene and arranged to have those crew members already outside of the aircraft run into the town square about 500 yards away. There they were all pinned to a wall across the street from the Mehr Hotel. I was trapped in the wreckage along with the navigator, flight engineer, and nose gunner. We had been pinned there by the top turret that broke away from the aircraft frame and lodged in the flight deck well. The navigator and engineer were unharmed and finally got out after German soldiers axed their way into the wreckage. The nose gunner and I were not so lucky. We were trapped by the top turret and each of us suffered a broken leg. The Soltau Chief of Police joined the German soldiers from the nearby riding academy and after much hard prying and much hack sawing we were freed from the wreckage. They put us on a horse-drawn cart and took us to the town hospital where our legs were set and put in soft casts. We then rejoined the other crew members who were not locked up at the riding academy."

Meanwhile, cannon fire from the four Me-262s tore into EAGER ONE, flown by Lt. Frederick Tod. The damage was severe: Right side flight control cables severed, right flap shot off, right rudder missing, four-foot hole in the left wing, generators out, amplifiers out, main fuel line leaking, upper and tail turrets inoperative, hydraulics gone, radio destroyed, and pilots interphone not working. EAGER ONE immediately fell out of formation and started lagging behind. The B-24 vibrated and shuddered, testifying to the tremendous damage the Liberator endured. Despite the terrific pounding, Lt. Tod and the copilot, Lt. Warren Peterson, kept flying the aircraft. With some difficulty, the bombs were jettisoned and the engineer stopped the fuel leak. Shortly afterwards, a fire started in the number four engine but extinguished itself after they feathered the engine.

The navigator, Lt. Herman James, provided a heading and distance to the nearest emergency airfield, Malmo, Sweden. Lt. Tod ordered everyone to prepare to evacuate the aircraft, as continued flight was uncertain. He advised everyone they could bail out over Germany if they did not want to risk an over-water flight. Everyone remained. With control problems and an engine out, the crew threw all non-essential equipment overboard. Still, they descended while a German Ju-88 followed to witness their demise.

Approaching the southern coast of Sweden, the number three engine started running very erratically and another engine became uncontrollable. Lt. Peterson told everyone to prepare to bail out as soon as they reached the coast. From his position in the nose of the aircraft, Lt. Herman James noticed incredible physical strain on the pilots. Lt. Tod's right leg shook violently from fatigue. They kept the airplane in level flight by sheer strength.

The number three engine abruptly stopped and Lt. Tod issued the bail out order. After Lt. James exited the aircraft, he watched the plane turn away from the village of Falsterbo and head back toward the sea, a selfless act that undoubtedly saved many lives in the village. As the eighth man in the nine-man crew left the plane, the B-24 entered a spin and crashed into the Baltic Sea just off the coast. Obviously, fatigue caught up with the pilots and as Lt. Peterson attempted to bail out, Lt. Tod was not able to fly the crippled plane any longer.

On the ground, numerous people witnessed the life or death struggle. Mr. Harald Anderson and Mr. Lennart Ahlstrom were two men who rushed to the waterfront to help in the rescue. As the parachutes floated earthward, the pursuing German Ju-88 finally caught up with its intended victim, although too late to inflict more damage. Swedish anti-aircraft fire scared him away. The two Swedish men quickly located a boat and set out for the crash site to help anyone in need. Meanwhile, other locals rolled up their pants and waded into the water to help those who landed short of land. One, Sgt. Chester Labus, suffered shrapnel wounds in his leg but managed to make it safely ashore. The wind blew

some of the men overland where local residents quickly aided them. Mr. Ahlstrom and Mr. Anderson recovered Lt. Peterson but despite their valiant efforts, Lt. Peterson drowned. Lt. Tod perished in the crash of the B-24. Due to their heroic actions, seven of the crew survived. These two gallant pilots were posthumously awarded the Silver Star for their heroic actions.

After the brutal attacks, the low left squadron fell further behind. However, they dropped their bombs on the target at 10:34, nine minutes after the rest of the 448th. Realizing they would not catch the formation, the decimated squadron took a more direct route back to Seething instead of the intended route flown by the rest of the bombers. With many damaged planes and wounded men, they needed the shortest route home.

While the crew of EAGER ONE fought for their lives, the crew of SONIA held their breath as their plane limped home. A thorough examination of their plane revealed extensive damage. Their hydraulic system was ruptured, rendering it inoperative. The pilot, Lt. William Holden, elected to land at the long emergency runway at Manston. They manually lowered the landing gear and prepared to land without brakes and flaps. Despite missing one rudder, they landed on the long runway without complications. Lt. Douglas Torrance landed short of home. He selected a forward airfield in Belgium to land his shot-up Liberator.

Lt. Ed Anderson struggled to keep his damaged aircraft 42-

50590 airborne. With two engines shut down, the crew dumped everything overboard. They even resorted, although unsuccessfully, to using a crash axe in an attempt to jettison the ball turret. With four P-51s providing escort, they received headings from a homing station to a forward airfield. Using maximum braking they stopped the damaged Liberator on the short runway and followed a Jeep to a parking spot. As they parked, the two remaining engines sputtered and shut down as they ran out of fuel.

After taking the shorter route home, the battered remnants of the 713th BS arrived over Seething thirty minutes before the rest of the formation. Red flares indicating wounded on board shot skyward from numerous planes. It was the first indication to the ground crews of the severe beating the Liberators endured.

Damage from the jets was tremendous. Four crews were missing and their friends at Seething wondered about their fates. Thirteen B-24s endured damage but still brought their crews home. Still, numerous men suffered injuries ranging from small lacerations to more severe shrapnel injuries. After a long absence, the Luftwaffe struck back with a mighty blow. Only three other missions flown by the 448th during the entire war suffered more losses. All were early in the war except this one. The new jets attacked with near impunity, as the friendly escorts were unable to match their tremendous speed. They added a new dimension to the air war and reinstalled the fear of the Luftwaffe in the aircrews. ■



446TH BOMB GROUP FLIXTON-BUNGAY UPDATE

BY LINK VEAZEY

Time marches on. As I write this article it is almost time to elect a new Commander in Chief (President). No matter who is elected, our country needs to stand in unity to safeguard our heritage and basic principles upon which our nation was founded.

From my viewpoint, we need a return to things which made our nation great. I know that not everyone will agree with me, but it appears to me that we are slowly deteriorating from without and within. We had a partial awakening after the 9-11 happening, but we have not maintained our level of resolve. In place of complaining about our problems, we need to do something to help to fix them. I believe that one of the most important things we can do is to let our Congressmen, our Senators, and our President know what we expect from them. How many times have you said to yourself, *I need to make myself heard on this particular subject*, and then just let it slip by without voicing your opinion, where it just might have the effect that you desire? If we of the so-called "Greatest Generation" would use our influence one last time and let our leaders know our thoughts, opinions, and ideas, we might be able to turn our nation back to the nation for which we and many of our friends fought during World War II.

Please forgive me for expressing my thoughts, but I just hate to leave our nation as it appears to be heading for those of our loved ones who are following us.

The 446th Bomb Group Association is alive and well and finalizing plans for our 2005 reunion. We will be meeting in Boston, May 25-29. We contemplate visiting the sites which were made famous during the Revolutionary War years. Come join us as we go back in time to the days in which our forefathers brought this nation into being by sacrificing so much during our early history.

May God Bless America and Each of You Real Good. ■

Folded Wings

HEADQUARTERS

Thomas L. Love, Jr.

44th BG

James E. Branson

Jack Grady

Robert J. Keyes

Ted J. Szumski

George D. Telford

Maj. Gen. Hal C. Tyree, Jr.

93rd BG

Morris L. Hoover

Frederick M. Johnson

Thomas B. Parry

389th BG

B/Gen. Milton W. Arnold (HDQ)

Steven Bekiesz

Daniel R. Jedrzejewski

Joseph S. Johnson

Robert J. McVeigh

Francis L. Popham

Ray Shannon

392nd BG

Richard C. Hoover

Frederick V. Rodgers (492nd)

445th BG

Edward R. Barber

Edward Black

John E. Bloom

Bruce D. Gaw

Fabian S. Mack

Col. James L. Pallouras (HDQ)

Karl H. Rausch

446th BG

Malcolm S. Carney

Eugene L. King

John M. Corliss

448th BG

Jack L. Barak

Earl W. Bernard

Pete Blair

George H. Jepson

Eugene M. Petagine

Col. Elvin M. Sheffield

John W. Stanford

James F. Wagner

453rd BG

Wesley J. Bartelt

Walter T. Conneely

Paul C. Darden, Jr.

Richard B. Leonard

Maj. Eugene E. Massy

Gerald D. Phillips

Wayne B. Swanson

Frank R. Thomas

Allen R. Walters

Jack N. Ward

458th BG

George F. Adkins

Alfred C. Brauer

Stanley Kowal

William J. Lizut

Richard L. Lougee

Alfred A. Pizzato

William H. Seaman

Alexander E. Shanoski

Frank S. Thompson

T. John Trowbridge

467th BG

Evan L. Dastrup

Edgar R. Erikson

Gene Jacquemart

Maurice L. Malone

489th BG

James J. Boyle III

George M. Dilberian

Marvin L. Glassman

Norman W. Kanwisher (448th)

Chester W. Kidd, Jr.

John W. Mansfield

Albert Steininger

John L. Van Winkle

491st BG

Michael A. Brienza

Edward F. McCloskey

492nd BG

Morris Caudle

Evan Jones (93rd)



NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY LLOYD W. PRANG

We closed the last "News of the 453rd" by saying it was a good idea to maintain a positive attitude. Now I'm here to say it's getting harder and harder to do this. These "bummers" are coming at us with increasing frequency. For example: In Florida while preparing for one of the hurricanes, **Wes Bartelt** had some difficulty starting the generator he used to supply power in the event of a power outage. He overexerted himself, which resulted in his having a heart attack. During the ensuing hurricane, Wes spent his time in the hospital. When he was released, the prognosis was not good and he passed away a week later. I hardly knew anyone when I was at Old Buck, but it seemed that every time we flew a mission, Captain Wes Bartelt was in the air with us. Those of you who were at the 453rd reunion in Savannah may remember that Wes and Connie were the people who were hit by a car while riding their motorcycle. A lot of us will miss Wes. We hope Connie will see fit to join us in San Antonio.

In August we received a report from **Derek Hills**, the Trust Librarian at the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library, concerning the Book Endowment Program. He reported that books recently purchased via the 453rd Endowment included: *The Wrong Men: America's Epidemic of Wrongful Death Row Convictions*, by Stanley Cohen; *Chicago's Famous Buildings*, by Franz Schultz & Kevin Harrington; and *Lorraine 1944: Patton versus Manteuffell*. Books purchased in honor of S/Sgt. **Jay Jeffries Jr.** included *An Imperfect God: George Washington, His Slaves and the Creation of America* by Henry Wiencek; and *D-Day 1944: Omaha Beach*.

Gordon H. Mueller, Ph.D., president and CEO of The National D-Day Museum Foundation, Inc., sent us the following letter: "*The National D-Day Museum — America's Museum of World War II Years — celebrates the American spirit, teamwork, courage, and sacrifice of the men and women who won World War II. Your donation of 'The Liberator Men of Old Buc, The Story of the 453rd Bombardment Group (Heavy)' will be added to the growing collection of research material that is used by staff, visitors, and researchers alike to gain a better understanding of America's role in World War II. Thank you for your interest in, and continued support of, The National D-Day Foundation, Inc.*"

Stuart J. Wright has finished his book, *An Emotional Gauntlet*. It is primarily the story of the **Jack Nortridge** crew of the 453rd Bomb Group. In it he describes each mission in great detail, including the D-Day invasion. A copy of the book was available during our reunion in Kalamazoo. **Jim Dyke** read half of the story the first night and came back the next day with a glowing recommendation of the book. I rather believe there will be more published regarding the book elsewhere in *The Journal*, so I won't go into more detail here. (Editor's Note: See page 5.)

The date is now October 12. As usual, I'm almost late writing and getting this column to **Ray Pytel**. However, being late this time has provided the opportunity to tell you a little about the 453rd reunion in Kalamazoo. It was another good one. The names of those who attended will be published in our next 453rd Newsletter.

Irene and I, and our daughter, **Betty**, returned on Monday the 11th. We were tired, but we felt good about the whole thing. For those of you who are members of the Second Air Division Association — here's some of the story.

We arrived Thursday afternoon to find that **Jack Raiser** and his son, **Chris Raiser**, had things in the hospitality suite well in hand. Jack's other son, **Tom Raiser**, had fallen out of a tree and had seriously broken his leg, so he wasn't able to attend the reunion. "Seriously" means it's worse than just a broken leg. **Irene Hurner** of the Heritage League passed around a "get well" card. Everyone who was in contact with Tom at the reunion in New Orleans let him know we missed him very much.

Prior to the beginning of the reunion, several members called to tell us that they had medical problems and were unable to be there. Among these were **Francis & Louise Gianoli**; **Bud & Bonnie Fischer**; and **Jim & B.J. Kotapish**. On the first day of the reunion we heard that **David & Harriett Hamlin** had to cancel. **Ben Squires** and **Paul Fenoglio** had to leave a day early.

Now let's talk a little about a few of those who did attend. **John & Josephine Vercler** arrived riding their trusty scooters. **Chris Raiser** helped the driver of the coach get things in and out of the coach. **Burt & Claire Biel** with their daughters **Irene Hurner** and **Rosemary Lightly** arrived early and stayed late as they toured

the area. Jack and Chris Raiser joined them whenever possible. **Margaret Barker** managed to join her dad, **Hank Barker**, on Saturday. Her plane was to land at 12:15. She arrived at the place where lunch was being served at 12:30 and stayed for the rest of the reunion.

We had three "first-timers" — **Paul & Barbara Fenoglio**, **Rex & Marc Mills**, and **Herman Vanderwall**. Paul was a pilot in the 735th Squadron. Rex was a waist gunner on the **Norman Putman** crew, 733rd Squadron. Herman was a gunner on the **Bill Garrett** crew, 735th Squadron.

We managed to have 78 people in attendance for all or part of the reunion. Everyone with whom we managed to speak said they had a very good time. This was not an easy task since I had problems with my sciatic nerve and had difficulty standing for any length of time.

Another (since they did the same thing in New Orleans) well-deserved "Thanks" to **Linda Wittig** and her daughter, **Brenda Tudyk**. The service they performed by getting people on the coaches on time and being sure no one was left behind was invaluable.

The business meeting was limited in time due to the Presidential Debate. However, the one thing most people agreed upon was to have another reunion composed of just 453rd people. This is a nice thought, but where to go and, more importantly, how many are likely to be there are some things that must be considered. The only thing that can be said right now is, we'll give it some thought.

The end is near — the end of this column, that is. So a change of subject to some geriatric humor might be appropriate:

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office. "Is it true," she wanted to know, "that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?" "Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her. There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious is my condition? This prescription is marked NO REFILLS."

Cheers — and be certain to get those prescriptions filled on time. ■

392ND BG (continued from page 16)

The next 2ADA convention will take place this Memorial Day weekend in May. Are you planning to go? I am. The last time I was in downtown San Antonio was on that one and only pass from pre-flight school in 1943. I hear there have been some changes since then. Come if you can; we will have a good time.

Pilot write-up in logbook: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

Crew Chief sign-off: Auto land not installed on this aircraft.

Take care. ■



To the Editor:

The B-24 Liberator Stamp Petition has finally come to fruition. Here is the text of my letter of October 9, 2004 to Terrence W. McCaffrey, Manager, Stamp Development, United States Postal Service, requesting formal notification of the stamp's issuance. This letter was accompanied by an enclosure of my November 27, 2002 letter to Postmaster General Jack Potter.

Dear Sir:

After posting the enclosure I set out upon a petition drive requesting issuance of a B-24 Liberator aircraft commemorative stamp. The petition form, addressed to Chairperson Dr. Virginia Noelke of the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee, appeared in the 2nd Air Division Association *Journal* and in the B-24 Liberator Club *Briefing* magazine. Over a 22-month period, many thousands of petitions have been mailed to Dr. Noelke; I personally distributed some 3,000. I also solicited petitions from members of the Dutch Underground with whom I served for an eight-month period during World War II, this after parachuting onto Holland from a burning B-24 set afire by attacking enemy aircraft.

My cousin, Albert Gerritz of Pittsford, NY, a WWII B-24 air crewman, is a personal friend of and previously worked with Mr. James W. Meyer, a vice president of Kodak in Rochester, NY. Your letter of September 17, 2004 to Mr. Meyer advised that the B-24 Liberator would be included in a sheet of ten stamps issued during the year 2005, entitled "Advances in American Aviation."

Because of the many thousands of people involved in the B-24 Liberator stamp petition drive, I respectfully request a communication from you affirming the issuance of the B-24 Liberator stamp and the other aircraft involved. With your permission this letter will appear in the 2nd Air Division Association *Journal* and in *Bomber Legends*, the new publication of the B-24 Liberator Club. The circulation of these two publications is approximately 10,000. The word will quickly spread that these stamps will soon be available for purchase. The Collings Foundation, which operates

WWII aircraft including the B-24 on tours throughout the United States, will also be involved in the dissemination of the stamp's availability.

2005 is also the year for the dedication of a bronze replica B-24 Liberator with an 18-foot wingspan as the centerpiece of the Veterans Memorial Gardens in San Diego's Balboa Park. This bronze replica will be identical to the B-24 replica currently located at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

Your action on this matter will be greatly appreciated by the tens of thousands of B-24 Liberator devotees.

As an aside, will uncirculated sheets of "Advances in American Aviation" be available to purchase?

I am, very respectfully,

Frederick J. Gerritz (466th)
611 South Fann Place
Anaheim, CA 92804-2623

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To the Editor:

In regards to the article from *Yank* magazine on Lt. Novik of the 392nd BG: I was the tail gunner on the crew. As far as I know (and I hope I am wrong), there are only two of us left.

Thank you for the article.

Charles A. Buckley (392nd)
1645 Ridge Road
Iowa City, IA 52245-1628

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To the Editor:

I am hoping to find anyone who served with my brother, 1st Lt. William J. Pautz, from Toledo. He was a navigator on a B-24 that went down over the English Channel on January 29, 1944. Bill was buried in England and brought home in 1945. Anyone who has any remembrance of him, please contact:

Rita A. Mills
5675 Brook Cliffe Road
Toledo, OH 43614

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To the Editor:

My great-uncle, Donald W. Sang, was killed in action on July 21, 1944. His B-24 collided with another B-24. Six men from his crew were killed: James W. Wheeler, Ernest G. Stathes, Ellis Pfeiffer, Thomas J. O'Klane, Dean R. Smith, and my great-uncle. Three others bailed out and became POWs: Wayne Cowgill, James R. Martin, and Dale Holker. Their unit was the 453rd Bomb Group, 734th Squadron. Any information will be appreciated. Please contact:

Robert M. Rumsby
185 Bamford Avenue
Hawthorne, NJ 07506

→ → → →

Happy New Year

At this very special time of the year I want to thank you all for your notes, letters and telephone calls this past year.

To all members and friends of the 2ADA I send warm greetings and wish you all good health and much happiness for all of 2005.

Cheers, Evelyn Cohen

To the Editor:

Christine Armes, who was about 10-12 years old when the 458th BG was at Horsham, has worked for several years on a project to have a memorial at Norwich International Airport telling that such facility was originally an RAF base and then the base of the 458th Bomb Group.

The memorial is now in place, dedicated at a memorial service on 29 July 2004. My wife, Joanna, and I attended, as did several others. Regrettably it was not asked how many in the crowd were from the U.S.

It was quite an impressive affair, attended by the Lord Mayor of Norwich and representatives of a number of veterans' groups and military organizations, both English and American. Among the dignitaries was David Hastings, who talked about our 2AD Memorial Library at The Forum.

The dedication was ended with a fly over of The Battle for Britain Team, composed of a Lancaster, a Spitfire, and a Hurricane. These landed and taxied past our reviewing stand.

The monument is quite nice, and includes a picture of each of the planes that operated from Horsham. I took about forty pictures — if anyone would like some of them, e-mail me at egsr@intcon.net.

Elmo W. Geppelt (458th)
7117 South Columbia Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74136-5522

Ed. Note: For more on the dedication, see Rick Rokicki's report on page 9.

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To the Editor:

The first volume of a series of reference books, *Losses of the US 8th and 9th Air Forces in the ETO Area, June 1942 – December 1943*, has just been published.

The research for this series has taken over twenty-five years. The basic elements were derived from official documents kept by the National Archives and the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB, to which has been added relevant information from several official sources

(continued on next page)

LETTERS (continued from page 33)

in the United Kingdom and countries on the European continent.

It has been our aim to create a complete day-to-day survey of all U.S. Air Force losses in human life and aircraft on operational and non-operational flights. Much time has been dedicated to locating the exact crash site, the status of the crews, and burial data about the thousands of airmen who lost their lives.

Volume II will include the losses during January, February, March and April 1944. It has been scheduled for publication in Summer/Fall 2006.

The current book has 544 pages and nearly 300 photographs. The price is 59,95 English pounds (approximately \$110 U.S.) Orders may be sent to:

Stan D. Bishop
8 Mailes Close
Barton, Cambridge CB3 7BQ
ENGLAND

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To the Editor:

Page 27 of the Summer 2004 *Journal*, "100 Missions for C-Charlie, The Old Veteran" caught my attention. I flew as a radio operator/gunner on Lt. Francis Johnson's crew (389th BG, 564th SQ).

Most of our missions were flown in "C-Charlie, The Old Veteran." The old veteran had flown over 40 missions when we began our tour — the first mission being September 25, 1944. I remember it well . . . it was my 21st birthday. With 40+ missions, the officers of the crew arranged to have a logo painted on the nose: an old crippled veteran on crutches.

I flew 32 missions, but not all in "C-Charlie." I broke my ankle in a non-combat mission and therefore did not complete the 35 mission goal. I was told that "C-Charlie" flew over 114 missions. It went down flying supplies over the Rhine.

The ground crew member standing third from the left in the picture was M/Sgt. Beck, who nursed "C-Charlie" for most, if not all, of those missions. I am not sure how many total missions "C-Charlie" flew because of Beck's tender loving care.

E. Dale Bethell (389th)
5539 N. Fresno St., Apt. D
Fresno, CA 93716
E-mail: edbethell@aol.com

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To the Editor:

The Summer 2004 *Journal* was the first time I had occasion to read Thaddeus Poprawa's article "100 Missions for C-Charlie, The Old Veteran" (which had first appeared in the 2ADA *Journal* in 1978). I would like to shed some light on the history of "The Old Veteran."



Last mission of "The Old Veteran," February 22, 1945. Standing (L-R): Johnson, Newport, Nelson. Kneeling (L-R): Walcoff, Kaye [Kozlowski], J. Weckerly, T. West.

I was the flight engineer on the Francis Johnson crew when we were assigned to "C-Charlie," about August, 1944. We knew immediately of her past history (approximately 50 missions) and elected to name her "The Old Veteran." The crew met under the wing one foggy morning where we chipped in to pay for the nose art. It was a tribute to the aging plane as well as to our great pilot, "Pappy" Johnson, who was in his mid-30s — and you know, that was old.

We completed 35 missions in "C-Charlie" with great success. Aside from numerous flak holes (small ones) and on one occasion the loss of #2, the old war bird was most reliable. This was a tribute to its crew chief, M/Sgt. Beck, who was shown third from left in your photo. I don't recall the name of his assistant who was shown fifth from the left, but I remember calling him "Shorty." I believe it was at this time that "The Old Veteran" was assigned to the Kincl crew.

We shared the same barracks with this crew, so we knew them well. Among the most memorable of them to me was Stan Kupecki, whom we nicknamed "The Count" for his thin black mustache and habit of smoking cigarettes in a slim cigarette holder. It looked like he was smoking a pencil. And I believe it was Leo Brown who would receive clean bed sheets from home and keep them neatly stacked under his bunk. One day, they were late returning from a mission, and you know what happened to the sheets. Later we learned of the crew's safe return and scrambled to replace the sheets — somewhat in disarray, but all back.

The Johnson crew radio operator, Dale Bethell, waist gunner Leonard Walcoff, and I are the only three left and communicating. I wonder how many of the Kincl crew are still around.

Frank A. Kozlowski (389th)
N/K/A Frank A. Kaye
717 Walden Lane
Savannah, GA 31405

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To the Editor:

Remember that old and important phrase, "If at first you don't succeed, keep trying"? (Well, something like that.)

For all these years since the 1944 days flying around in those Liberators, I *knew* the radio operator was in charge of pigeons, somewhere, at some time. Years went by with no one backing up my story. I was starting to worry about my mind, until . . .

I received a letter from John W. Crow of the 491st BG, dated 4-20-03, saying YES, we did carry pigeons from Morrison Field (that is Palm Beach, FL now) to Trinidad.

Then I received an e-mail dated 4-22-03 from Earl Zimmerman, who was a static chaser on Lt. James' crew. However, they flew the northern route to England and didn't remember having pigeons. (It was probably too cold going that way for those little things.)

Then, on 2-3-04 I heard from George Karnahan. He carried two when they flew training and sub-patrol missions out of Langley, VA during November 1943. George went on to say he ended up with the 93rd BG and flew 31 missions in two months.

However, on 9-7-03 I received an e-mail

from Carl L. Brown, who goes by "Lew." Lew was with the 492nd BG, then went to the 467th BG. BUT — he remembered pigeons! Hooray! Now I am feeling really confident. But the e-mails did not stop there. We have been e-mailing for over a year now.

Lew's first e-mail was signed, "From an old Penna boy living in NJ for 43 years." Well, I thought from that statement, he probably came from the Philly area. But what a surprise when he said that he had signed up in Erie, PA on January 1, 1943. I had signed up in Erie also, on October 19, 1942.

Lew went to the New Cumberland, PA induction center. I went to Ft. Mead, MD induction center. Lew went to Miami Beach for basic. I went to Duncan Field, San Antonio, TX (now Lackland). Lew went to radio school at Scott Field. I went to Sioux Falls, SD for mine. Lew went to Ft. Myers, FL for gunnery. I went to Laredo, TX, *in the summer!* Lew went to Alamogordo, NM for phase training. I went to Casper, WY, *in the winter!* Our crew, Lt. Kremer's, left West Palm Beach on April 3, 1944. Lew's crew left West Palm on April 11, 1944.

Lew's first mission was on May 12, 1944 to Zeitz, Germany. Our first mission was on May 23, 1944 to Orleans, France. (Wonder where we were for those 11 days?) But read on . . .

Lew's last mission was on October 6, 1944 to Hamburg, Germany. Our last mission was on August 9, 1944 to Strasbourg, Germany. (Did someone in the higher authority want our crew out of there?) I knew we were kept busy!! Oh well. We got overtime pay in the 453rd!

So you can see that Lew's path and my path were ALMOST parallel.

Now we return to the present day, Lew in New Jersey and me in Oklahoma, and we had been trying to decide some way where we could meet. Months went by, until June 2004. My wife Aida and I were planning a trip in mid-August to our old home town of Cochranton, PA. And Lew was coming to his high school class reunion in Meadville, PA at about the same time! (These two towns are about twelve miles apart.)

So, with a bit of rearranging schedules, WE MET on August 22!! It was a super reunion between two B-24 radio operators who remembered about PIGEONS!

Another coincidence: Back in the early '40s, Lew used to date Doris Counselman, the sister of Roger Counselman who came over with the original crews of the 453rd.

The only sad part of our reunion was that my Aida had been looking forward to it for months, but God called her home on June 22, 2004. But she was there!

John Hildebran (453rd)

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TALES FROM THE PHOTO LAB

*James H. Reeves (HDQ), Chairman, 2ADA Group Relations Committee, wrote **All Personnel – Headquarters, Second Air Division, who served at Ketteringham Hall during WWII – We'd Love to Hear From You!** and got this answer:*

Dear friend Jim,

I served in the Photo Section from 1943 through 1945 under Captain Jack Kellog, under Captain Jordan Uttal, and then under Major Ed Reed. General Kepner was a skilled military photographer and he stayed close to the photo lab when the strike photos of the day's bombing came in. He was knowledgeable in photography and made knowing demands on the photo lab when the strike pictures came in from the missions.

Automatic cameras came on when the bombs dropped and took pictures every six seconds until the bombs started bursting. This gave us a virtual walk across the target, and we made 500, 1000, and 2000 foot circles from the aiming point of each group. Then we counted individual bomb bursts where possible, and whole squadron burst patterns as being over-or-short and also left-or-right of the assigned MPI (mean point of impact).

This gave us "batting averages" for the accuracy of every squadron, and — with it — true air discipline on errant bombing by any group. Frequently I got to brief the general after we assigned what was a "batting average" really for the number of feet left-or-right or over-or-short from the aiming point assigned.

The photo lab also took pictures of the visiting VIPs who came through regularly. We got to photograph nearly all of the big shots who came through, and it was a great thing to be in on.

I retired after 30 years, 10 months, and 11 days in the Ready Reserve, and they put a little silver eagle on my shoulder.

My last service years were at the Air Force Academy in the candidate advisory service. I visited high schools in my assigned area, speaking about the service academies and the opportunities of a life career in the armed forces. It was a great assignment. I plan to give my considerable collection of Air Corps, Army Air Forces, and U.S. Air Force pictures to the Air Force Academy.

Yes, I still take a considerable number of pictures day to day — but it was more exciting snapping them out of the waist window of a B-24 Liberator.

Harold McCormick (HDQ)
927 Greenwood Avenue
Canon City, Colorado 81212



THE PIGEON REUNION (left to right): Carl L. Brown (Lew), John Hildebran, and Bill Sherry (Lew's friend).

Meanwhile at the Mighty 8th AF Museum ~

Second to None: The Legendary Liberator

“Never knew there could be so much to one machine as this B-24.”

— Ralph H. Elliott, 467th Bomb Group

The B-24 Liberator, a four-engine bomber most widely recognized for its split-tail configuration, flew with 21 bombardment groups of the 8th Air Force during World War II. Between 1939 and 1945, the production of B-24s in the factories of Consolidated Vultee, Ford Motor Company, Douglas Aircraft, and North American Aircraft resulted in over 19,200 of these planes. According to historian Robert Dorr, “The strength and durability of the Liberator, and its ability to carry a huge bombload and to shoot back, were all pluses in the campaign waged by the Eighth Air Force.”

In an effort to articulate the importance of this warbird, the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is planning a dynamic exhibition that will emphasize the 2nd Air Division and the B-24 and their place in history. The nose section “Fightin’ Sam,” already on loan to the museum from the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, will serve as a focal point in this exhibition to be prominently placed within the museum’s Combat Rotunda. Highlights of the proposed design include a simulated Type T2 hangar surrounding the nose section, a large format screen displaying original B-24 combat footage, and the placement of a human figure outfitted as a bombardier inside the nose. Casework located within the hangar will contain painted A-2 and B-15 jackets from B-24 crewmen and a patch from the 2nd Air Division’s 467th BG “Witchcraft” crew. In keeping with the use of new technologies in museum design, interactive components include an educational touch-screen program and a B-24 flight simulator that will educate and engage visitors of all ages. Photo enlargements and text panels will provide supplemental information and graphics in addition to those appearing on the touch screen. Together, these elements will present visitors with an interactive-based experience that enlivens the Combat Gallery with the complete story of the B-24 — a warbird **SECOND to NONE**.



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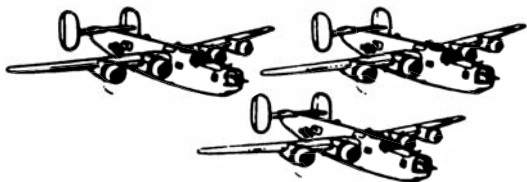
The original “Fightin’ Sam” flew its missions with the 389th Bomb Group, one of the pioneer Second Air Division Groups. The 389th flew the famous Ploesti low level mission in 1943. One of its pilots, Lloyd Hughes, was a posthumous recipient of the Medal of Honor, the nation’s highest decoration for valor, for his bravery on this mission.

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

EIGHTH AIR FORCE

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