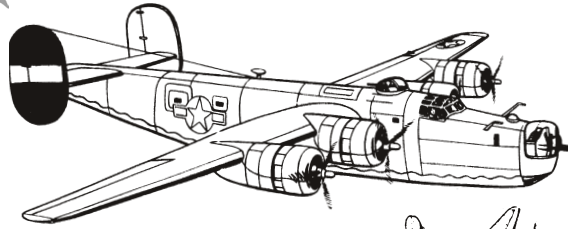




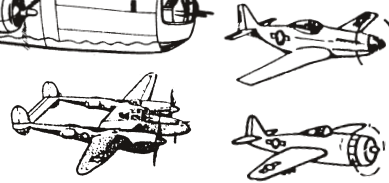
Season's Greetings

# THE JOURNAL

Official Publication of the:



Veterans of  
WORLD WAR II



Volume 46 Number 4

Fall/Winter 2007

## “All is Secure”

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,  
in a one-bedroom house made of plaster and stone.  
I had come down the chimney with presents to give,  
and to see just who in this home did live.  
I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,  
no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.  
No stocking by the mantle, just boots filled with sand;  
on the wall there hung pictures of far distant lands.  
With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,  
a sober thought came through my mind.  
For this house was different, it was dark and dreary,  
I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.  
The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone,  
curled up on the floor in this one-bedroom home.  
The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,  
not how I pictured a United States soldier.  
Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?  
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?  
I realized the families that I saw this night,  
owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.  
Soon round the world, the children would play,  
and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day.

They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,  
because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.  
I couldn't help but wonder how many lay alone,  
on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.  
The very thought brought a tear to my eye,  
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.  
The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,  
“Santa, don't cry, this life is my choice;  
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,  
my life is my God, my Country, my Corps.”  
The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep,  
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.  
I kept watch for hours, so silent and still,  
and we both shivered from the cold night's chill.  
I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark night,  
this guardian of honor so willing to fight.  
Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,  
whispered “Carry on, Santa, it's Christmas Day, all is secure.”  
One look at my watch and I knew he was right.  
“Merry Christmas, my friend, and to all a good night.”

— Anonymous

Submitted by Alfred Asch (93rd BG)

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492nd Bomb Group ..... SEE PAGE 18

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# SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

# JOURNAL



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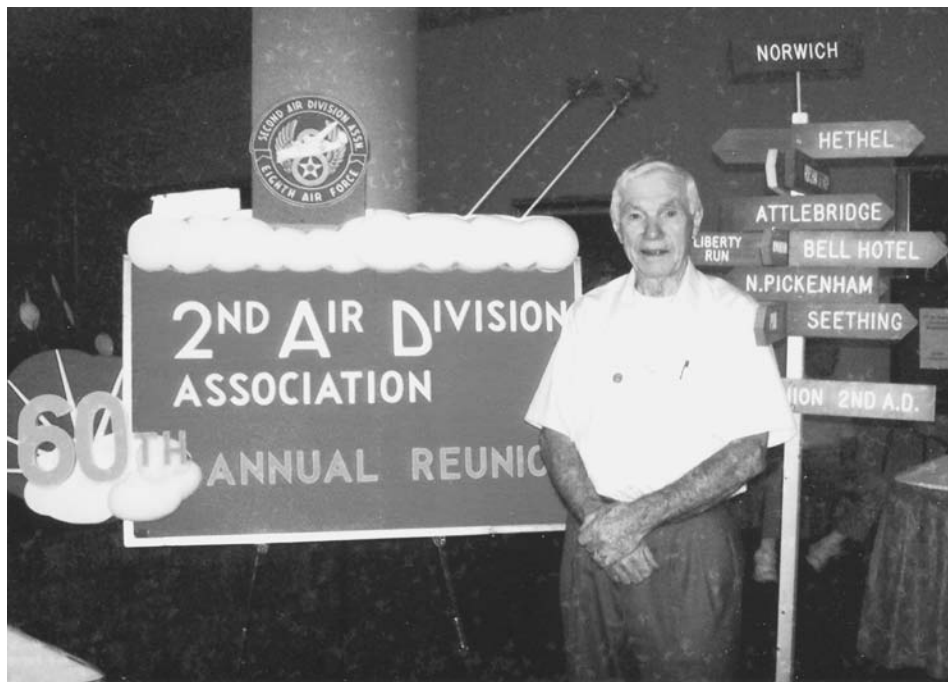
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# President's Message

BY EARL ZIMMERMAN (389TH BG)

**A**t Ease. It's my second time around as president, so my rocking chair will be empty for another year. We had a wonderful time at Grand Rapids, although it's getting down to a precious few guys — only 120 signed up.

A short one in case you don't know me. I was radioman on the Lt. Harold L. James crew. We went over with the 389th in June of 1943; promptly lost our new D model in a mid-air; DS to North Africa; took a six month vacation in Turkey via Ploesti; returned to Hethel; DS to Leuchars, Scotland to fly the black Libs over Norway at night; returned to Hethel for more combat; and turned out the lights when the 389th went back home in June 1945. I stayed in the Air Force and retired in 1964.



"Our Fearless Leader" at the convention in Grand Rapids.

I am presently working on the new 2ADA directory with the help of Maxine Mackey, as we have had a few changes in VPs and committee members. We've also had a few changes in the bylaws and procedures, but your association is in good hands, I hope. Our next meeting will be in Dallas in October 2008; more information will follow in upcoming *Journals*.

Hey, guys and gals, if you have any criticisms, suggestions, etc., please get in touch with me. My address and phone number are in the Directory on page 2 of the *Journal*.

I will be going to Norwich in November to lay a wreath for the 2ADA on Remembrance Day at the cathedral; and to attend the meeting of the Memorial Trust Board of Governors as well as Lord Hurd's speech and the service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. I also plan to visit Carleton Rode Church where the 389th and the 453rd have a memorial, the Green Dragon Pub in Wymondham, the Hethel Museum and chapel, and, time permitting, the World's End Pub in Mulbarton. One last stop, to see the Spitfire in the garden of David (a man of no small proportions) and Jean Hastings' home and enjoy another of Jean's fine dinners. She sets a fine table.

It's tough being the president of the 2ADA.

Hang in and take your pills. I hope to have a better report in the next *Journal*, if editor Pytel gives me time to get things together. ■

## 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).

We make every effort to mail your *Journal* within 90 days of the article submission deadlines of February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1. 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.

## FORMER 2ADA PRESIDENT JOHN B. CONRAD DIES

**J**ohn Browning Conrad, 87, husband of the late Wanda McGill Conrad, of Lexington, Kentucky died Sunday, October 21, 2007. A native of Dry Ridge, KY, he was the son of the late Guy and Etta Rae Browning Conrad. An avid Kentucky historian and genealogical researcher, Mr. Conrad compiled family histories and contributed to the Living Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky, and along with Ken Stone, was editor and publisher of *Footsteps of the Past*. During his career, Mr. Conrad co-founded (with Floyd Cox, Jr.) and served as president of Conrad, Cox & Associates, Eagles National Life Insurance Co., First Mutual Life Insurance Co., and First Mutual Insurance Co. Mr. Conrad co-founded (with Joseph M. Whitmer) and was president of PAL Inc., an employee benefit administrative and consulting firm, until he retired in 1985. He was Kentucky's first licensed insurance consultant. He served in the 8th Air Force during WWII as a navigator and flew a tour of 28 missions with the 392nd Bomb Group. Mr. Conrad was a member of Dry Ridge Presbyterian Church, University of KY Alumni Association, Kentucky Historical Society and the Grant County Historical Society, the SAR and was past president (1993-1994) of the 2nd Air Division Association. ■



**JOHN B. CONRAD**  
392nd Bomb Group



# Executive Vice President's Message

BY JOHN L. LEE (93RD BG)

Greetings to all! By way of introduction, I am John L. Lee, VP 93rd BG, and was just elected to serve as your Executive Vice President. I will be writing an article for each issue of the *Journal* and will try to keep you up to date on the happenings of the 2ADA. Also I will be helping Earl Zimmerman whenever he needs me, and will be in touch with the Bomb Group VPs to keep communications flowing.

Information about my background is as follows: I served in the 93rd BG toward the end of the war, flying nineteen missions. Before that experience, I entered the Aviation Cadet Training Program, advancing as far as Basic Flying School. After an unfortunate flight test, which I failed, I volunteered for Aerial Gunner School, was trained and was assigned to a B-24 ten-man crew. Three of us are still living and active in the 2ADA and the 93rd BG. After the war I returned to work in management with the Glen L. Martin Company. I stayed in the A.F. Reserve and completed my education, receiving a law degree. When I was in my forties, they recalled me to active duty and I served enough time to retire in the grade of Colonel.

For those who missed the convention in Grand Rapids, I say "I'm sorry." It was truly an outstanding one. The only way it could have been better was if more of you had attended. The hotel, the food, the city, the speakers and the speeches were terrific. I will try to cover some of the issues that were included at the meeting.

The Fulbright Commission had notified the 2ADA that they would no longer be a party to the selection of the librarian of our Memorial Library in Norwich. A decision was made by the Executive Committee to turn this responsibility over to the Board of Governors. It was felt by all present that it is very important to have an American presence in this position. There will, however, be a delay of about a year in setting up procedures for making the selection.

The effort that was led by Walter Mundy to fund the "Fightin' Sam" at the Mighty Eighth AF Museum was extremely successful. The goal of \$125,000 was exceeded by several thousand dollars. Congratulations to Walt and to all who contributed. Walt has indicated this interactive exhibit will be ready for use in June of '08. Walter also gave a final report on the Legacy Plan. This was approved by the Executive Committee and accepted by the members at the Business Meeting. Under this plan, when it

becomes necessary to phase out the 2ADA, the remaining assets will be distributed as follows: 33% to the Heritage League, 33% to the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum, and 34% to the Memorial Library.

Dick Butler, 2ADA Past President, VP 44th BG, and Chair of the Bylaws Review Committee, presented his report. The committee appointed by Past President Oak Mackey consisted of the following: Dick Butler, chair; Earl Zimmerman; and Fielder Newton. Amendments made by the committee were approved by the membership attending the General Meeting.

Our guest speaker at the Saturday night dinner was Donald L. Miller, who is the author of *Masters of the Sky*. Sixty years after the war he has written an epic saga of the 8th Air Force. Professor Miller said that he felt honored to speak to the men who had actually been there.

Four members of the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust attended the meetings. They were Matthew Martin, chairman; David Gurney; David Hastings; and Andrew Hawker. The relationship that the 2ADA has with the British is most inspiring. They expressed warm memories of their early years during the war and some of the meetings they had as children with our veterans. They also have formed close ties with our members that are lasting and very encouraging. The speeches given by these gentlemen at the banquet on the last night were touching and should be printed in this or a future *Journal*.

The last night's banquet was also the setting for our traditional Candle Lighting Ceremony. Candles were lit in remembrance of the different campaigns of the war against Nazi Germany and our seven thousand fallen comrades, as well as those who have died since the war. Awards were presented by the chairman of the Awards Committee, King Schultz (448th), to the following: Fielder Newton, Ray Pytel, and Richard Roberts. These awards were hourglasses, hand-made by our new President Earl Zimmerman. David Hastings and his wife Jean, Matthew Martin, and Evelyn Cohen were also recipients of unique hand-made awards. Glenn Miller music was played during dinner, and many of our group danced to those wonderful tunes.

All in all, this was a most successful and happy reunion. Thanks to Bud Koorn dyk for suggesting this wonderful location, and thanks to Evelyn Cohen and her convention committee for a terrific job. ■

SHIPDHAM



BY DICK BUTLER

Will Lundy, while at the 44th BGVA reunion in Branson, Missouri this past Labor Day weekend, fell while walking with his son Kevin and struck his head on the pavement. He was unconscious and Kevin got him to a hospital where it was determined that Will would need surgery. While still unconscious, Will was airlifted to a larger hospital in Springfield, Missouri. There he underwent cranial surgery to relieve blood pressure on his brain and to remove a clot. At the time of this writing, 20 September, Will was still in intensive care but progressing favorably.

Will Lundy is undoubtedly the most well-known 44th Bomb Group veteran. He has earned that reputation as a result of his more than forty years of historical research about the men, aircraft and missions of the 44th. He documented all of the missions flown, who flew on them, results, losses and casualties. All this information is contained in the recent book he published, *44th Bomb Group Roll of Honor and Casualties*. He was one of the founding members of the 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association (BGVA).

Will is also well-known in the Second Air Division Association for his long participation in it, his numerous historical articles, and his support of the Memorial Library. He attended all of the 2ADA conventions in Norwich since 1979. During the Fiftieth Anniversary of V-E Day in 1995 in Norwich, Will carried the American Flag at the head of the contingent of Second Air Division Association veterans, some three hundred strong, as they marched in the parade through the streets of Norwich to the Cathedral. There he carried the flag at the head of the procession into the Cathedral for the ceremony and out of the Cathedral at the conclusion. We were all very proud of him for his professionalism while performing this important duty.

Ardrith and I extend sincere Holiday Greetings to all 2ADA members. ■

*Ed. Note: We are sad to report that Will Lundy passed away October 11, 2007.*

# The Editor's Contribution

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

Usually the start of the fall season brings several 2ADA members stopping over on the way to Arizona or the west coast from their original home areas "out east" to the warmer winter environs of perpetual summer.

On October 2nd this editor had lunch with the original navigator on our crew who due to his proficiency got promoted to a lead crew and was then invited by the Luftwaffe to stay at their luxury camp for some ten months — this was the Kassel Mission benefit of September 27, 1944.

Jim Withey and his traveling companion, Ann Eneguess, both come from east coast states of New Hampshire, Maine and Massachusetts area — where the three states meet the Atlantic. In the cooler months they make the Tucson green valley area their stomping grounds; summers their abode is Peterborough, NH.

We were discussing the various benefits of the respective "home" areas of our 445th crew. The four living members of our crew reside "way across" the U.S. — Jack Pelton, the pilot, lives in the "L.A." area of California; Tom Hart, the radio-man, lives in the Lone Star state of Texas. I was the engineer from Wisconsin and Jim Withey was originally living in Kittery, Maine and had his printing shop in New Hampshire.

Jim said each area has its own unique benefits — California has its earthquakes, Texas has its hurricanes, Wisconsin has its tornadoes and tough, cold winters, and the east coast has Boston and New York — all natural disasters.

## ANSWERS TO THE SUMMER QUIZ

Great Britain, Canada and the United States were involved in the anti U-boat campaigns of 1939 through 1945. The Royal Air Force coastal command, which at that time included the Canadian Air Force, are credited with 67 submarines sunk by Lend-Lease Liberators off the maritime provinces of the North Atlantic. In the early days of 1942-1943 the U.S. Air Force anti-submarine groups mainly patrolled the Caribbean and the South Atlantic, and their B-24s are credited with ten U-boats sunk. In the fall of 1943 came the "Big Switch" and in a U.S. Navy and Air Force exchange of Army Air Forces

B-24s for the Navy's aircraft plant at Renton, Washington, the Navy took over the planes in the South Atlantic, and the Air Force started producing B-29s at the newly acquired Boeing plant. The Navy is credited with 13 submarines.

A total of 90 U-boats sunk by the various Liberator-equipped services resulted in the German Admiral Karl Donetz calling off his "wolf packs" due to heavy U-boat losses in the summer of 1943, and the constant observation by patrolling aircraft reducing the effectiveness of the "wolf-pack" tactic.

Winston Churchill announced in late June 1943 that hardly any Allied ships were lost to U-boats.

As a historical aside, the personnel losses by the active U-boat crews in WWII amounted to something like 90% — not a healthy service to be in!

## FALL QUIZ

Aside from the Second Air Division, there were a number of B-24 equipped groups and squadrons that were part of the 8th Air Force.

Can you identify and name at least five

such units and what were they doing?

What special equipment did some of the units have?

At the time of D-Day, how many B-17 groups and how many B-24 groups did the 8th Air Force have?

## GRAND RAPIDS "REUNION" WAS LARGER THAN YOU THOUGHT...

Ed Zobac (AM, 445th) brought his laptop with camera to the convention and during the registration time immediately after lunch he contacted Luc Dewez, our friend in Belgium. Luc just got his camera working and we could talk and see each other across the Atlantic without any time delay. Several of our 2ADA members also conversed with Dewez until he said, "I gotta put my kids to bed." It was 8:00 p.m. in Belgium and only 2:00 p.m. in Michigan.

Ed then contacted Mike Simpson (AM, 389th) in Scottsdale, AZ and we had some nice conversations between our 2ADA group and Mike. Thus even if our convention attendance was limited, the laptop connected us with the rest of the "world." It looks like this is the way to go! ■

## The Kassel Mission Historical Society

Share the passion for this Mission! What really happened to the 445th that day? Watch as the story continues to unfold. Return to Tibenham and Germany in 2008 with our dynamic group. Never forget September 27, 1944.

### JOIN US!

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E-mail (print): \_\_\_\_\_

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# "Thank You" Address at the 2ADA Banquet, Grand Rapids 2007

BY DAVID HASTINGS, MEMORIAL TRUST GOVERNOR AND IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMAN

Mr. President, Members of the Second Air Division Association, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you so much for inviting us to attend the Sixtieth Annual Convention and our twenty-sixth visit to the great Second Air Division family. It does not seem possible that we have had the privilege of knowing you for sixty-four years. Sadly for Jean and I, this is the last time that we will be able to cross the Atlantic, so this evening we need to say some sincere "Thank You's."

First of all of course, is thank you for coming over in those dark days of the Forties to join us in the fight for freedom. Your arrival was like a bright star at the end of a very dark tunnel. We admired your bravery, sacrifice and friendship, and especially, despite fighting a very hard war you found time for us youngsters, to allow us in your B-24s, to take us to the mess hall for chicken, ice cream, Hershey bars and Coke, things we had not seen for years, as well as those great Christmas parties.

We also had the privilege of having you in our homes, to give you time away from the base and the war, even if it was only for a few hours, as well as trying to share your grief during those awful losses in the early years.

If you had not arrived when you did, it is almost certain that Jean and I, along with many others, would have died in a Nazi concentration camp many years ago.

Thank you for the privilege of serving your unique Memorial Library as a Governor for twenty-eight years, and I hope to complete a few more years as I am now the only Trust Governor left who knew you in the war, and we can never repay the debt that we owe to you.

I am just so glad that an American author has just written a book about those days and how that amazing friendship began, so that youngsters of today can understand why you mean so much to my generation.

Thank you for your vision in 1945, when you left us to return home, not to leave just a statue or a plaque but a beautiful living Memorial Library, the only one of its kind in the world, in tribute to those almost seven thousand young men who died and also to all those who survived.

Thank you for your support of Tom Eaton and the Memorial Trust in 1976 at Valley Forge when you began the generous funding for your Memorial which has continued each year and again this eve-

ning. Your Memorial has brought so much happiness and understanding to thousands of people from all parts of the world, and here are just a few of those wonderful memories we have to thank you for.

First, all your conventions in the United States, and we have been lucky enough to attend twenty-six of them. San Antonio, my first as a Governor, when I let you down by going "sick" just before the banquet, and McAfee when Andy Low took us to West Point. How can we ever forget Palm Springs, when Jimmy Stewart had us all in tears when he talked about "My America." Fort Worth and the 50th Anniversary of the B-24. Las Vegas with over 1600 attending and the year of "Diamond Lil." If you had said in 1943 that I would become a pilot, a Colonel in the Confederate Air Force and help to fly a B-24 across the Atlantic as well as meeting my old wartime pilot, I would have laughed at you, but thanks to the 2nd Air Division Association it happened that year. What about Colorado Springs and that wonderful service in the beautiful chapel at your U.S. Air Force Academy, Irvine, Lexington, Dearborn, St. Charles, Nashville, Hilton Head, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Washington; the list is endless. Can we also give a special thanks to the WACs who have been so kind each year.

Two other memories spring to mind. Thanks to Geoff Gregory, I became the first Honorary Member of the 467th Bomb Group in 1984, and then in 1991, thanks to Jim Reeves, after an amazing evening I became a Lieutenant Colonel Aide de Camp to the Governor of Georgia. What memories indeed.

Plus for me as a pilot to have twenty-nine thousand miles of flying with David Patterson of the 445th in your great country was an unbelievable dream come true. Especially the year when we took his aircraft all the way round the USA. Landing at Dayton, we met up with the 453rd and Andy Low as well as the great Moose Allen, and then two days later when we landed at Shreveport there was the 467th with Colonel Shower, Geoff Gregory, and Jack Stevens.

Then of course, how can we ever thank you enough for all the times you have had us to stay with you in your homes and the great tours that you have given Jean and I — you have really spoilt us.

Then those wonderful Norwich conventions where you brought joy to thousands of Norfolk people. The years of the Private Trains with the Anglian Big Band

playing on the platform at Norwich — you will never see that again. The huge tent on the Showground and then on your next visit when we had built our new Sport Village we sat down over twelve hundred people at the banquet. The V.E. Day Parade and that amazing evening at the Theatre Royal — we saw the film this week — the Cathedral services, again emotional moments that can never be repeated, including the roar of the B-24s and the Norwich composer who wrote your moving 2nd Air Division Association Fanfare. What about that amazing private Air Show given by RAF Coltishall, and in the evening at the Norwood Rooms, Mike Benarcik presented your wonderful painting of "Welcome Home Yank" to Coltishall, plus we persuaded Jimmy Stewart to conduct the Ray Shields Orchestra, Jordan Uttal told a risqué story in front of our rather staid Lord Bishop, and several of the WACs wore their uniforms. I am glad to give you the news on that painting. As many of you know, RAF Coltishall, our Battle of Britain station, has now sadly been closed, but I am delighted to say that "Welcome Home Yank" now proudly hangs in the special Coltishall room at the Air Defence Museum at Neatishead just outside Norwich, where it will be enjoyed by thousands of visitors.

Next, what about those nights at Broad House with June and Edward Trafford, or the night that Jimmy Stewart and Andy Low played the piano and sang squadron songs! And a few years later Evelyn Cohen and Geoff Gregory also sang . . .

Thanks also for your support of the youngsters at Wymondham College. Each morning as the twelve hundred students who we have on campus enter the wartime Nissen hut chapel, they pause to admire the 2nd Air Division mural and paintings. What memories you have given us.

Finally, the opening of your new Memorial Library in 2001, when you returned in force only two months after the terrible events of 9/11 and we as Trust Governors waited with bated breath to see if after six years of design and build that we had achieved your dream. And a dream for us was to see you receive the Freedom of our City. Then all the base visits which mean so much to our villages. And speaking of bases, I bring you greetings from The Friends of the Memorial, that wonderful group of people who not only support the Memorial but also preserve your old airfields, and we have a group

*(continued on next page)*



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

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

The Grand Rapids convention was a great success although not heavily attended. Those of you who missed it missed a good one. Now it is on the shoulders of Dallas to host the next one. At this writing, we are investigating the various possibilities for hotel accommodations. This does not have anything to do with my job as indicated above, but I hope it will spur you to plan on attending the next (and who knows, maybe the last) 2ADA convention.

Most of you know the Fulbright Foundation, UK, returned the money we had donated to provide an American scholar in our library. The money has been returned to the 2ADA who in turn gave it to the Memorial Trust to be held as a designated fund to pay for an American librarian, historian or teacher in years to come. Unfortunately, because Fulbright did not advertise for a scholar for the

coming year, we will be without a scholar for one year.

Glenn Gray, our last 2ADA/Fulbright scholar, has returned to the States after completing an outstanding two years of service. We commend Glenn for his work well done.

The biggest news about our Memorial Library is the upcoming retirement of Derek Hills, our Trust Librarian. Derek has done an outstanding job for some twelve years and has contributed to the continued successful increased use of the library each year. His supervision of the move from the temporary library into the new Forum was done in a very professional manner. Not a book was lost! His layout of the new facility was excellent and received acclaim from all users of the library. Derek's work with the county council and the Millennium Library staff was

often tedious but he demonstrated a keen ability to ferret out solutions that were in the best interest of all parties. We will miss Derek and thank him for all his dedicated work for our Memorial Library. We wish him well in his future endeavors.

The 2AD Memorial Library endowment for Phyllis DuBois has recently purchased the following books: *State Houses: America's 50 State Capitol Buildings*; *The Hudson: A History*; *William Merritt Chase: The Paintings in Pastel, Monotypes, Painted Tiles and Ceramic Plates, Watercolors and Prints*; and *Michener: A Writer's Journey*.

By the time you read this, we will have held the 12 November Governors meeting. I will be anxious to report on the happenings there in the next *Journal*.

I wish each of you a happy and healthy holiday season. ■

## Report of the Memorial Trust Chairman

BY MATTHEW MARTIN, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

**GREETINGS FROM NORWICH!** I am just back from the 60th Annual 2ADA Convention in Grand Rapids and, although suffering from some jet lag, I enjoyed it all. Grand Rapids is a most attractive city, and the convention provided me an opportunity to renew old friendships and make some new ones. Well done, again, Evelyn, for all your organization. Thank you also to Bud Koorndyk for inviting us to your native city. The lakeside at Grand Haven is extra special. If mankind (like some species of birds) migrated in the summer, I would choose this part of the world as my destination!

At the banquet at the end of the convention, I was presented with a magnificent gift of \$25,000, which I understand represents a number of individual contributions from members of the 2ADA. All the Governors of your Memorial Library are immensely grateful for this, and I would therefore like to express our very real appreciation.

The main challenge facing the Governors now is to secure an American presence in your Memorial Library following the Fulbright Commission's unfortunate decision to terminate the 2ADA program. First of all we will, with professional guidance, need to put in place a robust invest-

ment policy for the funds which will stand the test of time. The Governors have yet to decide how best to secure the future of an American presence and are presently considering various options. One thing I will say — we will discharge our obligations to the best of our abilities and without abrogating them. We are conscious of our duties, both legally and morally.

As the readers of the *Journal* know, we are in the process of advertising for a successor for Derek Hills, the Trust Librarian. The post is being advertised both locally and nationally. Derek retires in January and will be a very hard act to follow. Watch this space for news about this important appointment.

At the time of this writing we are also making arrangements for a busy program of events in November. Again I hope to give a full account in my next article in the *Journal*. We hope we will be joined by some supporters from the States, who will always be most welcome.

Finally, as I said at the convention in Grand Rapids, your Memorial Library is in good health. The more time I spend on it the more I appreciate what an extraordinary act of selfless generosity it is on all your parts. And so a BIG THANK YOU yet again. ■

### "THANK YOU" ADDRESS

(continued from page 6)

of them here this evening. Recently The Friends have had three more roads in Norfolk named in your honour so you will never be forgotten.

To work with Evelyn Cohen on the Norwich conventions was a high spot in our lives for Jean and I and our small team at DJ Associates. Evelyn, can we thank you for all your kindness, friendship, and the huge fun we had putting those conventions together. We certainly learnt what a massive task it is for you every year, and your hard work has given us twenty-six memorable occasions.

Thanks also to that wonderful Dzenowagis family whose superb video history project has enabled us and future generations to relive many of those great events.

Little did we think in 1943 what would follow that first meeting. You have so enriched our lives and those of our children and grandchildren.

So, can Jean and I thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for sixty-four years of wonderful friendship and the privilege of serving on your Memorial Trust. We will miss being with you in Dallas, but you will be in our thoughts, and like thousands of others who knew you during the war, WE WILL NEVER FORGET YOU.

God bless the Second Air Division Association. God bless America.

Thank you all so very much. ■

# YOUR HERITAGE LEAGUE

BY BRIAN H. MAHONEY  
Heritage League President

Those of you who read this space in the previous *Journal* knew that the unusual late scheduling of the recent 2ADA convention occurred well after we had to lock in our own annual meeting plans. In the event, we were very nicely accommodated by the 8th Air Force Historical Society earlier in Kalamazoo. While there, we elected our slate for two years, under our new set of bylaws, which also codify full voting and serving for our *non*-descendants, and the Honorary Life Mem-

bership class for all of you who served in the 2nd Air Division or any British or American units attached or assigned, in WWII.

Some of you graciously made apologies for us in Grand Rapids. I repeat them here. If not for my recent start in grad school, I would have added a second Michigan trip. I congratulate Dick Butler's committee for also completing a bylaws revision and am delighted to acknowledge the new language which returns the Heritage League to more than a nominal role in stewardship of the 2ADA legacy. We are honored to act as a "perpetuating lever" for contributing counsel, financial and other support of the Second Air Division Memorial Trust and other causes you have supported over the years.

We are happy to report that we have excellent institutional relationships with the Trust Governors, the Friends of the Memorial, the Museum in Savannah, and our siblings in the 8th AFHS. While there are unique and identifying missions and characters to all of these and to the League itself, our forward-looking mission com-

pels us to focus on the many things we all have in common. Our healthy relations in this special "community of commemoration" represent a constant investment, just like lifelong friendships, and happily we find like-minds in each of these organizations.

Our Executive Committee conferred (over the Internet) right after you were in Grand Rapids, and unanimously voted to hold our next general meeting with yours, in Dallas in October of 2008! We look forward to it and will encourage substantial participation by our members, and wish you a large turnout as well. We know to cherish what time we may yet be given to socialize with you as an organization and promise you that we will welcome you as individuals to our conventions when the 2ADA has finally "done a wrap."

I pray this finds you hale and hearty, but failing that I hope you may be comfortable and satisfied to know that a bunch of us "kids" will never forget what you (and your fallen comrades) have done for us and future generations. ■

## KETTERINGHAM HALL DIVISION



Guest Article By JIM REEVES,  
2ADA Group Relations Committee

To all members of the 2ADA:

I wish to share with you the letter which I addressed to President Oak Mackey and members of the Executive Committee prior to the convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan:

Greetings:

I extend to you my best wishes for your meeting prior to convention. I am sorry that I will be unable to attend. My chair will be vacant but I will be there in spirit. I have some knowledge of the important subjects you will be discussing.

As we members of the Second Air Division look over our shoulders for the past sixty-two years (since 1945) we have lots to be proud of for our many accomplishments. I am sure that history will show that no veterans organization has achieved

the success that we have achieved and enjoyed.

Our Memorial Library in Norwich, England, built in memory of our almost seven thousand great young men who made the supreme sacrifice, has been an outstanding tribute of record. The great relationship that has existed between our membership and the people of Norwich and Norfolk County has been outstanding. I have often wondered how many times the Atlantic Ocean has been crossed by members of our association. It has been my pleasure to cross it five times and back on my visits to Norwich.

Not only has our membership given of our time and effort to a most worthy cause but we have also contributed in financial support for a great and worthy cause.

Mr. President, I realize that many articles and books have been written about the success of the Second Air Division of the Eighth Air Force. Now I think it would be equally important to reveal the achievements and the importance of the Second Air Division Association.

Many veteran groups have had associations, but to the best of my knowledge no one organization has the track record of achievements as our own association. I hear very often of veterans organizations that are closing down and contributing their financial balances to some worthy causes. We of the Second Air Division Association are most fortunate to have a

younger generation of heirs to succeed and carry on our legacy... The 2ADA Heritage League. In this connection much tribute should be paid to Bud Chamberlain. The year that I was president of the Association, Bud came up with the idea of the Heritage League and it was accepted by the association.

Our association is rich in history that needs recording. Oak, I want to congratulate you and Maxine on a most successful year.

Now we can look forward to Earl Zimmerman to head our organization. I have known Earl for many years. With his background and knowledge of our association, he will make a great president.

Again, my best wishes for a great convention. My best regards to each one in attendance.

Kindest regards,  
Jim H. Reeves  
Group Relations Committee



In conclusion, I trust 2007 has been a good year for you and your family. May this Christmas Season bring much joy, peace and happiness to you and your family. May our individual and combined prayers bring the war in Iraq to a speedy close.

With the New Year approaching, Edna joins with me in wishing you and your family a great year in 2008!! ■



# 60th Annual Business Meeting of the Second Air Division Association, 8th USAAF September 1, 2007 • Grand Rapids, Michigan

## A. Call to Order:

1. The 60th Annual Business Meeting of the Second Air Division Association, 8th USAAF was called to order by President Oak Mackey at 10:00 am on September 1, 2007 in the Ambassador Ballroom of the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Honorary President Jordan Uttal and Vice President Membership Evelyn Cohen were absent due to illness.

2. Secretary Raymond Strong gave the invocation, and Executive Vice President Earl Zimmerman led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

3. President Mackey welcomed members and guests. He then introduced the British Governors of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust.

4. President Mackey appointed Bud Koorndyk as Parliamentarian.

5. Secretary Strong verified that a quorum was present.

## B. Report of the Delegate Committee (Barney Driscoll, Chairman):

Chairman Driscoll was absent. His report was presented by Fielder Newton. He stated that the 2ADA is a non-profit, non-political organization composed of U.S. Veterans and registered with the Internal Revenue Service under Tax Code Section 501 (c) (19). Its TIN (Tax Identification Number) is 25-1327743. As such, all voting members present are official delegates. The reasonable cost to such attendees is construed to be a charitable contribution and may be deductible by those who itemize deductions on their annual income tax returns. The 2ADA cannot provide advice on these matters. Members are advised to seek their own professional advice as may be needed. Fielder Newton moved and Richard Butler seconded that attending members of record be declared official delegates with a list to be published in the 2ADA Journal. Motion carried.

## C. Report of the Secretary (Raymond E. Strong):

Secretary Strong gave a general report on his activities as 2ADA Secretary. The minutes of the previous business meeting in Falls Church, Virginia were not read as they were printed in the Winter 2007 issue of the Journal. Secretary Strong also reported on recent action taken by the Executive Committee regarding the importance of the Journal. The Journal will continue to be published four times per year without a change in dues. However, the Dues Statement will include an optional check-off box for an additional amount of \$5.00 or more.

## D1. Report of the Treasurer (Elwood W. Nothstein):

Treasurer Nothstein summarized the financial status of the 2ADA as of June 30, 2007:

Beginning Balance, July 1, 2006:	\$92,805.69
Receipts:	\$77,707.62
Disbursements:	\$63,174.75
General Fund Balance, June 30, 2007:	\$107,338.56

## D2. Report of the Audit Committee (Elwood W. Nothstein, Treasurer):

Treasurer Nothstein reported that an audit was performed on July 10, 2007 by three professional accounting members of the 2ADA: Cortland Brovitz (466th BG), Vincent Palmer (466th BG), and Roy Farnsworth (445th BG).

## E. Report of the Vice President Membership (Evelyn Cohen):

Vice President Membership Cohen was absent due to illness. Her report was presented by President Oak Mackey. We presently have 2,886 Regular Members, 386 Associate Members and 72 Subscribing Members for a total of 3,344 members, of which 416 are Life Members. A total of only 120 people are attending this convention, one of the smallest in many years.

## F. Report of the Journal Editor (Ray Pytel):

Journal Editor Ray Pytel reported that the Journal is in good shape.

## G. Report of the Memorial Trust Board of Governors (Matthew Martin, Chairman):

Chairman Martin reported that Trust Librarian Derek Hills is retiring in January 2008 after 12 years of service. A series of lectures on post-war Anglo-American relations will be held this November. The year 2008 will mark the 50th anniversary of the completion of the American Chapel in St. Paul's Cathedral in London. This chapel was a gift from the British people to the people of America in gratitude and memory of the 28,000 Americans who lost their lives fighting the Nazis while based in Britain during WWII. The Annual General Meeting of the Memorial Trust Board of Governors will be held November 12, 2007 in Norwich. The main endowment fund now totals \$3,387,222 and the book endowment fund totals \$370,640 for a grand total of \$3,757,862. This represents an increase of \$495,106 over last year.

## H. Report of the President (Oak Mackey):

The duties of the 2ADA Fulbright Oversight Committee have been turned over to the Memorial Trust Board of Governors. The Endowment Funds administered by the Memorial Trust Board of Governors now total \$3,757,862. Monies held by the Fulbright Trust (\$390,844 plus about \$600,000 in Bonds for a total of approximately \$970,000) are being transferred to the Memorial Trust Board of Governors.

## I. Report of the Legendary Liberator Campaign Committee (Walter Mundy, Chairman):

Chairman Mundy reported that the Legendary Liberator Campaign goal of \$125,000 for the Fightin' Sam and improvements to the Second Air Division exhibit at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia has been exceeded. A total of \$127,633 has been received to date. Donation details can be found in the Summer 2007 issue of the Journal. He also gave a detailed status report on the design features and project progress.

## J. Report of the Legacy Plan Review Committee (Walter Mundy, Chairman):

Chairman Mundy presented The Legacy Continuation Plan which the 2ADA Executive Committee reviewed and approved at its annual meeting on August 30, 2007. Chairman Mundy moved that The Legacy Continuation Plan as submitted by the Legacy Plan Review Committee be approved. Richard Butler seconded. Motion carried.

## K. Report of the Bylaws Review Committee (Richard Butler, Chairman):

Chairman Butler presented the revised Bylaws which the 2ADA Executive Committee reviewed and approved at its annual meeting on August 30, 2007. Chairman Butler moved that the amendments to the Bylaws as submitted by the Bylaws Review Committee be approved. Charles Walker seconded. Motion carried.

## L. Report of the Convention Committee (Evelyn Cohen, Chairman):

Vice President Cohen was absent due to illness. Her report was given by President Mackey. Mackey stated that the next convention would be in Dallas, Texas in early June 2008. *(At its meeting the next day, the Executive Committee changed the convention date to October 2008).*

## M. New Business:

No new business was presented.

*(continued on next page)*

# HETHEL HIGHLIGHTS

BY JOHN M. RHOADS



By the time you read this, the 2ADA convention will be history and I will have completed my year as your group vice president, passing the torch to another. I am honored to have served you as your vice president. Regrettably, my circumstances precluded me from attending the convention.

The 389th Bombardment Group Museum in the old Hethel chapel is coming along under the capable hands of our British friends. The old organ has been restored and placed in the museum. Hopefully, Fred Squires and his group will have been at the convention and given you a more up-to-date account. We need to help our British friends with funds to help defray the expense. Any amount will help. Please send contributions to Allan P. Hallett, Treasurer, 249 Highland Ave., Leominster, MA 01453. Designate your contribution for the Hethel Museum.

If you have never done so, please start now and put to paper or tape your experiences during the war in Great Britain. Otherwise, valuable experiences will be lost to our following generations. Some of you have recorded your experiences and sent them to Kelsey McMillan, 389th Bomb Group Historian. My own experiences in Great Britain were recorded years ago. Of the 96 single-spaced pages of my *Memories of World War II*, 48 pages cover from the date our 389th ground personnel boarded *HMS Queen Elizabeth* in New York harbor on June 30, 1945 to our departure from Hethel for Southampton on May 28, 1945 to return to the USA. At least some of us boarded the *SS Bienville*, a U.S. liberty ship manned by U.S. Merchant Marines. ■

## 60th ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING (continued from page 9)

### N. Report of the Nominating Committee (E. Bud Koorndyk, Chairman):

Chairman Koorndyk presented the following slate of officers for the 2007-2008 year:

1. President: Earl Zimmerman (389th BG)
2. Executive Vice President: John L. Lee (93rd BG)
3. Vice President Membership: Evelyn Cohen (HQ)
4. Treasurer: Elwood W. "Bill" Nothstein (466th BG)
5. Secretary: Raymond E. Strong (HQ)
6. Journal Editor: Ray Pytel (445th BG)

There being no nominations from the floor, Charles Walker moved to accept the slate of officers as presented by the Nominating Committee. King Schultz seconded. Motion carried. The entire slate of officers listed above was unanimously elected to their respective positions.

The Nominating Committee also recommended that Brian Mahoney, President of the Heritage League, or his successor, be appointed as Official Observer to the 2ADA Executive Committee. William Berry moved to accept the Nominating Committee's recommendation. Charles Walker seconded. Motion carried.

### O. Adjournment:

President Mackey declared the meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

RICHARD C. ROBERT

Secretary Pro-Tem for Raymond Strong  
Second Air Division Association, 8th USAF

## Attendees at the 60th Annual Convention of the 2nd Air Division Association August 30 – September 3, 2007 • Grand Rapids, Michigan

Berry, William & Betty  
Borland, David  
Bowen, Doc  
Brumby, Birto & Frances Ann  
Butler, Richard, Ardith & Kay Drake  
Cohen, Evelyn & Lillian  
Dewey, Marilyn & Linda Alice  
DiMola, Elizabeth  
Dyke, James & Ingrid Tollius  
Dyson, Jack & Doris  
Dzenowagis, Joe & Helen & Victor & Linda, Joe  
Junior, & Ed & Joan Pepke  
Elfstrom, June, Lance & Barbara  
Fraser, Donald  
Gabrus, Charles  
Geppelt, Elmo & Joanna  
Gooch, Edward, Annabelle & Oliver & Michelle  
Gregory, Geoff & Terry  
Hallett, Alan & Jean  
Harriman, Russ  
Helmer, Bruce  
Howell, Leonard & Myrtis  
Kerr, Perry, Joyce, Jay & Pam Kerr Janwich  
Krogmann, Dorothy  
Lamar, John & Pat  
Lee, John & Betty

Leeton, Marjorie  
Lemons, J.R. & Jean  
Luhmann, Clarence & Winnefred  
Mackey, Oak & Maxine  
McMillan, Kelsey  
McNary, Lawrence  
Mohr, Stan & JoAnn  
Morgan, John & Mary Detweiler  
Mundy, Walter  
Neatrou, Russell & Nona  
Newton, Fielder & Marge  
Nothstein, Bill & Lucille  
Paller, John  
Patterson, Joan  
Pontillo, Mel & Mary  
Prang, Lloyd & Irene  
Pulse, Richard & Betty  
Pytel, Ray  
Querbach, Albert & Dorothy & John Eckert  
Robert, Richard & Gwen Bruton  
Rolloff, Ed & Sue & Randy  
Schultz, King & Paula  
Shower, Charlotte  
Sills, Bill & Steve  
Storms, Eleanor  
Strong, Ray & Ruth & Judy Honey

Suckow, Bob & Shirley Ann  
Veynar, Milt  
Walker, Chuck & Andrew Horlock  
Wegge, Fred & William  
Woinowsk, Russell  
Zimmerman, Earl  
Zobac, Ed & Rosalie  
Zybort, Stan & Helena

### Additions

Anderson, Clarence & Doris  
Huisman, Lewis & Lois  
Koorndyk, Bud & June, Pat, Bob & Nancy, Jack & Merel DeGraaf, Greg & Marsha Peters

### Our British Friends

Palmer, Al & Sue  
Ramm, Pat & Agnes  
Squires, Fred  
Waterfield, Kevin

### Board of Governors

Gurney, David  
Hastings, David & Jean  
Hawker, Andrew & Andrea  
Martin, Matthew



# A Great Stamp of Approval for Jimmy

BY STARR SMITH

**S**tarr Smith, author and international journalist, was the keynote speaker recently in Hollywood at the James M. Stewart Commemorative Stamp Ceremony in Stewart's honor at the Universal-NBC Studio, sponsored by the U.S. Postal Service. Joining Smith at the ceremony were Stewart's twin daughters, Judy and Kelly, and stepson Michael McLean. Smith is the author of the current book *Jimmy Stewart, Bomber Pilot* about Stewart's combat career in World War II. Stewart died in 1997. More than 300 of his Hollywood friends, co-workers and family attended the ceremony. Daughter Kelly said, "Our family is so honored by this stamp. I'm sure my father would be humbled as well. He received many awards throughout his life and I'm sure he would view this as one of the most cherished." Smith, a combat intelligence officer with the 8th Air Force, served with Stewart in England and said in his talk: "Jimmy Stewart was famous in another world and volunteered for wartime duty directly from civilian life. He was a man who trained hard and served well — a man who from the beginning wanted desperately to join the hunt in the cause of freedom. He was a man who led and inspired his fellow airmen in battle, who won the admira-



Joining Starr Smith (second from right) at the commemorative stamp ceremony were Stewart's daughters, Judy and Kelly, and his stepson Michael McLean.

tion and respect of his superiors, and, in the end, was like many others — a good man who fought the good fight." U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors Vice Chairman Alan C. Kessler, who dedicated

the Stewart stamp, said, "Jimmy Stewart knew how to touch people. Now is the time for our nation to show how we feel about him. We have done so with this stamp to honor him." ■

## His Bravery Was No Act

BY RANDOLPH E. SCHMID • ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Lots of actors play war heroes on the screen. James Stewart was one in real life.

A decorated World War II bomber pilot who returned from battle to star in *It's a Wonderful Life*, Stewart has been commemorated on a 41-cent postage stamp that was recently released.

Stewart served in the 445th BG, 453rd BG and 2nd Combat Wing of the 8th Air Force. He flew twenty bombing missions over Germany, including one over Berlin, after wangling combat duty when commanders would have preferred to use a movie star for morale-building work at home.

As a squadron commander, Stewart flew many dangerous missions when he could have sent others instead, recalled Robbie Robinson, a sergeant who was an engineer-gunner in Stewart's B-24 squadron.

But while Stewart rose to colonel during the war and later retired as a brigadier general in the reserves, he didn't stand on ceremony.

Robinson, of Collierville, Tennessee, re-

called one time when a creative tail gunner managed to "liberate" a keg of beer from the officers club.

That evening, Stewart wandered into a hut where some men were resting, picked up a cup, walked over to the "hidden" keg, poured himself a beer and sat back and drank it slowly, relaxing in a chair.

"We were shaking in our boots," Robinson said.

But Stewart merely got up, wiped out the cup, asked the men to keep an eye out for a missing keg of beer, and left.

Another time, Robinson recalled in a telephone interview, his plane landed behind another that was stuck on the end of the runway, nearly clipping its tail.

After watching this, Stewart rubbed his chin and commented: "Ye gods, sergeant, somebody's going to get hurt in one of these things."

"Once in your lifetime someone crosses your path that you can never forget, and that was Jimmy Stewart," Robinson concluded.

Dedicated in ceremonies at Universal Studios, Hollywood, California, this was the 13th stamp in the "Legends of Hollywood" series. A separate ceremony was held at the Jimmy Stewart Museum in Indiana, Pennsylvania, the actor's hometown.

"It's our privilege to pay tribute to James Stewart, a fantastic actor, a great gentleman, a brave soldier, and an inspirational human being who truly led a wonderful life," Alan C. Kessler, vice chairman of the postal governing board, said in a statement.

Other highlights from Stewart's career include the movies *Rear Window*, *Vertigo*, and *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, all directed by Alfred Hitchcock.

Stewart played a country lawyer in *Anatomy of a Murder* and played a lawyer again in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, a western.

He won an Oscar for best actor in *The Philadelphia Story* in 1940.

Stewart died at age 89 on July 2, 1997. ■



# 458th BG member donates \$100,000 to 2nd Air Division Memorial Library

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH BG)

**E**.W. "Bill" Nothstein, 2ADA Treasurer, has just informed me that he received a \$100,000 donation for the 2AD Memorial Library from 458th Bomb Group member **Bernard J. Newmark**. Bernie has served the 2ADA on several audit committees for the past several years.

Asked about his WWII history and personal background as well as how he came to the decision to donate the \$100,000, he related the following story:

So, you want to know how I got into flying, made enough money to give some away and still be old enough to have some left and to leave. I am 90 now.

Remember the old slogan, "The right way, the wrong way, and the Army way"? That's me: My first experience was when Lindbergh came to Rochester, NY. I was about 8 or 9. I sneaked under the rope onto the grass of Rochester Airport, shook hands with Lindbergh, and was promptly hauled off by a big Irish cop.

When I was 17 I took my first flying lesson in an "airknocker" with a wheel axle behind my knees. Some years later I got a full private ticket (#7897) under the Roosevelt program "CMTC."

Later I left Rochester and General Motors (Delco) and took a job with American Tobacco in Lake George, NY, where I used my ticket to get flying time in a Cub whenever I could on weekends. There I met a guy named Rodger Edgerton who came over from Burlington, VT. We split the \$3 per hour cost, and took pictures or whatever for a buck. I gave him a few lessons and let it go at that . . . Later, when I got to Primary in the AF at Benning, who would you guess was my civilian instructor? Right, Rodger got \$275 a month while I got \$75. (He said, "You don't say anything, I won't.")

Skipping along through basic and advanced, I was supposed to come out as a P-40 fighter pilot, but then along came Ploesti and Uncle Sam decided "You, you, you, and you just volunteered to be bomber copilots," and they sent us off to Boise with the verbal promise of becoming first pilots as soon as we learned the ropes and were shipped overseas. It never happened, although my records (I supposed) showed some "Command" time. In any case, this was not how I managed to set aside enough for a memorial to the guys that didn't make it.

I first flew the 25, which was upped to 30, which was upped to 35 and almost caused a revolution. Finally, when they asked me if I wanted another tour the week after the D-Day invasion, the answer was simple: "I came over with nine other guys, we were all alive and whole, and if they voted another tour (100%) I would too." You know the odds!!! I took my dog and boarded a returning ship and left for home . . . this was still before the Battle of the Bulge.

Enough of this: Now how did I make a living, besides being a director of maintenance and a test pilot at Westover Field and some training of pilots at Chanute?

At that time, the military in its fashion had the most archaic method of making ID cards that could have pre-dated the Revolution. They used a Carver lab press to burn, split, bust, and otherwise deface an ID card . . . so much so that as an industrial engineer I had to laugh. (A B-24 they could build with Ford's help, but a plastic ID was a joke.)

In 1952 I remembered that, and when it came my turn, I found a man in Rochester who had been making them on a contract until it was canceled (if he ever produced anything). Uncle paid him off and told him to look for a suitable junk yard. He was trying to salvage something when I got it and turned it into a turntable production machine.

This became the basic ID card, credit card, or whatever as you know it today. Only the plastic field and photo production have changed, where it can be done by anybody with a piece of equipment that weighs less than ten pounds.

Now comes the other side of the story. With all the energy and steam we had when we came out of the service, there weren't enough places to burn it off. Downhill skiing had just been more or less invented. Before then, skiing was more or less for transportation and necessity. Nobody in the States knew how to turn with the darn things, what sizes to use, or what clothing and boots to wear. Camp Carson trained the Mountain Division in a deserted mining town called Aspen, and there was a group of sadists in the college towns of New England that managed, like Lake Placid, to become a "winter wonderland." But they knew little or nothing about controls. Those who

could afford it went to Europe where they did some experimenting.

The places to ski way back in the '60s had no jets, few good roads, no super-highways, no 4-wheel drives, no artificial snow — and most important of all, no instructors!

I was among the happy, ignorant ones when I began planning my business trips with my laminating machine and supplies so that I would be in snow country on weekends. (I almost went into the ski shop and clothing business.) What I did learn was that there was no way for the skier to find out where the snow was, how to get there, where to stay, or any of the many other essential details. I had an answering service for my business which I allowed my fellow sadists to use for an update before every weekend.

As downhill skiing grew, by leaps and bounds, the need for information became critical. Numerous lifts were being put up and big money was being invested. With 30 and 45 minute lift lines becoming common, nerves got short, and the tourist industry almost burst with airlines all over the place. (To give you an idea, the first time I went to Aspen it cost you a buck a night and took almost thirty hours to get there. Today you couldn't rent a phone booth for \$100 a day. That's Hollywood in the Hills.)

Now to get down to earth. I made arrangements with a disc jockey to give a ski conditions report, which I eventually got to do myself with commercial sponsors such as United, Kodak, and others for reasonable amounts of money, and I was invited to most of the new resorts as they opened. I also was a broadcaster at the Lake Placid Olympics in 1980 (which I would have paid them for). That was the last time an Olympics lost money.

This went on for almost thirty years for "Bernie and the Moose" (my chihuahua dog). Then, about that time the big ski areas got bigger and decided they didn't like the ski condition definitions and made up terms such as "groomed granular" for ice. I then stopped broadcasting and started writing for a group of newspapers, which I continued until about twenty years ago.

Now you know how I got enough "do-re-mi" to remember respectfully the guys who didn't make it! ■

# 458th BOMB GROUP

HORSHAM ST. FAITH



## The Story Behind the Emblem of the 458th Bomb Group

Guest article by **BERNIE NEWMARK** (Major USAF Ret.)

I asked Walt Disney and the Disney Studio for “an animated B-24.” They asked where I was headed. I said I didn’t know — which was all I could say.

The “I don’t know” became the cloud in the form of a question mark.

The nose guns became the snort of the bull.

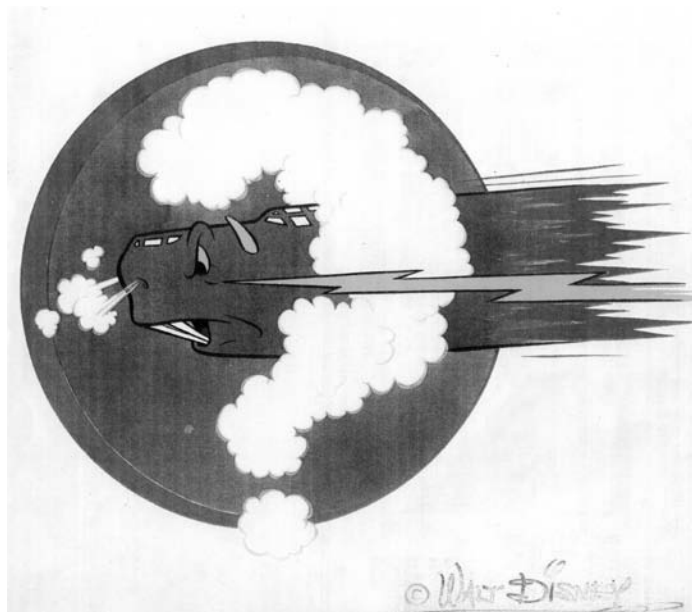
The nose turret became the nose of the bull.

The bombardier’s window became the teeth of the bull.

The navigator’s window became the eye of the bull.

The pitot tube became the horn of the bull.

The wing became the lightning streak.



To get patches made, I had to order 200 from a London shop. After giving the crew what they wanted, I gave the rest to the operations officer to sell to anyone who wanted one. It then became the emblem of the 458th Bomb Group of the Second Air Division.

I have the deed of ownership and the right to reproduce it on a non-profit basis. I own the original. ■



446TH BOMB GROUP

## FLIXTON - BUNGAY UPDATE

BY CARL ALBRIGHT

*In case you were wondering, here's what the official Air Force history book, Air Force Combat Units of WWII, says about the 446th:*

Constituted as 446th Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 20 March 1943. *Activated* on 1 April 1943. Trained for overseas duty with B-24s. Moved to England, October–November 1943, and assigned to Eighth AF. Operated chiefly against strategic objectives on the Continent from December 1943 until April 1945. Targets included U-boat installations at Kiel, the port at Bremen, a chemical plant at Ludwigshafen, ball-bearing works at Berlin, aero-engine plants at Rostock, aircraft factories at Munich, marshalling yards at Coblenz, motor works at Ulm, and oil refineries at Hamburg. Besides strategic missions, the group often carried out support and interdiction operations. Supported the Normandy invasion in June 1944 by attacking strong points, bridges, airfields, transportation, and other targets in France. Aided ground forces at Caen and St. Lo during July by hitting bridges, gun batteries, and enemy troops. Dropped supplies to Allied troops near Nijmegen during the airborne attack on Holland in September. Bombed marshalling yards, bridges, and road junctions during the Battle of the Bulge, December 1944 – January 1945. Dropped supplies to airborne and ground troops near Wesel during the Allied assault

across the Rhine in March 1945. Flew last combat mission on 25 April, attacking a bridge near Salzburg. Returned to the U.S. June–July. *Inactivated* on 28 August 1945.

*Redesignated* 446th Bombardment Group (Very Heavy). Allotted to the reserve. *Activated* on 26 March 1948. *Redesignated* 446th Bombardment Group (Heavy) in June 1949. Ordered to active duty on 1 May 1951. Assigned to Strategic Air Command. *Inactivated* on 25 June 1951.

*Redesignated* 446th Troop Carrier Group (Medium). Allotted to the reserve. *Activated* on 25 May 1955.

### SQUADRONS

*704th*: 1943–1945; 1948–1951; 1955–. *705th*: 1943–1945; 1948–1951; 1955–. *706th*: 1943–1945; 1948–1949; 1955–. *707th*: 1943–1945; 1948–1949.

### STATIONS

Davis-Monthan Field, Arizona, 1 April 1943; Lowry Field, Colorado, c. 8 June – October 1943; Flixton, England, c. 4 November 1943 – c. July 1945; Sioux Falls AAFld, South Dakota, c. July – 28 August 1945; Carswell AFB, Texas, 26 March 1948 – 25 June 1951; Ellington AFB, Texas, 25 May 1955 –.

### COMMANDERS

Lt. Col. Arthur Y. Snell, 25 April 1943; Col. Jacob J. Brogger, 28 September 1943; Col. Troy W. Crawford, 23 September 1944; Lt. Col. William A. Schmidt, 4 April 1945 – Unkn. Unkn, 1 May – 25 June 1951.

### CAMPAIGNS

Air Offensive, Europe; Normandy; Northern France; Rhineland; Ardennes-Alsace; Central Europe. ■





BY WALTER MUNDY

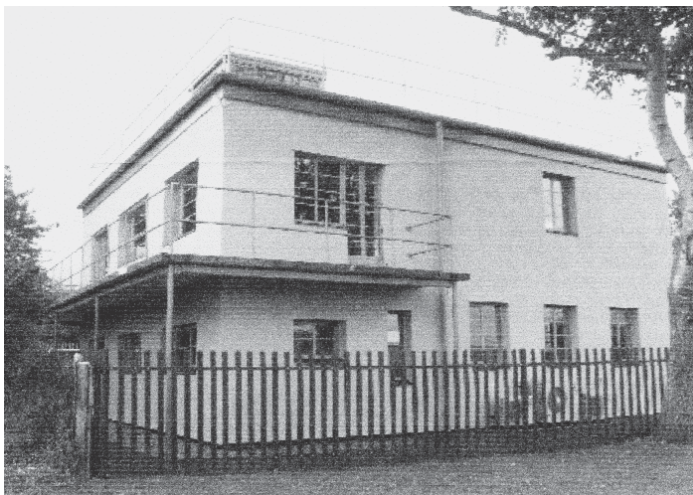
The 467th Bomb Group (H) reunion was held at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Dayton, Ohio, October 4-8, 2007. A number of events including a visit to the U.S. Air Force Museum at Wright Patterson Air Force Base were enjoyed.

The 467th membership, like the other groups of the Mighty Eighth Air Force, is experiencing many losses as age and infirmities take their toll. We are approaching the time when too many veterans will be unable to travel and annual reunions will be extended to two or more years between and held in conjunction with the Heritage League and at the site of the Second Air Division exhibit. Hopefully, those young and fit guys like me will continue to come together for camaraderie and to honor those who have gone on where eagles dwell.

The 467th BG membership is appreciative of the British Friends of the 467th for their efforts in restoring the control tower at Rackheath. Special thanks to Perry Watts and David Hastings and the owner of the property for their work and expense in preserving this historical facility. Here is a timely message from David:

#### A GREAT DAY FOR THE 467TH BOMB GROUP AND RACKHEATH

Monday, October 1st, 2007 was a great day for the 467th Bomb Group and the village of Rackheath when the restored control tower on the airfield was opened by Charlotte Shower. For nearly thirty years the village has tried to answer the original call made by Colonel Shower at a dinner in the Maids Head Hotel in Norwich when he said, "Get my tower restored." Luckily for us, a well known local company, Tilia Properties Limited, who are part of the Aquafibre Group who have been based on the airfield since the very beginning of the industrial estate, bought the entire site and realized the history of the control tower. They have restored the building to its original wartime look on the outside, while converting the inside rooms to luxury office accommodations. Even the modern double-glazed windows have been produced to their wartime shape and the Watch Office has been built on the roof, with the balcony restored and strengthened. We

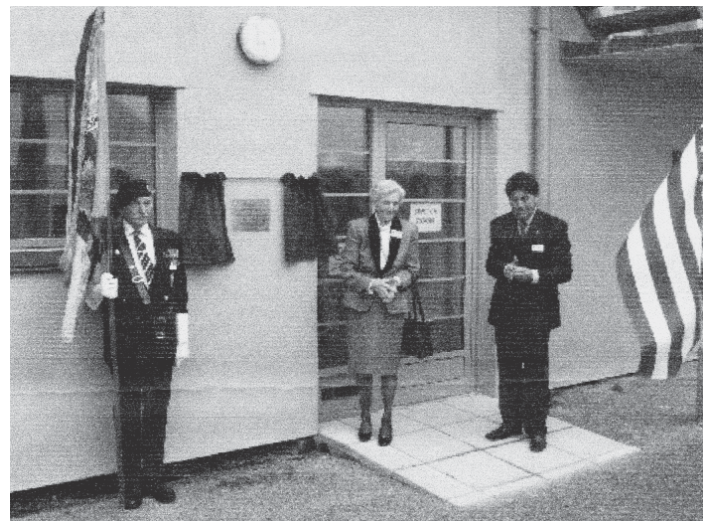


The restored control tower in all its glory.

can never thank Tilia Properties enough for all their hard work and the large amount of money that they have spent on restoring all the wartime details.

The day was fine, and just before 12:00 noon the guests assembled under a marquee just outside the tower to be greeted by Martin Broom, the chairman of the parent company, Aquafibre Limited. Then Nick Hovey, the managing director of Tilia Properties, took over and explained why they were so keen to restore the history of the building before he then handed over to Charlotte Shower to formally unveil the plaque and open the tower.

We were all deeply touched by her words as well as the fact that she had flown all the way from Los Angeles to be with us on this unique occasion in the history of the 467th and the airfield. Then Air Marshal Sir John Kemball, who was representing the Royal Air Force, gave a moving address describing how he had first met the Eighth Air Force as a youngster and then his vital part in the flight of "Diamond Lil" across the Atlantic in



Charlotte Shower just after unveiling the plaque. Nick Hovey is on her left.

1992. He was followed by Colonel Dwight Dorau of the USAF 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall, which is the only wing in the United States Air Force of today still allowed to carry their wartime tail colours on their KC135 tankers. He reminded us of how important are the links of friendship that were first started by the 2nd Air Division USAAF in the forties. Finally it was the turn of Trust Governor David Hastings on behalf of the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF in Norwich, the 467th Bomb Group Association in the USA and the village of Rackheath, to thank Tilia Properties for their outstanding restoration work, kindness and friendship. He also presented Jill Hollis-Graves of Tilia Properties with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of all her hard work since the project began and especially all her planning of the opening day.

The guests were then invited to tour the tower and enjoy drinks and a buffet lunch in the old Watch Office on the first floor, and it was a joy to hear the building echoing to happy voices and people remembering old times. The local Eastern Daily Press was there (great picture of Charlotte in the paper today) as was the BBC Television who filmed a whole range of interesting interviews. Among the guests were many supporters of the 467th, including June Trafford; Air Vice Marshal John Howe and his wife Annabelle; Philip Basey who provided a Standard Bearer; Jim Campbell; Mr. Bagshaw, the original owner of the tower; Squadron Leader and Mrs. Williams; Mr. Metcalfe and his daughter;

(continued on page 16)





BY CLARENCE LUHMANN

Another year has gone by and we have just returned from the 2nd Air Division Association convention that was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We had a very good turnout of the 445th. The largest group there. We had a hospitality room that was well-attended. People sat around and did a lot of reminiscing.

The business meeting ran smoothly and was over in record time. It would be nice to have the Heritage League meeting with us, as some day they may take over our duties.

After the meeting, we left the hotel and went north to the Mackinac Bridge. A learning experience, as they have a bridge walk every Labor Day weekend so we had a 1½ hour wait to cross the bridge. This was the fiftieth anniversary of the bridge, so there were more walkers than usual.

In northern Michigan the trees were starting to turn. It made for a very beautiful trip.

This being the last *Journal* of this year, Winnefred and I wish you Season's Greetings and best wishes for the coming year.

If anyone has anything they would like to see printed in the *Journal*, please send it to me or to Ray Pytel. Here is a contribution from **George H. Kelling**:

#### THE CHURCH STILL DOMINATES THE RUNWAY

My wife and I were in England in April. Since I have spent some time researching an ill-fated mission which took off from Tibenham in 1944, we decided to visit the base and village. Many members of the 445th have returned to Tibenham since the war, but I thought that some notes on our 2007 visit may be of interest. Two Belgian researchers working on the same project, Jurgen Verstaen and Pascal Carrette, were able to join us. We were there on April 22, 2007, the sixty-third anniversary of the last takeoff of the aircraft we are researching.

Tibenham village would be familiar to



wartime airmen. As then, it is a small farm village built along one street on the flat-as-a-pancake Norfolk plain. The village has escaped urban sprawl, and it retains its rural character. The Greyhound Pub, which stood during the war, is still there and still in business, most of its customers apparently locals. We had lunch (and a couple of pints) there, and it seems to be about as it was in 1944. A photo display of Jimmy Stewart's service at Tibenham stands on one wall, and some empty .50 cartridges stand on the mantle. It is a nice country pub, and visitors to the base should try to drop by. The food and beer are excellent, and the proprietor is well

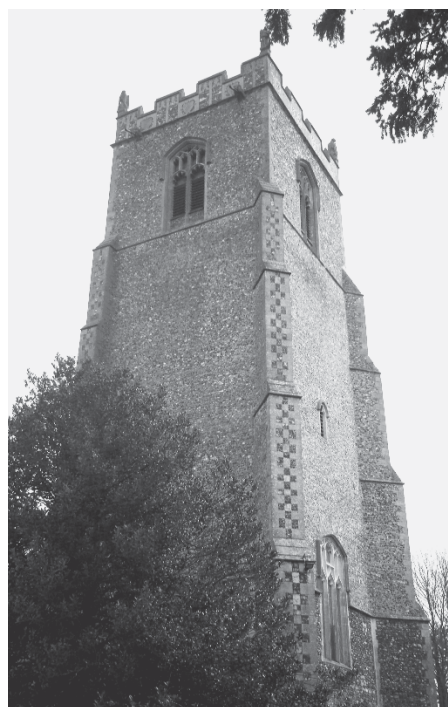


aware of the pub's history.

Down the street from the pub and on a slight rise is the centuries-old All Saints' Church, known to many World War II airmen as "the church at the end of the runway." Church and village date back to before the Norman Conquest, steeped in history. A war memorial in the churchyard carries the names of two dozen of the boys from the small town who were killed in the two world wars. The inscription, "These were our children," reminds us that Base 124 was not Tibenham's only wartime experience.

In the church, the Americans are well remembered. Prominent in the entry way is a brass plaque commemorating the 445th, flanked by red, white, and blue bunting. The church is immense, and shows the piety of our ancestors. The entire village could fit in the building with room to spare. Scattered among the pews

(continued on next page)





#### 445TH BOMB GROUP (continued)

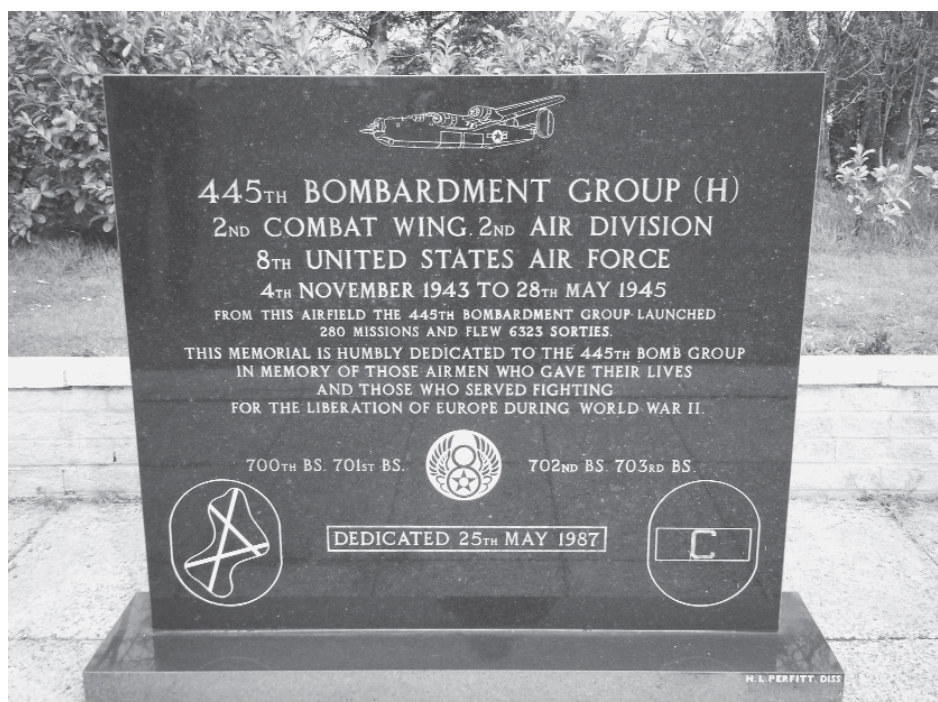
are about fifteen cushions woven with motifs relating to the Liberators. Some have images of a B-24, others have wings or 8th Air Force insignia, and still others commemorate individual flyers or aircraft. The B-24 "Bunny" is commemorated on two cushions.

The former base is visible from the church hill. Luckily the Belgians had vehicles, and we made the journey of a mile or so to the base without difficulty. Station 124 is now the home of the Norfolk Gliding Club, and their secretary, Graham Ashworth, made us welcome. Although none of the original buildings remain, the runways are intact and were quite busy with gliding on the Sunday we visited. The gliding club is quite aware of the history of their real estate, and a granite monument stands, flanked by the Union Jack and Old Glory, in front of the main runway.

The club house contains more reminders of those days sixty-plus years before. On the walls are photos of the roof of the operations building, with staff waiting for the return of the bombers. Other frames contain a map of the former base and representations of the patches of the 445th's squadrons. We were quickly shown fat notebooks, organized by squadron, full of photos, histories, and other memories of the war.

Tibbenham village has gone back to peacetime activity, and the base is busy with its new role as a sport-glider enterprise. For all that, we were struck with how much the events of six decades ago are commemorated. I suspect that the experiences of the Yanks in 1942-1945 are better remembered in Tibbenham than in America.

I must end this article on a sad note; two folded wings. James Cockriel of Platte City, Missouri, and John Bryant of Fort Worth, Texas died this spring. Both were on the Liberator I'm researching, from the 700th Squadron, 445th Bomb Group. ■



#### POOP FROM GROUP 467 (continued from page 14)

Roger Hastings; Steve Stavridis, chairman of the Rackheath Parish Council; and David Teager of Broadland District Council to name but a few, as well as all the Tilia Properties Directors and team.

The 2nd Air Division Association 2001 convention standards were on show and the Stars and Stripes proudly flew from the new mast and weather vane which incorporates a B-24 Liberator painted as "Witchcraft," another proof of the detail

that has been built in by Tilia. Everyone was deeply impressed by the high standard of restoration including the Watch Office on the roof and the impressive quality of the furnishings, doors and carpets on the inside. All the rooms had been labeled with their wartime function and many photographs were on display. The only shock of the day came when the guests learned that the picture of "Witchcraft," specially painted by Mike Bailey for the main reception room, was now going to Savannah and not the tower

at Rackheath. In the end, everyone was sad to leave, but thanks to Tilia Properties and especially Jill Hollis-Graves it was a truly superb occasion that will always be remembered.

With the control tower, the marker, the Private Miney plaque, the original bronze plaque and seat under the village sign, the new Coffey Crew Gates at the church, and the many 467th road names including Albert Shower Road, Mahoney Green and Witchcraft Way, the 467th Bomb Group will never be forgotten. ■

# "Drama Over Cologne" Part 2

BY SCOTT NELSON (458TH BG)

While doing the story about Ernie Sands ("Drama Over Cologne," Vol. 46, No. 3, Summer 2007 *Journal*) and him being shot down over Germany, I was able to contact MC Miller and get his side of the story.

MC Miller (Millard C. Miller) was chosen to be pilotage navigator with the Klusmeyer crew on October 14, 1944. Target was the marshalling yards at Cologne. MC was the second navigator because the Klusmeyer plane was flying deputy lead and needed another navigator. As it turned out, the lead plane had to be turned back due to mechanical difficulty, so the Klusmeyer plane had to take the lead and Ernie Sands reluctantly became lead bombardier.

As the Klusmeyer plane left the target after bombs away, it was hit by several bursts of flak, the first shattering the nose turret in which MC was sitting. MC was stunned and noticed a lot of blood coming from a wound on the right side of his face and he could barely see. Someone grabbed him under the armpits and pulled him from the turret, and the next thing he remembered was the bombardier (Sands) giving him first aid. MC remembered being dragged back through the bomb bay and remembered seeing the bomb bay doors still partly open (they never got completely closed when they were hit but were not open far enough to bail out through). MC remembered being pulled back to the camera hatch, then being pushed out, and then a terrific jerk! MC doesn't remember much about his ride down (he probably passed out). The next thing MC remembered is being on the ground with one of the other crew members next to him. As luck would have it, the other crew member was Staff Sergeant Joseph G. Pohler. Pohler was a German-born American and was fluent in Deutsche. Sands had sent him out right behind MC in the hope that Pohler could quickly get medical attention for MC. Well, it worked — Pohler called to the German civilians in the area and quickly got him the medical attention he needed. The aid kit that Sands had stuck in MC's jacket was used for his immediate care. Pohler even passed himself off as an officer, thus this also helped get MC quick attention. The Germans respected rank, even from the enemy!! The initial capture report from the German records lists Pohler as an officer! The Luftwaffe medical service took responsibility for MC's care and



"DRAMA OVER COLOGNE," 14 October 1944

he ended up in a Luftwaffe hospital in Frankfurt.

MC was in rough shape with his injuries and his eyeball out of its socket. His eye was scheduled to be removed, but a Luftwaffe surgeon with the rank of Lt. Colonel examined MC and thought he could save the eye.

The doctor sewed MC's eye back in the socket and bandaged him up. After a time the bandages were taken off but MC could not see out of his injured eye. The doctor said "let's try something" and they gave MC treatments of short frequency radio waves directed at his eye. After several days of this treatment, MC's eyesight started coming back and he regained it in full.

Miller remembered the doctor was from Hess and his last name was the Germanized form of Miller. He said he and the doctor could have been distant cousins because Miller's family was from Hess, a state outside Munich.

After his recovery at the Frankfurt hospital, MC was sent to Stalag Luft 3 to spend the rest of the war as a POW.

Another interesting item about the Klusmeyer crew: The waist gunner on this crew was Jewish and was named Raymond Silverstein. To protect himself in case of being shot down and captured, Silverstein changed his name to Sills to throw off the Germans. Raymond's brother belonged to the 82nd Airborne and participated in Operation Market Garden

and was wounded at Nijmegen, Holland. He had been sent to a hospital in England. Sills asked the squadron commander if he could stand down on the Cologne mission in order to visit his wounded brother. The Klusmeyer plane flew without one waist gunner that day and the act of visiting his brother saved Sills from being shot down over Germany. The fact that Sills changed his name did not guarantee that the Germans would not have found him out. Visiting his brother could well have saved his life!

*SOURCES: Personal interview with Ernest Sands, personal phone interview with Millard C. Miller and Robert Ferrell, article from the Daily Post-Athenian (October 23-25, 1998). Also, many thanks to Darin Scorza, 458th BG Historian and Website Manager: [www.458bg.com](http://www.458bg.com).*



I have prints for sale of "Drama over Cologne." They are limited edition lithographs (up to 350). I also have artist proofs (up to 50). Regular numbered prints go for \$40. Artist proofs include an original sketch in the lower margin and go for \$60.

Prints measure 27" x 21" (actual image size is 23" x 15.5") and are signed by the 458th lead bombardier, Ernest Sands.

**SCOTT NELSON**  
6705 CR 82, Solen, ND 58570  
Phone 701-597-3525  
[www.scottnelsonart.com](http://www.scottnelsonart.com)



## ATTLEBRIDGE TALES



BY JIM LORENZ

### ATTLEBRIDGE BASE

We have discussed with the 466th BGA the future of placing flowers on our base memorial for the next few years. The BGA has a fund set up for this and Mr. Bernard Matthews has assured us that as long as he owns our base, his men will keep the Frans Green area mowed. The Superintendent of our Cambridge American Cemetery has confirmed that the Frans Green area has been deeded to the USA. If all else fails, he will have a wreath placed on Frans Green on Memorial Day for a fee of \$100.

For now our 466th BG will continue to pay for the November 2007 flowers and the BGA will pay for the Memorial Day flowers.

I had an interesting letter from Helen Clinch, saying she is a mature student in the School of History of East Anglia doing a project on Hockering Wood in Norfolk with specific reference to WWII. She is

interested in a field survey on the bomb dumps in the woods. I did find one of our 466th BG armorers, Ralph R. McCready, and gave his address. I'm sure she would appreciate more information. Just give her an e-mail at [helendlinch@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:helendlinch@tiscali.co.uk) with any data or suggestions.

Mary and I were very pleasantly surprised at the recent Kalamazoo meeting of the Heritage League to be inducted to their Inaugural Class of the Heritage League Hall of Fame. As most of you know, Mary and I have been 2ADA liaisons to the League since 1998 and have been a small part of the growth of the League.



Mary and Jim Lorenz, July 21, 2007

### FUTURE MEETINGS

July 2008 – 8th Air Force Historical Society and the 466th BGA at the Mighty 8th AF Museum.

July 2008 – Heritage League at the Mighty 8th AF Museum.

October 2008 – 2ADA convention in Dallas, Texas. ■

## Second Air Division of Southern California Regional Reunion

Saturday, February 23, 2008  
Phoenix Club • Anaheim, CA

For further information  
contact Dick Baynes at  
(949) 854-1741

## Answering Machines

My wife and I can't come to the phone right now, but leave your name and number and we'll get back to you as soon as we're finished.

Hi! I'm not home right now but my answering machine is. You can talk to it. Wait for the beep.

Hello! I'm David's answering machine. What are you and what do you want?

This is not an answering machine. This is a telepathic thought-recording device. After the tone, think about your name, your reason for calling and your phone number and I'll think about returning your call.

Hello! We can't pick up the phone right now, because we're doing something we really enjoy. Jean likes doing it up and down and I like doing it right and left. Leave a message and when we're through brushing our teeth, we'll get back to you.

Hi, this is George. Sorry I can't talk right now, so leave a message and stay by your phone until I call you back.

Please leave a message. However, you have the right to remain silent. If you do, we'll not call you back. But everything you say will be recorded and will be used by us.

Hello! You are talking to a machine. My owners do not need siding, windows, or a hot tub and their carpets are clean. They give to charity through their office and do not need their picture taken. If you're still with me, leave your number and they'll get back to you.

Hi! Now you say something.



NORTH PICKENHAM

## 492nd BOMB GROUP HAPPY WARRIOR HAPPENINGS

BY WILLIS H. "BILL" BEASLEY

The 492nd BG held its group reunion in Colorado Springs, CO, July 10-15, 2007. At the Group business meeting on July 14, I submitted my resignation as the Group Vice President for the 492nd BG reporting to the 2ADA.

After 17 years as the Vice President of the 492nd on the 2ADA Executive Committee and the many chairmanships and committees I have served on, I felt the time had come for me to step down. Unfortunately there appear to be no 492nd members interested or willing to assume this position.

LEWISTOWN, PA — The remains of a 492nd Bomb Group gunner who died after his plane crashed in Germany more than 63 years ago have been laid to rest in his native central Pennsylvania.

Staff Sgt. Robert Flood was a 22-year-old gunner aboard a 492nd BG plane that crashed in Germany in July 1944. He was buried with full military honors in Dry Run.

An archaeologist who specializes in finding crash sites located Flood's plane in 2003, according to Paul Arnett, a historian for [www.492ndbombgroup.com](http://www.492ndbombgroup.com) and the son of a pilot from the 492nd. ■



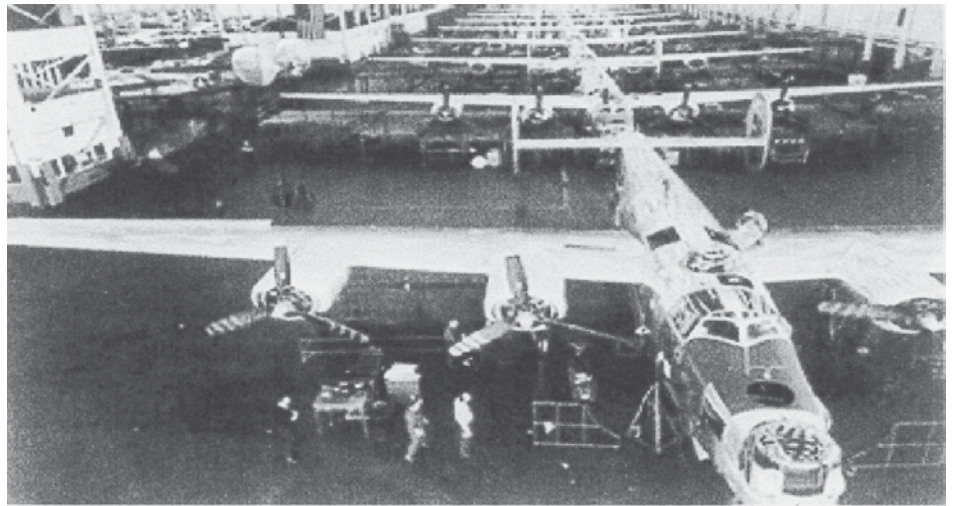
# Willow Run author writes a sequel ... it's a movie script this time

BY RAY PYTEL (458TH)

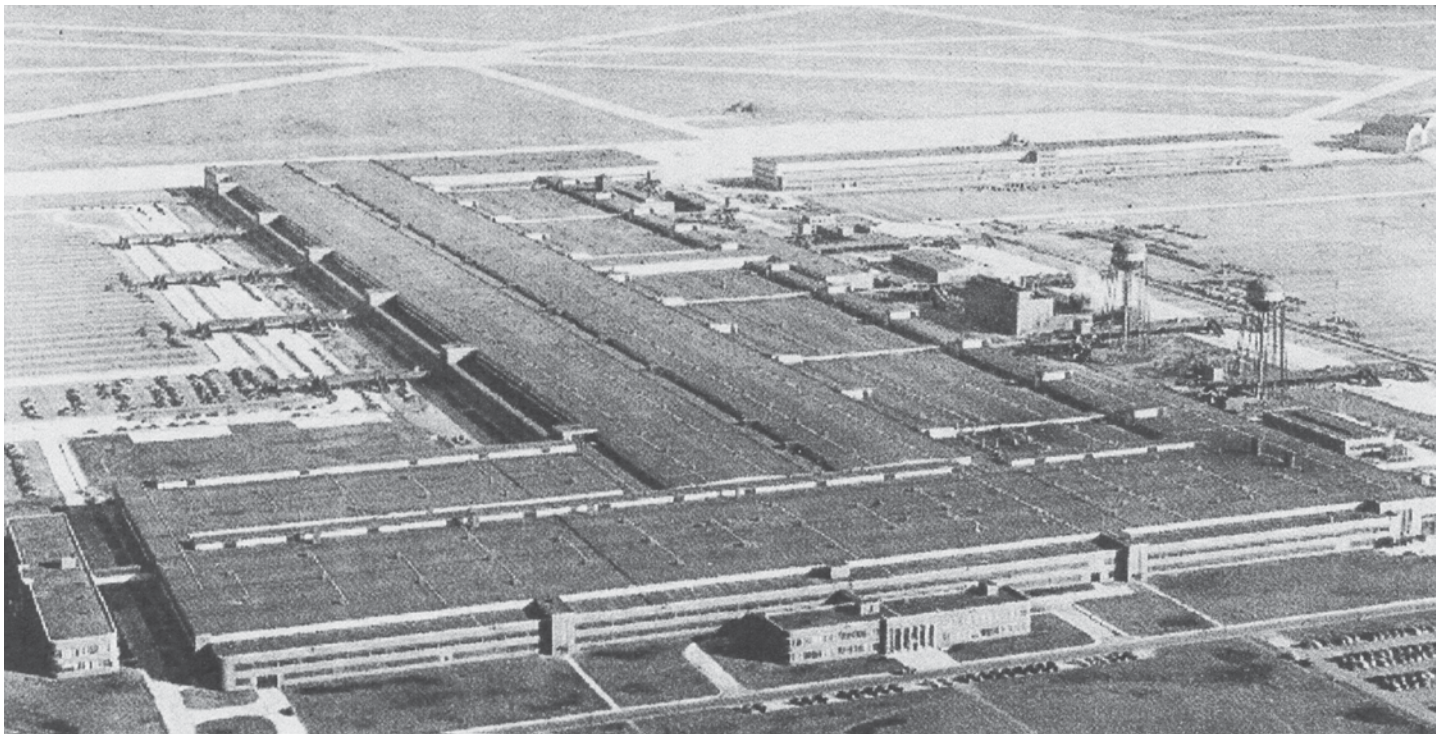
In 1995, Warren Benjamin Kidder authored the book *Willow Run – Colossus of American Industry* (See article on page 20, reprinted from the Summer 1996 2ADA Journal, Vol. 35, No. 2.)

In the interim, in conjunction with screenwriter Jack Schaberg, an employee of Future Media Corporation, Kidder has prepared a movie script dedicated to the great industrial genius Charles E. Sorensen, who was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the world's largest manufacturing plant in WWII — “Willow Run” in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The script has now been completed.

Starting as a draftsman, Sorensen was brought in to the Ford Motor Company before WWII. Ford, frustrated because no one who worked for him could translate



One of Sorensen's two mass production lines at Willow Run.



Willow Run was the largest production factory in the world during World War II. Its assembly line was more than a mile long.

his many revolutionary concepts into drawings, discovered Sorensen's talent for doing just that. This was the start of a 40-year business relationship unparalleled in U.S. manufacturing history.

In December 1940 Major Jimmy Doolittle and Air Corps procurement officer George Mead visited Henry Ford to determine his willingness to manufacture airplanes for President Roosevelt's “Arsenal of Democracy.” Though no great friend of Ford, FDR challenged him to put his money where Sorensen's mouth was. Sorensen picked up the gauntlet by sketch-

ing, literally overnight, plans for a mile-long assembly line that would turn out one twenty-ton four-engine bomber an hour — a feat inconceivable to everyone but him, and unparalleled in the history of manufacturing. A feat so powerful that it provided the Eighth Air Force with the bombers they needed to defeat Hitler.

When Pratt and Whitney invited the Ford Motor Company to help them manufacture their radial aircraft engines for Allied fighter planes, it was Sorensen who manufactured 57,852 of their engines and made Ford Motor Company the largest

manufacturer of aircraft engines in the country.

All in all, 8,685 various B-24s were produced, at an unprecedented clip of less than an hour per plane. The motion picture script tells a story with a broad-brush approach to the historical battles and figures of WWII. The traditional big players — Ford, Churchill, FDR, Hitler, and many other historically significant names — serve as the support and means to develop the story of the 8th Air Force and its use of the Liberators, supplied to a large

(continued on next page)



# Willow Run Story Retold from the Heart

Author weaves personal history into book about birth of an industrial giant

BY JOHN MULCAHY, STAFF REPORTER, THE ANN ARBOR (MI) NEWS • SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1995

Ypsilanti's link with Willow Run is often intimate and personal, spanning its transformation from farmland to industrial hub, its role in World War II and its continuing effect on local culture.

That holds especially true for Warren Benjamin Kidder. The Kidder family farm at the corner of Ecorse and Denton Roads was one of several bulldozed in 1941 to build Willow Run Airport and the Willow Run bomber plant. The destruction included uprooting the painstakingly cultivated strawberry and asparagus patches, the family-built barn, and the flowers Kidder tended and sold for pocket money.

"When they ripped through those, I was sick," says Kidder, who was 14 at the time. For 25 years, until he bought his own home, Kidder said he had periodic nightmares about the farm's destruction.

Kidder, now 69, went on to lead a successful life. He served in the U.S. Merchant Marine, earned a degree in engineering, started his own company and developed a widely used device for controlling traffic signals. He also founded the Kidder Foundation Trust, lived in Mexico and Alaska, and survived near-death in an Arctic adventure.

When he returned to Michigan from Denver, Colorado, in 1985, a writing professor at Lansing Community College determined Kidder had been the last person to live at Willow Run and encouraged him to write the definitive history of the area through the bomber plant days.

Two to three years of research followed, with Kidder gathering information from the Ford Motor Company archives as well as from a daily log — discovered among his mother's belongings — of the building and operation of the Willow Run bomber plant.

The resulting book, *Willow Run, Colossus of American Industry — Home of Henry Ford's B-24 Bomber*, is being published by Kidder's foundation.

Kidder believes the book will appeal to former bomber plant workers and their children, as well as to autoworkers, military people, and the general public. The plant entered the national consciousness after Pearl Harbor, Kidder says.

"Willow Run was the national symbol of revenge for Pearl Harbor. Henry Ford came out and said we're going to build a bomber an hour, and that's what turned people on," he says.

The book combines Kidder's personal reminiscences of his Willow Run home, the struggle of his parents, Elmer and Eva Kidder, to build their farm, and an immense amount of technical and historical



**Warren Kidder returns to the area where his family's farm and childhood home once stood. The property was bulldozed and became part of Willow Run Airport and the Willow Run bomber plant. Kidder has written a book about the history of the plant.**

PHOTO BY ROBERT CHASE

detail on how Charles Sorensen of Ford forged Willow Run into the biggest factory in the world, capable of producing one B-24 bomber an hour at the height of its wartime production.

For example, the appendices of the book tell everything from the number of rivets (242,752) needed to complete the major sections of the plane, to the total length of the assembly lines (5,450 feet), to the minutiae of B-24 construction (278 feet of rubber tubing, 226 cable assemblies, 90 pounds to 120 pounds of camouflage paint per plane, etc.)

Readers less concerned with engineering may still want to know that the plant had its own hospital, that pilot Charles Lindbergh test-flew airplanes at Willow Run, or that German-born architect Albert Kahn, who died in 1942, designed the plant.

Kidder has also turned up many photographs of Willow Run before, during and after bomber plant construction.

While he has not seen the book, Michigan reference archivist Le Roy Barnett says he has seen some of the material used in writing it.

"What I saw made my eyes light up, and I look forward to getting my copy," Barnett says.

Kidder's focus on production distinguishes his book from others about Willow Run, notably Marion Wilson's *The Story of Willow Run* and Lowell Carr's and James Sterner's *Willow Run, A Study*

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*"Willow Run was the national symbol of revenge for Pearl Harbor. Henry Ford came out and said we're going to build a bomber an hour, and that's what turned people on."*

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of *Industrialization and Cultural Inadequacy*. Kidder himself worked in the Willow Run plant producing airplanes for the Kaiser-Frazer Corp. after the war when the company produced both planes and autos. It was an experience that he believes helped him write his book.

"I could relate to their problems," he says of the people who built the plant. "Because I worked on airplanes, I knew what to look for."

Still, some of the most appealing passages of the book are drawn from Kidder's memories of his childhood home, before Willow Run became a national symbol.

During his research, he came across some photographs, taken by Ford employees, of his family's house at its new location on Belleville Road, where it was moved and still sits.

"They were so well taken that I could see the pattern in the drapes in my mother's windows," he said.

That kind of detail has helped Kidder come full circle from the young boy sickened by seeing his family home destroyed.

"It puts a big period to that thing that I've carried around with me," he says. ■

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## WILLOW RUN SEQUEL (continued)

degree by the Willow Run production facility designed by the Ford genius Charles F. Sorensen.

There is also an accompanying love story focusing on two people — an American and a German — who fought a war inside of a war to be together.

Many B-24 air crew and ground crew members — including your editor — went through a five or six week course at Willow Run and saw the amazing "automotive-inspired" production lines, and what appeared to be an endless line of B-24s in various stages of assembly, ending up on the flight line ready for the final step — the check out flight. Incidentally, our crew did pick up a Ford built B-24H at Topeka, Kansas on our way via the southern route to our base at Tienham — just one of the 8,685 that came out of Willow Run. ■



# HALESWORTH 489TH NOTES

BY  
MEL PONTILLO

## Being Present for the Beginning of the End

If you were en route to the 489th Bomb Group briefing room on the morning of July 25, 1944, you would have been able to sense that something big was being planned. It was the St. Lo mission; number nine for our crew. I didn't realize at that time, but 63 years later I learned that the St. Lo mission marked the beginning of the end for Nazi armored divisions. This was especially the case in light of the fact that the 25th of July marked the day when the Panzer-Lehr Division was decimated by the 8th Army Air Force.

It was called Operation Cobra, and it occurred seven weeks after D-Day. Its opening phase consisted of two bombing raids, one conducted on the 24th of July, and one undertaken on the following day. Both air raids included the participation of the 489th Bomb Group.

The purpose of these two missions was to help U.S. ground troops and armored divisions break out of their bogged-down positions and advance across France. History articles state that the second St. Lo air raid was one of the most important and effective bombing missions made by the 8th Army Air Force. It was comprised of 1,581 8th AAF heavy bombers, 11 groups of 9th AAF medium bombers, and 483 fighter escorts. All crews were ordered to keep radio silence en route to the target.

General Eisenhower ordered Army Air Force squadrons to bomb the German Panzer-Lehr Divisions and all accompanying Nazi ground troops who were preventing a major breakout by United States ground forces. Our troops were located about 15 to 20 miles from the English Channel, near St. Lo, and this was to be a sight-bombing mission. This mission was originally scheduled for July 24, but the bomber crews were called back to Britain because of bad weather and heavy cloud cover. There were some bombs dropped that day, but most of the crews returned to England with full bomb loads.

According to the Internet, the return-to-base order given to the American squadrons on the first St. Lo raid misled Nazi ground troops into thinking that they had successfully defended themselves against

a U.S. Army Air Forces attack. They were not prepared for the far greater bombardment that was to come on the following day. My log entry, which was written on the same day, reads as follows:

*"Today's mission was a tactical mission in support of our ground troops in France. Our target was a concentration of enemy stronghold positions about three miles west of St. Lo. The bombing was sight-bombing and our bombing altitude was 12,000 feet, enabling us to go beneath the clouds.*

*"The enemy troops were about 1,500 yards from our troops. The bomb load was 240 20-lb. fragmentation bombs. The flak was rather intense and accurate. Our right wing ship went down in flames."* (All of the crew members of the downed airship perished that day, except the co-pilot who was severely wounded.)

*"...We saw heavy traffic down below us, especially on our side of the line. The Field Artillery signaled us with flares. There were also white markers on the ground to direct us in the air. The targets were all hit."*

Before I joined the air cadets, people in the States would speak as if the Germans had superior and even unbeatable military technology. The Germans believed themselves to have had the superior military hardware, also. Then, in the course of one day, that belief changed drastically. In fact, this is what Lieutenant-General Fitz Bayerlein (of the German Panzer-Lehr Division) had to say about Operation Cobra:

*"It was useless for the infantry to have dug in, as it did not protect us against the bombing . . . Dugouts and foxholes were smashed, men were buried, and we were unable to save them. The same happened to guns and tanks...it seemed to me that many of the men who survived the pattern bombing...either quickly surrendered to the attacking infantry or else escaped to the rear.*

*"The first line had been annihilated by the bombing . . . The three-hour bombardment of July 25, after the smaller one of the day before, had the effect of extinguishing the morale of troops who were physically and morally weakened by 45 days of continual fighting. The long duration of the bombing, coupled with the impossibility of mounting a counter-attack, created a depression marked with feelings of helplessness, weakness, and inferiority. Therefore, the morale of a great number of men grew so bad that they, feeling the uselessness of fighting, either surrendered, deserted to the enemy, or escaped to the rear . . . Only strongly nerved and brave men could endure this strain."*

*"The shock effect was nearly as strong as the physical effect upon the dead and*

*wounded . . . Some of the men got crazy and were unable to carry out anything. I was personally in the center of the bombardment and could experience the tremendous effect. For me, who during this war was in every theater of operations, and who was assigned to the places of the main efforts, this was the worst thing I ever saw.*

*"The well-dug-in infantry was either smashed by the heavy bombs in their foxholes and dugouts or else killed and buried by the blast. Infantry and artillery positions were blown up. The whole bombed area transformed into fields covered with craters, where no human being was left alive. Tanks and guns were destroyed and overturned, unable to be recovered, because all roads and passages were blocked."*

Bayerlein went on with his dissertation about what happened at St. Lo, and it was entirely tragic for his troops. His loss of manpower, tanks and armored vehicles enabled U.S. commanders to initiate a full-scale assault the following morning. July 26, 1944 was the date when the successful breakout began, and August 4 began the dash across France. By May 1945, the war in Europe was over. So, July 25, 1944 was decisively the beginning of the end.

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

I have always taken pride in reporting on our reunions, and this year is no exception. By year's end, I will have attended five of them; four 8th Air Force reunions and one family reunion.

I had the pleasure of attending this year's reunion of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. It was held at the Penn State campus in State College, PA. This 16th annual reunion was held from June 24-26. It had a turnout of 65 people. This was the third consecutive year in which I was fortunate enough to attend. Last year's reunion was attended by 75 people, and the year before, the count was 100. This included family members and friends. These figures reflect how our ranks are reducing.

The two notable highlights of this reunion were the visit to the Eighth Air Force archives at the Penn State Library and the banquet held on the last night of the reunion. The banquet was a big winner, as it brought out plenty of smiles. The banquet was in its usual grand style, enjoyed by all who attended it. In addition, it was decided during the membership meeting that another reunion would be held at the same place next year during the last week of June 2008.

Incidentally, during the 8th Air Force Library visit, I talked with one of the curators about 8th Army Air Force records  
(continued on next page)

# Shared Experiences

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

Greetings, good friends of the 2ADA! It has been close to four years that I have been living at Town Village North, a wonderful senior retirement center. During that period I have been conscious of my frequent journeys into the past, particularly my time spent in the pre-school and elementary school years, my man-about-town years at high school and college, during and after those years, and after college my entry into what proved to be a fifty-year career in business interrupted by a four-year military stint. This was followed by sixty years with all of you in the 2nd Air Division Association and, of course, my 41½ years of married life with a lovely lady whom I met while we were overseas in England, doing our part to achieve victory in World War Two.

With respect and reverence to all phases of my life, I have come to the conclusion, which I have stated often, that the two outstanding periods have been the college years and my memorable days in uniform; most particularly the wonderful experiences with the Division and after, with our time together in the 2nd Air Division Association from its formation in 1948 to date.

In the recent past few years I have written in the *Journal* of our right to be proud of what we have accomplished in preserving the friendships we formed in the service and in the creation and support of that living Memorial to our 6881 comrades who gave their lives. They are listed in that beautiful Roll of Honor which is prominently displayed in the Memorial Library of the 2nd Air Division USAAF in

Norwich where we served with pride from November 1942 to May 1945.

We have shared our experiences at our sixty 2ADA conventions in person and in print, in the more than 200 2ADA *Journals* (four per year) which have served as an effective adhesive in keeping us together over all the years.

I strongly regretted my inability to attend our 60th convention, this time in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I am exceedingly grateful for the note I received signed by all in attendance.

Now, as we approach the 2007 Holiday Season, I take this opportunity to wish you all the very best. The 2nd Air Division Association has been and is one of the most important segments of my life.

Bless you all! ■

## 489TH NOTES (continued)

and memorabilia, antiques, pictures, letters and documents from 8th Air Force veterans who are willing to donate them. The library contains an abundance of information about 8th Air Force history, including its participation in WWII.

Something different for reunions was held on the first evening of this one. It was a class "A" minor league baseball game. The game was held at the new baseball field, located near the famous Penn State football stadium. The New York-Penn League's State College Spikes (a St. Louis Cardinals minor league team) played the Jamestown Jammers (a Florida Marlins farm club.) I rooted for the Spikes, but they went down to a disappointing loss. It was still an enjoyable game, nonetheless.

At the next get-together, I experienced another first-time event for me. It was an outdoor picnic held by the Western Pennsylvania Wing of World War II's Eighth Air Force Historical Society. It was held on July 18, at the estate of Hap Nicholas, on the banks of beautiful Slippery Rock Creek in Slippery Rock Park, near Slippery Rock, PA. There were pontoon boats on hand for riding up and down the creek, and a batch of golf carts for strolling about the 40-acre estate and two spacious mansions called "the Red House" and "the White House." This was the perfect place for this event, and it was well planned. Believe it or not, the first event on the agenda was an outdoor membership meeting. It was decided by the members that another picnic will be held next year at the same place in July.

I estimated that about 100 people attended, including members, family and

friends. One requirement for attending was that of bringing a casserole, salad or dessert. Needless to say, there was plenty of food there. I saw many happy people with big smiles on their faces, indicating that it was an enjoyable event, indeed. I too had a great time. Incidentally, Hap Nicholas is the president of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. Many thanks are extended to Hap and his family for providing such an enjoyable event.

After attending and reporting on many different 8th Air Force reunions, I attended another first: a family reunion. It was held in my hometown of Clearfield, Pennsylvania during the weekend of July 27-28. About 200 signed up for this reunion, and about 175 showed up. I wasn't aware that I had so many relatives. There were many in attendance that I met for the first time, as they are scattered all over the country. This affair was well planned and attended. The first day was the informal gathering of the clan, for renewing old acquaintances and making some new ones. It featured a light meal and liquid refreshments. The second day was an all-day picnic held at the Curwensville Lake, consisting of plenty of food and many delightful moments. Everyone who attended seemed to have enjoyed this event.

This year's 2ADA convention was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel from August 31 to September 3. The attendance numbered 120 people. This included 2ADA members, family and friends. This convention was very well planned. It provided more time to visit with friends and to make new ones. This was quite appropriate for our aged troops. The hotel was great, and the serv-

ice was excellent. My only disappointment was that the 489th Bomb Group only had five people in attendance at this delightful get-together.

The highlights of this convention were the optional tours of the Gerald R. Ford Museum and the Van Andel Museum. On Sunday there was a tour on the boat, *Queen of Saugatuck*. The tour was made by 50 people. The trip was started in Saugatuck, went down the Kalamazoo River and then into Lake Michigan. That evening the 2ADA banquet was held in its usual splendid manner. The convention seemed to have been enjoyed by all who attended. Dallas, TX was chosen for the 2008 convention.

My daughter and I did not make the museum tours, because we instead had the pleasure of attending the Gerald R. Ford Museum the day before, for the inauguration of the postage stamp that commemorates the former president. It marked the first day when the 41-cent stamp bearing the 38th president's likeness was made available for sale. We had standing room only in the museum auditorium. The honored guest was Richard A. Ford, Gerald Ford's brother, who unveiled the stamp. The guest speaker was Michael A. Ford, son of the late president. There was a similar ceremony held in California, being that it was Gerald Ford's home during his later years. It was in California where the former first lady, Betty Ford, and two other Ford children attended.

The 489th BG reunion in Branson, because of the time element, will be reported on in the next *Journal*. Being that this will be the final issue of 2007, I am taking this opportunity to wish you all a happy holiday season.

Hope to see you at the next reunion. ■





491st BOMB GROUP  
POSTREMUM ET OPTIMUM

## the RINGMASTER REPORTS

BY JOHN A. PALLER

As this issue of the *Journal* will be in the hands of members just prior to the Christmas holidays, it would be an appropriate time to wish happy (and healthy) holidays to one and all.

As this is written in late September 2007, I am looking forward to the 491st BG annual reunion. We will be meeting on October 3 at the Marriott in Dayton, Ohio. We have a well-planned itinerary, created by the hard-working and diligent Board of Directors of the 491st BG, who always provide the attendees with an entertaining, as well as reflective, interlude away from everyday activities back home. Together once more with comrades, from a time when "the skies were never still."

In my last report I wrote about the Luftwaffe "Sturmgruppen." I stated that a book list would be provided for readers inter-

ested in the air war over Europe and especially Luftwaffe aircraft and tactics.

References and additional information follow:

1. *Focke Wulf Jagdflugzeug 190*, by P. Rodeike, Struve Druck, Eutin 1998. (German text but includes literally hundreds of previously unpublished photos of Kurt Tank's "Wurger".)

2. *Strumstaffel 1 The War Diary*, by E. Mombeek and E. Creek, Classic Publications.

3. *Focke Wulf 190 at War*, by Dr. A. Price (originally Ian Allan 1977), now reprinted as *Fw 190 in Combat*. Sutton Publishing, 1998.

4. *Scale Aircraft Modelling Magazine*, Vol. 23, Number 1 – March 2001. Contains an article entitled STURMGRUPPEN 1994 BOMBER DESTROYERS. The article contains many good photos as well as scale drawings of the Fw190. The text by Neil Page is excellent. Copies may be found in good hobby shops or Byrd Aviation Books, 114 Deer Path Rd., Williamsburg, VA 23188.

5. *Luftwaffe Sturmgruppen*. If you wish to add just one publication to your library about this phase of the war, it should be this soft-cover, reasonably priced book, published by Osprey Publishing. It is currently in print. Osprey may be reached at [www.ospreypublishing.com](http://www.ospreypublishing.com),

telephone 866-620-6941 or drop them a line at Osprey Direct, c/o Random House Distribution Center, 400 Hahn Rd., Westminster, MD 21157. I have just received their summer 2007 supplement and their selections are amazing. Their listing covers everything from Roman battles from 109 BC to AD 131, through the Ottoman Empire and also "Operation Barbarossa" in 1941. Their latest is *The P-51 vs. the Fw190* by Martin Bowman. Listing these titles of bygone days reminds me of the philosopher George Santayana's statement: "Those who do not learn by the lessons of history are bound to repeat its mistakes." (Don't know if I have the quote exactly correct, but it's close enough.)

Currently, I am reading *America Alone* by Mark Steyn, in which he deals with the threat of Islamic imperialism. He looks ahead into our new century and sees demographic forces vs. the "politically correct" philosophy in our institutions, intellectuals and multi-culturists on a collision course. He draws a dismal picture of the West's survival unless we confront this new threat. Actually this threat did not start on 9/11. The followers of the Prophet Mohammed have given the Christian West a lot of grief throughout the centuries. This part of history is well covered

(continued on page 26)



HARDWICK

## Open Letter to the 93rd

BY JOHN LEE

By the time this article reaches you, the 2ADA and the 93rd BG will have had their conventions. I was nominated and elected by the members attending the 2ADA convention to the position of Executive VP. The next issue of the *Journal* should have a new group VP representing the 93rd on the Executive Committee. That individual will also take over the writing of the "Open Letter to the 93rd."

At this time I am including an article submitted by Leo Hebert. Leo and I have been very close friends for many years. Our friendship started as the war in Europe ended.

### "JITTERS FROM BITTERS" by Leo Hebert (Radio Operator)

Sixty years ago, when I arrived home in Baltimore, Maryland, after an honorable discharge received at Andrews Airfield in the Washington, DC area, I had good recollections of some details and events from our tour of duty.

When things settled down at home, I

went to a hobby shop and bought a kit for a B-24 Liberator. It was all wood in those days (not all plastic like today), and I carved, sanded, painted, and trimmed it, detailed it with the 93rd Bomb Group identification, and applied the name "Jitters from Bitters." It looked pretty good, and I mounted it on a stand. When I got married five years later, it went with us to sit on bookshelves and be admired or invite some conversation about the war.

After many years of it knocking around and our kids breaking off propeller blades that weren't designed to be spun, it got put away. Recently it came out of storage, and I have spent considerable time refinishing the paint and restoring details to the original finish. I haven't located any scale blade propellers yet, but I gave the model to one of my thirty grandchildren who has an interest in aircraft.

I took a picture of the model on its stand, by holding it up in the air with the sky and clouds in the background. Then I took the digital photo to Wal-Mart's

photo shop and they touched it up to look like it was flying.

Now for the rest of the story. I flew with my crew on many different airplanes on our 18 missions over Germany in 1945. Somewhere along the line, our crew ended up with a plane that wasn't all patched up. I don't remember if we ever flew B-24H #42-95204 on any combat mission, but we did take some of the ground personnel on sightseeing, low-level trips over war-torn Germany after VE Day.

It was our ground crew chief mechanic, after several years of duty at Hardwick Air Base, who named this new plane. With our pilot's permission, we were allowed to paint the nose of the airplane with "Jitters from Bitters."

Somehow, we got some enamel paint of red, yellow and white colors. I was elected to be the artist and I climbed up on the rolling scaffold, and applied the name and a big mug of beer.

"Bitters" was an English brew, and it was served at the pub near the base. We had to bring our own canteen cup for our drinks. The aluminum cup turned an awful black color and it didn't taste very good either. I added the foam to the head of the beer, which was not really authen-

(continued on page 28)



# NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

By LLOYD PRANG and JAMES DYKE

*Editor's Note: Part 1 of this 453rd BG report was written by group chairman Lloyd Prang prior to the 2ADA convention in Grand Rapids, and Part 2 was written by vice chairman James Dyke following the convention.*

## PART 1, BY LLOYD PRANG

**Dick Butler** sent an e-mail letter to me that included some great aircraft pictures from the "Thunder over Michigan" air show last year. If you have a computer, go to this website to see them: <http://www.richard-seaman.com/Aircraft/AirShows/YankeeAirMuseum2006/Highlights/index.html>.

**Stewart Wright** mentioned that **Bill LeRoy** had passed away on May 10, 2007. Bill had been the radio operator on the **Jack Nortridge** crew, which was an original crew with the 453rd BG. Only two members of this crew remain: **Bill Eagleson**, the bombardier, and **Wayne Lim**, the tail gunner.

Although this flight will have been completed by the time you read this, I thought you might be interested in the story "From Glacier to Glory." This is one more of those things that came to me via the Internet. On July 15, 1942, a squadron of six P-38s and two B-17 bombers took off and headed for the European theater of operations to support U.S. allies during WWII. Due to insurmountable weather-related problems en route they were forced to abort their mission and make an emergency landing on a remote ice cap in Greenland. "The Lost Squadron," as it has become known over time, drifted miles from its original location and only one P-38, encased in 268 feet of ice, was salvaged.

A recovery and restoration mission taking more than ten years and costing more than a million dollars brought this legendary P-38 Lightning, now known as "Glacier Girl," back to her original flying glory. On June 23, 2007, "Glacier Girl" was to depart from Teterboro Airport in New Jersey bound for Duxford, England to complete her fabled World War II transatlantic mission.

Steve Hinton, who will fly "Glacier Girl" on her transatlantic flight, said, "It's thrilling to be part of this historic event, which pays homage to the brave aviators who beat the odds to survive certain death on that ice cap in Greenland." "Glacier Girl" was to be accompanied by the P-51 Mustang "Miss Velma," flown by air show leg-

end Ed Shipley. After landing, "Glacier Girl" was to remain in Duxford for the renowned Flying Legends Air Show on July 7 and 8. She then was to return to the U.S. where she was scheduled to fly in the EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh, WI on July 12, 2007.

On Saturday, 9 June, **Eugene (Mac) McDowell** wrote that he had been awarded the French Legion of Honor Medal. His note, and the comments of others, will appear in the September issue of the 453rd Newsletter. He wrote, "63 years ago, on June 6, 1944, I flew on the first mission that the 453rd flew that day. We took off at about 0200 and I remember the bombardier said bombs away at 06061/2 hours. Last Wednesday the French Government awarded the French Legion of Honor to 32 WWII veterans in my local area of Florida. Do you know if anyone else in the Group has received the award?"

I sent an e-mail out to several of our 453rd members. **Leo Ryan** replied that he flew as a bombardier on D-Day but had not been contacted by the French government.

**Bill Norris** wrote that in August 2000 he had received a commendation medal, the Medal of the Jubilee of Liberty. It was conveyed by the French Province of Normandy and presented by Heather Wilson, Member of Congress.

**Nick Radosevich** wrote that he also was in the first wave on D-Day. However, he had not been contacted.

Comes now from Mac, the rest of the story. It seems that a representative of the Naples French Community had attended a meeting of the Military Officers Association of Southwest Florida. She mentioned she had seen that two veterans in Vermont had been given the award and she inquired to the French government about doing it for the veterans in Collier County, Florida. Mac was given the task of locating these veterans for her. He found five veterans; she found the balance of the 40 involved, 32 of whom attended the award ceremony. The French President, who is the head of the Legion of Honor organization, had to approve all the names on the list. It took a year of hard work and a lot of paperwork to accomplish this.

Farewell to an American hero, **Brigadier General Robin Olds, USAF (Ret.)**. On 14 June 2007, Robin Olds headed west. He passed away peacefully, from conges-

tive heart failure, one month short of his 85th birthday. Robin spent his younger years and schooling in Hampton, Virginia and attended West Point. He graduated in 1943. After completing pilot training he was assigned to the European Theater of Operations, where he flew 107 missions in P-38s and P-51s. He shot down thirteen enemy aircraft over Europe and became a triple ace in Vietnam when he downed four MIGs. He flew 152 combat missions in a F-4 Phantom while acting as a Wing Commander of the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing in Thailand. After his duty in Vietnam, General Olds was named Commandant of Cadets at the U.S. Air Force Academy, where he served from 1967 to 1971. Up until a few months prior to his illness, Robin was frequently called upon as guest speaker and lecturer for his inspirational and motivational talks. He traveled all over the world speaking to military and civilian groups. Godspeed to a more-than-fine leader. *The above was forwarded via Tom Weeks, USAF (Ret.) fighter pilot, and our own Bill Norris. Thanks, Bill.*

I just received notice that **Chester Sandford** passed away on April 25, 2007. Chester had been the bombardier on the Charles Wincey crew, 734th Squadron. Complete details will appear in the letters section of the September Newsletter.

More sad news: An e-mail of 19 July 2007 said the **G.W. Ford** died at his home this weekend of a very aggressive form of cancer. His health had deteriorated rapidly in the past two weeks and his family had gathered to be with him during his final days. A memorial service was held on Saturday 28 July 2007. G.W. was another of our 453rd pilots who volunteered to serve a tour in P-51s after completing a tour in B-24s. At Old Buck G.W. was the copilot on the Marvin Oakland crew, 732nd Squadron. Only two members of that crew remain. They are the navigator, **Paul Compton**, and the nose gunner, **Meyer Slott**.

Finally, as this is the last *Journal* for this year, Irene and I view this as an opportunity to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year.

## PART 2, BY JAMES DYKE

This is TRIP-UP V+ VICTOR calling FLAME LEAP. It is not often that a vice-chairman of a group gets to make a report for the 2ADA *Journal*. Circumstances do alter conditions. At the 2ADA convention in Grand Rapids, our group chairman **Lloyd Prang** made a slight misstep while coming down on an angular staircase, tripping and falling into a major accident. He broke his right hip and thoroughly discombobulated his right shoulder.

*(continued on page 26)*



The B-24 Liberator was a powerful war machine, capable of non-stop transport of up to five tons of explosives for distances of 1,000 miles and the return to base. The Liberator had a crew of ten men — each trained for a specific task. We were part of the Eighth Air Force and assigned to the 458th Bomb Group (H) at a former RAF base near Norwich in East Anglia. We arrived in Southampton in January 1945 after a 10 day Atlantic convoy passage from New York and soon thereafter found ourselves assigned to the 752nd Squadron of the 458th BG at Horsham St. Faith.

By April 1945 it was becoming clear that the war in Europe was winding down. However, the Allied experience at Bastogne in December 1944 through January 1945, when Hitler unleashed a fierce counter-offensive culminating in the Battle of the Bulge, taught the Allies the folly of predicting victory before its arrival. The crew of 340N (Nan) had flown missions on fifteen out of sixteen days during February 1945. Why so little relief between missions? To an air crew it was an indication that the brass had concluded the war was about to end and therefore it was no longer necessary to dispatch replacement crews to fill the ranks of those completing their tour of duty or otherwise out of action. We had flown almost as much in March, but had some respite due to bad weather that kept us from flying almost daily. At this stage of the air war over Europe, targets were primarily transportation and oil, i.e. railway marshalling yards and oil refining and storage facilities. The Wehrmacht required huge supplies brought by rail — and to cut off such delivery was the task of the Eighth Air Force.

It was 0400 on April 5, 1945 when the wake-up orderly pounded on my door and barked, "Sir, mission briefing at 0545." Copilot Herman Bull and I tumbled from our bunks and dressed in dark silence. As we made our way to the officers mess we went through the ritual routine of speculating on the day's target. It was cold and a heavy overcast added a somber pall to the predawn darkness. "Maybe it'll be scrubbed," hopefully murmured Paul Gable, the navigator. We quickly and silently ate our mission breakfast, which consisted of fresh fruit, fresh scrambled eggs, fresh whole milk, toast and coffee. The breakfast fare for crews not flying a combat mission that day would be canned fruit, powdered milk, powdered eggs and spam — all tasteless and ersatz. The mission breakfast was served only to those going into mortal combat, in the spirit of the condemned eating a final hearty meal.

The briefing building was cold and drafty, close to the operation tower. We were

## ICE: A War Story

BY ED HOLMGREN (458TH)

already in flying gear, which was a series of layers beginning with long-johns, followed by the electric flying suit — a cotton-wool mixture, like a cover-all with booties and wires coursing throughout and an electric plug dangling like an umbilical cord to be connected to the airplane's electrical system. This was meant to keep the body toast-warm when the outside temperatures at 24,000 feet were minus 60 degrees F. Over all of these entirely tasteless, fetching and non-sexy, but eminently utilitarian undergarments, were the fleecelined leather jackets, trousers, boots and helmets.

The briefing officer (usually a squadron commander or the group CO) opened with the target for the day's mission, its characteristics, importance and the route to be flown to and from the target. On this day the target was Hof, an industrial and railway center in Bavaria, near the Czech border. Secondary targets nearby were Plauen (marshalling yards) and Bayreuth (munitions dump). Each airplane would carry a load of ten 500-pound GP bombs. The intelligence office then indicated the probable nature and extents of Luftwaffe fighter opposition. Finally, the weather office detailed the atmospheric conditions that we could expect from take-off to return to base. As it turned out, weather conditions were to be the fateful factor in the problem to be encountered by this hardy band of brothers flying in 340N.

By 0630 I had completed the preflight inspection of the aircraft. The crew assembled on the hardstand, smoked a last preflight cigarette, and climbed aboard. Take-off was scheduled for 0700 and thirty-five airplanes from the 458th took off into a leaden sky at fifty-second intervals and were instantly thrust into the overcast. We flew on instruments to Buncher 17 near Liege, Belgium. The radio compass beacon guided us to that point. It was at Buncher 17 at 16,000 feet that the weather officer had indicated that we would break out of the cloud cover, meet the group, assemble and join other groups doing likewise at a nearby area of the sky all presumably in the clear and above the cloud cover. The four groups in formation would comprise the combat wing of 100-110 aircraft. The code name for the wing was LINCOLN RED.

We arrived at Buncher 17 about forty minutes after take-off, flying in a sky akin to a large bowl of thick creamy soup for the entire distance. We were more or less in the clear with not another airplane in sight. After flying around the area of the Buncher for what seemed like several minutes in an unsuccessful attempt to find the formation, we left the immediate area of Buncher 17. Breaking radio silence (a court martial offense in anything but an emergency), I called Lincoln Red leader to learn the group's position. Red leader replied that the group was at the designated assembly area and altitude and I should get my butt over there PRONTO! While on the intercom with the navigator trying to get a compass heading to get back to the assembly area, I noticed the wing icing was getting thick. The wing surface had been icing up while we were climbing and the de-icer boots were successfully breaking it off.

Then it happened: the airplane began to stall despite the fact that all four engines were pulling 2300 RPM and 36 inches of mercury on the turbo-superchargers, normal engine power settings for straight and level flight. The only apparent danger seemed to be the excessive icing on the leading edges of the wing and tail surfaces — icing that would not respond to successive inflation and deflation to the hydraulic de-icing system. Shorty Richardson, the tail gunner, reported that the elevator surfaces were quickly icing and there was no apparent action of the tail's de-icing boots.

In an attempt to break the stall and regain air speed, I thrust the nose of the airplane down. As the airplane retained air speed I could not pull the wheel back to straight and level flight. I shouted to Herman to get on his wheel so we could pull back together — he did, and no such luck. The airplane entered a gentle spin, lost altitude and gained airspeed, accelerating to 320 mph (normal straight and level air speed was 180 mph). Realizing that I had little control of the airplane and no certainty that control would return, I ordered the crew to make preparations to bail out. As conditions rapidly worsened, I hit the Klaxon horn, signaling the order to bail out.

The flight engineer Joe Metosh, the radio operator Rollin Helbling, and Dean Burke, the nose gunner, left via the catwalk at the front of the bomb bay. Shorty Richardson, the tail gunner, Ted Semchuck, the ball turret/armorer, and a nameless waist gunner left through the rear catwalk of the bomb bay. As I was preparing to emerge from my seat on the flight deck to follow the copilot, Herman Bull, to the bomb bay for our departure, I

*(continued on page 28)*

**NEWS OF THE 453RD** (*continued from page 24*)

der. The local medics put two pins in his hip and had him walking a short distance the very next morning. Back home in Indiana he is making ambulatory progress with the aid of a cane. The shoulder is being allowed to heal its damage before any attempts are made to make major repairs. It will take at least eight weeks or more for the shoulder to be assessed. The shoulder problem eliminates the possibility of getting around with crutches and restricts the ability to carry out his usual correspondence activities. Feel free to send him a card or your electronic best wishes. Don't be disappointed if you don't get his usually jovial response.

The 2ADA's Grand Rapids convention was small but vigorous. Grand Rapids was a bit hard to get to, and some got wiped out by floods, winds and storms, and of course, the usual inroads of age and infirmity. The Amway Grand Plaza was everything that Bud Koorndyk had promised it would be. The service was excellent, the meals were notable (especially the Baked Alaska) and of course there were a couple of truly upscale restaurants as well as some rather modest offerings. The Gerald R. Ford Museum captured the attention of many, even to the exclusion of other attractions. It truly is one of the better Presidential Libraries/Museums and merits your exploration if you have a chance.

At the Saturday dinner the 453rd squeezed in a record-breaking (five minute) business meeting. No new nominations had been received. Nominating Committee Chairman **Allen Williamson** proposed reelection of the present slate of officers. They were reelected for 2007-08. The financial report received from Treasurer **Oliver "Mo" Morris** was approved as presented.

A motion was made and carried to phase out the PX merchandise activity. Its market appears to be saturated since only \$156.50 in sales was made during the preceding year. Some items are depleted – there are no more billed caps. Stock is available only in minimum quantities. Suppliers want to provide larger quantities than it would be prudent to invest group funds in, only resulting in quantities of items for which there is no market. Current stock consists of two small polo shirts, two mediums and six extra larges; about a dozen cloth shoulder patches; and, perhaps fifty or so of the metal enameled badges. Current prices prevail. However, any stock remaining at the time of publication of our February '08 Newsletter probably will be offered

at ridiculous "close-out" prices.

Consensus of members present was that our Newsletter and the careful attention of our chairman, Lloyd Prang, are what have kept us together as a viable group. There was consent agreement to utilize our Group assets to continue publication of the Newsletter so long as **Wilbur and Jeanne Stites** would perform the editorial and publication activities, and for as long as the funds hold out. Something for the benefit of the individual members rather than giving it to some other group or organization. After all, the funds did come from our individual memberships.

At this point there is no assurance that the 453rd will be able to plan and carry out additional group meetings on our own. We must never lose sight that we are part of the Second Air Division, and that we can schedule time off on our own and have our own hospitality lounge during the conventions of the 2ADA. STOP, right now, and mark your calendars for the month of October 2008. The 2ADA will meet in Dallas, and we can be there!

**Pat and Agnes Ramm** occupied their usual places with the 453rds. Nearby Michiganders who made it in were our ever faithful **Russ Harriman** as well as **Louis and Lu Huisman**. Lloyd presided, materially backed by his right-hand, **Irene. Russell and Mrs. Neatrou** provided the Florida contingent. **Richard Robert** came up the river from Louisiana, and **Jim Dyke** blew in from the sands of New Mexico. Dick and Jim hosted as their guests, **Gwen Bruton** and **Ingrid Tollius**, respectively. Some of you will remember meeting Ingrid in Las Vegas in the spring.

Both the 453rd and the 2ADA are composed of military veterans. Air Force regulations clearly authorize the wearing of the uniform for functions of such at their meetings and conferences. At Grand Rapids, only three members appeared in uniform. A navigator from one of the groups displayed his usually immaculate Summer Mess Dress regalia. The other two were from the 453rd. Russ Neatrou performed the nearly impossible trick of wearing his Class-A WWII uniform complete with the 25-mission crush on the cap. He looked great even though the blouse may have been stretched just a bit tight. Congratulations, Russ! Jim Dyke again exhibited the winter blue Mess Dress uniform. Where were the other groups?

The Dzenowagis film presentation on Saturday night of the 1995 fifty-year Victory Parade in Norwich met and exceeded its usual high standard. After the banquet on Sunday night Ingrid and I skipped out on the professorial presentation of his book concerning the 8th AF and the

struggles over Europe. At the front of the Amway Grand we mounted a horse and carriage rig for a tour of Grand Rapids. The clippity-clop of "Dixie's" ironclad hooves on the brick and cobblestone provided a musical and rhythmic background to the tour. Grand Rapids is an impeccably clean city with almost everything in good repair, few empty buildings, and little if any evidence of a vagrant population. Red was everywhere. Highly noticeable was that perhaps more than 80% of the buildings were made of red brick, or even had been painted red. After getting back to the hotel we learned that we had missed out on a truly positive critique wherein our 2ADA President, **Oak Mackey**, and others, proffered massive corrections to the text of the lecturer. Sorry we missed out on that part of the program.

Think Dallas for '08. Transportation-wise, Dallas is easy to get to, either flying or driving. The weather will be probably be good, the facilities will be superb, and friendships will be warm and welcome. As our membership dwindles, if you don't participate, I can assure you that terminal decisions will be made by just a handful of individuals. Don't forfeit your participation. You may not like the final determinations. ■

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**491ST RINGMASTER** (*cont. from page 23*)

in a book entitled *The Decline and Fall of the Ottoman Empire* by Alan Palmer. From the time that Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453, on up through 1683, when the Ottomans were pounding at the gates of Vienna, the pressure continued. The Turks by this date had occupied Hungary for 150 years. In the siege of Vienna, Kara Mustafa slaughtered 4,000 villagers in Perchtoldsdorf near Vienna. He ordered the systematic killing of prisoners, exhibiting their heads to demoralize the Austrian troops. But, 1683 was the year of the high water mark for the Ottomans. Under the Polish King John Sobieski, and troops of many European nations, the Ottoman Empire went into decline. But it took until WWI, after six centuries of pre-eminence before it collapsed. Now the followers of the Prophet Mohammed, in the name of Allah, are on the march again. The question is — does the West have the will to face this threat?

I believe we, of the WWII generation, have a duty and a responsibility to learn as much as we can and then educate our children, grandchildren and yes, our great-grandchildren about the true nature of this threat. Don't count on the schools to do it. This too is part of our legacy. ■





SEETHING

# The 448th Speaks

BY KING SCHULTZ

## FOLDED WINGS OF THE 448TH

Clifford W. Harris (May 2007); Peter Edgar, Forest Hills, NY; and LTC. Col. William Searles (June 2007), who served in the Air Force for thirty years.

## REUNION

The 448th Bomb Group's 2007 reunion took place in Orlando, Florida. The highlight was a visit to The Kennedy Space Center. We viewed an IMAX movie and had lunch with an astronaut. There was a visit to the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame. One hundred one were in attendance at this outstanding reunion. No elections took place, thus the same officers will be in charge for another year. The 2008 reunion will take place at Gulf Shores, Alabama.

## "B-24 STORY" BY KING SCHULTZ

*The story below appeared in the August edition of The EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) Chapter 14 in San Diego:*

During WWII, I came to Alpine, California to visit my parents after completing a combat tour of 33 missions with the 8th Air Force in a B-24. While there I met Cliff Hanson, a design engineer with Consolidated. Cliff invited me to tour the engineering department of Consolidated to meet engineers who designed the B-24. At the end of the visit these engineers invited me to lunch. At the end they asked me how I liked the B-24. My response was that it was an excellent airplane for its purpose, but that it had one major design flaw, namely, that there wasn't any place for a fellow to relieve himself. They replied that the B-24 had relief tubes for this purpose.

So my story began. At 26,000 feet in an unheated and unpresurized airplane, I sometimes found it necessary to urinate. The first time this happened I used the relief tube below the flight



PLANE OF OUR WORLD WAR II ALLY:  
Two Russian YAK52s at Seething for July 2003 air show.

deck. Some of it sprayed on the heat sinks of the four voltage regulators there; the resultant odor on the flight deck was horrific. Breathing oxygen accentuates one's sense of smell. Next time I had to go, I opened the bomb bay doors and urinated into the open airstream. It blew into my face. On a subsequent flight, I opened the bomb bay doors about a foot and urinated into the open area. Again it blew into my face.

So the next time I went back to the waist to use the relief tube there. Later I learned it had blown into the suspended ball turret gunner's face. The waist gunners said that there was suction in the six inch space between the tail turret and the skin, suggesting I go there. So that I did, later discovering that it had swirled around and blew into the face of the tail turret gunner. Then our copilot suggested his ultimate solution. Place some condoms in my flying suit and when necessary, pee into the condom, slide open the pilot's window and throw it out. This I did, but the windblast caused the urine to splatter all over the instrument panel and the pedestal, instantly freezing. He sat there roaring in laughter. So, I came up with the ultimate solution. The next time, I went to the bomb bay and simply urinated on the inside of the bomb bay doors.

By the time we returned from the mission it had completely evaporated, thus the perfect solution. The Consolidated engineers laughed hysterically. ■

## Folded Wings

### HDQ

Dean Moyer

### 44th BG

M.Gen. William H. Brandon (Ret.) (HQ)  
Norman C. Kiefer  
Leon Lowenthal  
C. Will Lundy  
Roger S. Markle  
LTC James L. Whittle, Jr.

### 93rd BG

Joseph F. Bisson  
Guy P. Cheney  
Fred Lakner  
Charles F. Lotsch  
Paul O. Peloguin  
Carroll Stewart

### 389th BG

Wayne H. Buhrmann  
John V. Fanelli

Nicholas A. Ferrant, Jr.  
Theron H. Hanes  
Robert H. Hoessler, Jr.  
Kenneth W. Johnson  
James L. Lewis  
Dallas G. Rayl  
Allen E. Seamans

### 392nd BG

George T. Ashen  
William H. Bowen  
John B. Conrad  
John J. Holzinger  
George G. Judd  
Harry M. Vasconcellos  
Henry Wilk

### 445th BG

L.S. Bowers  
Jack Condon  
Paul R. Cool

Henry Eirich  
Edward Kowalski  
Willard E. Vaughn

### 448th BG

Joseph Longo

### 453rd BG

Melvin L. Bishop  
Ralph T. Colliander  
Ralph McClure  
Merle Strum

### 458th BG

Scott Fogg  
Ernest J. Hutchins  
Donley R. Koon  
Burton W. Wheeler, Jr.

### 466th BG

Merl F. Hoyle  
Robert R. Rottman

### 467th BG

Paul J. Hannafey  
Eugene D. Parker  
Edwin F. Rowehl  
Albert L. Touchette

### 467ARC

Elizabeth Mary Willis

### 489th BG

LaVerne S. Graf  
Ralph W. Nix  
John Yatsko

### 491st BG

LTC Dudley E. Friday

### 492nd BG

Robert J. Downes (389th)

## ICE: A WAR STORY *(continued from page 25)*

noticed the nose of the airplane beginning to come up. I motioned Herman to get Gable out of the catwalk where he was preparing his departure. A mild struggle ensued between the two as Gable motioned in the windswept noise for Herman to push him out of the aircraft. (No one bails out of an airplane without a push, shove or kick). Herman finally prevailed and got Gable back onto the flight deck and we three regained our seats.

After taking stock of our situation we knew that: 1) the airplane was not going to crash onto a French or Belgian farm; 2) the crew was short-handed by two-thirds; and 3) we were certainly in no position to complete the mission to Hof. We were still flying on instruments at about 7,000 feet; the wing and tail icing was gone; thus the reason for the airplane's ability to assume straight and level flight — the temperature was warmer. I eased down to an altitude slightly below 4,000 feet and finally left the cloud cover. Not knowing where in the geography of France or Belgium we were, I radioed NUTHOUSE, an emergency radio station on the continent, and explained our plight. NUTHOUSE replied with a compass heading and instructions to fly for ten minutes to a nearby air base for landing. It was then that I remembered that the bomb load we carried was armed and the safety pins, which were kept on each bomb until after takeoff, were removed. Ted Semchuck, the armorer, had carefully put them into the pocket of his flight jacket. And where was Ted Semchuck and the pocketful of safety pins at the moment? I was not certain, but we knew it would not be prudent to land an airplane with a full load of armed and ready bombs and a lot of gasoline onto an airfield with a short runway. Once again I called NUTHOUSE and described the situation regarding the armed and pinless bomb load. The response was swift and unambiguous: "Stay the f--- outta here!"

Upon regaining his composure, the radio operator instructed me to fly to the Channel and dump the bombs in the fifty square mile area in the Channel, which was closed to all surface shipping. This was the spot where returning airplanes with bombs that failed to release at the target area were jettisoned.

We dropped down to about 2,000 feet and flew over the beautiful French countryside. The small fields appeared April green as we flew on a course to the Channel and a bomb-free airplane. Before arriving at the Channel the airspeed indicator became inoperative. Not to worry — the navigator's instrument was okay and he periodically gave me the reading over the

intercom. After reaching the Channel we lost contact with NUTHOUSE and switched over to COLGATE, an air-sea rescue station on the English coast. In the meanwhile Gable was working the GEE box, an early form of radar navigation, in an effort to electronically guide us to the bomb disposal area. COLGATE provided a compass heading and time to reach the disposal area. After several minutes COLGATE says it is OK to jettison the bombs. Gable, who has been diddling with the knobs of the GEE box, shrieks over the intercom, "NO, NO, WE'RE OVER LONDON!" Once again I called COLGATE and was reassured that we could safely drop the load. I lift the bomb release lever and Herman looks over his shoulder to see that all ten bombs have, with certainty, left the aircraft.

We then head for home to await word on the fate of the new members of the Grasshopper Club (anyone who has made an emergency parachute jump). Upon landing we are debriefed and learn that the entire mission was fouled up by the excruciating weather. Like us, other crews of the groups were unable to find their formation and flew with others. Some were short of fuel and landed in France and some were already back at the base, having given up in frustration. For us three who made it back it had been four hours since we took off at 0700. And now it was time to sweat out word of the fate of the rest of the crew.

By the end of that evening we learned that Metosh, Burke and Helbling were back at base. They had landed safely in Belgium and were picked up by an American artillery group that had seen them bail out. They were taken by Jeep to a nearby air base where one of the airplanes from our group had landed for refueling and returned home with the three passengers. The other crew members had a scary but ultimately satisfactory outcome. The tail gunner, Richardson, landed in a Belgian schoolyard as a horde of schoolchildren rushed out to greet him including a pistol-wielding schoolmaster who held the weapon to Richardson's head. Apparently the town had been strafed moments before and the schoolmaster thought that Shorty might be a Luftwaffe pilot. Richardson was able to convince them of his nationality, aided by a U.S. flag patch on his jacket and a plastic card in his pocket which explained in Dutch, French and German: "I am an American." It probably helped that he too was spotted by an American artillery battery outfit as he drifted down which drove into the schoolyard and rescued him from an uncertain fate. Semchuck, the man with a pocketful of safety pins, landed in a field as the farmer was engaged in spring plowing. He was helped by the farmer and

made it to the same air base that Shorty had been transported to, and he and the other waist gunner all returned to Horscham the following day.

Two days later we were flying again — in a different airplane — to Lauenberg, southeast of Hamburg and a munitions dump. On this and subsequent missions we carried a back-up supply of safety pins stored in the bomb bay.

On that ill-fated fiasco we were not credited with a mission completed. Mission credit was earned only in those efforts in which a crew faced the enemy in combat. Bad weather or malfunctioning systems were not the enemy. Nevertheless, the war in Europe ended one month later and we did get to go home, having completed twelve missions.

And now, fifty-five years later, I look back on the thwarted mission to Hof as one of the greatest and most profound learning experiences of my life.

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*ICE: a War Story was published in the 2001/2002 ILR JOURNAL, a publication of the Institute For Learning in Retirement at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. Copyright March 2000 by Edward L. Holmgren. ■*

## OPEN LETTER TO THE 93RD

*(continued from page 23)*

tic for the bitters, but we could dream of our American lager beers.

On May 31, 1945 we took off for the States with our crew and eleven ground crew men. We were traveling light, to keep the load weight down for the flight over the Atlantic Ocean. They promised to send all of our personal stuff over in footlockers by ships, but it got all screwed up and we never received any of it. A year later, I got some pictures and stuff that belonged to some other G.I. I had toyed with the idea of dismantling a nice bicycle that I had acquired and putting it on the plane. But I gave up, avoiding some problems.

We landed at Iceland and then Goose Bay, Labrador before touching down at Dow Field in Bangor, Maine. This was the last time that we saw "Jitters from Bitters." They flew all the planes out to Arizona and sold them for scrap metal.

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Thanks Leo, for such an interesting story. It brings back memories. Our crew also flew back to the States at the same time yours did. We took the same route and our ship was named "Journal Square."

Wishing all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. ■



# Tales of a Tail Gunner in WWII

BY RICHARD C. ROBERT (453RD BG)

for "Stories on a Summer Night" at St. James Place Retirement Community, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

From the time I was a young boy I had great interest in aviation and wanted to fly airplanes. So when the United States got into WWII, I volunteered for the U.S. Army Air Forces. After much technical training, I was assigned to a B-24 bomber replacement crew as a tail turret gunner. Our ten-man aircrew was composed of a pilot, copilot, navigator, bombardier, engineer, radio operator and four aerial gunners.

On completion of combat flight training near Hollywood, California, our crew headed overseas for combat duty with the 8th Air Force in England. We flew a brand new B-24 bomber from Florida to Great Britain via the Southern Route. This took us across the South Atlantic Ocean and two continents: South America and Africa. This long roundabout route took 56 flying hours over a period of 13 days in our four-engine propeller plane.

After arrival in Britain, our crew was assigned to the 453rd Bombardment Group

in the 2nd Air Division of the 8th Air Force. The Eighth Air Force was the largest air force in the world and was comprised of some forty bombardment groups in East Anglia, England. Our Bombardment Group was stationed at Old Buckenham Air Base, about 100 miles north of London near the city of Norwich. At this time, bomber crews in the 8th Air Force were required to fly 35 bombing missions over enemy occupied Europe in order to complete a combat tour of duty, which I did.

Two weeks before the June 6, 1944 Normandy D-Day Invasion of Europe by Allied forces, I started flying combat missions as a B-24 tail gunner in the European Theater of Operations. My first mission was flown in an old B-24, the "Notre Dame," and my 35th and last mission was flown in a newer model B-24, the "Spirit of Notre Dame." Most of our other missions were flown in our own plane, which we named "Hollywood and Vine" after the

famous street corner in Hollywood, California where we often visited while training for combat bombing operations.

Since the 8th Air Force only did daylight bombing, a mission started with an early wakeup around 2:00 a.m. After a quick shave, breakfast and a mission briefing, we received a final blessing from the chaplain. It is now time to start our bombing mission, which is high altitude precision bombing of an industrial, military or transportation target in enemy occupied Europe.

All planes on the mission take off at prescribed times, and assemble into a huge combat formation of 1,000 or so heavy bombers and cross the enemy coast at high altitude. Normal bombing altitude was around 24,000 feet, where the air is thin and very cold, down to minus 60 degrees Fahrenheit. This required the use of oxygen masks and electrically heated

*(continued on next page)*

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## "Sentimental Journey" Reminds Me of my Dad

*Our thanks to Hugh R. McLaren, 389th BG associate member, for the following article.*

In Arizona skies the once familiar drone of four Wright Cyclone R-1820-87 engines can be heard again if you visit Mesa, Arizona's Falcon Field. This municipal airport, once a training field for foreign pilots in WWII, is now the home of a WWII B-17 Flying Fortress bomber named "Sentimental Journey."

Army Air Force serial number 44-83514 was accepted by the AAF in March of 1945. "Sentimental Journey" was assigned to the 13th Air Force, 38th Reconnaissance Squadron based at Clark Field in the Philippines. After WWII "SJ" continued in Air Force Service in the Pacific participating in mapping missions for the government.

When "SJ" returned to the continental U.S. in 1948, many of her sister ships had already been melted down for their aluminum scrap content by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. A new role was found though for "SJ" as a "Dumbo" aircraft with the Navy; a refitted B-17 which carried a life boat under its fuselage. Eventually, "SJ" was reassigned to the Air Force and completed its military service as a drone controller aircraft with the 3205th Drone Group, Air Proving Ground Command, Elgin AFB, Florida, and was then transferred to military stor-

age at Davis Monthan AFB in Tucson.

"SJ" wasn't retired long. In late 1959, the Aero Union Corporation at Chico, California purchased this aircraft for conversion as a slurry bomber; an aircraft engaged in dropping either water or chemical retardants on forest fires. For nineteen years "SJ" served her country once again, albeit in the unglamorous role of a "fire bomber." Year after year crews responded to the comfortable controls of this weary warbird. Who knows how many thousands of acres of our nation's precious timber resources were saved from ashes by an aircraft designed for industrial or strategic destruction!

Finally in January 1978, Aero Union Corporation sold old "414" to an avid group of aviation enthusiasts dedicated to preserving vintage WWII aircraft in flying status. This group, known officially as the Confederate Air Force, operates an extensive museum at Harlingen, Texas. When they began to outgrow their facilities, an idea developed to establish "Wings" across the country where enough interest and funds could be assembled to maintain one or more of these warbirds – hence the formation of the Arizona Wing in 1977.

In the years since the acquisition of old "414," "Sentimental Journey" has been re-configured from its slurry bomber tanker

status back into its familiar "Twelve O'Clock High" wartime configuration. Now, as one walks through this classic aircraft, one notices the Norden bomb-sight and the bombardier's panel up in the nose, as well as the chin yoke arm, which the bombardier used to operate the forward firing gun turret. The navigator's station has been rebuilt even down to the tiny lamp above the navigator's table.

A Sperry upper and lower ball turret, Cheyenne tail turret and both waist gun replica positions have been reinstalled for accurate historic preservation. Even dummy bombs hang from bomb shackles in the bomb bay.

Why so much interest in this 64-year-old relic? My father, Hugh R. McLaren, flew on B-24 Liberator four-engine bombers (similar to the B-17 in size and range) with the U.S. 8th Air Force as part of the 389th Bomb Group, 565th Bomb Squadron. Dad's original B-24 serial number 42-40687 was named "Heaven Can Wait." His aircraft was lost in a mid-air collision near Norwich, England while training for the famous August 1, 1943 low level mission to Ploesti, Romania, whose target area was the massive oil refinery complex.

Dad received the Distinguished Flying Cross for flying on this mission, as did every other crew member aboard the 177

*(continued on page 31)*

# WWII British Army vet finally gets her medals

## She operated U.S. made radar to spot Nazi planes

BY HILLARY WOLFE

Irene La Fay was 17 when she joined the British Army in 1941, mainly because she needed the work.

Her four younger siblings had been evacuated to the countryside in 1940, but she stayed behind. She remembers how the army gave her a test and then told her she would be part of the OFC, or Operational Fire Control. She thought that meant she would be helping put out fires on the ships near her coastal resort town of Southend, right outside of London.

That's when her commanding officer showed her the complicated electronic radar equipment with receivers and transmitters.

"It was mind-boggling," said La Fay. "I had no idea what I was going to do."

It turned out that La Fay, along with many other young women, was about to be trained as a radar operator, picking up German planes and sending their coordinates to predictors who then sent the locations to the gunners.

For four years La Fay served her country as part of a two-person team, one working the receiver and one working the transmitter. And though it was frightening business, she remembers that she had to stay calm.

"Any day the planes came over was scary," she said. "But you just do your work and don't think of anything. I was young. I didn't have time to be frightened."

She did remember one particularly long night, though, because it was the night before she met her husband, an American.

She had just come off a 72-hour shift during which time she had helped shoot down seven planes.

"I was pretty proud of that," she said.

Her work during those years earned her a couple of medals. When her husband of 58 years, Paul La Fay, found out that she had never received them, he sent away for them. Now, La Fay said, he has her medals and pictures of her in uniform plastered all over his office.

"He's the one making a fuss over it after all these years," she said. "I never even think about it, except when my children and grandchildren ask what I did."

During the last year of the war the two British machines La Fay used were replaced with one unit made in America. The American radar units were all-inclusive, but the three-person teams could only work on them for two hours at a time because they emitted radiation.

Her electronics expertise made her a



**IRENE LA FAY** shows off the medals she recently received from the British government in recognition of her service during World War II. She was a radar operator who helped shoot down German buzz bombers.

valuable worker in other ways.

La Fay remembered that her group would also repair electronics and diesel engines. And when a searchlight manufacturer closed down, the searchlights were brought to her team. "We'd pull them apart and put them back together," she said.

Despite her training, La Fay stopped working when she married. Even if she had pursued a career, she said it would not have been in electronics, but dress-making.

In fact, sewing keeps her busy nowadays. She makes dolls for children in hospitals with the Senior Citizens Club in Hacienda Heights, CA.

La Fay and her husband moved to New York right after the war and came to California about 18 years ago after one of their daughters moved here. She said she tries to go back to London every three years or so.

The couple had five children, three of whom are living. Their son and two daughters have given them six grandchildren. ■

### TALES OF A TAIL GUNNER *(continued from page 29)*

flying suits, as B-24s were not pressurized or heated. My tail turret was the coldest place on the plane, where the temperature approximated the outside air. My eyebrows and exposed areas on my face would often be coated in frost from the extreme cold.

My job as tail gunner was to ward off attacking German fighter planes, which I did. The most dangerous part of a mission was the time over the target area, as German industrial and military targets were well defended by fighter planes and anti-aircraft artillery. Our plane often came back with lots of holes from enemy fire, but I fortunately completed my 35 combat missions without being injured or having to bail out and become a prisoner of war.

I enjoyed flying in the Army Air Forces as a young man, and as a senior citizen I still like to fly. My combat service in the air war over Europe during WWII was a most unusual and dangerous experience.

I AM GLAD I DID IT — BUT I WOULDN'T WANT TO DO IT AGAIN!!! ■



# Landing in “Neutral” Switzerland

REPRINTED FROM WISCONSIN BADGER NEWS

In WWII, most of the 166 U.S. aircraft that landed in Switzerland did so out of necessity. It was either that or risk a crash landing in occupied France, or worse, running out of fuel long before reaching English shores. Only about five to ten percent of the crews landed there deliberately to escape the rest of the war. A large number of Americans escaped from the Swiss interment camps and made their way back to England. Of the 1,740 internees and evadees, 947 tried to escape. Of these, 184 attempts failed and the airmen were sent to brutal prison camps that were worse than the Stalag Luft camps in Germany.

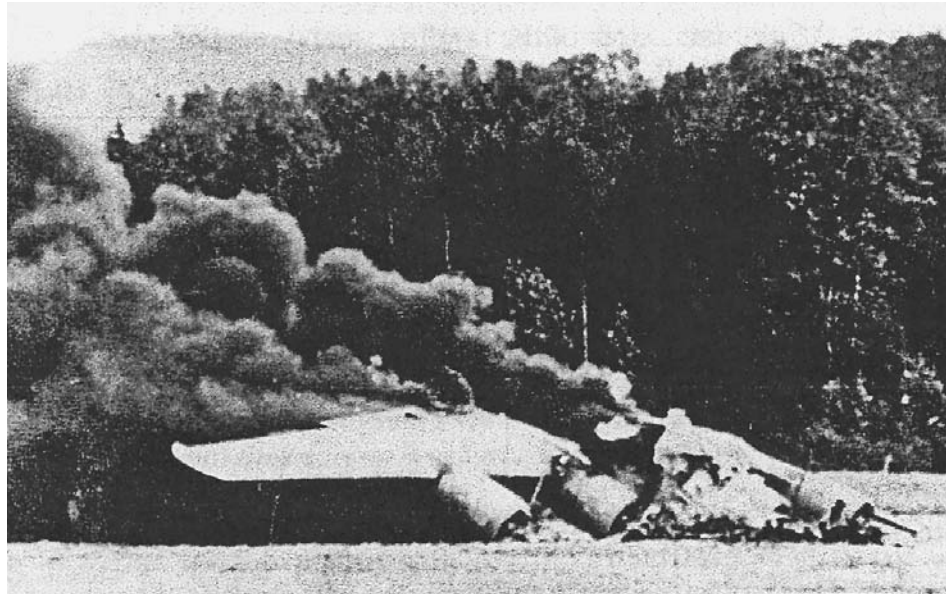
The first airmen to arrive in Switzerland did not land there. They had been shot down over France or Germany and managed to make their way across the Swiss border. These men were considered “evadees” rather than internees. According to Swiss laws dating back to medieval times, they were entitled to sanctuary and some were free to leave like tourists. They were kept in separate camps from the internees who landed or parachuted into Switzerland.

A popular saying at that time was, “The Swiss are working for the Germans six days a week and praying for the Allies on the seventh!” However, the alliance between Switzerland and Germany was mostly an economic one. Looking at it from another perspective, if the Swiss had not cooperated with Germany, they would most likely have been annexed and occupied by German forces. Probably 95% of the Swiss people were openly pro-Allies.

The first foreign aircraft to land in Switzerland was a Luftwaffe Dornier Do-17Z-3 on 21 April 1940. The crew mistook Basel-Biresfelden airfield for a German field and landed. They were interned by the Swiss, but were later released due to pressure from the German government.

Until the summer of 1942, all landings or crashes of foreign aircraft on Swiss soil were made by Axis planes. A number of Me-110s and He-111s were shot down by Swiss fighters and a number of Luftwaffe training aircraft landed in error. Some of the German crews were allowed to return to Germany.

The first landing of an Allied aircraft was made by a British Mosquito in August of 1942. The pilot and copilot were returning from a recon mission to Venice when an engine overheated and they were forced to land at the Berne-Belp airfield. The two-man crew tried to destroy the plane, but they failed in the attempt. The



The death of “Death Dealer”

aircraft was repaired by the Swiss and later saw service in the Swiss Air Force. Both pilot and copilot were returned to England and paired with two German pilots sent back to Germany.

The first U.S. aircraft to land on Swiss soil was a B-24D named “Death Dealer.” It was from the 93rd Bomb Group and had taken part in a raid on the Messerschmitt factory at Wiener-Neustadt. The plane was set on fire and destroyed by the crew. In an almost unbelievable coincidence, the first B-24 to land in Sweden was also from the 93rd Bomb Group and it too was named “Death Dealer.”

The first B-17 to put down in Switzerland was from the 100th Bomb Group. They crash landed with #3 feathered, #2 shot up with the prop windmilling and the landing gear up. They had just left Schweinfurt on 17 August 1943. The second B-17 to land was from the 390th Bomb Group and had also been on the Schweinfurt mission. They bellied in near Berne on the 17th with two engines shot out. The last arrival landed on 20 April 1945. It was a B-17G from the 15th Air Force.

Of the 166 U.S. aircraft that landed, 74 were B-17s and 82 were B-24s. The rest were fighters and recon aircraft. A record of 16 U.S. aircraft landed in one day on 18 March 1944. Twelve were B-24s and four were B-17s. Six of the twelve B-24s were from the 44th Bomb Group alone. Some landings were highly questionable, such as when a B-24D from the 93rd Bomb Group, a veteran of the famous Ploesti raid, landed at Dubendorf on 16 March 1944. The Swiss noted, “The aircraft was virtually undamaged and contained enough fuel to

get them back to England.”

From August to October of 1945, 30 B-17s and 41 B-24s were flown back to Burtonwood in the U.K. The rest were scrapped in Switzerland. Ironically, those that were flown to England arrived too late to be flown back to the U.S. and so were scrapped at Burtonwood. Other items, such as aircraft equipment, bombs, flight clothing, etc. were hauled out of Switzerland by trucks to Munich-Erding, Germany where they were destroyed or burned. ■

## SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY *(continued from page 29)*

aircraft that attempted to destroy this industrial target. One third of the dispatched aircraft never returned.

Whenever I attend an air show with “Sentimental Journey” I recall the efforts of all of our air and ground crews that served in the Army Air Forces in WWII. I feel a sense of deep personal pride in the restoration of 44-85514, but even more I feel we were honoring all of the men and women who gave so much to preserve our way of life. My “Sentimental Journey” always extends back to my father’s heroic sacrifices and my mother’s loyal and unfailing love that enabled him to face these aerial missions.

“Sentimental Journey” today represents pride in our past and instills a confidence in our future for all who see her, a graceful lady, whose elegance is most keenly appreciated against the backdrop of a clear blue Arizona sky. ■



## WENDLING 392nd BY OAK MACKEY

The 60th Annual Convention of the Second Air Division Association, held at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan, August 30 – September 3, is history. The hotel facilities were excellent, there were five first-class restaurants, and there was the new twenty-eight-story tower plus the completely renovated rooms of the former Pantlind Hotel, a landmark for years located in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids. The hotel employees were gracious and attentive; they went out of their way to be extra nice to us old vets and families. It should have been a very special convention, but it wasn't. There were only 120 people there, members and guests included. Helena and Stanley Zybert, Maxine and myself were the only 392nd BG folks attending. All the rest of you missed a good time, for it was a fun convention. Other than general old age, there may have been a couple of reasons for the low attendance. Grand Rapids is a bit off the beaten track and airline flights mostly require a connection in Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, etc. Also, the 8th AFHS convention was in Kalamazoo, Michigan in July of 2007. Put those things together and you have the recipe for the low attendance. Next year will be better; the convention will be in Dallas, Texas in October. The weather will be cool, airfares will be low, there are many non-stop flights from almost anywhere in the country, and it is within driving distance for many. So, mark your calendars and make your plans. This will be a good one, and there won't be many more.

This is a special note to all 392nd BG members. You have read in the 392nd BG Memorial Association "NEWS" about the fund drive to increase the trust fund which provides the money to maintain the memorial and grounds at our old airbase at Wendling. An additional \$20,000 is needed. Carroll Cheek has made a very generous offer. He will donate \$10,000 when donations from all other members total \$10,000. Make your checks out to 392nd BG Memorial Association, write Wendling Memorial on the memo line, and mail to Bill McCutcheon, 20620 Milton Court, Brookfield, WI 53045. Be generous, keeping in mind you cannot take it with you.

The Executive Committee of the Second Air Division Association met on August 30, 2007 in Grand Rapids just prior to the convention. On April 25, 2007 the Fulbright Commission announced to the 2ADA that they were cancelling the Fulbright/2ADA contract. Provisions in the contract provide for such cancellation; either party to the contract can cancel by giving the other party 60-days notice. If the contract is cancelled by either party, the corpus of the Fulbright Memorial Library Award will be returned to the Second Air Division Association. This has been accomplished. The Executive Committee voted nearly unanimously to pass the corpus over to the Memorial Trust Board of Governors. The Governors have volunteered to act in the same capacity as the Fulbright Commission. They will manage the assets of the corpus to provide an American presence in our Second Air Division Memorial Library in the form of an American Librarian. Also, they will advertise for, and select a suitable candidate for the position of said librarian. The amount of the corpus is \$990,000.

Another noteworthy event at the Grand Rapids convention was the election of my good friend Earl Zimmerman (389th BG) to the office of President of the Second Air Division Association. This will be Earl's second term in office; he was President a long time ago, back before 1980. Also, John Lee of the 93rd BG was elected Executive VP. Please give Earl and John the same cooperation, goodwill and friendship you gave me during my term.

One more Executive Committee item for your consideration. Total dues-paying membership in the 2ADA is around 3300, times \$20.00 for dues, which gives a gross annual income of \$66,000. Each issue of the *Journal* costs \$11,000; four issues cost \$44,000. That doesn't leave much to pay other expenses. The Executive Committee considered raising the dues and decided against it. A plan of voluntary contributions was adopted. When you receive your annual dues notice in November, there will be a line on it where you can add a voluntary contribution for the *Journal*. We are not looking for a large donation here; if each member could come up with just \$5 that would be sufficient, however, larger donations will be accepted. The *Journal* is literally the life-blood of the 2ADA. Without it we fall apart and become nothing. If this plan of voluntary contributions works well, we can maintain four issues annually and keep the 36-page format.

Now that I have picked your pocket, it is time to say good-bye. Be kind to each other. ■

## Better Listen

by Robert D. Davis (392nd BG)

*The black sands are stirring on  
Tarawa and Iwo  
Soft murmurs pass between the  
crosses in Henri-Chapelle  
Sands shift angrily at the water's  
edge at Omaha and Utah  
The ones who gave all are stirring  
– growing restless  
Better listen – better listen*

*Soft rumbles can be heard thru the  
skies over Schweinfurt and  
Ploesti  
Leaves are beginning to quiver on  
the trees hiding the old prison  
camps  
The hurried rewriting of history  
will never erase the sacrifices  
at Guadalcanal and  
Bougainville  
Unease is growing among the fallen  
about their country  
Better listen – better listen*

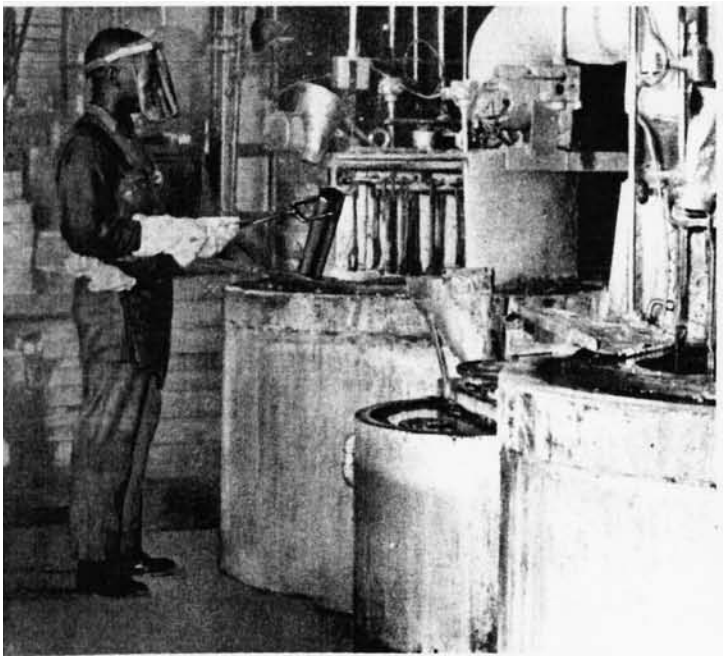
*Watch Old Glory – she unfurls and  
snaps in disgust  
She has no trouble hearing those  
who are now growing restless  
They are stirring – Anzio, Po  
River, Remagen, Pearl  
Better listen – better listen*

*This is still their country – left in  
your care  
They did not stain their country's  
Flag or Honor  
In God they trusted and gave all  
for that trust  
They hear their country's borders  
are unprotected and they are  
growing restless  
Can't you hear them?  
Our country, my country, our  
Flag, my Flag, our Honor, my  
Honor, they are priceless  
Better listen – better listen*

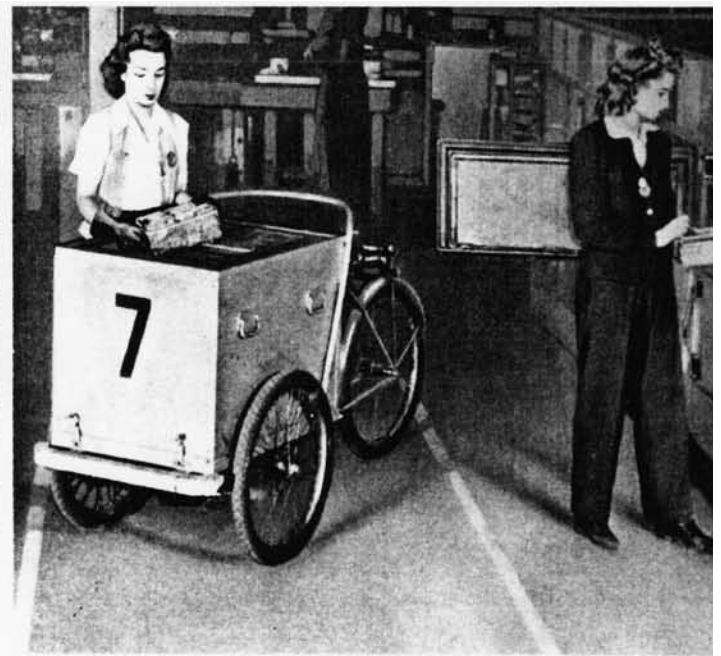
*Three thousand in five years? –  
Try three thousand in one day –  
day after day.  
Better listen – you can claim to be  
taking care of their country  
They gave their lives for their own  
united nation – not a United  
Nations  
Better listen, they are growing  
restless*

*Don't wait until you can hear  
them clearly*

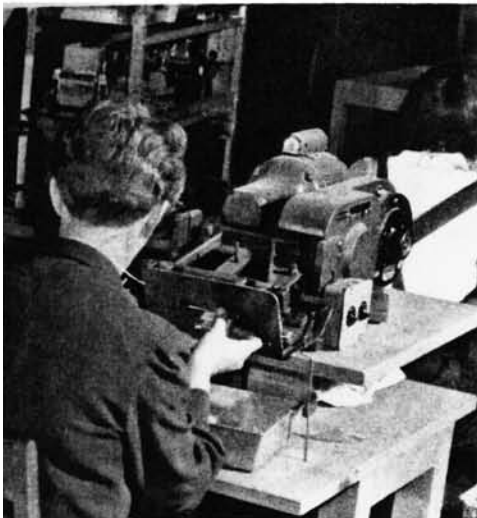




Above, furnaces where rivets are heat-treated.



Above, refrigerators for storing "D" rivets.



Above, part of the rivet packaging machinery.

Below, rivets emerge in glassine paper bags.



# 300,000 RIVETS

From PLANE TALK, circa 1943

An idea for packaging rivets in transparent bags has revolutionized rivet handling at Consolidated Vultee.

Each Liberator bomber needs more than 300,000 rivets to hold it together. Workers used to drop them frequently on the job. Once 23 tons were swept up, and had to be sorted into 400 different sizes and kinds.

Today the rivets are packed in cellophane. The bag is stamped with the rivet's size, and is packed automatically. The worker is saved time in finding the size he needs, and few rivets get dropped.

Two types of rivets are used. One is called the "AD." This is dyed a greenish-yellow color to distinguish it. Following its heat treatment, it is allowed to harden four days at room temperature. It can then be driven without cracking.

The second type, called the "D" rivet, is made of a harder alloy, and is about 10 percent stronger than the "AD." It will crack if driven after it is age-hardened. Hence it is kept in refrigeration to arrest its hardening, until needed on the job. These "D" rivets stay cold in their bags for an hour and a half after being taken out of the refrigerator, because the bag acts as insulation. They are delivered to workers on the line in ice-carts. ■



Above, sealing the rivets in the handy bag.

Below, storage rack for labelled rivet bags.





To the Editor:

The tragic loss of pilot Captain Harry B. McGregor on August 9, 1944 was painful. How did we make it if Harry couldn't?



**Harry B. McGregor**

He was a pilot's pilot. He had more hours than any of us and an authority with an airplane that was unsurpassed and something we never questioned. His crew came from Tucson and was assigned to the 787th. He was very much like actor Jimmy Stewart – always right!! Some thought he was invincible – a giant in a land of uncertain young fliers in a war hardly seeming to affect him. He was in the lead on most of his missions as the crew felt safe with "Solid Harry." On his 28th mission, he was assigned the deputy position due to the fact that the lead was given to Lt. Godbout and his PFF crew. Harry's B-24 was hit by AA and the #3 engine was on fire. The aircraft went on its back and into a spin – no chutes were seen. The news of the shoot-down shocked and saddened the 466th combat crews.

James O. Auman (466th)  
352 Church Street  
St. Marys, PA 15857



To the Editor:

For the fourth year in a row, Andrea and I greatly enjoyed attending the 2nd Air Division Association convention where, once again, the warm friendships shown by all present made it a very happy occasion for both of us. Our particular thanks, as always, go to Evelyn Cohen and all the others who did so much to ensure an excellent few days in Grand Rapids.

Although the attendance was low this year, and we were disappointed not to see several old friends, the small number

present made for a very cozy gathering. We were delighted to be able to talk to almost everybody there, and to meet for the first time more than a few with whom we hadn't had that pleasure before.

After the convention we drove up to Sault Ste Marie, and I'm writing this on our flight home from Dallas having returned there via Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas. In Little Rock I was impressed to find that the Outreach Coordinator at the MacArthur Military History Museum knows of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library from research she had carried out for an 8th Air Force veteran, and it will remain a pleasure and privilege for me to help maintain your Memorial Library as a focal point of Anglo-American understanding and friendship for many years to come.

Andrea and I hope to visit many more of your states in due course, but in the meantime, we look forward both to welcoming any of you and your families who come to Norfolk and to being with you again at your convention in 2008.

Andrew Hawker  
Trust Governor, Norwich



To the Editor:

I would like to hear from anyone who knows the availability of an article by General Robert Cardenas in which combat during WWII was described. That article is a perfect description of what bomber crews went through. I have been searching for the article and even had a copy but misplaced it.

Please let me know if you know where it is available. General Cardenas has written so many articles that he doesn't recall who published it.

Mark Morris  
1419 20-1/2 Lane  
Pueblo, CO 81006  
E-mail: marksan61@msn.com



To the Editor:

Can Jean and I express our very sincere thanks to the 2nd Air Division Association and all the members who attended the 60th Annual Convention at Grand Rapids for all the kindness, friendship and warmth of welcome we received. As always, it was great to be back with that wonderful 2ADA family even though it was sad to realize that this was our last trip across the Atlantic, but we will still serve your Memorial and see you in Norwich.

Also our thanks to Linda Dewey for having us stay at her beach house prior to

the convention. As always you have left us with so many memories, and thanks to the hard work by Evelyn Cohen it was another superb occasion.

David Hastings  
Trust Governor  
"Westering"  
32 Thieves Lane  
Salhouse  
Norwich, NR13 6RQ  
England



To the Editor:

I have just read a copy of the *Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 1. I had not been aware such a thing existed and I was fascinated. I was a tail gunner on a B-24 H in the 491st for 31 missions from 6/2/44 thru 8/14/44. I have a log of all the missions.

We flew out of Metfield, I believe until the bomb dump blew up, and then moved to another field. Our pilot was Wakely. I would like to get on your mailing list. Please inform me of the cost.

Mr. Wesley C. Lund  
3834 54th Ave. SW  
Seattle, WA 98116-3625

*Ed: The 2ADA and the 491st welcome you!*



To the Editor:

In the Summer 2007 issue of the *Journal*, in the letter section, I asked the members to send me a copy of a story I wrote for a 1989 *Journal* entitled "This Ole Hut." I received two copies. One was from Don Fraser of Freeland, Michigan, who was a bombardier in the 458th. The other was from a gentleman from the Memorial Trust, Norfolk, England. Thanks, Ray, for the service. I am happy. Life is good. Carry on.

Michael J. Donahue (93rd)  
725 Village E - Apt. C  
Midland, MI 48642-9352



To the Editor:

I have to get this off my chest before I pass on. I was a member of Lt. Clesen Tenney's crew. He came from Del Rio, Texas. We took our overseas training at Westover Army Air Base in the state of Massachusetts. Little did I know that crew 238 was to become an ill-fated crew. Lt. Tenney was to be piloting one of three B-24s heading to Greencastle, Ireland. George Moss, our engineer, woke me and said would you care to go to Ireland that October 18th, 1944. I said sure. I turned over on my side and finally got up about 9 o'clock. Had I boarded that aircraft, I would have been killed. Fifty percent of



Tenney's crew was killed. The rest of us were used as needed to fill out other crews. The bombardier, Lt. Keil Holland, lost his life on a mission, as did George McGuinness, the waist gunner. I flew a mission with Lt. Clifton Howard on February 24th, 1945. Upon taking off with 20 one hundred pound (napalm) bombs, the aircraft was having a problem with its #1 engine. The pilot feathered the engine. Then #3 engine started to make too many revolutions per minute. This made the plane harder to fly. Lt. Howard decided to fly the aircraft back to the base. He made four banks into the feathered #1 engine. On the last bank, I saw the runway. The control tower instructed Lt. Howard not to land because of the napalm the plane was carrying. We crashed. Lt. Howard lost his life. The navigator, bombardier, nose gunner and engineer also died. Five survived. The copilot, Lt. G. Stevens, didn't remember any part of the crash. He died four years ago. The radio operator and three gunners received burns and injuries, as did Lt. Stevens. Of those who died in the plane accident at Landican, England on October 18th, 1944, flight officer Roy Sechler is the only one of Lt. Tenney's crew resting at Madingley Cemetery. Those who died on February 24th, 1945, of Lt. Clifton Howard's crew in the crash outside the base, were crew chief Henry Holloway and nose gunner Herman Barnes. Divine Providence has a wonderful way of working, for HE brought me home.

There are three of us left out of Lt. Tenney's crew: William Langevort, John Readington and myself. I wish someone could find John Readington for me.

Stephen J. Bolcar (445th)  
413 Boonton Avenue  
Boonton, NJ 07005



To the Editor:

I'm doing research for a documentary film about the Tuskegee Airmen. It will be made in conjunction with a feature film, currently called "Red Tails," that Lucasfilm is beginning to make. Along with speaking with members of the 332nd Fighter Group, I'd like to speak with B-17 and B-24 airmen who have memories of their bombers being escorted by Red Tails, and/or running into Red Tails pilots while on leave in Italy in 1944 and 1945.

Also it appears that the 485th Bombardment Group force landed at the 332nd base at Ramitelli in December 1944. If any bomber pilots have memories of a force landing at Ramitelli, I'd be very interested in speaking with them. I can be reached via e-mail at [Sharon.wood@lucasfilm.com](mailto:Sharon.wood@lucasfilm.com) or by phone at 415-662-5719. My mailing



Stephen J. Bolcar

address is at the end of this letter.

I very much look forward to speaking with bomber airmen with memories of the Red Tails and hope to hear from them as soon as possible.

Sharon Wood  
JAK Films  
P.O. Box 2009  
San Rafael, CA 94912-2009

*Ed. Note: I know that we had exchanges of crews between the 8th AF and the*

*15th AF. Perhaps you can help her out.*



To the Editor:

I attended the 2nd Air Division Association convention in October 2006 and went to the Pentagon for the dedication of the Air Force Memorial. I missed you and was sorry you were not up to attending. You are so valuable to the 2nd Air Division Association as the Editor Supreme. The reason I haven't been up to writing to you sooner is that I have finally gotten off one pill my doctor wanted me to eliminate, Predisone, which is a steroid and was prescribed by a doctor I no longer go to. My present doctor wanted me to cut it out as I was now down to ½ tablet every other day. I tried it but I missed it. Well, when I went to the convention I forgot to put the bottle in and I decided it was time. When I arrived home I was really missing it, but with the bones' weakening effect, I decided to get off of it completely. It took me time, but I am off.

The day of the dedication I wore Bill's cap with Ploesti and a B-24 to the Pentagon area. Several Air Force people stopped me and wanted to know where I had gotten the hat. We had a conversation and I told them that Bill had 30,000 flying hours. They were quite impressed.

Ms. William J. Denton  
2605 Via Olivera  
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274



## 'Memphis Belle' exhibition opens

REPRINTED FROM "FLYPAST"

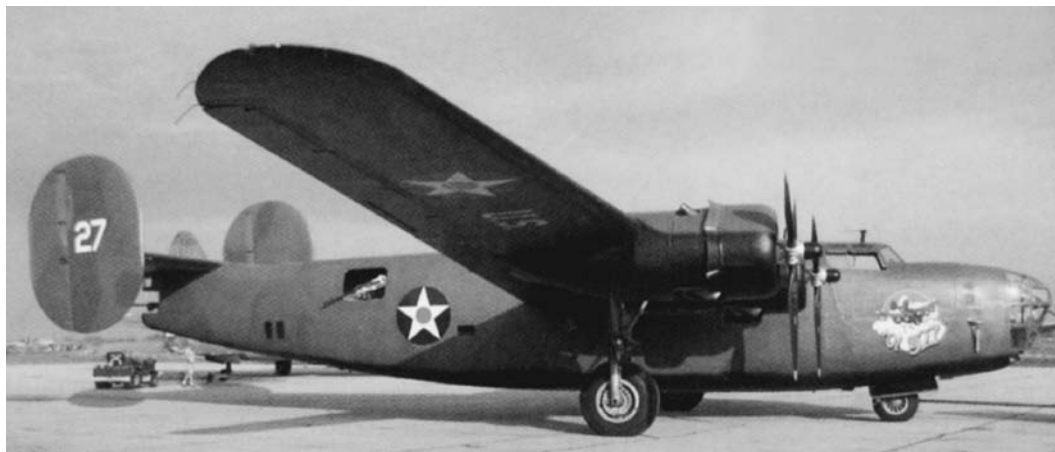
A permanent new exhibition detailing the story of the famous Boeing B-17F Flying Fortress 41-24485 *Memphis Belle* was unveiled at the Tower Museum, Basingbourn, Cambs, on May 17. The display details its crew and their missions from Basingbourn, the War Bond tour of the U.S., and the famous William Wyler 1943 documentary.

The exhibition that took six months to complete was researched and constructed by the museum's curator Chris Murphy and aviation historian Graham Simons. There has been no permanent detailed exhibition relating to this famous B-17 since the Tower Museum was opened in 1974. Major Stone, a serving USAF pilot, and Lt. Col. Nigel J. Smith, Commanding Officer of Basingbourn Barracks, opened the exhibition.

To celebrate the opening, the Memphis Belle Swing Orchestra, which appeared in the Hollywood blockbuster film in 1990, performed in the *Belle's* former home, Hangar 3, on June 9. The museum is open on Wednesdays, Sundays and bank holidays, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, go to [www.towermuseumbasingbourn.co.uk](http://www.towermuseumbasingbourn.co.uk). ■

# Goodbye 'Diamond Lil', hello 'Ol' 927'

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The CAF's B-24A "Ol' 927" at Midland, Texas in its new livery. At right, crew chief Gary Austin poses with the new nose art.

Following six months of painstaking refurbishment by crew chief Gary Austin and his team, the Commemorative Air Force's Consolidated B-24 Liberator NL24927 was unveiled at Midland, Texas, on May 12. Formerly flown in LB-30 transport configuration as 'Diamond Lil,' the CAF flagship has been returned to its original B-24A layout, complete with new paint scheme, gun and crew positions, along with the bomb racks. Nose art has also been applied.

The team managed to acquire a set of original bomb-bay doors, but due to the tight timescales involved, they were unable to fit them. They will be installed at a later date.

The four props were sent to San Antonio Propeller Service over the winter, as they require a regulatory inspection. Gary had the company repaint them after the work had been completed. All the flying control surfaces were removed, recovered, painted and then refitted.

The CAF's Liberator was built as a B-24A and was destined for the RAF in 1941, but a landing accident in New Mexico put an end to its transfer. Rebuilt, it was used to transport cargo and VIPs around the U.S., and gained the nickname 'Ol' 927.'

After being "demobbed," it was bought by the Continental Can Company and flew as an executive transport for about a decade. It was then sold to Mexico's national oil company, Petroleos Mexicanos, and flown in South America until the CAF acquired it in 1967. In 1971, the Liberator was put in the paint scheme and markings of the 9th Air Force's 98th Bomb Group.

This Liberator did not carry nose art during its service life, so Gary and the team used some artistic license and came up with a fetching design incorporating its original name. 'Ol' 927' will show its new configuration with a U.S. tour. For more information, go to their website: [www.commemorativeairforce.org](http://www.commemorativeairforce.org). ■

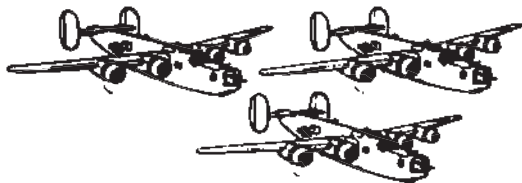
## "Best Bomber"

'Ol' 927' picked up Judge's Choice for the best bomber at the Oshkosh EAA "Air Venture" event, July 23-29, 2007. More than 10,000 aircraft appeared at Wittman Regional and the overflow East Central Wisconsin airports, including 1,014 vintage aircraft and 365 warbirds. Overall attendance was estimated at 560,000. ■



## SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION EIGHTH AIR FORCE

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