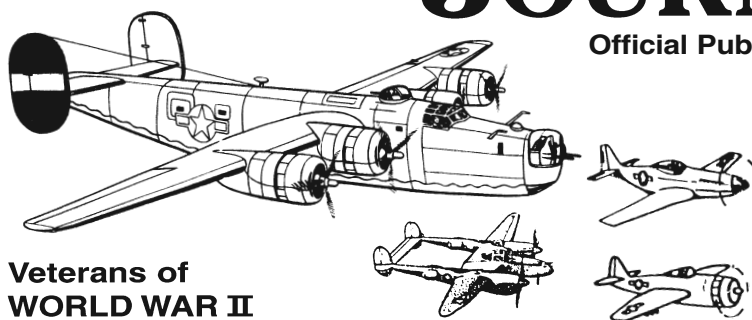


**IT'S
CONVENTION
TIME!**

**October 17-20
Grapevine, Texas
SEE YOU THERE!**

THE JOURNAL

Official Publication of the:



Volume 47 Number 3

Fall 2008

President's Message: "Reflections"

BY EARL ZIMMERMAN (389TH BG)

As the end of my term as your President approaches, I reflect on our Association and on our heritage with the Second Air Division Memorial Library. This year we will join in the celebration of the 61st anniversary of our great organization. Our former officers, and others, continue to nurture the relationship through their efforts. I am especially grateful for the members, past and present, of the Memorial Trust in Norwich.

We are getting down to a precious few, and it is the transition of the future pool of personnel that gives me some concern. The time has come to consider closing down the 2ADA. Another matter will be the future of the *Journal*.

Going through some old photos in my file cabinet brings back

many memories. The dedication of the first library in 1963; our return trips to Norwich every three years; the Bunnies at the Playboy Club in Lake Geneva; Bunnies chasing me all around the swimming pool . . . or was it the other way around?

I think of time spent with Jordan Uttal at a service in the Hethel Chapel; with David and Jean Hastings who attended twenty-six of our reunions; listening to Evelyn Cohen telling about her wild three-day passes in London; and Lloyd Prang doing a full lay-out with a half twist off the staircase in Grand Rapids and breaking a few bones.

In closing, I express my appreciation to the 2ADA Executive Committee members for their service during my tenure. ■

"The Valiant Clan"

PYRAMIDIERS OVER PLOESTI



Hugh McLaren advises that **Historic Aviation** sells this wonderful poster of "The Squaw" and "Hail Columbia" assaulting Ploesti on 1 August 1943, under the title "The Valiant Clan." Another poster they have is "Coming Back Is Secondary," featuring the final mission of the B-24 "Vulgar Virgin" and signatures of the artist and twelve Ploesti survivors. For more information, contact **Historic Aviation**, 121 Fifth Avenue NW, New Brighton, MN 55112, phone 1-800-225-5575.

DIRECTORY

Honorary President JORDAN R. UTTAL
Town Village North • 12271 Coit Road #3201 • Dallas, TX 75251
Telephone: 972-788-9041

OFFICERS

President EARL ZIMMERMAN
P.O. Box 40897, Indianapolis, IN 46240
Telephone: 317-846-1462

Executive Vice President JOHN L. LEE
930 Preston Trail, Melbourne, FL 32940-7822
Telephone: 321-259-6861 • E-mail: Jlee1922@aol.com

Vice President Membership EVELYN COHEN
06-410 Delaire Landing Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114-4157
Telephone: 215-632-3992 • Fax: 215-632-8319

Treasurer E.W. (BILL) NOTHSTEIN
1359 Harwood Lane, Macedon, NY 14502
Telephone: 315-986-7374

Secretary and Director of
Administrative Services RAYMOND E. STRONG
642 Cedar Club Circle, Chapel Hill, NC 27517-7215
Telephone: 919-967-2301 • E-mail: rstrong2@cochill.net

2ADA Representative
Board of Governors CHARLES WALKER
9824 Crest Meadow, Dallas, TX 75230-5331
Telephone: 214-987-0467 • E-mail: b24man@aol.com

GROUP VICE PRESIDENTS

Headquarters RAYMOND E. STRONG
642 Cedar Club Circle, Chapel Hill, NC 27517-7215
Telephone: 919-967-2301 • E-mail: rstrong2@cochill.net

44th Bomb Group RICHARD D. BUTLER
16828 Mitchell Circle, Riverside, CA 92518
Telephone: 951-697-2908 • Fax: 951-697-5875
E-mail: rdb24@earthlink.net

93rd Bomb Group CHARLES D. SILL
808 Fernridge Court, Modesto, CA 95351-4469
Telephone: 209-537-8381 • E-mail: CHRSSL2@ClearWire.net

389th Bomb Group FIELDER NEWTON
3301 Shellers Bend #914, State College, PA 16801-3068
Telephone: 814-235-0889

392nd Bomb Group OAK MACKEY
6406 East Presidio, Mesa, AZ 85215-0972
Telephone: 480-641-3033 • Fax: 480-641-0506
E-mail: oakmackey@msn.com

445th Bomb Group CLARENCE A. LUHMANN
673 290th Avenue, Blue Earth, MN 56003-9710
Telephone: 507-773-4431

446th Bomb Group CARL ALBRIGHT
3300 Utah NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110
Telephone: 805-298-5988 • E-mail: calbri@comcast.net

448th Bomb Group KING SCHULTZ
2011 Lemonberry Lane, La Costa Glen, Carlsbad, CA 92009
Telephone: 760-704-6430

453rd Bomb Group LLOYD PRANG
2451 Willow St., Greenwood, IN 46142 • Tel. 317-885-0224

458th Bomb Group E.A. "RICK" ROKICKI
2605 Chapel Lake Dr. #207, Gambrills, MD 21054
Telephone: 410-721-0298 • Fax: 410-721-0283

466th Bomb Group JAMES H. LORENZ
5331 East Poinsettia Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85254-4716
Telephone: 480-951-0343 • E-mail: jameslorenz@aol.com

467th Bomb Group WALTER J. MUNDY
15533 Swallowtail Road, Edmond, OK 73013
Telephone: 405-340-1677 • Fax: 405-359-9537
E-mail: warminok@att.net

489th Bomb Group MEL PONTILLO
837 Childs Avenue, Monaca, PA 15061-1318
Telephone: 724-774-2398 • E-mail: melltill@aol.com

491st Bomb Group JOHN A. PALLER
2 Walnut Drive, Flemington, NJ 08822
Tel: 908-782-3791 • E-mail: DJP88@earthlink.net

492nd Bomb Group THIS POSITION IS VACANT

JOURNAL

Editor RAY R. PYTEL
P.O. Box 484, Elkhorn, WI 53121-0484
Telephone: 262-723-6381 • Fax: 262-723-7981

HERITAGE LEAGUE

President BRIAN MAHONEY
90-27 170th Street, Jamaica, NY 11432
Tel: 202-232-1423 • E-mail: BriCamera@mindspring.com

2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Trust Librarian LIBBY MORGAN
The Forum, Millennium Plain, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 1AW, UK
E-mail: 2admemorial.lib@norfolk.gov.uk
Website: www.2ndair.org.uk



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

JOURNAL



TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message
EARL ZIMMERMAN FRONT COVER

Executive Vice President's Message
JOHN LEE 3

The Editor's Contribution
RAY PYTEL 4

The Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division
MATTHEW MARTIN 6

Report of the 2ADA Representative on the
Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust
CHUCK WALKER 6

News from Across the Pond
LIBBY MORGAN 7

Your Heritage League
BRIAN MAHONEY 8

Folded Wings 14

Letters to the Editor 34

2ADA Financial Report
ELWOOD W. NOTHSTEIN 35

GROUP REPORTS

44th News
DICK BUTLER 24

Open Letter to the 93rd
CHARLES SILL 10

389th Green Dragon Flares
FIELDER NEWTON 14

392nd Bomb Group
OAK MACKEY 20

445th Bomb Group
CLARENCE LUHMANN 13

446th Flixton-Bungay Update
CARL ALBRIGHT 14

The 448th Speaks
KING SCHULTZ 17

News of the 453rd from Flame Leap
LLOYD PRANG 25

458th Bomb Group
RICK ROKICKI 9

466th Attlebridge Tales
JIM LORENZ 10

467th Poop from Group
WALTER MUNDY 10

489th Notes
MEL PONTILLO 12

491st Ringmaster Reports
JOHN PALLER 15

FEATURES

A Strange Wartime Incident
"BAD NEWS" 3

"The Pregnant Guppy"
RAY PYTEL 5

Me, Mom, and World War II
BOOK REVIEW BY DR. RITA HAZEN 8

"The Younger Ones" in Norwich,
Remembrance Day
CAROL HOLLIDAY 11

British Air Expert Lauds U.S. Products
PETER MASEFIELD 16

Mission Homeward Bound
HAROLD DORFMAN 17

Wartime Advertising 18 & 19

Consolidated Sets Record in Low Cost
for 1943
TUCSON DAILY CITIZEN 20

The Balloon Bombers
C. GRAHAM 21

Last WWII Bombing Mission Over Europe
EILEEN O. DADAY 22

Crew Gates Revisited
ANDY DeBIASSE 23

"Ben Love: My Life in Texas Commerce"
BOOK REVIEW 24

Inventor of Marvel Plane Wing
is Visitor in Madison
MADISON, WISCONSIN CAPITAL TIMES 26

Number 35: My Last Mission
ROBERT CLARK BARNES 27

An Appreciation of David Neale
DAVID HASTINGS BACK COVER

MEMORIAL TRUST BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MATTHEW MARTIN
Chairman

Dairy Farmhouse, Low Common, Swardston,
Norwich NR14 8LG, Norfolk, England

RICHARD J. ASHTON

Director, American Air Museum,
Duxford Airfield, Cambridge, CB2 4OR, England

PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER BIGSBY

School of English and American Studies
University of East Anglia
Norwich, Norfolk, NR4 7TJ, England

MRS. FRANCES DAVIES

57 Church Lane, Eaton, Norwich, Norfolk, NR4 6NY, England

DAVID DOUGLAS

Langton Cottage, Langton, Spilsby, Lincs. PE23 4PU, England

BEN DU BROW

Framingham Cottage, FRAMINGHAM PIGOT,
Norwich, Norfolk, NR14 7PZ, England

JOSEPH M. DZENOWAGIS, JR.

23890 Middlebelt Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48336 USA

PETER FOSTER

8 Albermarle Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 2DF, England

DAVID Q. GURNEY

The Priory, Church Street, Litcham, King's Lynn,
Norfolk PE32 2NS, England

DAVID J. HASTINGS

"Westering," Salhouse, Norwich, Norfolk, NR13 6RQ, England

ANDREW HAWKER

10 Rectory Lane, Mulbarton,
Norwich, NR14 8AG, Norfolk, England

DAVID HILL

Shotesham Lodge, Shotesham All Saints,
Norfolk, NR15 1YL, England

MICHAEL LONGE

4 Edenhurst Close, Unthank Road,
Norwich, NR4 7Q7, England

MICHAEL MACY

Cultural Attaché, U.S. Embassy,
24 Grosvenor Square, London, W1A 1AE, England

JEAN STEWARD

14 Claremont Road, Norwich, NR4 68H, England

CHARLES WALKER

9824 Crest Meadow, Dallas, TX 75230-5331 USA
2ADA Representative on the Board of Governors

Executive Vice President's Message

BY JOHN L. LEE (93RD BG)

This is the last issue of the *Journal* before the Dallas convention. Betty and I are looking forward to seeing many of our veteran members and others there. The Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust in Norwich has taken action to set up the selection of an American librarian with the purpose to provide a personal American presence in the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library. I am confident Matthew Martin will give a full report on this in Dallas or in his article in this issue of the *Journal*.

There is some discussion going on among our members that this may be our last formal convention of the 2ADA. I personally feel that we should try to carry on for a few more years. It is possible however that some of the conditions that are set out in the bylaws may necessitate a dissolution. I feel that there is a lot involved in this issue that we need to cover in Dallas. I would like to recommend that we take steps to give greater responsibility to the younger generation.

A little reminiscence after more than 63 years:

I started a logbook when I headed off to England and the air base at Hardwick. Recently I showed it to my wife and heard her laughing quietly. She informed me that it was a most interesting account of daily activities until the last entry. It seems something distracted me so that I stopped making entries. That something was an Irish maiden with red hair who worked in Norwich as part of the war effort. For some reason I never followed up on the encounter but it still remains in my memory bank.

After the war I returned to my home in Baltimore, Maryland where I met and married my first wife. We raised our four children and were happily married for 54 years when she passed away. Betty, my present wife, and I knew each other for over twenty years but just as neighbors and friends. We both lost our first spouses at about the same time. I feel blessed that things worked out as they did and we celebrated our fifth year of marriage on August 16, 2008. We are enjoying life together and she is a tremendous supporter of my efforts with the 2ADA.

Some of you most likely kept logs as I did, and it would certainly be interesting to others if you could submit some of your experiences to the 2ADA *Journal* editor. ■

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.

A Strange Wartime Incident

REPRINTED FROM "BAD NEWS" (THE JOURNAL OF THE B.A.D. 2 FAMILY), JULY 2008

YE OLDE PUB, a B-17 from the 379th Bomb Group, had seen better days. She had been hit by flak and German fighters. The compass was out of action. One engine was dead. The tail, horizontal stabilizer, and nose had been shot up, and the plane was heading in the wrong direction . . . into deeper Germany.

Charlie Brown, the pilot, was startled to see a Luftwaffe ME-109 flying alongside! As the bomber flew over a German airfield, Franz Steigler, pilot of the ME-109, had been ordered to take off and shoot down the intruder.

When the fighter pilot got near the American bomber, he couldn't believe his eyes. Later, in his own words he said, "I had never seen a plane in such a bad state." The tail was damaged and the port side horizontal stabilizer was gone. The nose was smashed and there were holes everywhere.

Franz flew to the side of the B-17 and looked at the pilot who was scared and struggling to keep his damaged and blood-stained aircraft flying.

Aware that the pilot had no idea where he was going, Franz waved at him to turn 180 degrees. The German escorted and guided the stricken plane to the North Sea, then headed it toward England. He saluted Charlie Brown and turned back to Germany.

When the Luftwaffe pilot landed, he reported to his commanding officer that the plane had gone down over the North Sea. He never told the truth to anyone.

Charlie Brown and the remaining members of his crew told at their briefing what had happened, but they were ordered not to say anything about it to anyone.

More than forty years later, Charlie Brown had been trying to locate the German pilot, and after years of research Franz Steigler was found.

They met at a 379th BG reunion, all because Steigler had not fired his guns that day. Franz had moved to Vancouver, B.C. after the war. He and Charlie found that they had lived about 200 miles apart for the past fifty years. Brown lived in Seattle.

Thanks to Red Wallace for a great story. ■

The Editor's Contribution

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

While everybody else has some comments about our Grapevine convention, I feel that I have said what I wanted to say on it in the last issue, so instead I will have a few comments about some other stuff that went on around the ball in the meantime.

It is the disease of the times, I guess, but the news people seem to latch on to one subject and beat it to death, *ad nauseum* and *ad infinitum*. The great Brett Favre *gaga* (not *saga*) continued *ad infinitum* followed by the Olympic gold medal fever which at this writing still goes on and on. Tiddly Winks included, I didn't know the Greeks had so many different sports. Or did we just add a few dozen? And, at this writing, still coming are the political conventions, debates, election hoopla, and a zillion "analyses" on how they are going to win, and immediately thereafter why they lost.

Several articles that I may condense in a future *Journal* include the Consolidated B-32 story. The B-32 was to be a partner to the B-29 very long range bomber planned at the time that France fell in 1940 and we weren't very sure of that great unsinkable aircraft carrier Britain, just before they whipped the Luftwaffe in the duel between the RAF and Goering's Invincibles in the busy summer and fall of 1940. An article in the Yankee Air Museum newsletter poses the question, was the Willow Run plant really designed for the B-32 in case we needed it? The oversized hangar doors and a 7500 foot runway may be clues, as the B-24 certainly did not need it.

An article in the British publication *Flypast*, September issue, has a six-page article entitled "Day of the Ghost Bombers" which details the November 27, 1944 8th AF deception just a short time after the disastrous Kassel mission, in which nine P-51 groups were set up in bomber formations leading into Germany. The German radar operators did not discern any difference in the blips and readily assumed they had a juicy target for the interceptors. The P-51s had good cloud cover, plus some electronic wizardry by the 8th AF deception squadrons, to complete the ruse.

The Luftwaffe pilots were unaware and

were eager for another Kassel type encounter with their specially equipped FW-190s. They were confronted not by 8th AF bombers but by P-51s, and a free-for-all developed in which it was every man for himself as the Mustangs charged into the large gaggles of Focke-Wolfes and Messerschmitts. Nine P-51 groups were credited with 90 victories while the German pilots freely admitted that the odds were such that flying was almost a death sentence... Many individuals abandoned the unequal contest and landed as soon as possible. The article states that nearly one hundred German planes were lost. The whole operation was put under wraps for future use, but the whole thing was almost forgotten due to the start of the Battle of the Bulge on December 16, 1944.

A different tune is described in the following book review. Check with your local bookstore for price and availability.

LILI MARLENE: THE SOLDIERS' SONG OF WORLD WAR II

By Liel Leibovitz and Matthew Miller

Not even the most iconic of songs necessarily deserves its very own biography, but in the case of that Second World War classic "Lili Marlene," dear to soldiers and civilians on both sides, there really is a fascinating story to tell. Forged in the crucible of 20th-century German history, a First World War poem, picked up by Berlin's cabaret scene, became a song with music by one of Hitler's favorite composers, recorded by an ambitious anti-Nazi singer. Lively and well-informed, this book tells it all, with lots of attention to the travails of those involved. Nazi music had some rousing tunes, but generally the lyrics were bawdy. Here the sentiments are unobjectionable and universal, just made for a time when the shadow of the barracks gate was bound to heighten romance under lamplight for a world at war.

ANSWERS TO THE SUMMER QUIZ

See the article on the facing page, entitled "The Pregnant Guppy."

FALL QUIZ

1. Name three 2ADA presidents who served two terms.
2. Name three cities where the 2ADA had its convention twice.

PACKER NATION

Finally, here is a departing shot for you football aficionados:

The Packer Nation makes most fans seem namby-pamby about their teams. Judging by vanity plates at Lambeau Field and around Green Bay and Wis-

consin, Packer fans are way more passionate than Jets fans. Plus, they wear cheese! And then there's this old joke: A man with season tickets at Lambeau Field shows up for Week 1. The seat next to him, usually occupied by his wife, remains empty. Neighboring fans ask where she is. He explains that she died in the offseason. They offer condolences and ask why he couldn't bring a friend or relative to the game — after all, the waiting list for season tickets has more than 70,000 names on it. "I would have," the man replies, "but they are all at her funeral." ■

Have you ever wondered?

Although these ponderables came to us without attribution, we seem to see the stamp of the late, great George Carlin all over them. Only Carlin had the type of mind that could come up with such questions.

Why the sun lightens our hair, but darkens our skin?

Why women can't put on mascara with their mouths closed?

Why you don't ever see the headline "Psychic Wins Lottery"?

Why "abbreviated" is such a long word?

Why doctors call what they do "practice"?

Why you have to click on "Start" to stop Windows XP?

Why lemon juice is made with artificial flavor, while dishwashing liquid is made with real lemons?

Why the person who invests your money is called a broker?

Why there isn't mouse-flavored cat food?

Why they sterilize the needle for lethal injections?

Why they don't make the whole airplane out of the material used for the indestructible black box?

Why sheep don't shrink when it rains?

Why they are called apartments when they are all stuck together?

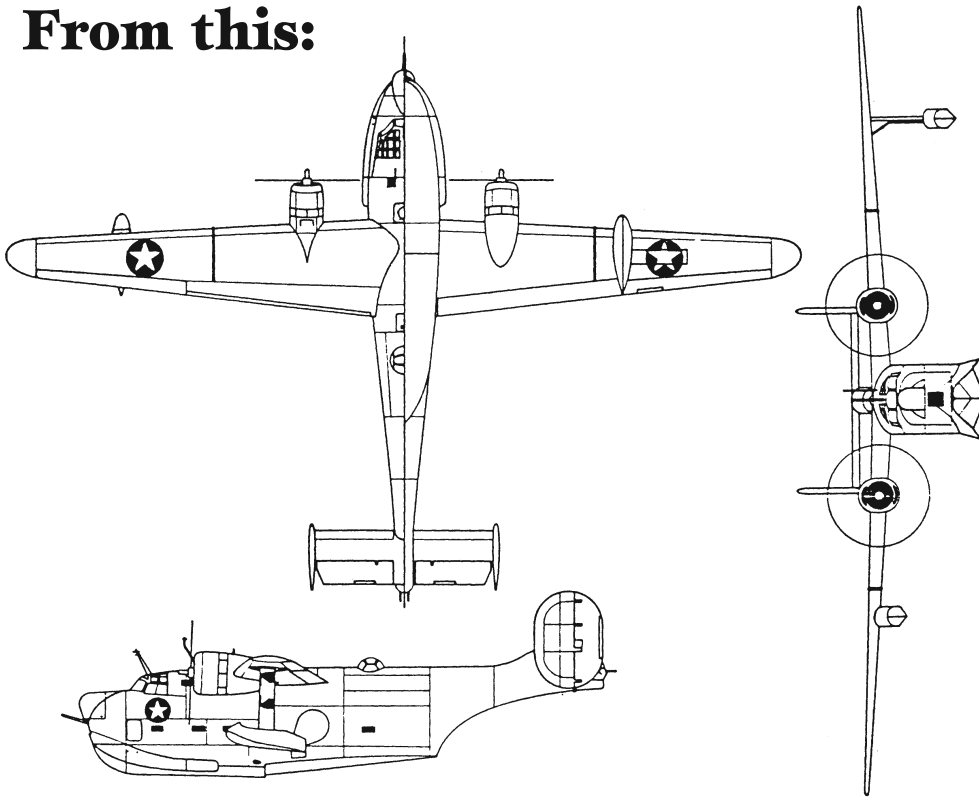
If con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?

Why they call the airport "the terminal" if flying is so safe? ■

“The Pregnant Guppy”

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

From this:



CONSOLIDATED XP4Y-1 CORREGIDOR (Model 31)

Originally designed as a fifty-two passenger commercial transport, later modified into a prototype Navy patrol bomber. Used to develop the wing and tail design for the B-24 Liberator.

FIRST FLIGHT: May 1939

WINGSPAN: 110'

LENGTH: 74'1"

HEIGHT: 25'2"

POWERPLANT: Two Wright R-3350-8 engines of 2,300 hp each

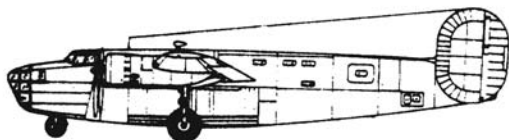
MAX SPEED: 247 mph @ 13,600 feet

RANGE: 3,280 miles

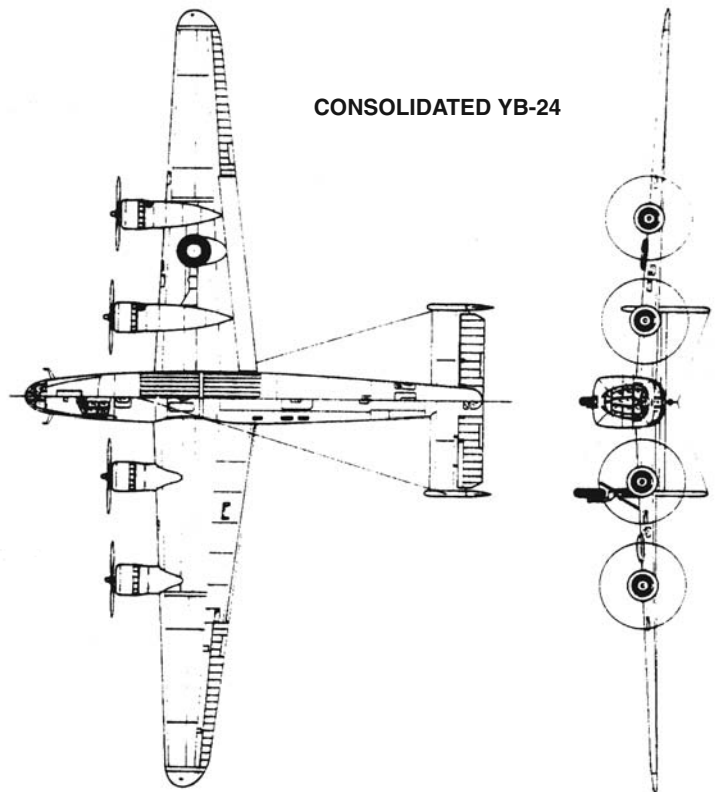
*Known as **The Pregnant Guppy**, the Consolidated Model 31 twin-engined flying boat was the first airplane to utilize the Davis airfoil.*

Came this:

The old Army Air Corps in late 1938 asked Consolidated to consider building the 1935 Boeing B-17. They replied that they could design and build a better heavy bomber. The new design was submitted, and in January 1939 Consolidated started the production of the prototype. The first “B-24” type flew on 29 December 1939. The first order was by France, which collapsed before the then called LB-30s were delivered. Britain took over and found many shortcomings, such as no power turrets, self-sealing tanks, and superchargers, all corrected on later models — some right away and others in combat. First B-24 delivery was made to the newly reorganized Army Air Forces in June 1941.



CONSOLIDATED YB-24



The Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF

BY MATTHEW MARTIN, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

GREETINGS FROM NORWICH!

We are now much looking forward to our trip to the States and the 61st 2ADA Convention in Dallas. We do not know how many more conventions there will be, and so a significant contingent is coming over from the UK, including several Governors; the new Trust Librarian, Libby Morgan; and, thanks to a most welcome grant from the U.S. Embassy in London, two students and two teachers from the Norwich University College of the Arts. The students intend to carry out an oral history project whilst they are at the convention. I intend to deliver my usual annual report to the Executive Committee and to the business meeting of the Association. I hope that many readers of this *Journal* will make the trip to Dallas for what promises to be a special reunion.

We have made real progress over the Fulbright replacement program. After looking at several options, the Governors concluded that the most workable and best solution was to secure the services of one or two post-graduate American students at the University of East Anglia here in

Norwich. After detailed discussions, all the arrangements are in place, and as I write this article, we have five applicants for the scholarships we will be awarding. These applicants will be interviewed and the best one selected. In the first year we will award one scholarship and from the second year onwards there will be two. The intention is that for most of the time there will be a young American in your Memorial Library, meeting and greeting its users. Also, we hope to increase the amount of outreach work we do so that local people can hear about your Library and the good news about America.

The Governors are beginning to make plans for the future. We have been looking at the structure of the Board to make sure we are in good shape for years to come. As we have been making these plans, we have learnt that two long-serving members will be standing down at the Annual General Meeting of the Trust in November. Both Fran Davies and David Hastings have served the Trust over many years and have made very significant contributions to its well-being. I will, in my next

article for the *Journal*, pay a special tribute to them both for all they have done.

Our new Trust Librarian, Libby Morgan, is beginning to make a significant contribution to the functioning of your Memorial Library. In truth she has hit the ground running. The fruits of her labours will improve your Library very substantially over the coming years. It is an exciting time for us here. The Memorial is alive and well.

Just by way of example, we are investigating how best to work with local schools and other educational agencies to promote your Library; we will be promoting the Library as a tourist destination; we will be making a complete overhaul of our website; and we will continue to ensure that the library stock reflects the needs of users and potential users of your Library. So you will see, we are going to be very busy.

Since I last wrote, we have lost two stalwart supporters of the Trust. Firstly there was Alfred Jenner, a most remarkable man whose own wartime experiences in the RAF and as a prisoner of war made his contributions particularly relevant and im-

(continued on next page)

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

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

It was my good fortune to attend the Board of Governors meeting on July 10, 2008. I wish to share with you the results of that meeting.

The American Embassy is footing the bill for two English students, interested in oral history, to attend our 61st Convention in Dallas. Not to be outdone, East Anglia University is sending two teachers, also interested in oral history, to attend the convention. On a visit to the Forum I was able to visit with both of the teachers. They are certainly looking forward to their visit to America.

The Governors are bringing our new Trust Librarian, Libby Morgan. In addition, possibly four or five Governors and one of their wives are expecting to attend. You can see the "friendly invasion" is working in reverse. Of course, we welcome them all with open arms.

The Governors passed a new succession plan. No Governor may serve beyond the age of 75. No Governor will serve more than 25 years before stepping down. However, if he or she is well under 75 at that

time, they may be selected to serve again after being off the Memorial Trust for one year. It is expected this new plan will assure the Memorial Trust will be manned by young energetic members at all times. This will become effective at the upcoming November meeting.

This new rule will catch Fran Davies and David Hastings. Both have served long and faithfully and contributed greatly to the success of our Memorial Library. How could we have held such wonderful conventions in Norwich without the extraordinary efforts of David? And Fran has contributed so much including arranging the successful biennial lecture program and securing the excellent speakers Norwich has enjoyed hearing. We congratulate them both and thank them for their extraordinary contributions as Governors. We wish them well.

In order to provide an American presence in our Memorial Library, the Governors have completed an agreement with East Anglia University whereby the Trust will fund a \$6,000 scholarship for an Amer-

ican student, who is studying at the University, to work 400 hours in our Library. This is half of the coverage needed. If this first student works out satisfactorily, a second will be added, thus providing the same coverage the Fulbright Scholar provided. This is a keen arrangement which the Governors have the funds to support.

A report from Andrew Hawker of the Library committee states things are going well in the Memorial Library and spoke highly of the good work Libby is doing. Governor Foster reported all is well with the finance committee.

I anxiously await the arrival of our English friends attending the 61st 2ADA Convention. I know you will enjoy meeting these special friends, as they will be able to answer questions you may have concerning the Library. I know you will cooperate with the students seeking oral histories.

It was a long way to go for a two hour meeting (yes, all this was accomplished in two hours), but well worth the effort!

Stay well, and I look forward to seeing you at the convention. ■



Dallas: Ready, Camera, Action!

An Oral History of the 2nd Air Division (USAAF)
in East Anglia During World War II

BY LIBBY MORGAN, TRUST LIBRARIAN
SECOND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL LIBRARY, NORWICH

At the April meeting of the Memorial Trust Governors, Michael Macy, the Cultural Attaché at the U.S. Embassy, suggested that they would pay for two students from the U.K. to attend the 2nd Air Division Association convention in Dallas in October — to record interviews with 2nd Air Division veterans.

In partnership with the Norwich University College of the Arts, we duly submitted our project plan and grant application form to the Embassy, and were delighted to hear only last week that the funding has been approved for this project, and two students and their tutors from the University College will be attending the Dallas convention.

PROJECT GOALS

1) This project sets out to capture the experiences of both 2nd Air Division (USAAF) veterans and the people of East Anglia during World War II, by gathering oral histories from U.S. veterans and also their “U.K. friends” attending the 2nd Air Division Association convention in Dallas, 17-19 October 2008. These will be in the form of filmed/videoed interviews, which will contribute to the film archive of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library.

2) Additionally the project will generate a short 5-10 minute film for use by schools and young people, raising awareness of the contribution made by American airmen (and women) to the Second World War, the impact their presence had on the local community, and the continuing “special relationship” between the people of East Anglia, and the people of the United States.

3) To cement the future collaboration between Norwich School of Art and Design (NSAD) and the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library as a way of increasing outreach work to young people in the region. Longer term, it is envisaged that this film could be used as a tool to introduce the film archive to schools that might be interested in joining the oral history project (recording the memories local people have of the USAAF personnel stationed in the Norwich area during World War II).

Both the Norwich University College of the Arts and the 2AD Memorial Library are excited that this project has been given the go-ahead by the U.S. Embassy, and we are looking forward to meeting everyone in Dallas! ■

A Day in the Life of the 2AD Trust Librarian

BY LIBBY MORGAN

Below are some extracts from my diary. This is just a small selection of some of the activities that I and the other Memorial Library staff have been involved with over the last few months.

21st May – We took part in the Norfolk Heritage Centre’s Map Day — with a display of World War II maps in the library’s meeting room. Maps from our collection were displayed alongside local maps from the Norfolk Heritage Centre. The display attracted a number of new visitors to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library.

26th May – I attended the Memorial Day Service at the American Cemetery at Madingley, and was privileged to lay the wreath on behalf of the Governors of the Memorial Trust. I met with David Bedford, the Superintendent, and we have since exchanged e-mails. He hopes to visit the Memorial Library at some point in the not-too-distant future.

29th May – I took a display of books and other library materials to an event at Little Ellingham Village Hall, near to the Deopham Village Green airfield, home of the 452nd Bomb Group (3rd Air Division).

10th June – The Library staff team visited the Imperial War Museum at Duxford. We met with Sue Chippington, Head of Learning, to learn about the museum’s educational outreach program to schools. This was followed by a guided tour of the museum, the highlight being the American Air Museum.

11th June – Michael Macy, U.S. Cultural Attaché, kindly arranged for me to meet with Professor Philip Davies, Director of the Eccles Centre for American Studies (British Library) at the U.S. Embassy. Sue Wedlake, from the Embassy Cultural Affairs Office, also attended the meeting. I came away with some very useful ideas, and helpful suggestions as to how we could promote the “American Studies” aspect of the Memorial Library better, and I’ve now lots of food for thought as to the best way we can make a start on this.

19th July – We hosted a book signing and an exhibition of paintings in the library to launch Mike Bailey’s new book, *The Aviation Art of Mike Bailey*. This was a very successful event, which attracted both new visitors and “old friends” to the library, doubling our usual number of visitors for a Saturday. ■

THE MEMORIAL TRUST *(continued from page 6)*

portant. And David Neale was Chairman of the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial. David was a modest and self-effacing man who supported your Library over many years. We will miss them both a great deal.

As I said in my last article for the *Journal*, various activities are planned for November, starting with Remembrance Sunday on the 9th November and the Trust Annual Meeting the following day. Together with an important service at St. Paul’s Cathedral in London on the 13th November to mark the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the American Chapel, these will make a trip to the UK a truly worthwhile and meaningful one. Do come!

Finally, we continue to welcome to your Library visitors from the States, including veterans and their families. As always, we give all of them a very warm welcome.

NEXT STOP DALLAS! ■

YOUR HERITAGE LEAGUE

BY BRIAN H. MAHONEY
Heritage League President

The Heritage League officers and membership are primed to participate in your 61st Convention in Grapevine, and moreover remain at the ready to take on appropriate legacy programs and oversight tasks as the 2ADA leadership and membership see fit. That is, we are ready to do the work for which we were founded by members of your organization in 1986; to perpetuate the honor and memory of the

service and sacrifice of all who served in the Second Air Division (and all units attached or assigned) during WWII.

As has been reported here a few times since we launched our Honorary Life Member program, all who fit the description in the previous sentence are eligible to receive our newsletter for free . . . you only need to "sign up" with us to begin receiving it. You can send me an e-mail with your name, address, and WWII unit affiliation, or mail me that same information. Indicate if you are fine to receive it as an e-mail attachment. Those of you who have been loyal dues-paying members in our Associate Members category have been "converted" to Honorary Life Members; we do not require any annual dues from you, but of course will continue to accept your tax deductible contributions in support of our important mission.

We note with pleasure and excitement the latest version of the 2ADA Legacy Plan, which restores the League to a substantial position in succession when your impressive operation winds down. We are ready

to use our human and fiscal assets to operate programs, year in and year out, that suitably keep your history (our prized inherited *legacy*) alive, compellingly and accurately portrayed to coming generations. We will continue to support the Memorial Library, to encourage the fine volunteer body (the Trust Governors) charged with its operation, and to cultivate our friendships across generations with the British "Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial," with whom we have reciprocal honorary membership. (We finally came up with a grand name to reflect this unique relationship: *Heritage Memorial Friends*. "Yank" and "Tommy" alike now can use it to refer to their "kin" in the cousin organization across the pond. Special thanks to David Hastings and the late David Neale!)

I hope this finds you enjoying each day, and that we may yet have some "quality time" in your company. For my Heritage League colleagues, I also hope you are comforted to know that we will always carry your torch and keep the flame burning. ■

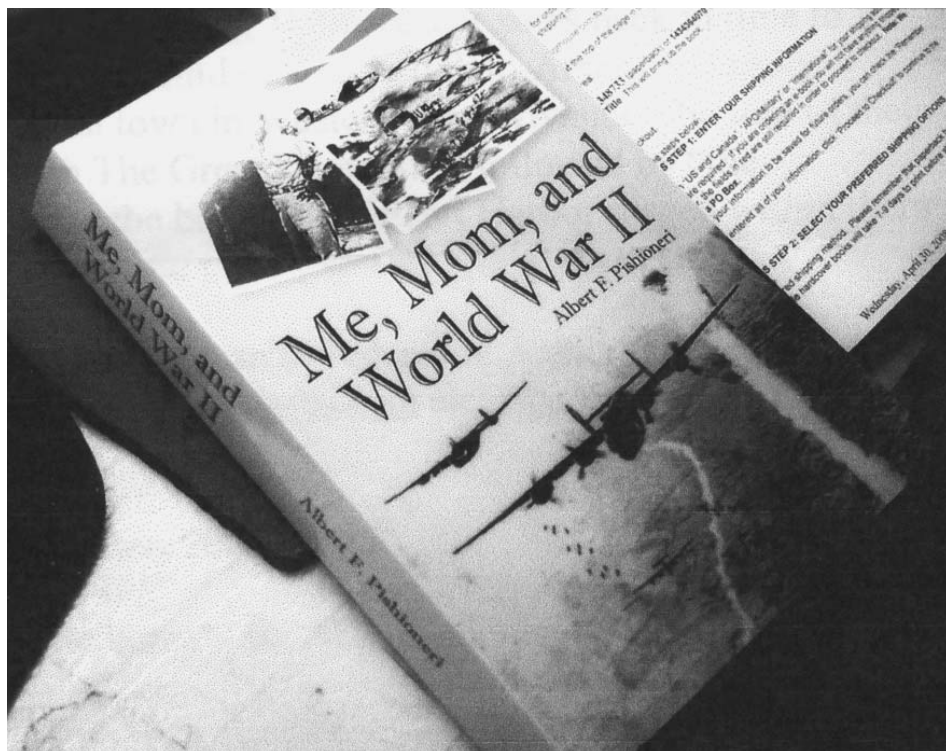
Me, Mom, and World War II

BY ALBERT F. PISHIONERI (446TH) • BOOK REVIEW BY DR. RITA HAZEN

Hanging beneath a B-24 Liberator in flight, in -40 to -60 degree weather, bringing his own oxygen and heat with him in this hostile environment; a moving target for enemy fighters, gives one a unique perspective from which to ponder who and what it's all about.

In his book entitled *Me, Mom and World War II*, Albert F. Pishioneri (446th BG), a veteran of 35 bombing missions over occupied Europe during World War II, recalls his experiences illuminated by the insight of a Bachelor of Science in American History and over 37 years of teaching Social Studies. A veteran storyteller and talented artist, he weaves his story of chronicling the historical events and personal experiences of his service life between the actual letters he wrote home that were preserved for him by his mother. His original sketches further enrich the tapestry.

In this book, the reader steps back in time to experience life as the middle child of a large Italian-American family growing up in a small steel town in western Pennsylvania. The loss of their father, and living through the Great Depression followed by the emergency brought on by the bombing of Pearl Harbor, forged with-



in them a strength and courage that held them together.

The book is available in both hard and soft cover, and can be purchased through

Authorhouse.com, BarnesandNoble.com, Amazon.com, or Borders.com. The publisher is AuthorHouse, 1663 Liberty Drive, Suite 200, Bloomington, IN 47403. ■

458th BOMB GROUP

HORSHAM ST. FAITH



BY RICK ROKICKI

GEORGE A. REYNOLDS, 1930-2007

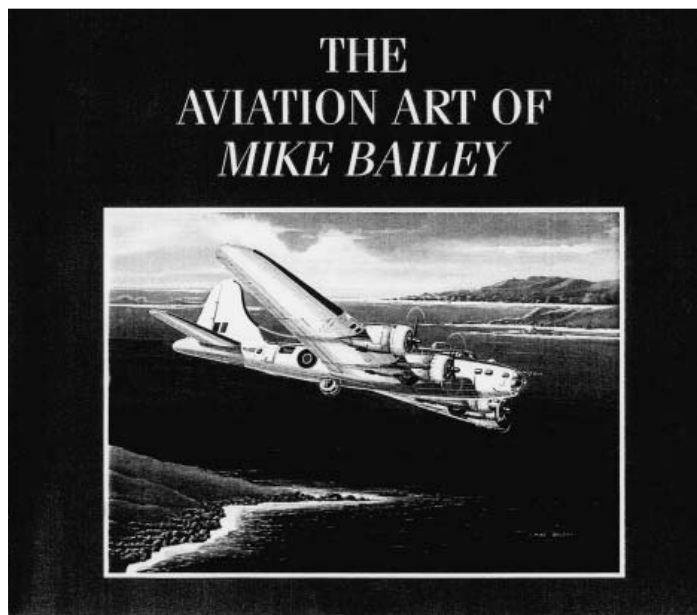
Sometime in the middle of last year, I received a revision to the 2ADA roster from Evelyn Cohen, to remove George Reynolds' name from the membership roster because of non-payment of 2008 dues. I wrote to George, but the letter was returned to me, marked "Return to Sender." Knowing that George had a health problem and might be in the hospital, I wrote a few weeks later, but the result was the same. George Ferrell, who lives in Huntsville, called and wanted his address and telephone number. I said that in two attempts I had not been successful and that I suspected Reynolds may have passed on and I wasn't advised. I doubted that he would let his dues drop. Ferrell said he would check with the Birmingham newspaper and the library for an obituary. As a result of George Ferrell's efforts we know the following: George Reynolds passed away on February 20, 2007 at age 77. He had enlisted in the Air Force and served as an Air Traffic Controller for ten years. After discharge, he joined the FAA as an ATC for thirty years and retired as a supervisor. The last book he authored was the non-fiction *Spacecraft and Earthquakes Plus*. He previously wrote seven non-fiction books, one novel, and 75 magazine and journal articles, plus several histories of the 458th Bomb Group. We shall miss him. Many, many thanks to George Ferrell for doing all the groundwork for us.

In further correspondence with George Ferrell, he sent me an article written in a magazine called *America in WWII*, Mar/Apr 2008. The article was titled "The River Kwai Reality Check." This relates to the bridge over the river Kwai. Quoting a paragraph, "The Allies attacked the bridge a number of times. AZON, short for Azimuth Only, a radio-controlled smart bomb that bomber crews from the U.S. 458th Heavy Bombardment Group, finally succeeded in destroying the bridge in April, 1945." Now, there's a story that is hard to believe. Flying from Horsham St. Faith to central Thailand with no air-to-air refueling was a little too much to not receive a correction! Ray Gallagher, son of John E. Gallagher, one of the "Buck Rogers Boys" (the AZON fliers) wrote to the magazine that his father was a lead navigator in the 755th Squadron of the 458th BG and at no time did the Group ever leave England for the Pacific Theater. The editor then wrote a correction stating that it was the 493rd Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group of the 10th Air Force's B-24 "Double Trouble" that bombed the bridge.

AVIATION ART OF MIKE BAILEY

In late June, I received a book from Mike Bailey entitled *The Aviation Art of Mike Bailey*. This was the book that Mike told me he was trying to get published several years ago, but rising paper costs plus litho and color costs were impossible for the publisher in the UK. After many so called "bumps in the road" it was done.

The publisher is East Anglia Books, Station Road Elsenham, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM22 6LG, England. The ISBN is #1 869987 12 8. The book contains 44 paintings beautifully reproduced on superior paper, along with text and photos plus an autobiography of the author. The paintings include a WWI Bristol F-2B Fighter, civilian aircraft, and Allied fighter and bomber aircraft of WWII, some of which were less known and many well known to most of us. Thoroughly enjoyable and informative, the book size is 12.75" x 11.25", suitable for coffee table display. Available at £30.00 pounds sterling (that's \$60.00 American), quality throughout. Unfortunately, I have no telephone number or e-mail address for the publisher that I can include. If you are interested in this marvelous book, you might want to call Mike at 01503-626257, or write to him at 91 Waterworks Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4DB, England. First published in England in 2007, the book has since been printed in China, obvious reason to lower the cost.



RHAPSODY IN JUNK

Regarding my 458th column in the *Summer Journal*, somewhere between "here and there" a typo occurred regarding Marilyn Walton's book title. It is *Rhapsody in Junk* (not June). The book is available from Author House at www.authorhouse.com or call 1-888-280-7715 or 1-513-523-2016. ■



BY JIM LORENZ

As I sit here to turn out perhaps the last "Attlebridge Tales," I certainly have fond memories of our last thirty years of 2ADA meetings and trips to England. If and when the 2ADA does fold, I would note that all or any of you will be welcome to come to the 466th BGA meetings, which will now be held together with the 8th Air Force Historical Society meetings. And the Heritage League is continuing and will welcome any vets — with no dues — to attend their meetings.

As to the placing of flowers at our Frans Green Memorial — we will continue for the time being to ask Digby to buy the flowers and place them. Our 466th BGA does have a fund set up to continue this as long as possible. I'm sure some of you might remember a letter that Dick Baynes sent to Mr. Matthews in 2004 concerning maintaining of the monument. Mr. Matthews responded, "I am writing that I will ensure that, whilst my company continues to own the airfield, the monument to the 466th Bomb Group will be maintained!"

When the 2ADA goes out of business, any monies in our 466th BG bank account will be transferred to the 466th BGA for the use of maintaining our memorials. I have a letter from the director of the American Cemetery near Cambridge stating that they will be happy to buy and place flowers at our Frans Green monument every year for a \$100 fee. (With the decline of the dollar, that is about our current cost to have Digby buy and place the flowers.)

Please keep in touch — and I'll be happy to try to get an answer to any questions you might have. Meanwhile, I, John Horan, and Stanley Mohr will continue in our offices until the 2ADA decides when and how they will close up the Association. So do keep in touch and support any of the remaining units — the Heritage League, the 466th BGA, and the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, as well as our 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich. ■



Open Letter to the 93rd

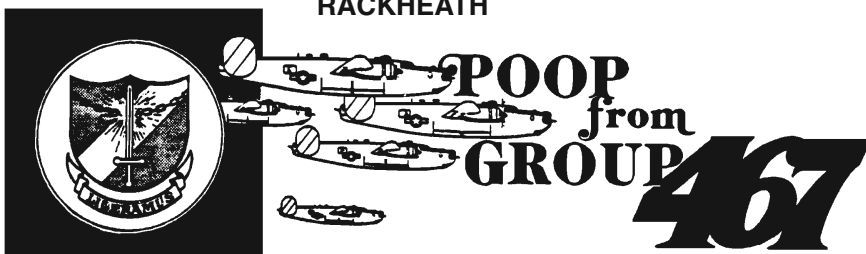
BY CHARLES SILL

The 93rd BG and the 2ADA lost a true longtime friend on 6 June 2008 with the passing of David Neale. David was Chairman of the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial for many years, and he and his wife Pearl were mainstays of the Friends. Pearl Neale also has serious health problems. As most of you know, in addition to supporting the 2AD Library, the Friends often assist returning veterans for visits to their old bases and lay a wreath for the 2nd Air Division at the annual Memorial Day services at Madingley American Cemetery.

David was a boy on a farm adjoining the bomb dump at Hardwick during World War II and had first-hand knowledge of much of the activity at Hardwick.

The final design of the stained glass window our group has commissioned for the Memorial Chapel at the Mighty Eighth AF Museum in Savannah, GA is to be presented to the museum staff in September and to the 93rd BGA at our reunion in Dallas, TX, October 16-20, 2008. The reunion will be at Embassy Suites Dallas – DFW Airport North, Grapevine, TX. For more information, see the 93rd BG website at www.93rdbombardmentgroup.com. ■

RACKHEATH



BY WALTER MUNDY

The latest and last reprint of the 467th Bombardment Group (H) History is now being printed. This edition will include all addendums, errata, enhanced photographs, and additions and corrections. Hardcover copies will be available in September 2008. The price is estimated to be around \$50.00.

Like the Mighty Eighth Air Force and the Second Air Division, the membership of the bomb groups is declining. Many are "slipping the surly bonds of earth" and many are fighting the deterioration of health that comes with age. The time comes too soon when it is too difficult to travel and enjoy the reunions of friends and comrades. Now is the time to consider turning the continuation of our legacy over to the kids of the next generation. It is incumbent on those of us who are able to provide the leadership to guide the orderly transition of our legacy to the Heritage League.

I urge all members of the Second Air Division Association to send in their response to support the publication of the *Journal* after dissolution of the 2ADA. As of this issue, there have not been enough pledges to support the continuation of the *Journal*. Since this matter will be discussed at the convention in Dallas, now is the time to indicate your support. Please do not send money now — there will be time to provide the funds when it has been determined how many issues we can support and who will provide the management of the publication. ■

Saved by the Bees

A man was driving down a rather deserted highway when he ran out of gas. He estimated it would be quite a hike to the next town and was about to get out of the car when a bee flew in the window.

"What seems to be the problem?" asked the bee. "I'm out of gas," the man replied.

The bee told the man to get out and take the gas cap off the filler pipe and wait right there. Then the bee flew back in the direction from which it had come.

A few minutes later, the man watched as an entire swarm of bees came along and flew straight into his gas tank. After about five minutes they all flew out. "Try it now," said his bee friend.

The man got in, turned the ignition key and the engine started instantly. "Wow!" the man exclaimed. "What did you put in my tank?" And the bee's answer was, "BP!" ■

“The Younger Ones” in Norwich, Remembrance Day

BY CAROL HOLLIDAY, SECRETARY OF THE HERITAGE LEAGUE

At the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, Remembrance Day is a ceremonial tribute throughout England and other Commonwealth of Nations. People cease activity and observe a two-minute silence to pay respect for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, and for those who are involved currently in wartime activities.

Ongoing for many years, I've been extremely fortunate to attend these activities in Norwich, occurring in November. The British Governors of the Memorial Trust welcome Second Air Division veterans and families to share in the commemoration of our presence in East Anglia, England during WWII. A solemn parade of poppy wreath laying is filled with reverence and gratitude. Beginning at City Hall we observe the procession of dignitaries involving an entourage of British military groups, both young and old. I strongly feel that we, the generations that follow, should never forget. It is a grand sight to see and one you will never forget.

Following the poppy wreath laying (the 2ADA current president lays the 2AD wreath), we proceed to the Norwich Cathedral, where



Back row L-R: John Lee, Charles Sill, Kurt Warning, Chuck Walker, Matthew Martin. Front row: Carol Holliday, Betty Lee, Joan Patterson, Earl Zimmerman, Vicki Warning, Charlie Walker.



Earl Zimmerman and David Hastings step forward to lay the Second Air Division wreath, November 2007.

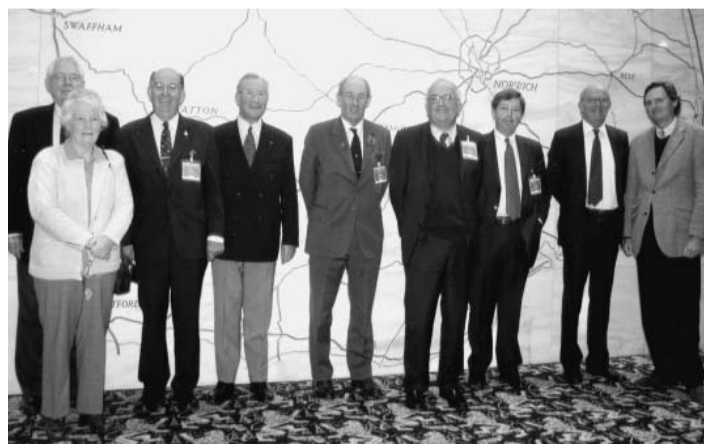
officiating members of the clergy give a very moving liturgy following the British military in its finest tradition. Last Post and Reveille is sounded with bugles. The experience is very real. Many of my generation have attended, including Vicki and Kurt Warning, Joe Dzenowagis, Jr., Andrew Horlock, Irene Hurner, and others. We will once again experience the British hospitality, which includes many once-in-a-lifetime excursions this November. One of the outstanding memories of our trips is the impeccable hospitality in the homes of the British Governors. Matthew Martin and his Governors have been exemplary leaders during this period. These special Governors and their wives dedicate time, warm friendship, and hard work to our well-being and that of the Memorial Library and Trust. Most important is the All Governors' Meeting at the Norwich City Council Building. Plans are formulated for the present and future of the 2AD Memorial Library.

Each year we have witnessed something new and culturally distinct in English traditions. From a fox hunt to field trips around the countryside, a trip out to the coast to see historical buildings, or visits to the U.S. Air Bases where our veterans flew from during the war, each visit leaves a mark in memory. We can only honor by knowing and remembering.

Toward the latter part of the week, we travel back to London and attend the St. Paul's Cathedral service known as Evensong. It is a prayer service with an unbelievably angelic presentation by



Peter Chapman, Andrew Hawker, Chuck Walker, Andrew Horlock, and Derek Hills at Charter House reception, St. Paul's Cathedral.



Governors of the Memorial Trust at City Council for All Governors' Meeting: Fran Davies, Chuck Walker, David Hastings, Andrew Hawker, David Gurney, Ben DuBrow.

the St. Paul's Choir. Our liaison, Peter Chapman, Lay Canon of St. Paul's, has encouraged us to attend the 50th Anniversary of the American Chapel which houses the *Roll of Honor* of American dead. The American Ambassador, Robert Tuttle, will be in attendance and it promises to be special. Please attend. ■

HALESWORTH 489TH NOTES

BY
MEL PONTILLO

FLYING THE UNFRIENDLY SKIES OF EUROPE IN 1944

I would like to share with you another trip down memory lane. This trip highlights the degree of danger that we experienced in unfriendly airspace during 1944. To start, when the war was said and done, the statistics on it came out in various documents. It was found that, during the days when the 489th served in the European skies, 86.2% of American bomber crew casualties were due to flak. This meant that Allied air superiority over the Luftwaffe was of little benefit for the American bomber crews who flew over flak guns during daylight hours.

The presence of German anti-aircraft guns per square mile increased in Nazi-held territory after the invasion of Normandy. This is logical, being that the Germans took their available flak guns with them during their retreat from France, placing them in the remaining Nazi-held territories. Guns that were being shot from Pas-de-Calais, St. Lo, and Rouen were now being fired from Holland, Belgium, and the Rhineland. The airways over Germany became more crowded with flak after the Germans began to retreat from France.

I was asked where the Nazi flak was the most terrific. According to my combat diary, the answer is Berlin, Munich, and the Ruhr Valley. According to the same log, the additional answer is over fuel depots, Tiger Tank factories, aircraft assembly factories, and believe it or not, railroad yards. That is to say, the flak was terrific over the principle factories, depots, and transportation lines of the Nazi war machine. The flak came in its usual red bursts, along with the resulting puffs of smoke. Flak could be seen very easily at nearby or faraway distances. The Ruhr Valley, incidentally, was referred to as Flak Valley by combat crews. It was also referred to as Flak Alley.

The idea of bombing a railroad yard (otherwise known as a marshalling yard) might sound uneventfully boring. However, we encountered terrific amounts of flak during a number of marshalling yard missions. For example, the July 12, 1944 mission that targeted Munich's marshalling yards resulted in damage being in-

flicted upon 301 bombers in addition to the twenty-six that were shot down over the target. In fact, the air battle reported in November 1944 as the largest one in history was one centered around a railroad junction in rustic Bielefeld, Germany. So important to the Nazis was the railroad junction that they sent a large number of fighters to attack us, some of which were ME-262 rocket aircraft. According to my log, we encountered a lot of flak during the two Saarbrücken marshalling yard missions. We also encountered heavy and accurate flak during the three Hamm marshalling yard missions. Marshalling yards were well fortified.

One would instinctively think that bombing a Nazi air base would have the effect of disturbing a hornet's nest and triggering an epic air battle. However, from my personal experience, it was as if we caught the Luftwaffe off guard each time we bombed one of its air bases. My experience came from missions that sent us to the air bases of Rheims, Laon, and the Ludwigshafen area. Those missions went reasonably well, as we only encountered heavy flak while approaching the air base at Laon.

My combat diary's entry for the Rheims aerodrome mission states, "*We saw only a few bursts of flak at quite a distance. We saw no fighters.*" My entry for the Laon mission states, "*The flak at the target was pretty heavy and fairly accurate.*" However, there is no mention of Nazi fighter planes, even though the same diary stated that it "*was a big day in the battle for Paris.*" Furthermore, after the Ludwigshafen mission, I wrote "*We expected fighters but didn't see any.*"

Whereas it seemed as if Luftwaffe pilots were sleeping during our bombing runs against their bases, other targets were such that it seemed as if the Nazis knew we were coming. Quite frankly, we were so loud and slow in the sky that we could not surprise anyone. The Germans heard us coming as soon as we reached their airspace. This meant that the Luftwaffe had to have known that we were coming each time we attacked their airfields.

So, why were Luftwaffe fighter pilots absent when we arrived over their air bases? The answer is that Luftwaffe pilots intentionally stayed grounded, because they knew that they would not have an air base on which to land, after we dropped our bombs on it. That is to say, a pilot cannot land on a runway marred with bomb craters.

Concerning those missions where it appeared as if the Nazis were waiting for us, my combat diary states the following:

(1) "Today, the greatest air battle over central Germany was fought since D-Day.

The flak was heavy and accurate. Also, plenty of enemy fighters (JU-88, Me-109, Me-410, FW-190)." (*The target was the JU-88 twin engine fighter assembly plant in Aschersleben, Germany; July 7, 1944.*)

(2) "Over the target, it was a barrage. (Very Intense.) Twenty-six ships in all went down." (*The target was the marshalling yard at Munich, the city where the Nazi party originated; July 12, 1944.*)

(3) "At the target, the flak was very intense and accurate. I sometimes wonder how we got through." . . . "About 40 bombers were lost. I now know how a duck feels during hunting season. One plane in our group was lost. Plenty of them were pretty well shot up." (*The target was the Messerschmitt component plant in Kempten, Germany; July 21, 1944.*)

(4) "Our target for today was an oil refinery in Hamburg, Germany. The target was left blazing and smoking. The flak over the target was terrific; very heavy and very accurate. We lost one plane in our group. It was burning as it headed toward the earth." (*October 6, 1944.*)

(5) "The flak was really heavy all the way from the I.P. to the target, and even past the target. I was sweating it out, because a four gun enemy battery was barely missing our left wing." (*The target was the rail yard at Mainz, Germany; October 19, 1944.*)

(6) "The Jerries really had our altitude today, and I think they threw up everything that they had; even the kitchen sink. Long before we dropped the bombs, (though after the IP), flak was hitting all around us. We dropped the bombs and made a left hand turn. The flak was so close that I could see the red flashes as it burst." (*The target was the Sterkrade oil refinery, in the Ruhr Valley; November 6, 1944.*)

In general, buzz bomb sites, submarine bullpens, and Nazi air bases were the targets that gave us the least resistance. The missions where we received the most resistance were those that targeted tank factories, aircraft assembly plants, refineries, depots, and transportation junctions of the Nazi war machine. Needless to say, there were exceptions.

This article is not intended to minimize or maximize the danger level involved in any mission. Even a simple milk run could have some degree of danger attached to it, and many of them were exhaustively grueling, nonetheless. Most importantly, one crew's milk run was another crew's disaster.

Hope to see you all at the next reunion. For details of the 2ADA 2008 convention, refer to the Spring and Summer 2008 issues of the *Journal*. For the 489th Bomb Group reunion, refer to the June 2008 issue of the 489th Bomb Group Newsletter. ■



BY CLARENCE LUHMANN

I begin my report with a medical update. On the 21st of April I was to have a hip replaced, that I had for sixteen years. It had worn out. When they removed the old hip, they found I had an infection. So for over six weeks I had an antibiotic infusion every day. On June 12th I had a new hip put in. Now is the time for recovery.

As I think back to 1944, we had some very near encounters with disaster. D-Day was one of our easiest missions. On one mission we were hit over the target and lost an engine. Thank you to the fighter aircraft who brought us back safely as we had to leave the formation. By the time we got back to our base, we were flying on two engines. As we came in on the approach, we lost the third engine, but we were close to the ground, so we made a safe landing.

As I think back, there was not enough credit given to the ground crews that fixed up these planes that we brought back.

DONALD D. WHITEFIELD, 86



Excerpts from Houston Chronicle obituary by Harvey Rice:

Donald Whitefield, who survived thirty perilous missions as a B-24 navigator in WWII, including the most disastrous of the war, died

July 25, 2008. He was 86. Don was in three 2nd Air Division bomb groups: the 492nd, the 44th, and the 445th.

Surviving so many missions placed Whitefield among a lucky few, because bomber crew casualties were so high. His luck also held during a bombing mission that resulted in the near annihilation of his bomb group.

Whitefield earned two Distinguished Flying Crosses and an Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters during his tour of duty in WWII. He was recalled to active duty during the Korean War but remained in the United States as a navigation teacher. After

the war, he used self-taught chemistry to turn experiments in a home laboratory into a successful polyurethane business.

Whitefield was born December 11, 1921 in Bellaire, Ohio and attended high school in St. Louis, Michigan. He dropped out of college when he got his draft notice and went to work in the payroll department of a factory in Detroit that was manufacturing the B-24 Liberator bombers that he would soon be flying.

After being drafted into the Army, he signed up for the Army Air Forces Aviation Cadets and attended navigation school in Houston. A hostess at the Houston USO caught his eye, but hostesses were forbidden to date servicemen, recalled the hostess who later became his wife, Billie Whitefield, 86.

"Rules were made to be broken," she said. They were married November 13, 1943, just before Don graduated from navigation school and was assigned to a B-24 bomber crew in El Paso.

Whitefield's B-24 was assigned to the 492nd Bomb Group, and he barely survived the first mission when his bomber crash-landed on return, 300 feet inland. The entire crew survived.

His most harrowing mission was on September 27, 1944, when his 445th BG B-24 was one of 35 bombers assigned to bomb the city of Kassel. The bombers went astray, losing their fighter escort, and were attacked by a swarm of German fighters. Twenty-five bombers were shot down within three minutes, and others were so battered that they were forced down. Whitefield's bomber was one of only four that returned to the airbase at Tibenham, England.

445TH'S FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE GROUP CITATION

Excerpts from the report of the then Group VP Chuck Walker in the Fall and Winter 1990 Journals:

Ray Pytel's "several years of research and search" finally culminated in the 445th BG being formally presented the French Croix de Guerre avec Palme by Lt. Col. Foron, the French Air Attache to Britain. We owe Ray Pytel a great big thank you for all the work he put into this task — attaboy, Ray.

Did you know that only three bomber groups were awarded the Croix de Guerre? The 492nd Carpetbaggers, the 100th BG (B-17s), and the 445th BG — so you see it is quite a unique honor.

Here is the citation in English:

FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE WITH PALM, awarded by Decision No. 332, 17 September 1946, by the President of the Provisional Government of the French Republic, with the following citation.

"A splendid unit, animated by the

finest spirit of courage and tenacity. It distinguished itself brilliantly in air operations over occupied territories and Germany from 1 December 1943 to 1 February 1945. It made 225 combat missions and dropped over 13,000 tons of bombs on vital German centers, in spite of sharp enemy resistance, which cost it 97 planes as against 142 enemy planes shot down or damaged. By its sacrifice, its tireless devotion, and its excellent crew work, it made a great contribution to the liberation of the French territory."

This 13 x 18 inch "Diploma" with your name imprinted is available only to members of the American Order of the French Croix de Guerre for \$25. It is in four colors ready to display in a minimum 16 x 20 inch frame with blue border. The "Diplo-



L-R: Lt. Col. Foron, French Air Attache; Ray Pytel; and Chuck Walker at the presentation of the Croix de Guerre citation and medal in 1990.

ma" is issued in French, only to verified members, by the Association in Paris. It takes about three months to deliver.

Membership requirements: All 445th veterans who served with the Group at any time between 1 December 1943 and 1 February 1945 are eligible for association membership. Send registration fee of \$5 plus \$5 annual dues to: American Order of the French Croix de Guerre, 1133 Broadway, Room 504, New York, NY 10010. Individuals are not entitled to wear the medal or ribbon, as it is a Group award. If you would like this beautiful certificate with your name on it, follow the above instructions.

The late Frank DiMola, former 445th Group VP and later 2ADA President, wrote about the 1990 43rd Annual 2ADA Convention in Norwich, England in part:

"The great banquet night, July 30th, 1990, always a memorable night to treasure. The 445th Bomb Group was presented the Croix de Guerre avec Palme by the representative from the French Embassy, Colonel B. Foron. This is one of the highest awards given by the French Government. Representing the 445th Bomb Group and accepting this award were
(continued on page 15)



HETHEL

389th Bomb Group Green Dragon Flares

BY FIELDER NEWTON

The 389th Bomb Group members in the past year had expressed their desire to visit the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, GA, so plans were made to have our group reunion along with the annual reunion of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, August 3-8 in Savannah. A suite was reserved and members were advised that a fee of \$20.00 per person would be required to pay for the suite. To ensure that enough funds would be available, Paul Billings generously offered to underwrite these costs.

The group banquets are scheduled for Wednesday, August 6th and the 389th will be seated together. Unfortunately, with only 26 registered to attend, we did not reach the number required to have a private room.

The reunion is being held at the Savannah Marriott Riverfront, which is located on the east end of the world-famous River Street with its unique shops and restaurants. Two trips to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum are planned, as well as other optional tours. Having never before attended an 8th AF Historical Society reunion, I trust it to be as enjoyable as the 2ADA conventions.

I had planned to report on our reunion after returning from Savannah, but this report must be in Ray Pytel's hands by August 10th, so you will be hearing about the Savannah news in the *Winter Journal*.

Keep 'em flying. ■



446TH BOMB GROUP

FLIXTON-BUNGAY UPDATE

BY CARL ALBRIGHT

The 446th Bomb Group held its 2008 reunion at the Wenger Hotel in San Antonio, Texas, with one hundred and one people registered. Of this number, thirty-two were surviving Bungay Buckaroos. Also in attendance was a very special guest, Erna Sittler Torney. Erna Sittler was the Red Cross Director at Station 125 in 1944. She and Lt. Edward "Jack" Torney (704th) were married at St. Mary's Church on February 14, 1944. Other special guests were Lester and Alison Curtis from Bungay, England. Lester is the Suffolk Museum webmaster.

A special "Thank You" to Jack and Mary Nell Roos for their superb efforts in putting together a very successful reunion. Mary Nell is also the co-editor of the *Beachbell Echo*. She writes and edits many of the articles that appear in the publication.

It is apparent that the 446th Bomb Group Association continues to be a thriving organization, with the support of many second and third generation members. This includes not only family members of the Buckaroos, but also other special people who are interested in preserving our history.

Our 2009 reunion will be held in Nashville, Tennessee. Details of the reunion will be published in the *Beachbell Echo* as they become available. ■

Folded Wings

Headquarters
Charles J. Pollman

448th BG
Paul N. Beyerl
M.D. McLendon

93rd BG
Carl R. Greenstein

466th BG
Henry Tevelin
Larry S. Tromer
Andrew Van Slot

389th BG
Paul J. Bordewich (445th)
John A. Fino
Thomas J. Grima
Walter O'Connor

467th BG
Donald L. Kessler

491st BG
F.C. Chandler, Jr. (489th)

392nd BG
Wesley A. Schafer
Wilbur S. Stanford, Jr.

492nd BG
Louis Dezarlo

445th BG
Col. Albert J. Brown
Don Whitefield (492nd, 44th)

Subscribing Members
David Neale
Les Willis

FLASHBACK



After the D-Day invasion and the ground troops had moved inland. PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES H. REEVES (HEADQUARTERS), FROM FILES BROUGHT HOME FROM DIVISION OPERATIONS.



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

BY JOHN A. PALLER

At times, when preparing to write reports for the *Journal*, I mentally juggle different subjects around to determine which way to go. It is important that I give proper recognition to the dedicated groups of guys and gals that provide the glue that binds the 491st BG “Ringmasters” together. Some have devoted many years to endeavors like publishing the quarterly “Ringmasters Log,” serving on the Board of Directors; compiling and publishing our Directory; and organizing the annual reunions — which, incidentally, have been held in all four corners of this blessed country of ours. The reason I haven’t mentioned these wonderful people by name is because I don’t want to inadvertently miss someone. So browsing through old issues of the “Log” will be necessary before I proceed. This will be top priority in my next report.

There are times when the urge is very strong to write about current problems facing this nation. More importantly, what we can do to keep the country a free republic? What sort of tomorrow are we leaving our grandchildren and great-grandchildren (the “tomorrow” for our own older children is already here!) How serious is the Islamic threat? Demographically, what is happening to the Christian West? Has our affluence since WWII contributed to what I perceive as a decadent society? How about energy woes, fuel prices, inflation and the sinking value of the U.S. dollar? What happened to our manufacturing base and our railroads? Remember the “Arsenal of Democracy?” So many profound thoughts to ponder — I think I’m getting a headache!!!

RAILROADS DURING WWII

Classic Trains Magazine issued a Special Collectors Edition a few months ago entitled RAILROADS AND WWII. An article in the magazine by Les Hoffman is entitled “Tales of a G.I. Hogger.” It is an excellent, informative piece. Mr. Hoffman writes about his railroading experiences in Algeria, Italy, France, and finally in Germany. I am quoting his first paragraph, subtitled “Germany – Railroading Among the Ruins:”

“We left Dijon for Germany over the same railroad we had been working on



A postwar photo shows the devastating effects of Allied bombing on the main passenger station in Munich, Germany.
PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY



The Deutsche Reichsbahn yards in New Munster lie in ruins. Author Les Hoffman found German track and equipment to be in good shape — away from bomb-damaged areas.
PHOTO BY WILLIAM A. MARGOLIS

for the last six months. Passing through Nancy and Metz, we began to see how badly the Air Corps had treated the Germans, especially when we got to Mainz on the Rhine River. The whole city was just a mass of rubble. It was amazing to us at the time, but we got used to it because most cities we saw were in the same condition. The small towns weren’t hurt much unless they contained a factory or a big railroad yard.”

Checking through my log book I discovered that 16 of our 35 missions were to marshalling yards and other railroad-related targets. This reveals that the 491st Bomb Group’s efforts against German transportation targets had a high priority and certainly contributed to bringing down the Nazi regime. ■

445TH BOMB GROUP (continued from page 13)

Chuck Walker, the Group VP, and Ray Pytel, who did much research to have this award received.”

Pytel added that because the French Government issued the citation more than a year after the 445th was inactivated (on September 12, 1945), it was never presented until this time.

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

I hope to see many of our group members and the rest of the 2nd Air Division Association at the Grapevine, Texas convention in October. There are a lot of things to be considered at this meeting. ■

British Air Expert Lauds U.S. Products

BY PETER MASEFIELD • Reprinted from the Lincoln Nebraska Sunday Journal and Star, September 5, 1943

Peter Masefield, editor of the British magazine "The Airplane" and well-known authority on aviation and air warfare for the London Sunday Times, is in this country to confer with U.S. aviation experts and to observe generally the aviation picture here.

SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA — During the first week of an extensive tour of the U.S. aircraft industry, which I am privileged to make through the courtesy of the U.S. Army Air Forces, I have already seen much of interest and a great deal of real encouragement, all the more accentuated when one looks back to the dark days of 1940 and 1941.

Could Hitler or Hirohito or any of their satellites have seen one quarter of what I have been enabled to inspect during the past seven days, any few lingering hopes they might have cherished of avoiding utter defeat would undoubtedly have been dispelled forever. That does not imply any suggestion that the war will be easy or that any efforts can be relaxed. The war must still be a long and arduous business, perhaps fraught with many disappointments and grievous losses. But with American and British production rolling in unison to supply the needs of the fighting services, the outcome cannot be in doubt.

So far I have spent days in three great plants working to destroy the Axis: those of Packard at Detroit, Ford at Willow Run, and Boeing at Seattle. Each of these concerns, which among them employ more than 100,000 workers, is contributing directly to the bombing of Germany and of Japanese-held territory.

Packard and Willow Run are especially interesting because they represent former automobile companies turned over to aircraft work, whereas Boeing stands out now — and in history — as the pioneer of the modern four-motored day-bomber.

America's contribution toward the R.A.F.'s great night-bomber offensive is seen in the production of Rolls-Royce Merlin engines from the Packard plant. Many of these Packard-built Merlins are droning nightly over Germany in British Avro Lancaster bombers. Others are delivered for installation in the fast de Havilland Mosquitoes that have been keeping Berlin in a state of apprehension on so many nights recently, as well as exerting material damage. Yet others of these Merlins go to power the North American Mustang fighters, which, thus equipped, are among the fast-

est fighters in the world.

The American-built Merlin differs only slightly from the British version. In many cases, improvements suggested in America have been incorporated in the British Merlins and vice versa. Merlins delivered to the U.S. Army differ in many of the accessories from those delivered to the British, but the standardization between the two nations is now progressing so well that there may come a time before long when the two versions will be identical. The American version of the highly supercharged Merlin 61 is now coming out from the Packard works, and in its present form is one of the highest-rated engines in the world.

At Willow Run, the new version of the Consolidated Liberator is now in full production at the rate of some dozens each week. The long, moving assembly lines have, naturally, taken some time to fill up and to get fully under way. That has been accomplished and the twin ones now move forward every six hours, a period which will be progressively reduced as time goes by.

There can be no doubt that the re-designed nose of the Ford-built Liberator, with its roomy Emerson turret mounting two 50-caliber guns, is a great advance over the earlier models. The forward defense is now excellent and the bombardier has improved accommodation in a prone bombing position underneath the turret. In addition, communication between the pilot's compartment and the nose has been improved greatly and the navigator is better situated.

A fully-retractable underneath Sperry ball turret has been added. The new Liberator thus has eight 50-caliber machine-guns mounted in four power-operated turrets as well as the standing two waist guns. Enemy fighters will not find the Liberator easy to tackle from any point of view, least of all from the former favorite head-on position. The nose turret, the top turret and the ball turret can all be brought into play against the head-on attacker.

Far across the Rockies, at Seattle on Puget Sound, I saw the famous Boeing Flying Fortress being turned out in great numbers. Details of the latest modifications to the Fortress to increase still further its fighting powers may not be mentioned yet, but will certainly continue to be the despair of enemy pilots. One is not surprised at the extraordinary way in which they stand up to damage from enemy fire and return to their bases when no ordinary

airplane would stay in the air at all.

One important feature of Boeing production is its flexibility. Not more than about five bombers from the assembly line are ever exactly alike. Detail modifications are constantly being built into them to increase their effectiveness in action.

Throughout the tour so far, one has been struck by the labor problems, which the American factories are up against. There seems to be little doubt that if absenteeism and frequent migration of employees could be cut by half, the total production would go up by an astonishing amount. Even so, the numerous women and hitherto unskilled workmen who have come fresh into the task of building aircraft to defeat the Axis are doing a very fine job under totally unfamiliar conditions.

Here in America the transition from normal home life into industrial work is probably a much greater change than in many parts of Great Britain. Much has been done. We should be wrong to believe that on both sides of the Atlantic there is not much more still to do to speed "unconditional surrender." ■

ANCIENT INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

After having dug to a depth of five meters last year, Scottish archaeologists found traces of copper wire and concluded that their ancestors had a telephone network more than 150 years ago.

Not to be outdone by the Scots, the British dug to a depth of ten meters. Shortly thereafter, articles in the UK newspapers read, "British archaeologists have found traces of 250-year-old copper wire and have concluded that their ancestors already had an advanced, high tech communications network a hundred years earlier than the Scots."

One week later, THE KLUB, an Oslo newspaper, reported the following: "After digging as deep as 30 feet in a corn field near Long Lake, Marvin Mansen, a self-taught archaeologist, reported that he found absolutely nothing. Marvin has therefore concluded that Norwegians were using wire-less 300 years ago." ■



SEETHING

The 448th Speaks

BY KING SCHULTZ

FOLDED WINGS OF THE 448TH

Chuck Bonner (May 2008), Porter, Indiana

Jean A. Beaulieu (February 2008), Lomita, California

Mission Homeward Bound June 1945

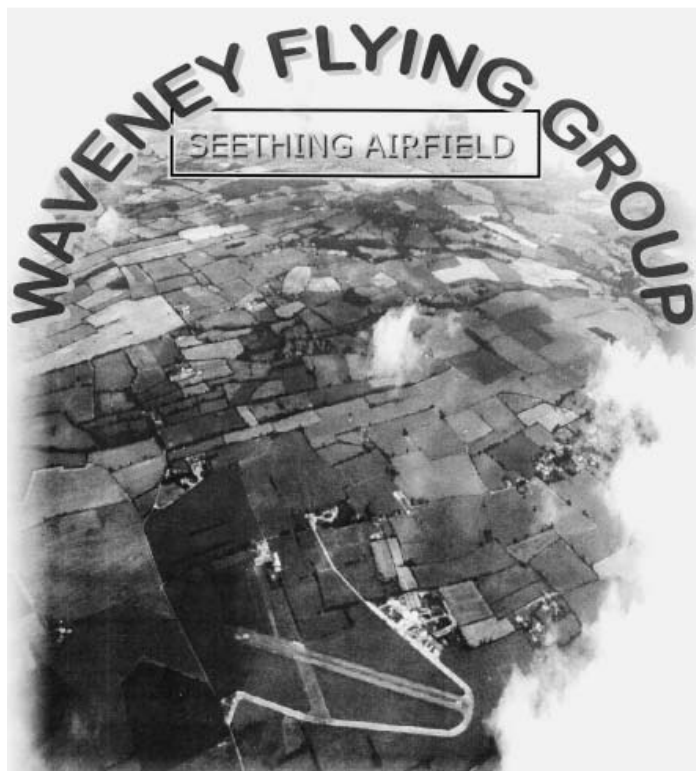
SUBMITTED BY HAROLD DORFMAN

This chronicle is being written on 10 April 1997. The actual dates, flight times, and distances are accurate and are confirmed in the original flight logs. The details of the stops between each leg of the flight and the in-flight incidents are as accurate as possible considering that it is fifty-two years later. If I don't write this down now, I probably never will.

Germany surrendered on 8 May 1945. Coincidentally, we had a party scheduled at the Officers' Club that night. Some of us were already celebrating in the club several hours before the party started. I opened up a bottle of Three Feathers whiskey that I had brought from the States. By the time the ladies arrived I had finished the fifth of whiskey to within one inch of the bottom. They carried me out on a stretcher as the party girls arrived. They put me to bed, at attention, in full uniform including my tie and my shoes. I woke up in the morning with the hangover to end all hangovers and learned that I missed the best party ever, a victory party at the club. That was the end of my hard whiskey drinking career.

Our war was over. Our base was at peace and military chicken had now invaded our easy-going life with the first order to "fall in" (line up at attention) wearing our A-2 leather flight jackets for inspection. The squadron commander inspected the line of officers and told several of us that we had four or five hours to remove all nudes painted on our A-2 flight jackets. This was, however, only the beginning. They actually inspected our quarters and expected us to clean them up according to military standards, which we did. We were no longer combat warriors. We were army officers expected to act like officers. We were advised that walking down the streets of London or any other city while playing with a yo-yo would subject us to a court martial and was conduct unbecoming an officer. We were shattered.

All flight crews were advised that we would fly all airworthy aircraft back to the USA, and we were advised that we had to dispose of all personal, heavy hardware. The major problem was our personally-owned bicycles. A local dealer came to the base and offered us two pounds (roughly \$9) for each bicycle, despite the fact that most of the bikes were worth at least \$100. Although we tried, the army would not allow us to smuggle the bikes back to the States on our planes, because they were too heavy. At night we would hide the bikes on the planes, but after we left, the MPs would search the planes and the next morning the bikes were back at the door of our Quonset hut. The dealer knew he had us over a barrel and thought we were helpless. One of the fellows, however, who refused to sell an expensive bicycle for \$9, went into the Quonset hut, took a fire axe and destroyed both wheels, the frame and the chain with three or four blows. He then looked at the dealer and said "Sold for one



pound" (about \$4). The axe was passed around to each of us, and without exception we all reduced the value of our bikes. We had a great deal of satisfaction. Hundreds of bikes on the base were destroyed within a few hours. The only problem was a shortage of axes.

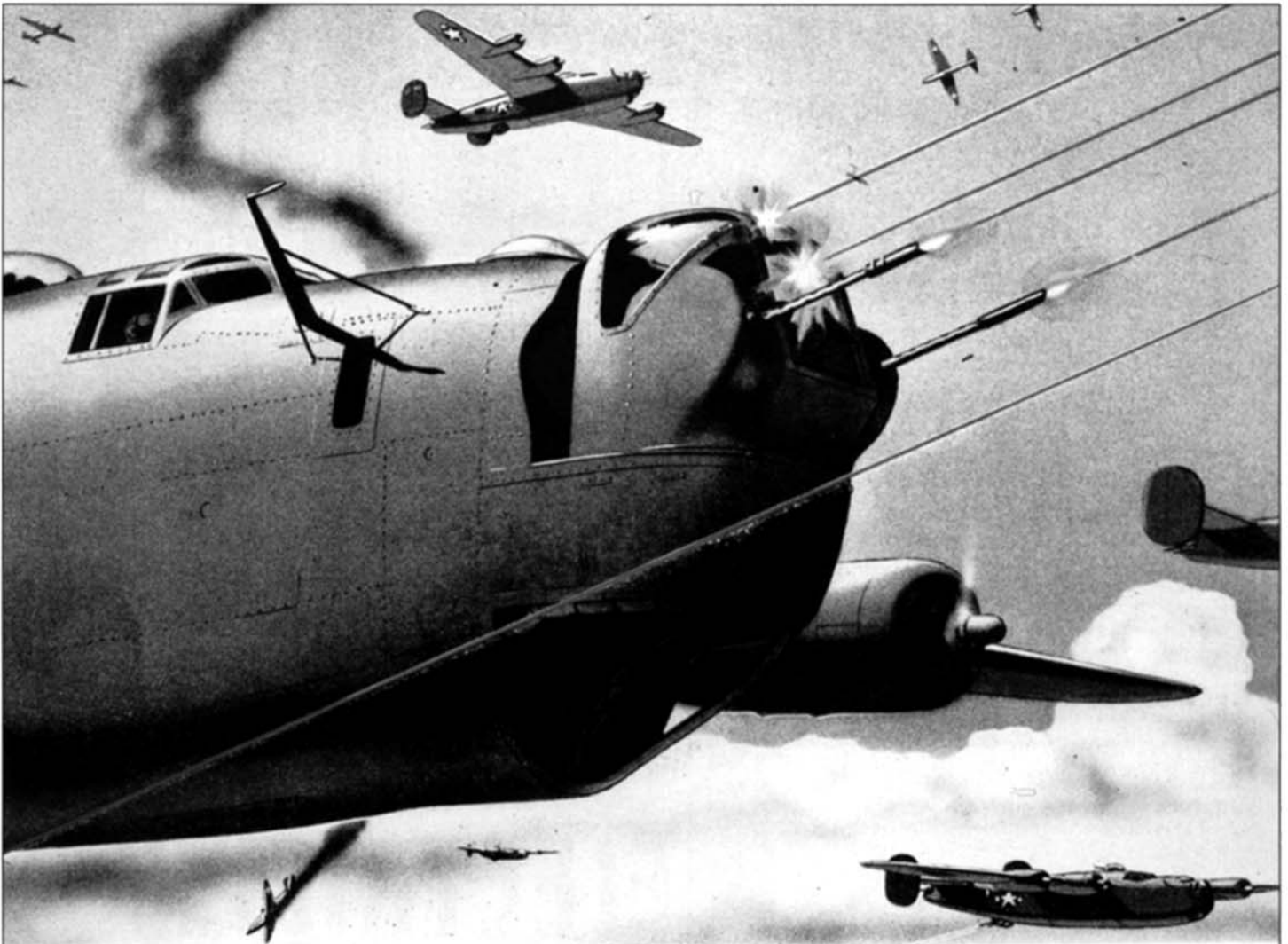
Two or three nights before takeoff we were advised that we had to get rid of all the booze in the clubs, leaving us with a tough decision: we had to drink it or dump it. The crew members who were responsible for actually flying the airplanes — pilots, navigators, engineers and radio operators — could not afford the luxury of taking off with a hangover. The other eleven passengers could sleep undisturbed. All were prohibited from drinking within 48 hours of takeoff, which meant that we had to finish the booze off that night. Despite our best efforts, most of it was left behind. After my hangover to end all hangovers, I limited myself to two or three glasses of Guinness ale.

I was assigned to a crew from a neighboring bomb group because we had a surplus of planes and the bomb group had a surplus of flight crews. The trip home was to be flown in four legs as follows: (1) Seething, England to Valley, Wales; (2) Valley, Wales to the Azores; (3) the Azores to Gander, Newfoundland; and (4) Gander to Bradley Field, Connecticut. The trip totaled 3,920 nautical miles (nm) or 4,510 statute miles. Our indicated airspeed was 160 knots (182 mph) for the entire trip. Our orders were to "deliver one B-24 bomber," nose-art nickname "ETO-PIAN," to the Base Unit Commander at Bradley Army Air Field, Connecticut. ■

HIGH SCHOOL GOATS

At a high school in Montana a group of students played a prank on the principal. They let three goats loose inside the school building. But before they let them go, the boys painted the numbers 1, 2 and 4 on the sides of the animals.

School officials and the local police soon rounded up Nos. 1, 2 and 4, but then spent the rest of the day looking for No. 3. ■



HE THUMBED HIS B-24 NOSE at a torrent of hot Nazi steel

A true story of sixty thrill-packed seconds in the life of an American flyer whose armor weathered a deadly hail of machine gun fire to save his life.

He was parked in the nose turret of a B-24 Liberator—part of a formation of Allied bombers bent on destruction of a critical Nazi war area. High above the clouds, his plane droned nearer and nearer its target.

Suddenly, he caught a fleeting glimpse of a cloud-hopping Nazi fighter plane. Trigger fingers became tense and in a flash the scrap was on.

Streaking out of a cloud at lightning speed, the Heinie bored in with his guns spitting fire and steel. The aim was deadly. CRASH went the plastic panes of the turret and a fusillade of steel poured in. But the Nazi slugs were plunking into a tough wall of armor—and they didn't get through!

**BUY MORE THAN BEFORE
in the 5th War Loan Drive**

All the while the B-24's nose guns were blazing a stream of fire—and *bitting their mark*. Doggedly the Nazi fighter dove in again. Smack on the nose came another hail of hot steel—and again the guard of armor stopped it cold.

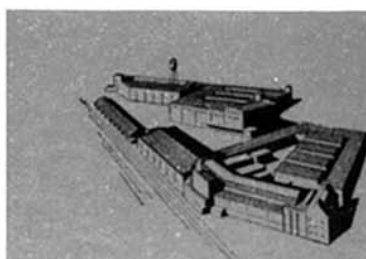
Finally, the steady fire from the Yankee guns ripped through a vital spot—the Nazi fighter pilot went crashing to his death. And thanks to the B-24's fighting armor, the kid in the nose turret came through *without a scratch*.

* * *

This incident gives Van Dorn workers a glowing sense of pride. For they are among the

builders of armor for the nose turrets of the B-24. They are producing armor plate that guards the flyers of almost all types of American fighter and bomber planes. And their skill in applying our 65 years of metal fabricating experience to the building of stronger armor protection is reflected in the high percentage of our flyers *who are returning safely*.

A tale like this should be an inspiration to every man and woman in war work to do a better job in backing the men at the fighting fronts. For tomorrow, their lives may depend upon how fast and how well we do our jobs today.



THE VAN DORN

IRON WORKS COMPANY • CLEVELAND 4, O.

SPECIALISTS IN METAL FABRICATION
AND HEAT TREATMENT SINCE 1878

Night Patrol

"**W**E were flying routine night patrol," said the bomber pilot, in relating the incident which won for him a letter of commendation from the Commanding General. "Flying at 1000 feet, we saw the sub surface. Descending to 300 feet and flying at 300 miles per hour, we switched on our landing lights; and as we passed over the sub, bracketed it with four depth charges."

In accordance with Army regulations, names are omitted in this story from COMMAND POST, McClellan Field, Calif.

This is the G-E Airplane landing lamp—generally used for safer landings, but employed by this pilot to help blast a sub. Built in the same way as your G-E Sealed Beam head-lamps, it is only one of over 200 lamps used on the average big bomber.



When the last patrol has flown and the lights come on again, General Electric Research will be seeking new ways to bring you brighter, happier living. Health-giving ultra-violet . . . fluorescent "daylight" for kitchen or bedroom . . . and other new applications of light. Right now so many G-E lamps are serving our fighting forces that it is important to make the most of the lamp bulbs you have. Keep your G-E Mazda lamps clean, keep them close when you read or work, and turn them off when not in use. Conserve for Victory!

G-E MAZDA LAMPS

GENERAL  ELECTRIC

Hear the General Electric radio programs: "The G-E All-Girl Orchestra", Sunday 10 p. m. EWT, NBC; "The World Today" news, every weekday 6:45 p. m. EWT, CBS.



*To make lamps **STAY BRIGHTER LONGER**
THE CREED OF G-E RESEARCH*

BUY BONDS FOR VICTORY



WENDLING 392nd BY OAK MACKEY

There was a most wonderful rain storm here in Mesa, Arizona last night (7-10-08). There was some wind, lightning, and thunder, but mostly it was a fantastic downpour, a real "gully-washer" like we seldom see in these parts. Now, this summer in some areas of the USA, rain has become a four-letter dirty word with floods and all, but here in Arizona, rain is always welcome. My rain gauge measured four inches this morning. Average annual rainfall here is only seven and one-half inches, so we got over six months of rain in one evening. It is a miracle how thousands of tons of water can remain suspended high in the air and then at the appointed time come pouring down in the form of rain; truly amazing.

None of the above has anything to do with the Second Air Division Association, but I had to tell about it.

This Fall *Journal* may arrive at your home in time to remind you that it's high time to sign up for the 61st Annual 2ADA Convention in Dallas, October 17-20 at the Gaylord Texan Resort. Information and reservation forms were included in the Summer *Journal* for your convenience, and there is more info in this *Journal*. The hotel website is www.gaylordhotels.com. Costs are very reasonable for this day and age (the \$5.00 hotel room disappeared some time ago) and you will have a good time mixing with old friends and making new ones. Dallas has excellent air service with non-stop flights coming in from many parts of the country. The Gaylord Texan is located on the shores of Lake Grapevine just a few miles north of the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport, so taxi fare is reasonable. This will NOT be the last convention; there will be another in 2009. You read it here first; location has not been decided yet.

The 392nd BG Memorial Association is conducting a fundraiser to establish an endowment type fund to ensure that the 392nd BG website lasts into perpetuity. Because of the very active X-Gens of the 392nd BGMA, this website is the best. Go to www.b24.net and see for yourself. It has been used as a resource for the 2002 Bruce Willis movie, "Hart's War," and a PBS documentary called "The Price of Freedom." This is a reminder to all 392nd folks to send donations now if you have not yet done so. Also, www.b24.net is avail-

able to everyone worldwide, and donations will be accepted from anyone. Second Air Division Association members are invited to enjoy this website and make a donation if you are so inclined. Send donations to 392nd BGMA Treasurer Bill McCutcheon, 20620 Milton Court, Brookfield, WI 53045.

Colonel Lawrence G. Gilbert was the commanding officer of the 392nd BG at the war's end. He is alive and well at his home in Winter Park, Florida. The photo at right is of then Captain Gilbert before going overseas with the bomb group in 1943.

Be kind to each other always. ■



Capt. Gilbert at the controls of a B-24. The photo must have been taken in the States because of his rank and the khaki uniform.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM GOAR

BLAST FROM THE PAST

1944

Consolidated Sets Record in Low Cost for 1943

REPRINTED FROM THE TUCSON DAILY CITIZEN, FEBRUARY 26, 1944

Reduces Cost to Government by \$251,000,000 Below Original Contract

Substantial reductions made in man-hours required and in other costs incurred in producing airplanes, made it possible for Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation to deliver four-engined bombers as well as other models to the government at the lowest net cost of any manufacturer in 1943, the company's annual report, signed by T.M. Girdler, chairman, and Harry Woodhead, president, reveals.

Record breaking production of warplanes was reflected in sales of \$797,199,544 for the fiscal year ended November 30, 1943. The report, first to be issued since the merger of Consolidated Aircraft Corporation and Vultee Aircraft, Inc. on March 18, 1943, also reveals that the company's backlog of unfilled orders at the end of the year amounted to approximately \$3,000,000.

Reduces Cost

Net income from sales (including operations of Vultee Aircraft, Inc. for eight months only, March 31 to November 30) amounted to \$19,287,941 after providing for post-war readjustments. The net income includes as a deduction from excess profits, a debt retirement fund of \$5,143,000 and postwar refund of \$2,047,000.

In the year ended November 30, 1943 Consolidated Vultee reduced the cost to the government of airplanes and parts delivered by \$251,000,000 below the price called for in the original contracts. These reductions were made through voluntary refunds of cash and price reductions and amounts reserved for further cash refunds. They do not include the waiver of substantial amounts due under escalator provisions of contracts.

Vultee Design

Provision has been made in the accounts for a refund of \$80,000,000 pending renegotiation proceedings for the 1943 fiscal year, which amount is included in the \$251,000,000 refund and price reduction figure.

All airplanes delivered in 1943 by the company were designed and developed by Consolidated Vultee. Of these the exploits of the B-24 Liberator were the most spectacular and included the famed Ploesti oil fields raids in Romania, the bombing of the Messerschmitt factory at Weinerneustadt, near Vienna, bombing of Paramushir outpost on the road to Tokyo, and the first reconnaissance flight over the Jap naval base in Truk. ■

THE BALLOON BOMBERS

BY C. GRAHAM

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO "BULLETIN AIRWAR" AND TO THE FOLLOWING:
MRS. ANN DAY, JIM LONG, CALGEN PRESCOTT, AND KOKU-FAN MAGAZINE

It isn't easy anymore to startle people with little known facts about the history of World War II — the following did astonish us, however: From the period of 3 November 1944 to March 1945, an attack force of over 6,000 bombers penetrated the defenses of the North American Continent and deposited approximately 300,000 pounds of explosives from Alaska to Texas. Because of the rigid secrecy employed by the Canadian and United States Governments during the attack periods, even today, there is little evidence

that it ever took place. From the little that we know, it appears that the results were not particularly effective.

The bombers were Japanese balloons launched with a cargo of three to four incendiary or high explosive bombs suspended underneath each basket. The predominant load was undoubtedly of the incendiary type since these bombs would offer the most promising results for the propagation of the primary detonation.

The balloons could be released only when the prevailing winds were most favorable, since they had no control of the directions other than a crude altitude control device. There was only a four-month

period in the winter when the winds were favorable and, fortunately for us, it was also the worst time for starting fires. Summer was considered best because of the dryness.

An instrument package in the basket was operated automatically by changes in temperature and when it became warmer, as would be the case at lower altitudes, specific quantities of sand ballast were dumped and thereby allow the balloon to maintain a proper height until it reached its general destination via the jet streams of the upper atmosphere. Eventually, the sand was exhausted and there would be a certain loss of the gas. The balloon would then descend to earth where the bombs would, hopefully, detonate.

Calgen Prescott, who has a sample of the bag, tells us that the color of it is a very pale green. The material itself is made up of about five layers of rice paper that were glued together with a vegetable paste called Konnyaku Nori. The paste was made from a potato-like vegetable called Konnyaku. Apparently, the basket was of wicker construction common to such purposes and, if so, would be a neutral tan color. It isn't known if the balloons ever carried national insignia or markings of some kind. We'd guess that some did.

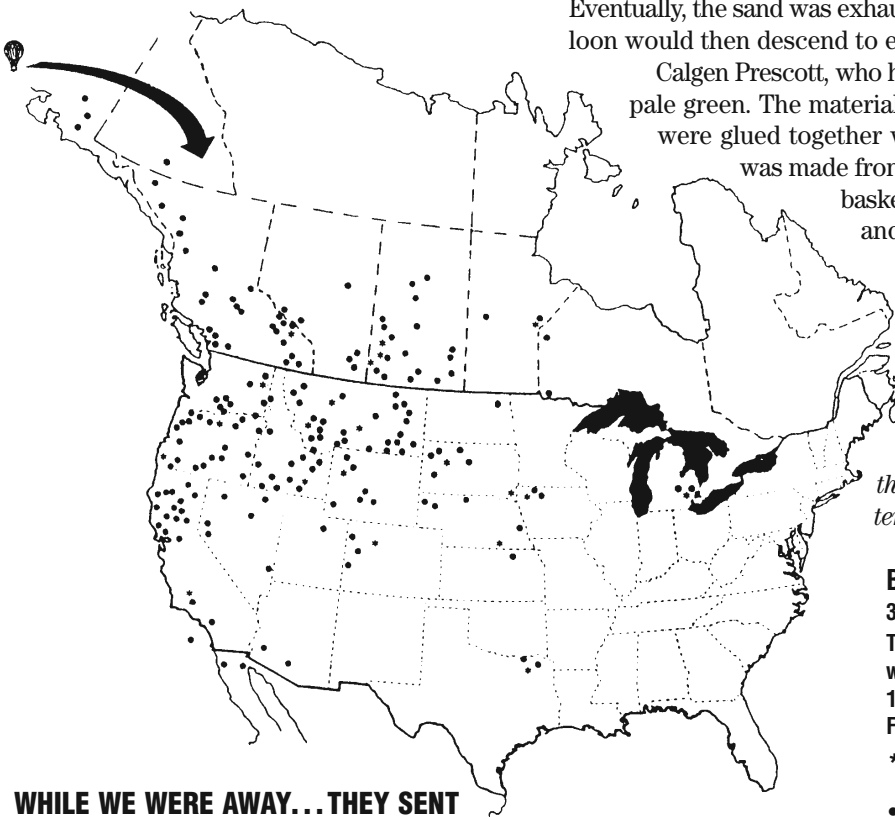
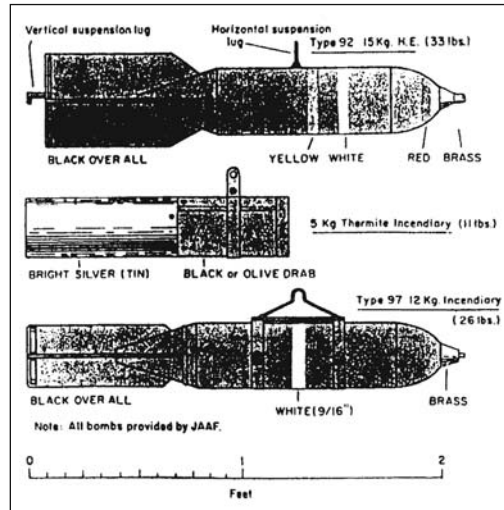
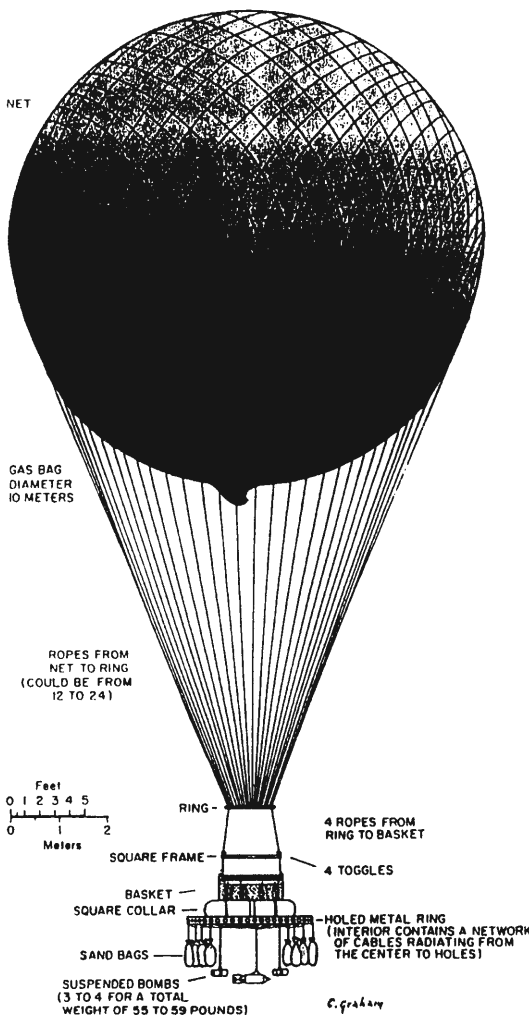
Ed. Note: For more details, read the book "Retaliation: Japanese Attacks and Allied Countermeasures on the Pacific Coast" (1975) by Bert Webber; also read his articles in American History Magazine circa 1975-80. Another article on the subject appeared in the September 1988 issue of World War II Magazine, written by Michael E. Unsworth. ■

BALLOON LANDING LOCATIONS

3 NOVEMBER 1944 – MARCH 1945

The map shows the known locations of some of the balloon landings which were launched during the period of 3 November 1944 to March 1945. Over 6,000 were released (some with great ceremony). KOKU-FAN Magazine calls them "Paper ICBMs".

- * Indicates a balloon landing in which there was a detonation of the bombs.
- Indicates a balloon landing in which there was no detonation due to some malfunction of the bombs.



**WHILE WE WERE AWAY... THEY SENT
6,000 BOMBERS AGAINST AMERICA!**

High flying humor, of sorts

An airline pilot was sitting in his seat and pulled out a .38 pistol. He placed it on top of the instrument panel and then asked the navigator, "Do you know what I use this for?"

"No, sir, what's it for?" asked the navigator, timidly.

"I use this on navigators who get me lost!" responded the pilot.

The navigator proceeded to pull out a .45 and place it on his chart table.

The pilot asked, "What's that for?"

"I'll know we're lost before you will."

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

A military pilot called for a priority landing because his single-engine jet fighter was running "a bit peaked."

Air Traffic Control told the fighter jock that he was number two behind a B-52 that had one engine shut down.

"Ah," the pilot remarked, "the dreaded seven-engine approach."

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

Taxiing down the tarmac, the 757 abruptly stopped, turned around and returned to the gate. After an hour-long wait, it finally took off.

A concerned passenger asked the flight attendant, "What was the problem?"

"The pilot was bothered by a noise he heard in the engine," explained the flight attendant, "and it took us a while to find a new pilot."

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

"Flight 2341, for noise abatement turn right 45 degrees," said the air traffic controller.

"But Center, we are at 35,000 feet. How much noise can we make up here?"

"Sir, have you ever heard the noise a 747 makes when it hits a 727?" asked the air traffic controller. ■

Last WWII Bombing Mission Over Europe

BY EILEEN O. DADAY, Daily Herald Correspondent

REPRINTED FROM THE DAILY HERALD (CHICAGO), APRIL 19, 1995

The way Max Snyder (458th Bomb Group) of Arlington Heights views Tuesday, it will be a day of mammoth proportion, a day of infamy, if you will.

It was fifty years ago Tuesday, or April 25, 1945 that the last World War II bombing mission over Europe was flown, signaling the end of the war in Europe.

"We shouldn't be celebrating the end of the war on V-E Day (May 14), when a bunch of guys signed a piece of paper," Snyder, who was the deputy pilot on the final mission, says. "The war in Europe ended with that mission."

Snyder, 72, recounted his tale in the office of his home dressed in his Air Force lieutenant's uniform and amid such artifacts as the silk escape map of Germany he carried in the pant leg pocket of his flight suit, his pilot's log book, photographs and a diary of all the bombing missions flown over Europe.

Admittedly, Snyder himself did not realize the significance of his last bombing mission, that it was the last mission flown over Europe, until four years ago.

But he has campaigned tirelessly since then to educate the public of the mission's place in history.

"I don't want people to forget," he says simply. "They wouldn't be doing what they're doing today if that war hadn't stopped."

Snyder discovered his role in the war's end in Europe while visiting the Second Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich, England, which was established with funds from Snyder and other members of the Second Air Division of the U.S. Eighth Air Force, which was mostly based in Norfolk County.

It was Snyder's third trip there, but it was the first time the archivist there mentioned the significance of the mission over Bad Reichenhall, Germany.

"It bothered me," Snyder says, "As soon as I got home, I looked up in my pilot's log and discovered I had flown on that mission."

He immediately wrote to the Department of the Air Force Research Agency, which is at the Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama, for confirmation. He received a copy of the mission, from the flight formation to the written paperwork.

"We will always remember our last mission, 25 April 1945, a historic date to be retained in our memories forever," stated documents Snyder received. "Our formation consisted of three nine-ship squadrons. On our last mission, the bombing results were excellent."

The mission took out railroad terminals at Bad Reichenhall, where German troops were loading anti-aircraft weaponry on flatbeds. Such weaponry was used to fire at General Patton's tanks, Snyder says. With the railroad out of commission, Patton made his push across the Rhine.

In all, 56 planes flew the mission, in a formation that called for Snyder's plane as the deputy lead plane, or at high right.

Some twenty planes were damaged during the run from anti-aircraft fire, and one airman was wounded.

The morning of that mission started like the rest, Snyder says. An enlisted man drove a Jeep to their quarters in the middle of the night and knocked on their door three times. He entered and first woke Snyder, the pilot, telling him of the upcoming mission. Snyder and the rest of his 10-man crew walked to a briefing room, where they were fed and briefed on everything from the weather forecast, to the site, to the government code word for the day in case they were captured.

Snyder flew his B-24 bomber in the mission, the same plane he had been assigned to during flight training in Topeka, Kansas, where it had arrived at the base right off the production line, with only five hours of flying time on it.

For Snyder, it wasn't his last mission in that plane. He made one more run, called the Tour of the Ruhr, during which he carried ground personnel from the base, from the airport technicians to the kitchen crew, to see the war zone.

Snyder says he is unsure how he will celebrate the anniversary. His wife, Marilyn, says it is his day, and suggests he should celebrate in his own way.

"But it's not my day. It's a family day," said Snyder, who suggested gathering the couple's four children and nine grandchildren for dinner on the anniversary.

"I want all the children together to restate it," Snyder said. "We wouldn't be here, we wouldn't be a family, if it weren't for this day." ■

CREW GATES REVISITED

BY ANDY DeBIASSE (467TH)

By now, most of the members of the 467th Bomb Group are familiar with the gift of gates given to the community center at Rackheath by our ten-man Coffey Crew. Two plaques that tell the story of the gates are prominently displayed at the Parish House there. One is in letter form, a short history of the gift; and the other is two pictures of our crew, one as we were in 1943 and another picture forty years later, the only known entire crew to have reunited at one of our conventions. We posed in the same positions as the 1943 picture, with the addition of our beloved Colonel Shower.

For those who may never make the trip back to Rackheath, here are the contents of the two plaques. They are companions to the gates themselves, permanently mounted in the Parish Center. They are a lasting remembrance of the warm relations formed by American airmen and British civilians long ago and still existing to this day.

To our Dear Friends at Rackheath,

As one of the two surviving members of the Coffey Crew, Al Muller being the other, it is my distinct pleasure and privilege to present to you this set of pictures.

These are the men of the Coffey Crew who shared with you the war years of 1942-1945.

In 1983, at our 40th reunion, Al Muller suggested a gift to commemorate our relationship in those terrible times. We reproduced and sold pictures of our famous B-24 "Witchcraft." Al, Jim, and I spearheaded the effort and every crewman was involved. We raised enough money to build the gates which you requested.

Now, in 2007, the gates have a new, wonderful structure, and at last, Al Muller, Joan Coffey, and I send you the faces of the indomitable crew.

Although most of us are gone, our gates and our bonds are stronger than ever.

With deepest affection,

ANDY DeBIASSE • December, 2007

The Airmen of the B-24 Coffey Crew – In Service – 1943
Eighth Air Force – Second Air Division – 467th Bomb Group



Bob Snyder – Jim Coffey – Harmon Small – Al Muller
Carl Schaut – Bob Miller – Andy DeBiasse – Bill Hayes – Bill Smith – Don Fafford

Fortieth Reunion
Boston, Massachusetts – 1983
with Base Commander Colonel Albert Shower



Bob Snyder – Jim Coffey – Al Shower – Harmon Small – Al Muller
Carl Schaut – Bob Miller – Andy DeBiasse – Bill Hayes – Bill Smith – Don Fafford



BY DICK BUTLER

During World War II, the 44th Bomb Group was awarded two Presidential Unit Citations. The first of these was for the 44th Bomb Group's aircraft and crews' outstanding performance on the mission of 14 May 1943, bombing the Krupp Submarine Building Works at Kiel, Germany. At this time, the 44th was the only B-24 group operating out of England and participating in this Kiel mission. The 93rd Bomb Group was in the process of getting reorganized in England after an extended deployment to North Africa.

The battle plan for this mission was for approximately one hundred Flying Fortresses carrying high explosive bombs to lead twenty 44th Bomb Group Liberators which would carry incendiaries packaged in strapped clusters as they hung in the bomb bays. As soon as they were released, the clusters would break open.

The battle plan did not take into consideration the different flying character-

istics of the B-17s and the B-24s. As a result, in the target area the B-17s were higher than the B-24s, and when the B-17s dropped their load of high explosive bombs, they went right through the B-24 formation. Fortunately, none of the B-24s were hit. As a result of this experience, B-17s and B-24s were not again scheduled to bomb the same target on the same mission. Further complicating the B-24 situation was the fact that as the incendiaries were dropped from the lead B-24s and the bundles broke open, the sky was filled with a myriad of individual four bound sticks of potential fire. This caused the B-24s to be in a looser than normal formation as the following planes strived to avoid the incendiary sticks falling from the leading planes. I distinctly remember one of them coming right at us that I thought was going to hit my windshield, but it passed underneath us. Again, none of the B-24s that survived the mission were hit by the sticks.

There were seventeen 44th BG B-24s over the target. Six were lost due to German fighters and flak. This mission was considered to have been very successful. A *Stars and Stripes* headline read, "Kiel Raid Greatest Air Battle." An outstanding photo taken from a B-17 over a formation of six of the 44th's B-24s over the target appeared on the cover of *Life* magazine shortly after the mission was flown. The caption states, "Six Eighth Air Force Lib-

erators go in for the bombing run over the shipbuilding yards at Kiel, Germany during the heavy daylight attack on May 14. The picture was taken midway through the attack and as the target area was obscured by smoke." I have a copy of that *Life* magazine cover photo.

The second Presidential Unit Citation award that the 44th Bomb Group received was for the 1 August 1943 Ploesti, Romania oil refinery bombing mission, nicknamed "Tidal Wave." There is no need to repeat here the 44th's participation in this famous mission, as so much has been written about it over the years in a number of books and in other publications as well as television productions. However, I believe it is significant to mention that one of the two 44th forces that attacked the refineries, the twenty plane force led by 44th Bomb Group Deputy Commander, Lt. Col. Posey, with John Diehl as pilot of the lead plane, was the only formation on "Tidal Wave" to completely destroy its assigned target, the Creditul Minier Refinery. This refinery, the only one that produced aviation gasoline, was so destroyed that it was not rebuilt during the war. This loss of aviation gasoline production adversely affected Luftwaffe operations for the rest of the war. Flight training was reduced, and takeoff by fighters to intercept incoming Allied bombers was delayed to the last possible moment to conserve fuel. ■

BOOK REVIEW: "Ben Love: My Life in Texas Commerce"

Every member of the World War II generation should read *Ben Love: My Life in Texas Commerce*. Ben's rise from combat experiences as an 8th Air Force "lead navigator" – a Captain at nineteen – to the pinnacle of the business and banking world is the stuff of legend.

Growing up "hard scrabble" during the Great Depression with a father whose business failed and a mother who would not allow adversity to deter her goals for her son, Ben Love achieved a pinnacle of success enjoyed by few. This book captures the essence of a superb citizen who was also a super achiever.

Enamored of Houston while an aviation cadet at Ellington Field, now NASA's Mission Control Center, Ben returned to his chosen city after military service and graduation from the University of Texas in 1947. He established a business and demonstrated unusual managerial skill in its success. After fifteen years he was recruited to head the Texas Commerce Bank. This was his entry into the field of

banking. Under his guidance the bank took the lead in establishing holding companies and garnering a national reputation for his banking organization.

Love's managerial skills were severely tested during a downturn in the petroleum market, and his bank was the only one of the "Big Five" banks in Texas to survive. In 1984 Texas Commerce Bank ranked 21st among the large banks in the country.

He worked effectively to create a world-class bank. This was accomplished when he merged with Chemical Bank of New York, now J.P. Morgan Chase.

Retiring at age sixty-five, he continued to lead in Houston philanthropic and civic endeavors. He led fund drives for diverse causes such as the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and the Houston Ballet and Symphony Orchestra, raising large sums to support these important activities.

His regard for his wartime organization and military career led to his becoming one of the first Trustees of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. In this

role he enabled the museum to achieve a degree of excellence recognized by over a million visitors to the museum since its opening in 1996. He also became a member of the Board of Governors of the American Air Museum in Great Britain.

Throughout the book he references numerous instances of techniques and management skills he learned as a lead navigator in the Mighty Eighth Air Force. Much of his success he attributes to the assumption of leadership and command at the age of nineteen while flying twenty-five combat missions and training replacement lead crews. He also noted that the opportunity afforded him to complete his college education under the GI Bill was a major factor in his later success.

Ben Love: My Life in Texas Commerce, by Ben Love, is published by Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Texas. This book is available from the bookstore of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402. Price is \$30 plus \$4.50 shipping. ■



NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY LLOYD W. PRANG

Today is June 15 — I've been thinking this was the final day to send this to Ray Pytel. However, I finally found the last *Journal* and when I got it dried out I noticed that August 1 is the final date. Then, on about the third week of June I received a note from Ray telling me that the deadline was July 20. This was to get the next *Journal* in your hands before the 2ADA convention in Dallas in October. Good thinking! This is promising to be one that you don't want to miss — and it might be the last one!

It seems that after my accident last September, when I took a spill and wiped out the entire left side of my body (I'm OK now), things have been trending downhill. Six months later, in February 2008, Irene fell and broke her right hip (the hip is OK now). Then her car developed a problem — it still isn't fixed (correction — it's now July 14 — the car has been fixed). Then the area in which we live got soaked with rain and our sewer backed up — we had about two inches of water and other stuff in our basement. We then found that our insurance didn't cover this type of thing. The policy had been changed on May 3 — the storm hit on June 6.

However, during that time some very nice things happened too. We had arranged to go on a cruise in the middle of May. Irene was able to make it — we didn't have to cancel. And the cruise line upgraded our cabin from a mini suite to a full suite. Also, our daughter and her husband volunteered to manage the details of the clean-up of the sewer overflow. This was a big deal! New carpeting is coming in a few weeks; hopefully things will "pick up" then.

It was during this time that **Lloyd Morris** wrote that he was ready to include **Mike Benarcik's** book *In Search of Peace* on his (Lloyd's) website. However, he needed permission to do this. I called Mike's brother, **Dan Benarcik**, and Dan was happy to have Lloyd do this. Shortly, anyone who wants a copy will be able to download it from the 453rd website. The charge for this service will be used to keep the website going.

Then there were **Murray & Shirley Schwartz**. They went to Attleborough, England on May 22 to represent the 453rd Bomb Group at the memorial service for **Roy West**, who had been the Group's English liaison for many years. Roy's son, **Kevin**, is continuing as the 453rd liaison,

as is **Pat Ramm**. Murray's complete letter and some photos will appear in the 453rd Newsletter. I must also note that Murray used a Frank Sinatra stamp on the envelope. That was a nice touch, Murray!

Chuck Walker sent a copy of the obit for **Leo Ryan**, who died on March 18th. Leo was the bombardier on the **Mel Williams** crew, an original crew. Thanks, Chuck. Of course Leo's entire obit will appear in the 453rd Newsletter.

We heard from **Don Parcels, Jack Raiser, Walt Bala, and Ben Squires**. Thanks for your concern about our various streaks of lousy luck. We also heard from **George Mazzara**. George was the waist gunner on the **Donald Schultz** crew, 734th Squadron. George wanted to know if we were still "in business." Happily, I was able to say we were.

Comes now items from the Internet. This one, titled "Veterans' Burials Nonstop at National Cemeteries," is not one of my favorite subjects, but it is informative. It's by Joe Milicia, an Associated Press writer. I've edited it because the whole thing was too long for this article of mine. Joe wrote:

An average of 1,800 veterans die each day, and 10 percent are buried in the nation's 125 national cemeteries, which are expected to set a record with 107,000 interments, including dependents, this year. Bill Tuerk, under-secretary for memorial affairs at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, said, "The peak year for veterans' deaths will be either 2007 or 2008." An estimated 686,000 WWII veterans died in 2007.

The busiest national cemetery is Riverside National, about 60 miles east of Los Angeles. It averages about 30 burials a day. This is followed by Florida National, 50 miles north of Tampa. Next is Calverton National, about 50 miles east of Manhattan, although it has handled as many as 55 burials a day. Six new national cemeteries are under construction for 2008, triple the previous year. This is the largest number of cemeteries constructed at one time.

After Taps are played, two uniformed members of an Army honor guard, wearing white gloves, perform the third and final ritual — the folding of the flag. They make each of the traditional 13 folds with precision as the mourners look on in silence.

Bill Norris sent the following obit that

appeared in a Vancouver newspaper: **STEIGLER, FRANZ**. After a long, extraordinary life, Franz passed away on March 22, 2008. Bill goes on to write that Franz was an ME-109 fighter pilot during WWII. After a bombing raid by B-17s on Bremen, one B-17 was almost shot to pieces. Flying on one engine, two of the crew were badly wounded, and with holes in the plane everywhere, it was limping back to England. Steigler encountered it, saw how badly it was shot up, and escorted it out of Germany to the North Sea. He saluted the pilot before he broke off. He never mentioned the incident to anyone. He later emigrated to Canada. About fifty years later, the pilot of the B-17 looked him up through an intensive search. They became close friends for many years. Franz was noted as a very modest person. The WWII incident was not mentioned in his obit.

Definition of a Veteran (author unknown): "A veteran is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank check made payable to the United States of America, for an amount of 'up to and including my life.' That is honor, and there are way too many people in this country who no longer can conceptualize it."

There are way too many of our guys who are members of the 453rd but not members of the 2nd Air Division Association. That's why this article will also appear in the 453rd Newsletter. Another reason is I just don't know what else to say.

Nuff said! Hope to see *all of you* in Texas. ■

Wedding Anniversary

Mark, a loving husband, was in trouble. He forgot his wedding anniversary and his wife was really ticked off. She told him, "Tomorrow morning, I will expect to find a gift in the driveway that does from 0 to 200 in under 6 seconds. AND IT BETTER BE THERE!"

In the morning, Mark got up two hours before he had to be at the office. When his wife woke up a couple hours later, she looked out the window and saw a gift-wrapped box in the middle of the driveway.

Confused, she put on her robe, went out to the driveway and brought the box into the house. When she opened it, she found a brand new bathroom scale.

Mark is not well enough to have visitors!

Inventor of Marvel Plane Wing is Visitor in Madison

REPRINTED FROM THE MADISON, WISCONSIN "CAPITAL TIMES" • SEPTEMBER 28, 1941

A modest, middle-aged man, whose revolutionary airplane wing is being hailed by aeronautical engineers as "the invention which may bring Germany to her knees," sat at a dining table in a Madison home Saturday and told how he hoped his invention would soon contribute to the defeat of Hitler.

The man is David R. Davis of Los Angeles, California, who was born and raised in Wisconsin. He came to Madison on Thursday for a brief visit with Lloyd Stafford, a lifelong friend. Stafford is a member of The Capital Times' advertising staff.

Davis, who has received national renown as a result of his invention and whose work was detailed in a lead story in the April 12 issue of The Saturday Evening Post, has devoted his entire life to aviation.

"I started tinkering with airplane design when I was ten years old," Davis explained. "My folks thought I was crazy — that was way back before much was known of aviation. But one day Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, came to our home, and he convinced my mother that I wasn't crazy."

Davis described his invention as a "new curvature of the wing which deflects air so that a plane doesn't get much drag and does get much more lift."

"The airplane manufacturer can use this additional lift to advantage in several ways," Davis said. "As one result, a plane can carry 25 percent more bomb load or 38 percent more gasoline load."

ONLY MECHANICAL PATENT

"Yes, I have a patent on it," he continued. "It is a purely mathematical patent, and, I believe, it is the only such patent that has ever gotten through."

Davis said that planes utilizing his new type wing are already in service with the British air force. These planes have been named the "Liberator" by the British and are the most formidable type of long-range bombers.

Davis declared that all long-range bombers manufactured by Consolidated Aircraft Co. at the Ford Company's new Ypsilanti, Michigan, plant and at new government aircraft plants at Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Fort Worth, Texas, will use his new type wing. In addition, the British government is constructing for the manufacture of planes incorporating the principles of the Davis wing in both England and India.

SEEK MORE USERS

The inventor said that his present trip to the Midwest was made to interest officials of the Curtis-Wright Co. and other aircraft manufacturing firms in the new wing. He explained that government officials are desirous of having the Davis wing introduced in all plants constructing bombers.

"They are already beginning to deliver the Liberators in reasonable quantities to England, and these planes are the weapons with which the British government hopes to beat Germany," Davis said Saturday.

"It is these planes that are doing the real bombing over Berlin right now. All the long range bombing of any consequence is being done by planes with this new type wing. They are being used for stratosphere bombing."

HOPES FOR HITLER'S DEFEAT

Davis throughout the interview sought to stress the necessity of defeating Hitler and expressed the hope that his invention would prove to be "just one little drop in the bucket that will eventually swamp Hitler and his like."

"The international situation is much more critical than any of us want to believe," he said.

Born in Neenah, Davis was raised in Eau Claire where he attended grade and high schools. He attended Vanderbilt University and the University of Southern California, but never completed his college engineering work.

"I've known Stafford from kindergarten up," Davis said, indicating his host. "We went all through the Eau Claire schools together and then both of us went to Vanderbilt. We canoed up and down the Mississippi together and did just about everything that boys would do."

WILL LEAVE TODAY

Davis said he hadn't seen Stafford in seven years and so took the opportunity of coming to Madison while in the Midwest on business. He said he planned to leave Madison today for further conferences with aircraft manufacturers early this week.

Davis declared that he has flown since pre-world war days. He said that he made his first flight in "an old Curtis pusher, made of bamboo and with a motor over the back of the pilot's neck."

In 1921 or 22 (he didn't remember just which) he attempted the first transcontinental non-stop flight, but "I made an

awful smear of it," he confessed. He also is said to be the first man to have flown across Death Valley.

"That was way back in the old days. I was blown across tail first," he confessed.

"As a flier," he added, "I was strictly second rate. I fly very little myself now. But the kids of today have flying in their bones. It is a whole generation of aviators that we are producing."

Davis said that he worked for many years in developing his new wing. During those years, he said, he knew nothing but aviation, but was forced to find a livelihood in a variety of occupations, even including several appearances as a cowboy in motion pictures.

"I guess I worked at just about everything, except newspaper reporting," he stated. He said he was a world war veteran, but added, "I was probably the most useless man in the last war." ■

Italian Cookies

An elderly Italian man lay dying in his bed. While suffering the agonies of impending death he suddenly smelled the aroma of his favorite Italian anisette cookies wafting up the stairs. Gathering his remaining strength he lifted himself from the bed. Leaning against the wall he slowly made his way out of the bedroom, and with even greater effort, while gripping the railing with both hands, he crawled downstairs. With labored breath he leaned against the doorframe, gazing into the kitchen. Were it not for death's agony he would have thought he was already in heaven. For there, spread out on waxed paper on the kitchen table, were literally hundreds of anisette sprinkled cookies.

Was it heaven? Or was it one final act of heroic love from his devoted wife of sixty years seeing to it that he left this world a happy man.

Mustering one final effort he threw himself toward the table landing on his knees in a crumpled position. His parched lips parted. The wondrous taste of the cookies was already in his mouth, seemingly bringing him back to life. An aged and withered hand trembled on its way up to a cookie at the edge of the table when it was suddenly smacked with a spatula by his wife . . .

"Get outta here!" she shouted. "They're for the funeral." ■

NUMBER 35

My Last Mission: March 30, 1945

BY ROBERT CLARK BARNES (445TH)

FOREWORD

This is the first-person account of the last air mission of Lt. Robert C. Barnes, from England to Germany and return, on March 30, 1945. He was a pilot in the 445th Bomb Group.

He was based at Tibenham, England, having arrived there on July 8, 1944. Up to this day, Lt. Barnes had flown 34 bombing missions. He was two months short of 22 years old!

He wrote this account in April 1945, while "rolling and pitching" on his way back across the Atlantic on the troop ship U.S. General Bliss.



AWAKENING

I guess I had lain awake most of the night, waiting to hear that familiar sound — the old mud-splattered Jeep coming around the huts after us. I was waiting to fly my last mission. I thought about the other mornings leading up to this one, and how I had felt then. There was that same tight, sickly feeling in my stomach. I was cold, cold all over, and I knew from experience that no fire on earth could ever warm me up.

A million thoughts went through my mind: What was the target? A "milk run," I had hoped, but deep down I knew that was impossible. No one had ever had that much luck. Maybe there wouldn't be any mission at all, but then I'd have to go through the long night again.

What ship would I get? I hoped it wouldn't be that old rattle-trap "R - Roger." What was keeping Slim? It was almost 3:30; he should be here by now. Then I heard that unmistakable sound and listened as he walked across the frozen ground toward me in Hut 25.

The outer door opened and closed. Slim strode in, flashing his light into the dark room. He looked as he always did — hat pulled down over his eyes, smoking a cigar, and cold. He came directly toward me, and by his action I knew that I was the only one on his list this morning.

"Whaddaya say, Slim?"

"Briefing at 0400 hours. You've got twenty-seven hundred gallons topped off and carrying six one-thousand-pounders. I don't know what ship you've got, but old 'R - Roger' isn't going today. This is it for you, isn't it?"

"Yeah, number 35. I never thought I'd see this day. I hope to hell I get back to buy you that drink I promised; that will be



LT. ROBERT C. BARNES, 1944

one drink I'll be damned glad to pay for."

"You'll get back okay. You've had good luck all the way, and it isn't going to change now. You want a ride down to the mess hall?"

"No thanks, Slim. I've got the old bike to ride for the first time. Can't break any rules this trip, you know."

Slim turned and went out the door just as fast as he had come in. He was always in a hurry when he came to us, his last call. I lay there in bed for a few minutes, not thinking of anything in particular, just thinking and breathing very deeply. I thought that my heart would burst; it was going to be hard. I listened to the deep breathing of the rest of the fellows there in the hut. Roy, there, next to me: He was finished, lucky guy. And Cliff, in the bunk next to him. Way off in the opposite corner, Buzz was probably dreaming of that gal back home, the way he was into it. You lucky guys, I thought, and rolled out of that nice warm sack.

GETTING READY

I dressed quickly and was very much annoyed at how much I was shivering. I always did that when I first got up in the morning. It was a combination of cold and fear. I grabbed my escape kit, a couple of bars of chocolate, an extra pack of cigarettes, and — last but not least — that ever-loving picture of my girl.

"One more, baby, and I'll be home," I muttered under my breath as I made my way out into the cold still of a winter's night in England.

The mess hall was very quiet, even for

this time of the morning. The boys never had much to say before a mission. I walked to the steam table, picked up a tray and went off to one of the tables. When I got home, I vowed, I would be sure to write my congressman about how terrible the food had been over here. Then I thought how lucky we were in comparison to the poor "doughboys" in France. It was very funny how quickly your appetite disappeared once you got in here, no matter how hungry you were when you first got up. Maybe someday breakfasts would again appeal to me. I guess it was those powdered eggs and milk that did it. Anyway, you had to eat something to last you for twelve hours or more.

I looked up to see who was coming down the line; there was Dick Hewitt, my copilot. Dick and I hadn't been together very long, but long enough to get to know each other well. He was a big guy with one of those faces that seems to throw out sunshine every time he smiled. He spotted me and came striding over.

"Well, Barnesey, this is number three-five. I sure wish I were that close to going home. You don't look worried to me. Brother, I'd be a scared son-of-a-bitch if I were in your shoes." (Dick didn't always exude sunshine!)

"I may look like the picture of placidity, but looks aren't all. My stomach is tied up in a knot, and for some strange reason, I'm not at all hungry. God, you know I can hardly believe that this is my last one. Wish to hell it was over. Wonder where we're going. Heard anything?"

"Not a thing. Slim said that it was a twenty-seven hundred topped off, and you know what that means — a nice long haul. Come on, eat up, and let's get going. It's almost four o'clock."

Together we walked out of the mess hall, climbed on our bikes and started off toward the flight line and the briefing room. The sky was still very dark, and what stars there had been when I first got up were now completely hidden. I surely hoped that it wouldn't rain before the mission got off. I hated those instrument takeoffs.

We rode along slowly, picking our way between groups of walking men. Here and there a cigarette flared up, revealing a tired face, blank of all emotions.

Suddenly the briefing room loomed up out of the darkness. We leaned the bikes against the corrugated wall and went into the rear part, which served as the dressing room.

(continued on next page)

NUMBER 35 (continued from page 27)

"Let's pick up our suits before the crowd gets here," Dick said as we entered the door. I nodded OK.

"Large size for me, Sarge, and not one of those damn limey suits either," Dick added.

"I'll take one of the same," I told Sarge, "but make it a medium, and make sure it works. I'll be damned if I again get one that doesn't work." He handed me pants, jacket, shoes, gloves, and a Mae West. I took them to my locker and put them inside with the stuff I had brought from the hut.

"Let's go, Dick. The Colonel has just come in." We walked from the dressing room to the briefing room via a narrow passageway. The briefing room was actually a long, wide Quonset hut, with a platform at one end and rows of benches from there to the back. A huge map hung on the wall behind the platform; it was the first thing that we always looked at when we walked into the room, because it showed where we were going.

Sometimes the map was covered with a cloth, for security reasons, and that always heightened the suspense. This morning it was covered, with Major Jenks behind the cloth, pinning a red string along our route. Now and then he would come out from behind the cloth and talk with Colonel Jones. Something must be up today. The room was filled with anxious talk and excited speculation about what was up. Major Cook, our squadron commander, was passing out the flight plans to each pilot and handed one to me as we entered the room.

We sat down with some of the boys near the back of the room and waited. I read the first page of the flight plan and saw that our group, the 445th, was going to lead the wing. We were to be called "Bourbon and Leader." The plan also listed our radio frequencies, emergency fields in France, and the fighter call signals. That was one call I wanted to know by heart. I turned the page and saw that I would be flying "S - Sugar," a very nice, new ship. We would be flying in the number three position in the lead squadron. That would be a very good place to be, as safe as any.

By this time, the room had quieted down. The briefing was about to begin. Major Jones rose from his seat and stated, "We'll have the weather first. Turn out the lights, please." As the lights went out, Lt. Sullivan flashed a colored map on the white sheet covering the map.

"You'll see that there is a thin ten-tenths cover over the field at the present time. It will dissipate by the time of takeoff into about five-tenths broken, with bases at twelve hundred and tops at three thousand. The weather en route should be about the same, with occasional thin clouds at flight

altitude. The target will be visual, with a possibility of some low broken at bombs away. At time of return, the field will be clear."

As he sat down, the lights were turned on, and Major Jenks rolled the covering sheet up. There it was, and a terrific groan went up from the boys. That little piece of red string looked as if it went to Russia! I broke out in a cold sweat. I knew that I would not be lucky enough to draw a milk run for my last one, and this would surely be no milk run.

"Gentlemen, today we are going to Halle. The whole 8th Air Force is going in, and we are leading. We're after a jet aircraft plant on the outskirts of the town. It was bombed last year by the Forts, but has been put back in operation. It is a vital spot and must be knocked out. This target is probably one of the most heavily defended in Germany. You can expect heavy, concentrated flak.

"You're fortunate that you are going in first, because, as you know, they only sight on the first group, and the group gets away pretty easy. We've routed you the best possible way. If the navigators are right on the ball, you should have a minimum of trouble. You'll have fighter cover all the way, both 47s and 51s. We don't expect that you will run into any heavy fighter opposition, but we know that they have plenty and will use them when the time comes. Keep your eyes open; I cannot impress that on you enough.

"You will reach your wing IP at 11:02, at 11:10 your group IP, and at 11:15 you will reach your squadron IP. This target must be bombed visually to ensure the best results. Bombs away will be at 11:20, and you will open bomb bay doors on the usual yellow flare.

"Oh, yes, I forgot: Assembly is around buncher #6 at reference altitude plus five. The lead ship will fire red and green flares and will circle to the left.

"You have your order of takeoff and time on the flight plan. Let's get off right today. I guess that's all. Anything you'd like to add, Colonel?"

"No, I don't think so," replied the colonel, as he rose slowly from his seat.

"Any questions?" asked the major. Silence. "Well, that's all then. Good luck."

The room was in turmoil in an instant, with pilots going one way, bombardiers another and navigators another. Dick and I sat there for a few minutes, going over the flight plan. We would be the fifth ship to take off; our time for taxiing 0605. We were to follow "B - Baker," a deputy lead ship. There was a lot of material on those flight plans that should be read, but I knew that stuff backwards and forwards. All we were interested in was where we were flying and what ship we had. The rest fol-

lowed easily.

"Well, Richard my boy, I suppose that we'd better go get those damn clothes on and get out to the ship," I said, as I climbed over the next bench and headed to the back of the room. Dick was still looking over the flight plan, shaking his head and emitting low moans every now and then.

"You know," he said, "if the Jerries had picked this for your last mission, they couldn't have done any better. (*Another ray of sunshine.*) I'm afraid there's going to be a hot time in the old town tonight. OK, let's go."

Air crew members are notoriously superstitious, and I was no exception. Get this: Ever since my first successful mission I had worn the same shirt and pants every time that I flew. You can imagine what they smelled like. Well, this morning would be the last time I put them on. Everything had to go into my routine the same way; any variation could invite complete catastrophe. I always put my left shoe on first, kissed my parachute three times, rubbed my lucky quarter, and went to the "john" just before every flight. Once I missed that stop, and was scared the whole time.

I put on all the clothes we were required to wear: heated jacket, pants and shoes, Mae West vest, and my parachute. It was quite a load. Into the zippered knee pocket, I put the escape kit, candy bars, cigarettes, and an extra pencil. I looked at my watch; it was 0500. One hour was just about enough time to get out to the ship and be ready to go on time.

"You all ready to go, Dick?" I called across to him.

"Yeah, in a second. I'll be with you after I tighten this strap on my parachute. There, that does it. Now if I have to jump, I won't be split up the middle. Let's go!"

We walked out of the dressing room by the same door we came in. It was still fairly dark out there, but the sky in the east was beginning to show signs of day. I could see a few stars here and there, which proved the weatherman's predictions. The trucks were lined up, waiting to take us to the planes. The first one in line was being loaded with grunting and straining men, for with all that flying equipment on, it was hard to climb into the back of those big "GI" trucks. Dick and I scrambled aboard, along with a couple of other guys. When the truck was full, someone shouted "OK, let'er go," and we were off.

There were four different sections to the field, one for each squadron. Because we were at the far side of the field, we were last out. When the driver got to our side of the field, Dick yelled, "Hardstand 15!"

"Right," countered the driver. In a moment, we were there.

As soon as we had jumped out of the truck, Simmons, my engineer, came around from under the tail.

"Everything OK, Simmons?" I asked as he drew near.

"OK. Say, Lt. Barnes, where are we going? They tell me it's supposed to be a very rough target. And you flying your last one! That's a fine thing!"

"We're going to a place called Halle. I guess it's pretty rough there, but no rougher than Magdeburg or Berlin. They won't touch us, and if you'd like to make a little bet on it . . . ?"

"No, thanks. The ship is in good shape. Just out of the sub-depot with a new number three engine. Checked out perfectly."

"Simmons, would you get the boys over here for a minute? I've got a couple of things to say to them that we were told at briefing."

"Right. Hey," he hollered, "you guys come here a minute. We've got some things to go over."

They came from everywhere — out of the bomb bays, nose wheel door, and rear escape hatch. In a minute, they were there in front of me. They weren't individuals, just globs of dark shadows, with a cigarette here and there to show that they actually were people. I recognized Jones, the radio operator, by his high-pitched laugh; Johnson and Frederick because they were always wrestling with each other; Lynch by his Boston accent; and Fersak because he was from Brooklyn. They were the best crew on the field. I wouldn't think of going anywhere without them.

"Fellows," I started, "Major Jenks told us to be sure to tell you that since this is a fairly important target, the Germans might send up a few fighters. (*In the last days of the war, the Luftwaffe was depleted and used their fighters only in crucial situations.*) You have seen them before, so I don't need to tell you to keep your eyes wide open and those guns moving. They may try a few jets on us, and they'll be fast as hell, so give 'em plenty of lead. But you know more about that than I do. When we get back, I'll buy you all a big long drink . . . and I'll need at least one big one myself. What time do you have, Simmons?"

"0535."

"Good, we'll start engines in ten minutes. Meanwhile, whaddaya say, Dick, we go have a cigarette and relax for a minute."

We smoked our cigarettes in silence, each thinking his own thoughts. I was trying to keep fear out of my mind. It always came at just about this time, 34 times before, about ten minutes before takeoff. I guess everybody got the same feeling before a mission, but this morning it was heightened for me by that big "last one." I finished the cigarette, stamped it out and headed for the plane.



I climbed up through the bomb bay, not an easy task when cocooned in bulky flight gear, passed those large "eggs" and wiggled up onto the flight deck. Jones was already at his radio table, arranging the material that he would use on the mission. It was just a step further into the cockpit and those two coffin seats we would be sitting in for about ten hours. I climbed into the left-hand seat and adjusted it to my height. I put the set of earphones on, fastened the throat mike around my neck, plugged the heated suit cord into the box by my left hand, and looked over at Dick. He was all finished. We were ready to go.

"Let's start 'em, Dick. It's ten of."

"OK, starting number three." He leaned out the window and gave the sign (three fingers held up) to the ground crew man waiting under the wing. Dick turned the main switch on and number three engine on, primed it, energized and engaged it. At the same time, I pulled the mixture to full rich. The engine sputtered to life and ran with sweet purring. The other three were started and left to warm up. As soon as they were warm, we ran through the checks: manifold pressure, prop RPM, turbo and generators. Everything was working beautifully. I looked at my watch, and it was just about time to go; we had about a minute.

"Everything ready, Simmons?"

He nodded "Yes."

"OK, then, let's start out so we'll be able to see Bennett in 'B - Baker' when he goes by."

I pushed the brake off, and we moved out to the taxiway. It was still dark, but you could see enough to make out the outlines of the ships as they stood on their hardstands. Further across the field I could

see the moving lights of one of the lead planes going forward towards the take-off runway.

I glanced at my watch again. It was five after six. I began to wonder where Bennett was; he was always on time. Suddenly, the lights of a plane started to move on a hardstand near us. I knew it was Bennett. After he passed us, about thirty seconds later, I moved out immediately behind him. It took us almost two minutes to taxi to the end of the runway. There, we waited for our turn to take off. With a last-minute check of the engines, we were ready. All the doors and hatches closed; flaps down 20 degrees; all four props in high RPM; cowl flaps closed; everybody in his place. We were ready!

Bennett was now standing on the take-off position. The green light flashed, and he was away. As soon as he had left and was going down the runway, we moved into takeoff position. I held my brakes, pushed the throttles ahead slightly, and looked for the green light. It blinked on, and we were off.

UP AND AWAY

As I released the brakes, the plane started down the runway at an ever-increasing rate of speed. At 120 mph, the ship rose sluggishly from the runway, as if she didn't want to leave.

"Gear up!" I yelled as soon as we had left the ground, and Dick pushed the gear handle up. At the same time, I reduced the takeoff RPM of twenty-seven hundred to the normal climbing RPM of twenty-five hundred. In a moment, the gear handle came back to neutral, showing that the

(continued on next page)

wheels were up and locked as they should be. As soon as they were up, Dick reduced the degree of flaps to ten. That made the plane fly more easily, yet climb just as fast.

Simmons came up from the flight deck and said, "Everything's OK. Generators off and wheels up and locked."

"Thanks, Fred. Have you got a cigarette handy?"

"Sure, Bob. How about you, Dick?"

"You bet. I can always use one after we get up and settle down for the climb. It sure turned out to be a nice day, but I hope to Christ the Jerries will not be able to see us this well."

By this time, we had turned and were on our heading of 40 degrees. This heading was the one that our group used to climb to assembly altitude. I could see Bennett up ahead about a half mile, and farther off to the right were other ships from groups nearby. This was the easiest part of the mission, and everyone enjoyed the climb especially when the weather was so beautiful, and this was one of the nicest I had seen for a long time.

When we had reached 2,000 feet, I made a 180-degree turn and headed the ship back in the direction of the field, continuing the climb. On paper this course looked like that of a race track, the legs being equivalent of 2,000 feet of climb. We stayed on this course until we had reached assembly altitude, today's being 18,000 feet or "reference altitude plus five."

Everyone was relaxed as we climbed, coupled with the beautiful scenery of the sun slowly creeping upon the sleepy countryside below. The higher we got, the lighter it became, until we could see the planes that only a few moments ago had been just green and red lights in the sky.

When we reached 12,000 feet, we put on our oxygen masks, the abomination of all altitude flyers. There's hardly anything worse than having something stuck tight to your face for six hours straight. We ran through the usual check to be sure that everybody's was working properly. Everything was working all right.

It wasn't long before the temperature inside the cockpit began to fall below freezing, but with our heated suits and gloves, we didn't mind too much. We arrived at 18,000 feet and turned toward the buncher to take our place in the formation.

The lead plane was circling to the left and firing red and green flares as we drew near the buncher. A buncher was a radio beam that was projected straight up in the air, like a pole. The ships formed around it as if they were children running around a Maypole. Each wing had its own buncher, and in our area there were five of them, in a diameter of about 100 miles. The circle was very large, probably ten miles in

diameter, giving the formation plenty of room in which to maneuver.

It took us only a short time to sidle up to the lead ship and into our position. Each squadron was comprised of ten ships, each group had four squadrons, and each wing had three groups; so there were a lot of planes (120 of them) flying in a really small area. This was one of the most tedious parts of the mission, flying round and round in close formation for up to an hour and a quarter.

At 7:50, we left the buncher and started for a point on the coast where we would join the rest of the wings. This place was called the DAL, the Division Assembly Line. We reached the coast at about 8:00 and started on our way to the enemy coast. It was at this point that the lead ship fired a yellow flare and announced by radio that we were to start climbing.

I pushed the control button on the control wheel microphone and asked Fred to start transferring the fuel from our "Tokyo" tanks to our main tanks. This was done as a safety measure because a half-full tank is an extreme fire hazard. I also told the gunners that whenever they were ready and the way was clear, they could start test-firing. It was always a great satisfaction to hear those guns and know that the boys behind them could hit a bulls-eye at 500 yards.

Dick called on the interphone, "Do you want me to fly for a while? You've been at it long enough, and I think it's about time you relaxed. What time are we supposed to meet our fighter escort?"

"I'm not sure; why don't you ask Shorty? As to your flying, go ahead, but keep it nice and tight."

Dick did call Shorty, our navigator, who informed him that they'd show up any minute before we hit the enemy coast, and that would be about 8:40. We continued our climb at a very slow rate, about 500 feet per minute, until we reached 29,000 feet. That point was reached at the same time that our fighters appeared. They made a beautiful sight, those groups of P-51s sailing along above and below us towards the enemy coast.

"How's the weather, big brother? You guys look awfully comfortable up there. See if you can scare up some 'bandits' for us; we're itching for a scrap."

The command pilot, in this case Colonel Jones, came back with, "OK, little friend; you stick with us, and we'll show you plenty of fireworks."

Our main point of contact this morning with the enemy coast was a point on the Dutch coast called Overflakie, a small island north of Rotterdam. When we were about a mile off the coast, the first flak blossomed in front of us. They always gave us a few bursts to show us that they

were still around. Immediately all the boys dove for their flak suits; they weren't taking any chances.

The route we followed was nicknamed "The Eighth Air Force Highway." It was a straight line from the coast of England to Berlin. Almost all our missions followed that route for at least part of the way. It was the safest path over northern Germany, because it missed all the large cities. We could never figure out why the Jerries hadn't closed that gap with flak guns, but it continued to remain open, and I prayed like hell that this morning wasn't going to be the day they would close it.

In a few moments, we were crossing the Dutch-German border, north of a small city named Rheine. Suddenly the radio crackled, "Bandits ahead!" The lead group of P-51s had run into a strong group of enemy fighters. My heart jumped into my mouth, and I'm sure that if I had the pounds to lose, I would have lost a good many right then.

I switched from radio to interphone and announced, "There are bandits ahead. Do any of you guys see anything anywhere?"

Frederick, the tail gunner, came back, "Yeah, I can see several fighters below at four o'clock. I don't know if they are ours, but they are having quite a rat race." I came right back with, "Well, keep your goddamn eyes open. Remember, I want to get back from this one."

The Germans had a clever habit of splitting our fighter force by using a feint in one direction and then bringing their main force in from the opposite side. It had worked many times before, and I was afraid they would try it today. They were especially fond of hitting the lead group, because if the lead were to be knocked down, the mission usually ended in complete failure. Nobody blamed the fighter boys for being taken in by this trick. The Germans were past masters at trickery.

We waited patiently, searching every corner of the sky for anything that looked suspicious. Suddenly, the guns in the upper turret exploded the silence and immediately the interphone was alive with chatter. Simmons shouted, "Jet!" and a form shot past and disappeared. Simmons came in again, "Boy, I didn't come anywhere near hitting him; he was going too damn fast!"

Colonel Jones came quickly and commanded, "Close up the formation, so that if he comes back for another try, we'll be ready for him. Tell the boys to give him plenty of lead, more than they ever gave any ship before."

We waited and watched again, but he didn't come back. Those "jets" were good for only one pass, because they had a limited supply of fuel. Thank God for small favors. Our fighters couldn't touch them; they made our gunners look sick. I found myself shaking all over and cursed my-

self for it under my breath. There was no sense to the shaking, but it happened every time that something new and threatening came along. After the first scare, everybody settled down but that feeling never quite left me throughout the mission.

What irony! Here we were on our way to destroy the heart of the German jet airplane capability, the engines that propel them, and we get a jolting reminder of just what having a fleet of jet fighters — with adequate fuel — could mean to our enemy and to our ability to stage missions like this one.

We were now deep into enemy territory. I watched the ground with various emotions. It seemed so strange that the beautiful countryside below contained such ruthless people. It was such an orderly-looking countryside; every piece of land was cultivated. Sometimes I could imagine that I saw people working without bothering to look up at us, the machines that were on their way to blast some of their countrymen into the next world.

The landscape we were passing over was between the Ruhr Valley and Halle, the Harz Mountain district. We had almost an hour to go before bombs away, the longest hour I was ever to spend. There weren't any further reports of fighters, but that could be quite ominous. Usually they knew by this time where we were going, or at least they had a good idea. Then they waited until we were on the bomb run before they went after us with a vengeance. At that time our fighters circled the target and, unfortunately, left us wide open.

Since our little brush with that "jet," the boys had become very quiet. There never was much to say before we were at the target, but after bombs away, the interphone was one continual chatter.

All we heard on the way in was, "How's the weather up there, Simmons?" That was Frederick calling from the tail. "It sure is cold back here. Something must be wrong with my suit; it hasn't worked right since we left. How far are we from the target?"

"Not too far, I don't think, Fred. About an hour, I guess," Simmons answered from the top turret. "I told you that you should have been an engineer and not one of those lousy tail gunners. If you had, you'd be nice and warm right now. That sun can sure get hot!"

In the meantime, Dick and I took turns flying the ship. This position in the formation was one of the best you could get, because flying on the lead ship required less effort. The lead plane flew on autopilot and therefore was extremely steady. Formation flying was really hard work and demanded the pilots' full attention. Your eyes had to be on the leader at all times. Any movement that he made must be followed exactly and immediately; that was

the only way to keep the formation in good order.

The further you were back from the lead ship, the worse the flying became. It was usually there at the end that the German fighters had the least difficulty in knocking down our boys. This spot was sometimes called "Purple Heart Corner" and it often lived up to its name.

THE BOMBING RUN

Shorty called again from the nose, breaking the silence and starting my heart pounding again. "We'll be at the wing IP in about thirty seconds. Expect a turn to the right of about twenty degrees. That will put you on a heading of one-forty. As far as I can figure out, we're just about on course and about five minutes late. There has been a slight wind shift, and we may have a head wind going over the target, instead of the predicted crosswind. Here's the turn."

"Thanks, Shorty," I replied, just as the lead ship leaned into a flat, shallow turn to the right. Mentally, I figured that bombs away would be at 11:25, instead of 11:20. I called the boys and told them to be sure their flak suits were on and to be ready to start throwing "chaff," the small pieces of tin foil we dropped to foul up the German radar units. They assured me that everything was ready.

My stomach began to tighten and I was conscious that my mouth was very dry, even though I was chewing gum harder and faster than I ever had before. Was everybody going through the same sensation? I surmised from the dead silence on the interphone that they were. It was

amazing how much a man could sweat up here, even with the temperature down around 45 below zero. Yet, as soon as we would leave the target and begin our get-away from enemy territory, we'd damn near freeze to death. Excitement and apprehension can do funny things with our minds.

It didn't seem as if we should be at the squadron IP, but the lead ship fired the usual yellow flare, and we turned toward the target. The IP was always considered the tip-off to the Jerries, for at that moment they knew exactly where we were heading. The way the missions were planned, it was supposed to cut the bomb run down to as few minutes as possible. But in order for the planes to straighten out and for the bombardiers to have enough time to pick their targets, the bomb run usually lasted five or more minutes. It was a terrific (sometimes terrifying) five minutes. Straight line; no evasive action; constant altitude; no fighter cover. When we were going down a run, I knew just what a duck feels like when a group of hunters opens fire on him.

"Bomb bays open!" I yelled at Jones, who had gone down in the well and had been waiting for my signal. The words were no sooner out of my mouth than the sky directly ahead exploded with what looked like thousands of small black rain clouds. I was so busy flying that I didn't take much time to look at what they were throwing at us. The only place that I could take notice of the flak was between us and the lead ship, and there were several bursts that blocked my vision. It was the closest flak I had ever seen, and I knew

(continued on next page)



PHOTO TAKEN BY BOB BARNES ON A PREVIOUS MISSION

NUMBER 35 *(continued from page 31)*

that "This is it." None of us could possibly get through that stuff today. Wouldn't "bombs away" ever come, so that we could get the Christ out of there? A thousand things ran through my mind, none of which I can remember just a few weeks later. All I know is that I was truly scared; I'll admit that to anyone.

"Shorty, how long before we let these things go?" I called in a tight voice, a tone that everyone laughed about after it was over.

"In about thirty sec - - - - -" Crash! And the interphone was dead as a mackerel. I had seen the burst at the second the phone went dead and ducked instinctively. Immediately there was a terrific blast of air in my face, that almost tore me from my seat. My helmet was ripped off and propelled back against the bulkhead.

I caught a glimpse of Dick, his face as white as a sheet. He was looking at me as if he had seen a miracle. He had: One reflexive jerk of my head had saved my life. I looked at the hole in the roof over my head and knew why he had thought so. The hole was about one foot square. The shell had taken out not only the Plexiglas cutout but also a piece of metal directly over my head. Why it didn't take me with it, I would never figure out.

Dick took over for me. I cleared the glass from my lap and collected myself. All of this happened before and during bombs away, but I was never aware of the moment when they were finally let go. When Dick turned the plane, I realized that for almost thirty seconds I had been unaware of what had gone on around me. When I reached back to pick up my helmet, I found that it had a hole big enough for two fingers. The only reason that the piece of flak did not touch me was that it had been deflected by a strip of window frame. If my head had been up ?

Had Shorty possibly been hurt? I motioned for Jones to go down through the tunnel which connected the flight deck and the bomb bay to see if he was alright. While he was gone, I looked out at the engines to determine if they were okay. They seemed okay and were running smoothly. The flak was still blossoming around us, but not with the accuracy of before.

From my position on the left side of the ship, I could see several small holes in the wing. I thanked God that we had self-sealing gas tanks, for they had saved many lives by preventing the gas from igniting when a piece of flak went through the wing and tank.

Soon we were out of the flak and headed for home. I breathed a sigh of thanksgiving and took over the flying from Dick. When I looked out at the lead plane, I saw

that they had taken quite a beating, too. They were missing about a foot off the tip of the left wing, which had evidently been taken off by the force of an unexploded shell. I knew how they must be feeling now, if my own emotions were any guide.

Jones crawled up to the flight deck and wrote on a note that everyone was OK. However, we had taken a piece through our main hydraulic line in the bomb bay and were leaking fluid rapidly. That was bad, but not nearly as bad as a bum engine. We would have to land at Landsdowne, the auxiliary field with the 12,000-foot runway.

He also wrote that the group had lost three ships; two had exploded and one had gone down with a wing off. He didn't know who they were, but one of them had been flying right behind us. He was the one who had gone down with his wing off. Dick looked at his flight plan and found that it was Jacobson — on his first mission. Dick and I both closed our eyes and thanked God again. Poor kid, he didn't have a chance to find out what this whole thing was all about — not that we knew exactly ourselves, but at least we had been able to pay back some of the debt for all the guys that had been killed before us.

When we had left the target, we made a turn to the left, which would bring us back to the same route we had come in on; in other words, we had made a circle, crossing the target on the last curve. This brought the target off the left wing, and I was able to watch the other groups and wings going in on the city. It was a magnificent sight and very much like watching a movie. They seemed to move across the "screen" as peacefully as a group of swans floating on a lake.

They were getting hell, though, because the sky they were flying through was full of black puffs. Every once in a while, a bright yellow-orange spot appeared in that blackness and fell slowly to the earth. That was not a pretty sight. I turned from the planes and watched the target already covered with smoke and flames. We were certainly giving Mr. Hitler a going-over today, and it made my heart feel good. I was sorry to know that women and children were getting hurt, but that was part of the game that their leaders started. I didn't think I'd have any sleepless nights over it, though.

THE ROUGH RIDE HOME

I had been trying to hear something on the radio, but it too had gone out when the flak knocked out the interphone. It made me feel truly lost without communication with the rest of the formation, especially if there were a fighter attack. So far, we had been lucky, except for that one brush with the jet plane. I trusted that

the boys would keep their eyes open; if their guns went off, that would be all the warning that I would want.

We had been off the target for about an hour when the worst happened; our number three engine went out. Dick and I tried every method we knew to get it going again, but in vain. We feathered it and kept up with the formation. This was fairly easy now that we had no bombs. It always made us feel a little uneasy when an engine went out after the target, because if it had been from battle damage, there was no telling how many of the other engines had been hit and might go out at any moment. One was OK, but no more. These B-24s don't fly easily on two engines.

We passed by Hanover once more, and this time they threw up plenty of flak. It wasn't very accurate, but it kept the navigators on their toes. Nobody wanted to go down after they had been through the target. I liked to watch flak when there wasn't anyone near it. There was something pretty about the way it blossomed into the clear blue sky. It hardly looked as if it could be the cause of so much damage, death and pain.

The Germans had quite effective flak and were probably the first to use the string system. They used it to cover the greatest area when they were not quite sure of our altitude. They had eight guns to a group, with one gun as the control. Their bursts were separated by about twenty feet, thereby covering 160 feet of altitude. It was used only when we were visible and when they could be fairly sure, within 200 feet, of our formation's altitude. It was quite a sight to see a string leap up between two ships in the same formation.

I was startled out of my complacency — it had been a long day already — by the loud staccato of the upper turret. I knew what it meant. I looked over at Dick, but he was watching the lead ship since he had just taken over the flying. But I could see that he was as tense as I was. There was nothing I could do but just sit there and hope to hell that this was just a passing jet.

No sooner had this thought gone through my mind when one of the blackest fighters I had ever seen was shot at by the lead ship. It was an FW-190, one of the Luftwaffe's best fighters. It was closely followed by two of our P-51 Mustangs. The German twisted and turned, looped, fishtailed, and finally did a split "S," turned on his back and dove for the ground. Shortly after that, firing of the guns shook the whole ship. Every turret must be going off. Once more, that expected feeling returned. I expected that at any moment a shell or a bullet would come ripping through the cockpit and

The lead ship started to make slow turns to the right, then to the left, trying to make the fighters miss. Dick suddenly pointed straight ahead. There, at about 3,000 feet, was a row of about twenty fighters in line abreast and coming toward our formation with all guns firing. Little puffs of brown smoke started breaking around us; they were the 20mm shells from the fighters. We knew from Intelligence that they carried a mixed load, which meant that every other shell was explosive; the ones in between were armor piercing slugs. Where those little things were going I didn't know, but I sure expected to be killed at any moment. I mean, they were coming at us head on and firing straight on.

They swept by us so close that it looked as if I could reach out and touch them. That swastika emblem looked just like the pictures: very black and very shiny. All the boys gave them hell as they went by, and I hoped like hell that each gunner got at least one. I looked quickly to the engines on both sides and did not notice anything special. But I did see a few more holes in the wings.

After they had passed by, things quieted down for a minute. I cursed like hell that I couldn't hear anything on that damn radio. I really wanted in the worst way to know what was going on and felt helpless as a baby, sitting there gritting my teeth. From the appearance of the rest of the ships, their attack had been successful. We were all there, at least as far as I could see.

I knew they would be back just as soon as they had re-formed, which shouldn't take them long. The only hope was that our fighters would be able to break them up. The fighter boys were itching for a scrap; well, here it was.

I took over the flying to give Dick a rest. We must stay as close to the formation as possible, because the Jerries respected a tight formation. They knew what concentrated firepower could do to them. I just prayed that we didn't lose another engine, because we then wouldn't be able to stay up with the formation, and stragglers were dead pigeons.

Simmons in the upper turret broke the silence. Immediately a fighter slipped over our heads. His engine was on fire, and I could see the pilot trying to get the canopy open so that he could jump out and parachute to the ground. One of our boys was right on his tail, giving him everything that he could. They had gone about 500 yards ahead of us when the German plane exploded and disappeared in an orange flame. Nice going, brother!

For the remainder of an hour or so, they continued to fly around us, making short darts into the formation when they thought they might get a good shot. The

fighter boys were having the time of their lives, but unfortunately the Jerries were too many for them.

The German fighters left us as soon as we hit the German-Dutch border, and I can safely say that everyone on board was feeling much better. The attack had caused quite a lot of trouble; not so much in our squadron as in the rest of the group, we learned later. Out of the forty ships that started the mission, five were missing as we crossed the Dutch coast. There was always the chance that some of the boys had been lucky enough to make it to France, but the odds were all against it today. A single plane without escort was as good as gone, for there were so many fighters in the air.

Shortly after we passed over the Dutch coast, on the route we had taken on the way out, Colonel Jones signaled by flare that he was starting a letdown. That meant that we would descend at 500 feet per minute. We all welcomed the letdown because it meant that we were out of danger from the enemy. More important than that, it meant that we could take our oxygen masks off and have that much-needed cigarette. When we reached 12,000 feet, I motioned to Jones to go back and tell the boys to take off their masks. I sure was sorry that the interphone was out, because the chatter today would certainly have been interesting and funny in a very ironic way.

I called Simmons out of the top turret and asked him to make a thorough check on our gas situation and on all battle damage. He went over the whole ship and returned to give me not a pretty picture.

"Well," he began, "we've used up an awful lot of gas running on three engines at almost full power, but I think we can make it if we can get down to about ten thousand and away from the formation. How much longer before we hit the English coast?"

"I figure that we should get there in about thirty-five or forty minutes," I replied.

"That's OK, then, but it can't be too much over that. We've got only about seventy gallons left, and with the power back it should just about get us there. As to the rest of the damage: a big hole in the bomb bay has knocked out the main hydraulic line that goes back to the reserve tank. All the fluid has run out of it, but the flow-back valve has kept the stuff in the lines anyway. There are several holes in the wings, but I don't think any of them are too serious. You never can tell, though. And, of course, the number three engine is out. I guess that's it. We were damn lucky."

"Thanks, Fred. Keep your eye on that gas, and let me know if it starts going down fast." I then called to Jones, who was trying to get his radio going and was apparently having some luck.

"Jonesey, call Air-Sea Rescue and give them the stuff they need to know. Tell 'em we have about one hour of fuel left and should be able to make the coast, but if we lose another engine, they'd better be there waiting."

I looked back and gave Dick one of those weak smiles. I don't think either one of us was scared at the thought of ditching, not after the rough ride we had been through. The water did look a bit cold, but I was still sweating from that close one back over the target. All we could do now was fly the plane, wait and hope.

The formation was about a thousand feet above us, so I had a good chance to see what the Jerries had done to us. Not only had we lost five, but several were torn up badly. One boy, flying in the high-right squadron, had lost half of his right stabilizer. He was lucky, for that was fatal in most cases. Another had a badly smoking engine. I sympathized with him, because I knew what was going through his mind. We looked like the worst bunch of airplanes that I had seen for a long time.

My calculations had been just about right. We sighted the coast at 14:10, just forty minutes after we had crossed the Dutch coast. The emergency field I had planned to use was quite near the coast, and I turned toward it. Five minutes more and we were over the field, which was already landing crippled ships.

I yelled to Simmons to fire a red flare followed by a green one, to signify that we were without radio communications and had battle damage. Immediately they gave us the green light to land.

"Lower the gear, Simmons. If it won't go down by itself, you'll have to come up here and crank it down. OK, Dick, twenty-five fifty (RPMs) and forty-two inches (*mercury pressure*). We'll need all the power we've got to get this baby down without a crack-up."

I circled the field and turned onto our approach, tense with the anticipation that there might be a crash if the landing gear should collapse upon impact. Either that would happen, or we might go off the runway if one of the tires had picked up a piece of flak. I decided not to use up too much of our precious hydraulic fluid. At 50 feet I pulled off the power and started to pull back on the control wheel.

I think I closed my eyes when we hit the ground, but at any rate when I opened them we were rolling straight down the runway. We rolled to a complete stop at the far end. I never used the brakes once. If we had to, it would have been impossible, for all the fluid in our lines had been used up when the wheels were lowered!

I got out of the plane and felt like crying for the first time since I was a boy. My last one was over. I was safe. ■



To the Editor:

Since all of us are getting "older" . . . here are some interesting statistics featuring the various ages of twelve of the bomb groups of the 2nd Air Division, plus HQ:

HQ 88	448th 87
44th 87	453rd 86
93rd 87	458th 86
389th 85	466th 87
392nd 86	489th 83
445th 84	491st 85
446th 88	

I do not have the numbers for the 467th BG or the 492nd BG.

James H. Reeves (HQ)
P.O. Box 98
Moultrie, GA 31776-0098

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

I notice that the 445th BG, your outfit, has a lot of items in the Spring 2008 *Journal* which I received on April 12th. In fact your 445th has more items in the *Journal* than many groups and especially my 392nd BG.

Arthur Olson (392nd)
3842 N. 151st Avenue
Goodyear, AZ 85395-8733

Ed. Note: You have stumbled onto every editor's dilemma — you can only print what is submitted to you, or if you have time, do some research and write up stories of your own.

The problem is that many 2ADA groups have their own Group "newsletter" or publication and their group members submit articles to them and are satisfied with that, and wish to go no further even if I request to reprint it in the Journal.

The 445th BG has no "Group" publication as such; therefore, unless they are members of the Kassel Mission Historical Society, they have "no place to go" but to the Journal!

So if your group is "short" on articles — send some in! By the way, only a couple Groups send me copies of their publications.

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

You call Dean Moyer an avid bowler. He always wore his 300 ring, awarded for a perfect game; and my wife, an avid bowler, always kissed his ring at the reunions. Ala a Pope . . .

Earl Zimmerman (389th)
P.O. Box 40897
Indianapolis, IN 46240-2039

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

Re: Use of heavy patrol bombers by the RAF: I hope this information is of use to you. I got it from the RAF Museum at Hendon in London:

As for the Royal Navy flying heavy bombers, I think the answer is no. All the heavy bombers (B-24 type) would have been flown by RAF Coastal Command. The Fleet Air Arm would have flown the Fairey Aviation Swordfish and maybe the Shearfish from carriers. They were both torpedo bombers. The Fairey Barracuda was also a torpedo dive bomber, as was the Bristol Beaufighter, and these I should imagine would all belong to the RAF Coastal Command.

John Threlfall (RAF veteran)
30 Lower West Avenue
Barnoldswick
Lancs BB18 6DW
ENGLAND

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

I'm sure many other readers identified your mystery aircraft in the Summer 2008 *Journal*. Here's the ex-Navy B-24 (Navy PB4Y-1) driver's shot:

After Consolidated's PBY design in the mid-thirties, the company placed their sights on an ever-bigger flying boat. Their model 29 became the Navy PB2Y-1 Coronado delivered in 1937. Intent on producing an even larger, more formidable flying boat, Consolidated president Reuben E. Fleet and his chief designer, Isaac M. Laddon, developed the model 31. It utilized a newly conceived, high-speed wing design by David R. Davis (thereafter called the "Davis High Speed Wing") and would be powered by two equally new Wright Duplex Cyclone 2000 hp engines. First test flight was in May of 1939 during which a number of problems were uncovered. Development of the aircraft, later designated the XP4Y-1 (Navy) and named the Corregedore, was hindered by many factors. Production stopped with delivery of the second prototype in the mid-40's.

In January '41, Consolidated was asked to prepare a design study for a new bomber to succeed the B-17. An Army Air Corps contract was awarded in March for a pro-

totype B-24. Much of the design hardware of the model 31 was utilized including the wing, twin-tail and general upper fuselage layout. The Corregedore's tail was actually grafted onto the first prototype B-24.

Had the P4Y-1 Corregedore gone into production, its use would have been as a Navy patrol bomber.

I know some might look at my "credentials" and say, "Oh, he means the Navy spin-off of the B-24, the PB4Y-2 Privateer." No, sir. I did gain about 900+ hours in Privateers, but I racked up 1400 pilot hours in the twin-tailed PB4Y-1. Manufacturer's plaques on the center cockpit console identified them as "B-24J." Although the Army Air Forces and the new U.S. Air Force soon divested themselves of their Liberators in the late '40s, the Navy hung on to theirs to the late '50's.

John W. Bradford Jr.
CDR, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
P.O. Box 25
Wetmore, CO 81253

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

I want to express thanks to people who honor veterans for military service. In World War II, 16 million people served and 407,316 were killed while the home front manufactured munitions and endured rationing. After discharge, many were told "no war stories" and we bottled up the memories of fifty years. We recalled the battles frequently and silently shed tears as we observed film of the events we endured. Veterans from other wars returned with little fanfare.

Recently Tom Brokaw and others wrote articles pointing out that 80% of the WWII veterans were dead and they are dying at a rate of 1200 per day. People began asking about the war, and churches showed videos of veteran interviews on Memorial Sunday. Many high school teachers trained students to interview veterans and sent the videos to the national archives. Some schools hold "Take a Vet to School Day" or equivalent every year and invite all veterans to appear before the classes. The Internet and e-mail allow us to build websites and receive honor messages on holidays from people worldwide who were school children during the war.

Honor Flight Inc. has made it possible for many of us to make free trips to Washington, D.C., to visit the WWII, Korean and Vietnam memorials. Our "guardians" — volunteer caretakers, terminal workers, color guards, bus/airline travelers, and complete strangers at the monuments, treat us as heroes. They clap, wave flags, shake our hands and say, "thanks for serving" as we walk around and ride in wheelchairs. It is a celebration equal to VJ Day and brings

tears to our eyes and lumps in our throat all day long. We are invited to tributes, receptions and concerts at museums, parks and auditoriums.

People today question our involvement in the Mideast wars and dropping the atomic bombs on Japan. The bombs killed a lot of people but they eliminated invasions and prevented the loss of many more of our lives. It ended the war and brought relief to a tired and weary wartime nation. In 1938, we watched as England and France tried to get us involved and Hitler invaded the small countries of Europe. Then the Japanese attacked us and our whole nation was involved in war on two fronts within a few days. Many feel it happened because we ignored the events that drew us into World War I and that events today are equivalent. When dictators lead armies and invade other countries, persecute civilians, harbor terrorists, manufacture chemical warfare elements and WMD's, an international group is needed to analyze and find a solution to the situation, and we need to be a part of that group. The price of freedom has never been free, and men and woman often suffer and die to preserve it. Thank God for those willing to serve, and thank God for those who recognize the sacrifices that have been made by our troops and our allies. We should continue to support and honor all veterans both dead and alive.

Garl McHenry (445th)
8250 E. New Carlisle Road
New Carlisle, OH 45344
E-mail: garld1945@aol.com

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

To the Editor:

My name is Nick Richards and I am researching the history of American football in the U.K. for a book I am writing, which is coming out in early 2009. I have just spent a day at the library in Norwich and picked up a leaflet on The East England Military Heritage Group. I wondered if any of you have any details of American football games played on bases during and after the Second World War. I am particularly looking for photos, anecdotes, scores — anything that you may have, no matter how small it may seem.

I already have some good general information about the game from that era, but just wanted to see if anyone has anything else or has any good contacts, etc.

Please feel free to drop me a line. I would greatly appreciate it, and am going to donate a copy of my book to the library in Norwich when it's finished.

Nick Richards

E-mail: Nick.Richards@archant.co.uk

✈ ✈ ✈ ✈

Second Air Division Association Financial Report

GENERAL FUND BALANCE, July 1, 2007

\$107,338.56

INCOME

Membership Dues	\$57,423.00
Interest	\$555.99
Other	\$16,537.71

Total Operating Income	\$74,516.70

EXPENSES

Journal & Related Expenses	\$36,060.56
Operating & Administrative Expenses	\$45,726.68

Total Operating Expenses	\$81,787.24

Net Income (after expenses) -\$7,270.54

GENERAL FUND BALANCE (after expenses), June 30, 2008

\$100,068.02

MEMORIAL TRUST FUND

Library Donations	\$27,150.20
Library Memorials	\$13,232.00
Interest	\$6,155.00
	\$115.00

Total Receipts	\$46,652.20

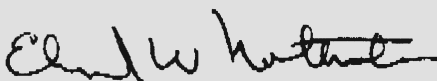
DISBURSEMENTS

Library Grant	\$25,000.00
Bank Charges	\$70.00

Total Disbursements	\$25,070.00

BALANCE June 30, 2008

\$21,582.20



Elwood W. Nothstein, Treasurer

FULBRIGHT FUND

Stocks matured and \$1,045,139.70 was electronically transferred to the Memorial Trust Governors.

An Appreciation of David Neale 1931-2008

BY DAVID J. HASTINGS, TRUST GOVERNOR

David Neale, the Chairman of the Friends of the 2nd Air Division USAAF Memorial, sadly died after a short illness on June 6, 2008. His deeply moving funeral service was held in a packed Halesworth Church, and we can only repeat the tribute that was paid to him on that day: "We have all lost a true and wonderful friend in David. He was a man of integrity and kindness who was always there when help was needed and when he offered to do something, it was always done properly and well. We will miss him terribly and our



thoughts are with Pearl today.

"David was Chairman of the Friends for nearly nine years, and he and Pearl worked so hard to keep alive the vision of a Founder Trust Governor, Anne Barne, to strengthen the ties between the Trust, the American veterans and their old wartime bases and our villages. Under David's wise leadership and counsel we have enjoyed many

happy meetings and the Friends have made large donations to the Memorial Library.

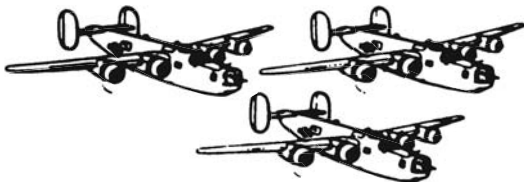
"We can never forget all those wonderful day trips organized by David and Pearl, with David always there to welcome you on board the coach. Then those amazing evenings at Hardwick where the 93rd Bomb Group had a special place in David's heart, and the wonderful Annual Thanksgiving Dinners where David's kindness and friendship always showed through, and the Friends' newsletter, "Second Thoughts," produced by David with his superb drawings.

"For the American veterans he was not only there for their last Association visit to Norwich in 2001 but on many occasions when they came back on their own. They knew that David understood what their Memorial stood for, as he was himself a Royal Navy veteran having served on the aircraft carrier *HMS Glory* in the Korean War, and they loved him for it. David was always there when they needed him, and at times when they fell ill during their stay in the UK, it was David who cared for them and saw them safely on their way home. The 2nd Air Division Association in the United States has asked that we especially record their thanks to him today.

"We have indeed lost a true friend, but he will never be forgotten." ■



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION
EIGHTH AIR FORCE
RAY PYTEL, JOURNAL EDITOR
P.O. BOX 484, ELKHORN, WI 53121-0484



FOLDED WINGS?
CHANGE OF ADDRESS?
All information should be sent to:
Evelyn Cohen
06-410 Delaire Landing Road
Philadelphia, PA 19114-4157

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Ipswich, MA 01938
Permit No. 74