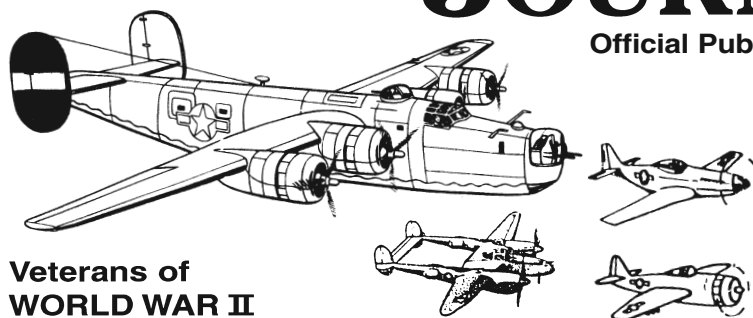


**2ADA 2008  
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# THE JOURNAL

Official Publication of the:



Volume 47 Number 1

Spring 2008

## The Early Days of the 2AD Memorial Library

By JOAN SMITH (née BENNS), former Deputy Principal Librarian

*The following document, submitted by retired Trust Librarian Derek Hills through the good offices of Mr. T.C. Eaton, records the experiences of Joan (Benns) Smith, former Deputy Principal Librarian, of the early development of the Second Air Division Memorial Library. This document will be lodged with the Library's historical papers and it is hoped that it may form the basis of newspaper articles and promotional materials for the Library.*



In January 1962 I came from London to take up a post in the Norwich City Library Service. The 2AD Memorial Library consisted at that time of several packing cases of books that were stowed away awaiting the opening of the new Norwich Central Library building, which took place in November of that year. The American Memorial Library\* was officially opened by the Queen Mother two months later, in January 1963. The décor and furnishings were beautiful and special to the American Library. I remember a very handsome turquoise carpet and furnishings that came, I think, from Sweden. Our American friends must surely have been very impressed when first they saw it.

The Memorial Library was a bit of a mystery to me at first, partly because there was no evidence of it, and partly because as a newly arrived Deputy City Librarian I was very busy learning to fit into a new job still based in the original public library in Duke Street. Those were hectic days for all of us.

In November 1962 all bookstock, including that of the 2AD Memorial Library, was moved to the new building on the site of the present day Forum. The books could now be properly displayed at last.

The bookstock consisted basically of material about the USA and books by American authors. Right from the start we collected as much as we could about the activities of the Second Air Division during the Second World War, although in those early days there wasn't much to be had. This greatly enlarged section must today be a substantial resource for researchers in this country, the USA and Europe.

The day-to-day running of the library was the responsibility of the adjacent Reference Library staff with my oversight. I dealt with visitors, routine correspondence, book selection, and donations. The City Librarian, Philip Hepworth, represented the 2AD Memorial Library at meetings of the Trustees and was in close personal contact with members of the Second Air Division Association and especially with the founder members.

We soon received visits from veterans anxious to revisit the sites of their former airfields. We gave them such help as we could and eventually were able to put them in touch with a young man who as a boy had seen and heard the bombers as they went on their difficult and dangerous missions. He was tremendously enthusiastic and became very knowledgeable. He continued in his capacity as volunteer guide for many years.

One aspect of my work, which I greatly enjoyed, was correspondence with veterans and their families regarding donations of books for the Memorial Library. A specially printed bookplate, appropriately inscribed with the names of the donor and the person in whose memory the book had been given was placed inside the front cover.

Gradually the use of the library grew. The Reference Library staff dealt with an increasing number of inquiries about all

aspects of life in the USA and of course the history of the Second Air Division and the U.S. Air Force. I was able to send small batches of books on loan to the various branch libraries in the City so that everyone could share in the benefits of the Memorial Library. It became evident that the work of the library if it were not to stand still or even decline, would need more resources in the shape of bookstock and staff. The members of the Second Air Division Association had given tremendous support over the years but were beginning to feel the effects of inflation, increased use, and an aging bookstock.

Tom Eaton, Vice Chairman of the Trustees and a prominent member of Norwich City Council, aired the problem at the Colorado convention of the 2ADA. The Americans were quick to respond. The appointment of a professional librarian from the USA was a great relief and joy to us all. Bertha Chandler was the first of many American librarians to enrich the service in their various ways. Only now could forward planning take place. Bertha was outgoing, enthusiastic, articulate and professional, and a fine ambassador for her country. She approached local organizations and schools to arrange visits to the library; gave talks and entertained an increasing number of American visitors — in short she raised the profile of the service. Before I retired in 1978 the American Memorial Library had been transformed by the presence of a full-time American librarian. The second chapter in the history of the library had begun.

*\*The term originally in common use for what is now the Second Air Division Memorial Library was the "American Memorial Library." ■*

# 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 ..... JOHN M. RHOADS  
13 Whalen Place, Sherwood, AR 72120-3616  
Telephone: 501-834-6392 • E-mail: rhoads392@comcast.net

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  
1089 Rancho Santa Fe Road, Encinitas, CA 92024-6834  
Telephone: 760-943-1641 • Fax: 760-943-0771

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: jameshlorenz@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: melfillo@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



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## MEMORIAL TRUST BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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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

"Westerling," 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

# President's Message

BY EARL ZIMMERMAN (389TH BG)

We have just returned from England after ten glorious days attending ceremonies representing the Second Air Division Association. The first was laying a wreath on 11 November at the City Hall, Norwich with David Hastings, followed by a service at the Norwich Cathedral. On the 12th, I attended the Memorial Trust Governors meeting chaired by Matthew Martin, and a lecture by Lord Hurd on the 14th. My last official duty was attending a service at St. Paul's Cathedral where the American Chapel was dedicated 49 years ago to 28,000 Americans who lost their lives in WWII. Somewhere in those ten days I visited our 2AD Memorial Library in the Forum.

On 10 November, Christina and I visited the chapel at Hethel where the 389th BG has a museum, and we each laid a wreath at the flagpole flying the Stars and Stripes after a speech by Pat Ramm of the 453rd BG. Fred Squires and the Hethel gang treated us to a short one at the Green Dragon Pub; a visit to the Wymondham Railroad Station museum where a large hospital was located during WWII; and a visit to Carleton Rode village church to climb the tower to thump the large bell inscribed with the 389th and 453rd, in a ring of six we dedicated a few years ago – the first bells in over 250 years. We finished off the day with a dinner at the Worlds End Pub.



Christina and Earl in the 389th Hethel chapel museum



The formation ship of the 389th BG was named after the Green Dragon Pub.

The refurbished control tower at Rackheath looks great. David Hastings took us on a tour of the area, and standing in the control tower you could almost hear the engines turning over and smell the 100 octane.

We were treated to many dinners and lunches. Matthew Martin hosted a dinner at his home, Ben Du Brow hosted a lunch for the gang at his place, and David Hastings and Jean always set a fine table.

David Gurney invited us to his fox hunt. We hadn't taken our riding habits with us, so all we could do was drink a few red wines, eat some of the nice breakfast sausages, and watch the beautiful horses and hounds maneuver around while waiting for the horn to sound. David introduced me to the crowd before they took off on a trot to catch Reynard. I must admit, David did look fine in his red coat.

It was a pleasure to represent the 2ADA as President in all the activities during my ten days in Blighty. I know that our Memorial Library is in good hands. ■

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.



Above: Earl Zimmerman in the tower of the Carleton Rode church with the 389th/453rd bell. Below: David Hastings and Earl in the Rackheath tower.



# Executive Vice President's Message

BY JOHN L. LEE (93RD BG)

Since this is my first chance since the beginning of a new year, I will start by saying Happy 2008! This is going to be a challenging year for our organization, but our collective commitment should guide us. This article will share some of Betty's and my reflections of last fall's trip to England and a look ahead to the coming year.

While in Grand Rapids, Matthew Martin issued an invitation to all to attend the Remembrance Day ceremonies in England on November 11th. Since Betty and I had attended that reunion as well as that of the 93rd BG in Minneapolis, we had decided not to go along. But after thinking it over, I decided that time's a-wasting and so off we went. We joined eleven others for what turned out to be a wonderful week in many ways. First, our British friends treated us royally. I'm sure they were glad to get some rest when we left. No doubt others will report on this event, so I will try to share highlights of what Betty and I will always remember.

Jean and David Hastings were at the Norwich Nelson on Sunday morning at the appointed time, with poppies in hand for us. We were taken to the City Hall to meet the Lord Mayor and other dignitaries, many of whom were in full uniform or traditional dress. Following morning coffee, we watched from the balcony as Earl Zimmerman and David Hastings laid the wreath in honor of the fallen members of the 2nd Air Division. Jean and David invited a group of us to lunch in their lovely home and flew our American flag in honor of the day.

We attended the Trust's Annual General Meeting at the County Hall. I am happy to report that the Memorial Trust is in good hands, and it was most interesting to attend the meeting. Luncheon followed at Brasted Barns, courtesy of Ben DuBrow, a Trust Governor.

An unusual experience was an invitation by David Gurney to attend the beginning of an English fox hunt. The riders were in customary riding gear for such an event. We were warmed by hot sausages and appropriate drinks. Watching riders and dogs move out for this traditional event created a memory that will stay with us for a long time. Many thanks to David for inviting us.

We spent a day at Hardwick with Charlie Sill, the new 93rd VP. There are many improvements in the museum there, including new glass cases and displays. We toured the newly decorated hangar and looked at six World War II airplanes — all in flying condition! We learned about the touching



**At the start of David Gurney's fox hunt. On the right is the Master of the Hounds.**

ceremony at Hardwick on the 11th, during which time dozens of poppies had been dropped by one of the light aircraft. We had tea with Paul, Colin and David Woodrow and talked about the old days.

We were among the group invited to Patsy and Matthew Martin's home for dinner on Tuesday. They were most gracious hosts and everything about the evening was warm and relaxing. The food, the wine, and cozy fire made us all welcome.

We were able to spend some time in the Memorial Library, which is a unique memorial. This is something that we must continue to support even after the last of our vets are no longer around to carry on this dedication. Looking through the bomber group books, I noticed that the crew I was on was the only group crew picture

in the 93rd book. Man, did we look young!

On our last evening in Norwich we attended the biannual lecture given by Lord Hurd at the John Innes Centre. Members of the 2ADA were introduced to the attendees: Earl Zimmerman, President; John Lee, Executive VP; Chuck Walker, Memorial Trust Governor; and Charles Sill, VP 93rd BG were all present. The lecture was followed by a delicious dinner.

The last day was a trip by train to London, to attend the Evensong services at St. Paul's Cathedral. This was something that Betty and I had considered forgoing, but after talking with Matthew Martin we decided not to miss it. We are so grateful that we did not miss the moving and inspiring ceremony. We were seated in the Quire, following a short service in the American Chapel. Betty and I were surprised to see that the Lt. Governor of Florida had laid the wreath of poppies at the Roll of Honor on the 11th. Beautiful music and a stirring sermon were highlights of our whole trip. Following a glass of wine in the Chapter House where the vicar spoke warmly of the lasting friendship between our two countries, we headed off to Gatwick for the trip home.

In this issue of the *Journal* there should be information about the next convention of the 2ADA, to be held in Dallas. Hope to see all of you there. ■

## Attention Everyone

The 2ADA Group Relations Committee is trying to gather the following information and we need your help. Please send this information about yourself to Chairman Jim Reeves. Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Unit(s) of assignment in Second Air Division \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Fax number (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to: James H. Reeves  
P.O. Box 98  
Moultrie, GA 31776**

# The Editor's Contribution

BY RAY PYTEL (445TH)

We are getting quite a few articles that are too long and need editing to fit the *Journal* format. Also, if you submit an article that appeared in a publication, please include the name and address of the original source. Many are copyrighted and others deserve the courtesy of being given credit for their effort!

## ANSWERS TO THE FALL/WINTER QUIZ

First there were five B-24 groups in the 3rd Division, a mix of both B-17s and B-24s until early fall of 1944. They were the 34th, 486th, 487th, 490th, and 493rd. The 8th AF experience was that since the cruising speed of B-24s was about ten miles faster, the 24's were either chewing the tails off the 17's or the 17's had trouble keeping up in the groups — this made the B-17 guys a bit unhappy.

The need for the longer-range B-24s in the Pacific eased the supply of the B-17s as they only had one bomb bay and thus could not install bomb bay gas tanks in one and a load of bombs in the other. In the fall of 1944 the five B-24 groups converted to B-17's in the 8th AF while the Pacific air forces ended up with the longer-range B-24's.

Other B-24 equipped groups were the 25th BG recon unit (in part), the 801/803rd Carpetbaggers, the 35th Squadron of Deception, and one squadron of Pathfinders in the 482nd BG. In late summer of 1944 the 2nd Air Division's 492nd BG assumed the duties of Carpetbaggers sans personnel and equipment.

## WINTER/SPRING QUIZ

Name and give the location of at least five different gun turrets on the B-24 models from 1942 to 1945. ■

## CORRECTION

Page 8 of the Fall/Winter 2007 Journal stated that the next general meeting of the Heritage League would be held in October 2008 together with the 2ADA. **That is incorrect.** The Heritage League will meet in June. We regret the error.

## "JOURNAL FOREVER"

To all 2ADA members:

Would you be willing to make a ten dollar (\$10.00) donation or more to continue to support 2-3 issues of **The Journal** per year after the 2nd Air Division Association dissolves per the Legacy Continuation Plan?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** Walter J. Mundy • Chairman, Journal Forever Committee  
15533 Swallowtail Road • Edmond, OK 73013

## "Intact" P-38 Lightning to be recovered in UK

**FLYPAST MAGAZINE** — In the summer of 2007 a WWII Lockheed P-38 Lightning emerged from the sand on a beach in Wales, where it had crash-landed in 1942. It will be recovered in the spring of 2008 for preservation at a major UK museum.

On learning of the discovery in September, Richard Gillespie, executive director of The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR), alerted curators at several major British collections. TIGHAR, a US-based non-profit historical and educational foundation, serves "the worldwide aviation historical community as a source of expertise and funding for responsible aviation historical research, archaeology and historic preservation."

Interest in the discovery was keen, and Richard mobilized a seven-person archaeological survey team to assess the aircraft's condition, describe and record the wreck site, and collect data that will be useful in the recovery. It also notified the USAF Federal Preservation Officer.

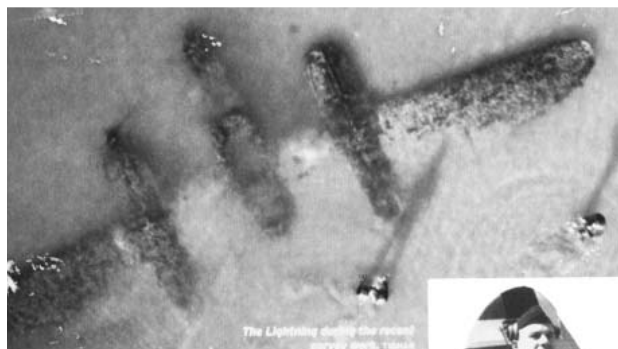
The survey of the P-38 was carried out from October 8-11. Assisting and observing were representatives from the Imperial War Museum; the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust; the Underwater Archaeology Department of the University of Wales; Gwynedd Council; Gwynedd Archaeological Trust; and Snowdonia National Park. A conservator from the RAF Museum also examined the wreck.

The aircraft is believed to be P-38F 41-7677 of the USAAF's 49th Squadron, 14th Fighter Group. On September 27, 1942, fuel exhaustion during a training mission forced 2nd Lt. R Frederick Elliott to land the fighter in shallow water near a beach in Wales. Lt. Elliott survived the crash unharmed but was later killed in action in North Africa.

Before the accident, the aircraft had been involved in fighter sweeps over the Dutch and Belgian coasts, making it the only surviving Eighth Air Force combat veteran P-38. After the crash, the authorities disarmed the aircraft, which was soon covered by the shifting sand beneath the surf.

At the end of Lt. Elliott's mishap, few civilians in the local area were aware of the incident, as the US beaches were closed to the public and the press was not allowed to print stories about Allied wrecks.

After the war, recreational use of the beaches resumed but the Lightning remained hidden, only to re-emerge briefly 65 years later. The sands have once again shifted and the fighter has again disappeared from view. An estimated 32 complete or partial P-38 airframes survive worldwide, and nearly all are late-production G, H, J or L models. For more information, log on to [www.tighar.org](http://www.tighar.org). ■



Above: The Lightning during the recent survey work, and Frederick Elliott, who was believed to be flying the P-38 at the time of its loss.



SEETHING

## *The 448th Speaks*

BY KING SCHULTZ

### FOLDED WINGS OF THE 448TH BOMB GROUP

**T**hose who have left us include **Joseph Longo** and **George Dupont**. George was our group VP for many years. He died from a fall from which he never recovered.

**John Grunow**, whom we have previously reported as passed away, bequeathed \$2,000 in his will to the 448th BG Memorial Association. John was a very generous man, and whenever the 448th was raising money for a worthy cause, he always stepped forward to offer whatever was needed. John flew from Sioux City, Iowa to Herington, Kansas with the Cater Lee crew for final overseas processing. We will miss him.

### 2008 REUNION

Our next 448th reunion will take place in Pensacola Beach in November, probably at the Hilton Hotel. The highlight of the reunion will be a performance by The Blue Angels. ■

## A Present to Mrs. Joan Smith

BY TOM EATON

**I**n 1973, Joan Smith (Benns) as Librarian to the Memorial Trust prepared a statement for my visit to the 2ADA convention in Colorado Springs, USA, giving details of the money available on income account for the year and the depreciation in place because of the effects of inflation. Those statements and the discussions that followed resulted in the realisation that the future of the Memorial Trust should be the responsibility of the Trustees of the Trust and the 2ADA jointly. From 1973 onwards, not only has the Memorial Library been strengthened and improved from year to year, but the lives of all the Americans and British involved have been enriched by the friendships resulting therefrom.

In 2007 Mrs. Smith was presented with a framed copy of the poem "The Sky Was Never Still," written by the late Roger Freeman, a long-time Memorial Trust Governor. The inscription reads:

*GIVEN to JOAN SMITH (Benns) in appreciation of her services as Librarian to the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF for sixteen years from November 1962 to November 1978. The goodwill and friendship that Joan created reflected so well the spirit of the founders of the Memorial.*

*From Tom Eaton, Vice President of the Memorial Trust  
(February 2007)*

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## "THE SKY WAS NEVER STILL"

---

by Roger A. Freeman

*The old man sat in the English pub  
As he had for many a year  
And listened to the strangers talk  
As he sipped a temperate beer.*

*A stranger asked how long he'd lived  
In the village here about  
"Why all my days," the old man said,  
"An age, without a doubt."*

*"I envy you," the stranger sighed  
"Your tranquil life,  
The gentle fields, the muted sky,  
Devoid of urban strife."*

*The old man smiled a wistful smile,  
"That's just a townie's dream,  
For I have seen the sky aflame  
And heard the meadows scream.*

*"I've known the thunder at each dawn  
That shook the very ground  
As warplanes sought to gain the clouds  
From airfields all around.*

*"They called some Forts and others Libs  
And there were fighters too  
I've counted hundreds at a time  
Yes, what I tell is true."*

*"They'd climb and soar like flocks of rooks  
And round and round they'd mill  
From north and south, from east to west  
The sky was never still.*

*"Sometimes there'd be a wondrous sight  
A sight beyond compare  
The bombers going out to war  
Forging the frigid air.*

*"Four miles above, just silver specks  
Like sunshine on the dew  
And trailing lines of cloud-like white  
Across the cosmic blue.*

*"They set the heavens all a-throb  
That did not fade away  
For others rose to meet the night  
Invisible to stay."*

*"And when was this?" the stranger asked  
"And who were those you saw?"  
The old man drank and then replied  
"It happened in the war.*

*"They were but boys and many died  
Some lost without a trace  
For then the sky in foreign parts  
Could be a violent place.*

*"Yes, they were boys and me a child  
But I remember well  
And if you have the time to spare  
There's more that I can tell."*

*The stranger said that he must go.  
"Perhaps another day."  
Indifferent to the old man's tale  
He quickly slipped away.*

*The old man turned to inward thoughts  
His memories to tend  
He knew that those who were not there  
Could never comprehend.*

*Those who'd not known the crowded sky  
The sounds that drenched the land  
Or stood in awe and wonderment  
Would never understand.*

*The old man left the English pub  
And stood awhile outside  
The evening vault was milky blue  
Cloud-free and stretching wide.*

*He raised his head and scanned the sky  
That held so still and clear  
And in his mind a memory  
And in his eye a tear.*



## 2AD Memorial Library welcomes new Trust Librarian

*Libby Morgan, the new Trust Librarian at the Second Air Division USAAF Memorial Library in Norwich, writes:*

I have been asked to introduce myself (briefly) to you all, so here goes...

I have a full degree in engineering geology and geophysics from Exeter University and a post-graduate qualification in library and information studies. I am a chartered member of CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals), which is the UK equivalent of the American Library Association.

My library career started with a year at Exeter University library, followed by many years working for Hertfordshire Public Libraries, working in reference and information services. I then



joined Hertfordshire County Council's Knowledge Management Unit, where I was part of the team responsible for delivering and developing the council's public website and staff intranet. Following my marriage in 2002 I moved to Bungay in Suffolk, working as Records and Information Manager for the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) in Lowestoft.

In 2005 my husband's job took us to live in Itteringham, a small village in North Norfolk, and I decided to take a mini career break. After a brief spell working for CILIP as Continuing Professional Development Officer for the East of England, I joined Norfolk Library and Information Service at the end of 2006 on a part-time basis, working at Aylsham Library and other libraries in North Norfolk.

I am really excited to have been appointed as the new Trust Librarian for your Memorial Library, which I know is held dear in so many people's hearts. I joined the library team here at the beginning of January this year, and had the privilege of working alongside Derek Hills for a short period, before his retirement on the 16th of January. I am extremely grateful to Derek for sharing his knowledge and valuable experiences with me, in such a generous manner. I'm looking forward to working together with the staff team (Jenny Christian, Lesley Fleetwood and Tom McKeown) to continue the development of this unique and very special library.

What I enjoy most about my job is sharing information with other people, by helping them to find out what they need to know. I am surrounded by fascinating information, which is most stimulating and a great challenge. I am looking forward to meeting the Memorial Library's users and finding out what books and resources they would like to see stocked on our shelves, so that we can make sure our collection is as relevant and contemporary as possible.

When not at work I enjoy singing with the Norwich Cathedral Consort, and my local church choir. I enjoy trying to keep our rather overgrown garden under control, and walking in the local countryside. I am married to Stephen, who is a Church of England clergyman, Rector of seven rural parishes in North Norfolk. ■

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

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

Remembrance Day is a very special day in England, and we were privileged to have attended again this year. Earl Zimmerman, our president, laid the 2ADA wreath without a flaw. The weather was good and it was a real treat to have been invited to tea in the Lord Mayor's parlor before the festivities began. Following the Remembrance Ceremony we attended a very meaningful service at the Norwich Cathedral.

The 2ADA was represented by Earl Zimmerman and his friend Cricket; Betty and John Lee (our Executive VP); Charles Sills, VP 93rd; Vicky and Kurt Warning representing the Heritage League; Joan Patterson and daughter Carol; and myself along with my son Charlie, grandson Andrew and his friend Patti.

The November 2007 Governors meeting was a very important and successful one. Chairman Matthew Martin did his usual super job of covering a number of

key issues before the largest attendance I recall having attended a Governors meeting. All the committees gave excellent reports on how the Library is being used and its projected activities. The Friends of the Second Air Division reported that the Thanksgiving dinner was a sellout.

The two key issues from my perspective were the financial statement and the future of the Fulbright funds. The financial report was an excellent one substantiated by the auditors. The representative of the investment firm spoke well of the future prospects of our funds. The Fulbright funds have already been invested by the Governors and will be handled very much as our corpus funds are managed.

Following the Governors meeting, Governor Ben DuBrow hosted an outstanding lunch for the group. Because he was retiring at the end of the year, Derek Hills was presented with a gift from the Governors and one from the 2ADA in recognition of

the outstanding job he has done as our Trust Librarian. We wish him well in his future adventures. We again thank Ben DuBrow for all the good things he does for our Memorial Library.

Lord Hurd delivered an excellent lecture that was well attended. At the dinner following the lecture it was my privilege to again have Lady Mary Colman as my dinner partner. After a brief visit to my old base at Tibenham, we proceeded to the St. Paul's Cathedral ceremony in the American Chapel. It was a special treat, as was the Evensong Service that followed.

To sum up our trip, I have never been more pleased with the fine group of gentlemen who are our Governors and the outstanding job they are doing in managing our Memorial Library. We owe them our sincere gratitude.

We look forward to seeing you in Dallas for the 2ADA convention in October. Stay well. ■





446TH BOMB GROUP

## FLIXTON-BUNGAY UPDATE

BY CARL ALBRIGHT

*The following article was authored and edited by members of the 446th Bomb Group Association and is intended for use by students to increase their understanding of World War II.*

### **“The Sky Was Their Battlefield”**

#### **PART 2**

#### **Forming the Bomber Stream**

**D**uring the night, armament men arrived at each dispersal area with a load of bombs on their trailers. They moved quietly and quickly from plane to plane, hanging their bombs up in the bomb bay racks. It was a dangerous job. At one base, six truckloads of 500-pound RDX bombs arrived after the derrick operator and his men had taken off for chow. The truck drivers didn't wait for their return. They backed up, jamming on the brakes to let the bombs roll off. The bombs exploded and most of the bomb dump along with them.

The ground crews followed the armament men. They pushed the propellers by hand to force out any oil that might have collected overnight in the piston cylinders. The ground crew chief boarded the plane and from the cockpit yelled, “Switch On.” Later there was backfiring and smoke, as the engines came to life and the propellers spun evenly and smoothly. Satisfied with their performance, the chief cut the engines to save fuel. The crew checked for oil, fuel, and hydraulic fluid leaks and cleaned the windshield. The bird was ready to fly.

The truck with the crew arrived and they boarded the plane. They went over the checklist and then started the engines. Then came the waiting. Eyes on the control tower. Finally, a green flare lit the sky, the signal to go. Engines would spit, sputter, and then roar. The planes would leave the hardstands. They waddled down the taxi strip to the runway. Pilots stood on the brakes. Throttles were shoved forward. The planes shook. Brakes released, the planes loaded with bombs and over 2700 gallons of gas roared down the runway and were airborne.

The plane's position in the formation had been given to the pilot at briefing. There was a diagram on a blackboard with the pilot's name assigned to each position in the formation. Takeoff would be by squadrons. England's winter weather made it difficult to get a formation in the air. An overcast with a base of 400 feet and the top anywhere from 4,000 feet to 15,000 feet presented a challenge. The prospect of death was faced with every takeoff, every mission.

Often the takeoff was into a pea-soup fog. The long climb to break out of the clouds was not unusual. They would find themselves perilously close to each other. Occasionally, you saw an enormous red rose bloom in the sky. Two bomb-laden planes had collided, twenty men lost. There were times the control tower could not see the planes rolling down the runway. There were times the pilots could not see their wing planes and other times when they could not even see the tips of their wings.

The trick was to get the plane off the ground, climb through the clouds, and come out on top. This was done with roughly thirty-six planes taking off at thirty-second intervals. While climbing through the soup on instruments, you might hit prop wash from the plane ahead. There were times it was so strong that the plane would be thrown into an almost vertical position. When you were above the cloud cover, you would see planes everywhere: above, below, ahead, behind and aside. The Group

leader would fire flares of one color. The Squadron leaders fired a different color. There would be a great deal of confusion. You picked out your leader by the color of the flare. There were times when a leader would run out of flares before the Group could be formed. Then some fellows would end up in another group. It took a great deal of time and jockeying before the formation could be on the way to the target.

Groups gathered in a slow, revolving racetrack spiral before forming the bomber train. Once formed, the contrails of a thousand bombers in the sky was a beautiful sight. It will never be seen again. It was ten thousand young men fighting their way to targets in enemy-occupied territory.

The bomber train left the English coast. Over the Channel, gunners test-fired their guns. At 10,000 feet, the pilot ordered the crew to put on their oxygen masks and plug in their heated suits.

Approaching the enemy coast, they looked for friendly fighter

**The contrails of a thousand bombers in the sky was a beautiful sight. It will never be seen again. It was ten thousand young men fighting their way to targets in enemy-occupied territory.**

cover. They wished for heavy weather over the Continent that might keep the Luftwaffe on the ground and keep them hidden from the flak batteries. Supposedly they were to avoid heavy flak concentrations. If the target was in the industrialized Ruhr, it was not possible. It was known as “Flak Alley.” Suddenly, there were large bursts of black smoke with red and yellow centers. Hundreds of pellets of shrapnel peppered the fuselage, some penetrating the ship, sometimes hitting a crew member. Seven to eight hours of formation flying through flak and fighters called for endurance and skill. Flying over enemy country there was always the possibility of death or spending the rest of the war in a prison camp. Some crashed; others jumped from disabled planes. Hopefully, they would fall into the hands of the military. There were times when an airman was captured by civilian mobs and beaten to death or thrown into a burning building.

Some never got past their first mission. One young crewman commenting on his first mission said: “The flak was really intense. I heard the sound of it hitting against the plane. I was shocked when I realized people were shooting at me. They were trying to kill me. I was really scared.”

The crews suffered. This might be the last day of their lives. Long hours of flying at 15,000 feet and above. The temperature inside the plane might fall to 30 or 40 degrees below zero. Sometimes it was colder. Fingers were more likely to suffer frostbite than toes. The men did not dare remove their gloves. Even a short period of exposure could cause frostbite. The tip of the nose and the ears were especially vulnerable.

The electrical equipment provided adequate protection when working properly. However, like anything containing electrical wiring, constant use eventually resulted in poor connections and short circuits in the wiring. A short circuit could result in painful burns and much discomfort. When it occurred, immediate action was necessary. You would hear someone shout over the intercom, “I'm on fire! Help me get out of this damned turret!” This was usually followed by some salty language until the suit could be unplugged. If the short occurred in the main body of the suit, the whole thing would have to be unplugged, and this meant a long, cold, uncomfortable flight.

The bomber pilot knew what he had to do. He, along with the navigator and the bombardier, had to get the bombs on the target. The gunners had to keep the enemy planes away. As the formation approached the target, the bombardier took over: “Bomb bay doors open! Bombs away!” ■





# NEWS OF THE 453RD FROM FLAME LEAP

BY LLOYD PRANG

*Editor's Note: Since Lloyd is still recuperating from his fall at the Grand Rapids convention, we are taking the liberty of reprinting the 453rd BG official history from the book Air Force Combat Units of World War II.*

## 453RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP

Constituted as 453rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 14 May 1943. Activated on 1 June 1943. Trained with B-24s. Moved to England, Dec 1943–Jan 1944, and assigned to Eighth AF. Began combat on 5 Feb 1944 with an attack against an airfield at Tours. Throughout combat, served chiefly as a strategic bombardment organization. Targets included a fuel depot at Dulmen, marshalling yards at Paderborn, aircraft assembly plants at Gotha, railroad centers at Hamm, an ordnance depot at Glinde, oil re-

fineries at Gelsenkirchen, chemical works at Leverkusen, an airfield at Neumunster, a canal at Minden, and a railroad viaduct at Altenbeken. Took part in the concentrated attack against the German aircraft industry during Big Week, 20-25 Feb 1944. Besides strategic operations, engaged in support and interdiction missions. Bombed V-weapon sites, airfields, and gun batteries in France prior to the invasion of Normandy in June 1944; on 6 June hit shore installations between LeHavre and Cherbourg and other enemy positions farther inland. Attacked enemy troops in support of the Allied breakthrough at St Lo in July. Bombed German communications during the Battle of the Bulge, Dec 1944–Jan 1945. Ferried cargo on two occasions: hauled gasoline, blankets, and rations to France in Sep 1944; dropped ammunition, food, and

medical supplies near Wesel during the airborne assault across the Rhine in March 1945. Flew last combat mission in April. Returned to the U.S. in May. Inactivated on 12 September 1945.

## SQUADRONS

732nd: 1943-1945. 733rd: 1943-1945. 734th: 1943-1945. 735th: 1943-1945.

## STATIONS

Wendover Field, Utah, 1 June 1943; Pocatello AAFld, Idaho, 29 July 1943; March Field, Calif., 30 Sep–2 Dec 1943; Old Buckenham, England, 23 Dec 1943–9 May 1945; New Castle AAFld, Del., 25 May 1945; Fort Dix AAB, NJ, 18 June–12 Sep 1945.

## COMMANDERS

Col. Joseph A. Miller, 29 June 1943; Col. Ramsay D. Potts Jr., 19 March 1944; Col. Lawrence M. Thomas, 7 July 1944; Lt. Col. Edward F. Hubbard, 25 Jan 1945–unkn.

## CAMPAIGNS

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

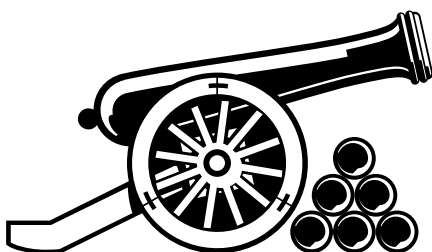
# CONFLICTS, WARS, AND RUMORS OF WARS

By TAMAR A. MEHURON and HEATHER LEWIS • REPRINTED FROM AIR FORCE MAGAZINE, DECEMBER 2007

The Constitution gives Congress the power to “declare war.” Yet, while the U.S. has resorted to arms many times, lawmakers actually have declared war—formally—only five times. As this page shows, the most recent occasion was some 65 years ago, in World War II. Three declarations were in the 19th century. In reality, Congress has been three times more likely to approve use of force without declaring war. It has on 15 occasions authorized “non-declared” wars—explicitly, implicitly, or on a contingent basis. The first time was in 1798 and the most recent in 2002. Moreover, the President on 10 occasions has committed U.S. troops to overseas combat with no prior approval from Congress at all, as is shown in the final column. America’s many routes to armed conflict:

| Declarations of War                                      | Explicit Authorization of Force | Implicit Authorization of Force |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Britain, 1812  | Quasi-War, 1798                 | Spain, 1898                     |
| Mexico, 1846   | Tripoli, 1802                   | Mexico, 1914                    |
| Spain, 1898  | Algeria, 1815                   | Cuba, 1962                      |
| Germany and Austria-Hungary, 1917                        | Civil War, 1861                 | Vietnam, 1964                   |
| Japan, Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania*, 1941-42 | Lebanon, 1983                   |                                 |
|  | 9/11 attackers, 2001            |                                 |

\* After Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and German declaration of war



## Contingent Authorization

Paraguay, 1858  
Formosa, 1955  
Middle East, 1956  
Gulf War, 1991  
Iraq, 2002

## Conflicts without Formal Authorization

Philippines, 1899-1902  
Mexico, 1916  
Korea, 1950-53  
Dominican Republic, 1965  
Grenada, 1983  
Panama, 1989  
Somalia, 1992-94  
Haiti, 1994  
Bosnia, 1995  
Kosovo, 1999

Source: *Congress at War: The Politics of Conflict Since 1789*, by Charles A. Stevenson, 2007, The National Defense University Press—Potomac Books, Inc.

## ATTLEBRIDGE TALES



BY JIM LORENZ

An August 15, 2007 letter from Derek Hills listed the three books recently purchased on our behalf under the 466th BG 2nd Air Division Memorial Library endowment. They are: *Spies Among Us: How to Stop the Spies, Terrorists, Hackers and Criminals You Don't Even Know You Encounter Every Day*, by Ira Winkler; *Friendly Invasion: Memories of Operation Bolera, The American Occupation of Britain 1942-1945*, by Henry Buckton; and *"Flak" Houses Then and Now: The Story of American Rest Homes in England During WWII*, by Keith Thomas.

These sound like books I would like to read! Derek indeed has been a real asset to our Library staff. Quoting from his letter:

*"This is the last time I will have the pleasure of informing you of your book purchases, as I am due to retire at the end of the year after eleven and a half years as Trust Librarian. In what has been, at times, a challenging job, I hope I have never forgotten that the Library represents a unique memorial to the men of the 2nd Air Division who gave their lives in defense of freedom during World War II. I have been very fortunate in having an excellent team of co-workers and I wish my successor every good fortune in maintaining the legacy which he/she will inherit."*

*"Finally may I take the opportunity to thank you for your most generous support of the Book Endowment program; it underpins our core activities and will help us maintain a vigorous and relevant library in the years to come."*

What else can we say? Only a job well done, Derek!

We had another letter from an associate member of the 2ADA, Ray Ward, mentioning a book he wrote in 1989 about the 8th AF in England, entitled *Those Brave Crews*. He mentions having received great reviews from Jimmy Stewart and the Air

Force Academy. Anyone interested can contact him by e-mail at Weldon@cqservices.com.

### THE FUTURE OF THE 466TH

Our 466th BG supplied the money for our November 12, 2007 Veteran's Day wreath on our 466th monument in "Frans Green." We will be talking to the 466th BGA about how we will proceed in future years. As the land called "Frans Green" has been deeded to the USA, the U.S. Superintendent of the Cambridge American Cemetery has offered to place a wreath at Frans Green on Veteran's Day 2008 for a fee of \$100. So we do have some options. We'll confer with the 466th BGA and keep you posted on our conclusions. The 466th BGA (a C-3 group — which means anyone may join the group, not only veterans) now has some younger officers and they will continue to meet with the 8th Air Force Historical Society.

Your 2ADA 466th BG officers (myself, Assistant VP John Horan, and Treasurer Stanley Mohr) are considering the future of the 2ADA and how our members may be served. Any residual money the 466th BG has will be given to the 466th BGA, to continue the placement of flowers on our Frans Green memorial. Please give any of your officers an e-mail or a call with your comments and suggestions. The

466th BG now has only three to six members attending the 2ADA conventions, so most of our members pay dues only to get the *Journal*. With the recent decision of the 2ADA that the *Journal* must be paid separately in addition to dues, this could be a factor for us to consider.

### BOOK REPORT

A friend of ours recently sent me a 2007 book entitled *Chappie*, a fascinating report of her dad, a Baptist minister who volunteered in 1942 to serve with the military as a chaplain after the Pearl Harbor attack. He served with the U.S. Army engineers — for the fighting in Africa, in Italy, and in the battles after the D-Day invasion of Europe. These were the guys who had to rebuild the bridges we destroyed. His detailed daily notes gave his daughter a picture of his daily military life. Her dad later became president of Scottsdale Memorial Hospital in 1968 before he retired. Give me a call if you are interested in this book.

### FUTURE MEETINGS

July 2008 — 466th BGA together with the 8th Air Force Historical Society, at the 8th Air Force Museum, Pooler, Georgia (Savannah).

July 2008 — Heritage League at the 8th Air Force Museum. ■



### RACKHEATH

**POOP**  
from  
**GROUP 467**

BY WALTER MUNDY

News on the home front. The publication of the Allan Healey history of the 467th Bomb Group, originally published in 1947, is being republished with the latest updates. Vince La Russa reported that the text is complete and the publisher is working on the photographs. The book will be ready to go on sale this year. Look for information for ordering this in the 467th Newsletter.

The restoration of the Rackheath control tower will include a few pictures in the reception area. The 467th Board has approved the commission of an 18" x 24" painting of *Witchcraft* that will be installed in the reception room. The original painting donated by the Reed Family was determined to be too large for the space. That painting will be sent to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum and will be installed in the Second Air Division Exhibit or in the Art Gallery.

The 2008 reunion of the 467th BG will be held in St. Louis, MO. Information on dates and events will be in the 467th Newsletter.

The design of the Second Air Division Exhibit at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is progressing, and the estimated completion date is June 2008. The 2ADA should plan to have its 2009 convention at the Mighty Eighth Museum so that all can enjoy and take pride in the achievements of the 2AD. Veterans and members, bring your children, grandchildren and great grandchildren so that they can know the legacy of freedom that we fought for. ■



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

BY JOHN A. PALLER

Although our numbers are dwindling, our 2007 reunion was better than ever. Superb weather in early October in Ohio was enjoyed during our visit to Wright-Patterson AFB for memorial services at the Base Chapel, lunch at the "O" Club, and a tour of the United States Museum of the Air Force.

I was accompanied by my son, David, in the hopes of further enlivening his interest in 8th AF history. He was truly impressed, particularly with the welcome shown by all the attendees. Also, I must commend our ball turret gunner, John (Guts) McGeary, who in spite of disabilities, traveled from Greensburg, PA with his son Dan to attend the reunion. "Where there is a will, there is a way!" The Marriott Hotel in Dayton was an excellent choice on the part of our Board of Directors, and the hotel staff did a commendable job in making everyone feel comfortable.

And this from our "CAN YOU TOP THIS" DEPT: Joe Pegram showed up at the convention with 16 members of his family. He and his wife had eight children, so there probably were a few that did not make it. The family members present covered four generations!!!

### TWISTED AIRPLANES AND TWISTED REPORTING

This is a story of a B-24 assigned to the 454th Bomb Group in Italy (15th AF). A British publication, circa 1973, dealing with B-24 camouflage and markings, contained a photo of a Liberator standing on its nose, and the caption stated that the airplane ran out of runway on landing, probably as a result of hydraulic system damage and subsequent brake failure. No other information was included.

Later, a soft-covered book published in 1989 shows that same airplane again, reporting that this "B-24M" (I suspect it was a "J" model) went straight in, killing all on board (*see photo*). "STRAIGHT IN" ... hardly! If that had happened it would have, without question, been reduced to a totally destroyed, burned-out pile of wreckage.

Then, in the Summer 2004 issue of the

2ADA *Journal*, the same accident scene is depicted on page 33, although from a different angle. Obviously the same aircraft as the markings were identical. James H. Reeves had submitted the photo with a short note that indicated seven men had been killed in the accident but no further information.

I knew that somewhere in my library I had some publication that contained a first-hand account of the tragedy. Finally, after some head scratching and much searching, I ran across the story. It was found in the Winter 1987 issue of George Welsh's B-24 Liberator Club "Briefing." There on page 15 is a letter written by Mr. Guyon Phillips of Greensboro, NC. I will quote part of his letter:

*"Here is a picture of a Liberator in a one-in-a-million accident. It occurred at the 454th/455th Bomb Group base near Cerignola, Italy in April 1945. I was a pilot with the 461st BG, which was close by. Early one morning, my co-pilot, navigator and I were in a Jeep on our way to Cerignola, and as I looked up the road ahead, I couldn't believe my eyes. There was the unmistakable oval fin and rudder of a B-24 high above the dirt road, which made no sense at all. Doing a double-take, I realized it was a Liberator standing on what was left of its nose."*

*At first, we were afraid to approach the plane in case it might explode from leaking gas (of course, the bombs weren't armed, but we didn't want to assume they weren't still dangerous). An Italian farmer had been going along the road in a small horse-drawn cart, and the farmer was over in a ditch with the over-*

*turned cart tending to the horse. The horse didn't seem to be injured, and apparently the farmer had to take to the ditch as the plane came roaring toward him and ground to a halt just short of the ditch.*

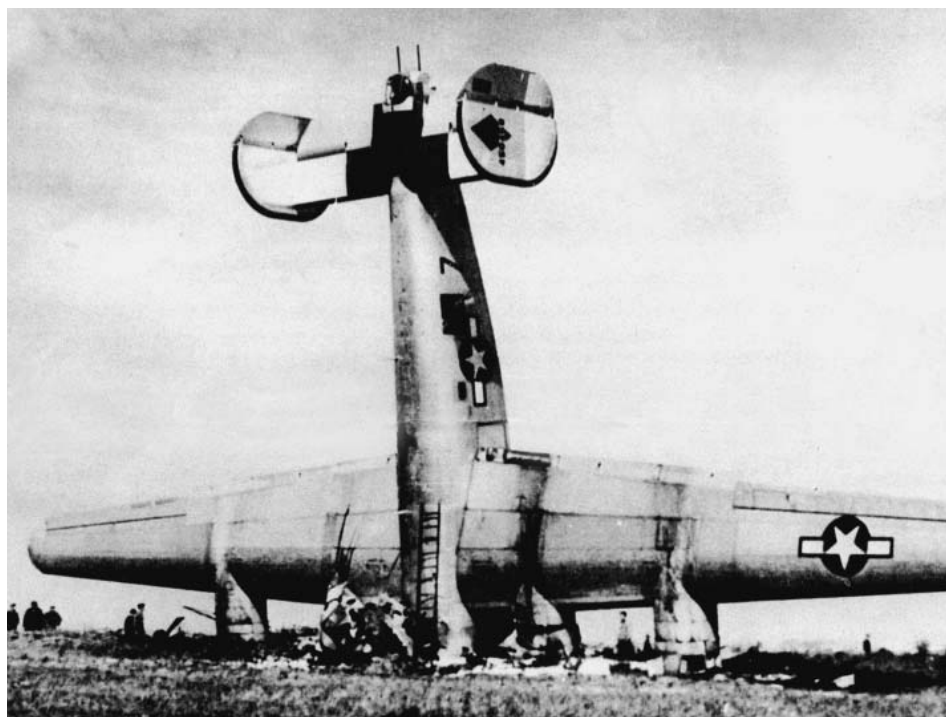
*You could tell immediately that the crew on the flight deck had been killed instantly. The plane was one of many taking off on a mission, and although the "Stars and Stripes" account mentioned "an accidental application of brakes," none of us believed that.*

*From every indication, the plane had an emergency of some sort just before lift-off and the pilot showered down on the brakes — a B-24 with a full load of gas and bombs just won't get in the air without full power.*

*Unfortunately, he was past the point of no return. After running off the steel mats at the end of the runway, the nose gear sheared off and the nose of the plane ground into the soft earth beyond with such force that it literally chewed off the front of the plane, right up to the engines. How the plane kept from toppling over on its back was a miracle — which may have saved the remainder of the crew.*

*We had gone through combat crew training in Boise, Idaho, and were told later that this was the plane of the "Model Crew," which had been selected from our base at Boise. I knew the pilot, although not personally."*

I included this story for two reasons. First, to update our membership and secondly, for the Heritage League and the NEXT-GEN members who may run across this photo in the future and are curious about what really happened. ■



# Hollywood Dreamers of the 392nd BG

BY PETER LARSEN • REPRINTED FROM THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

When Willis and Dorothy Miller first heard the pitch for “Beautiful Dreamer” they couldn’t help being struck by how familiar it felt.

The independent film they’d been invited to invest in told of a World War II romance between a B-24 Liberator pilot and his childhood sweetheart.

Willis knew the cockpit of a B-24 Liberator like most of us know our ears, having flown 30 missions over Germany as pilot of a bomber nicknamed the Starduster.

“I almost got killed three times,” says Willis, 85. “But I never lost a man in my crew.”

And Dorothy, who wrote Willis every single day he was away, certainly knew how it felt to live with the worry that her beau might not come home.

“You never knew,” says Dorothy, 82. “You’d read in the newspaper how many had been lost on a mission. And you wondered.”

So, they put in some money, earned in a life of farming and land development in Orange County, and in 2004, the story of the pilot and the wife was shot in 17 days and edited.

But then the money ran out, and the future of the film was thrown into question.

Willis and Dorothy had to decide: Let the film sink or swim on its own, or take a bigger risk and make sure that this story, so close to their own, got told as best it could.

Willis grew up on Long Beach, raised by his grandfather after his father was struck and killed by a streetcar. Dorothy lived in Huntington Beach, where her family, the Murdys, was prominent.

They knew each other at Huntington Beach High School and eyed each other at the church where her father taught Willis’ Sunday school, but didn’t fall for each other right away.

Willis enlisted in the Army AF at 17, before the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, hoping to land a coveted slot as a pilot.

“After he got his commission and his wings, we got serious,” Dorothy says.

“I was a second lieutenant at that time, and I saw her at church,” Willis says of the moment their smoldering romance burst into flames.

But by then, Willis was bouncing from one base to the next; from Stockton to Visalia to Albuquerque, N.M., where he found out he’d pilot a B-24 instead of a fighter.

Back at Munroe Army Air Field – now Edwards Air Force Base – Willis and Dorothy kept dating, with Willis occasionally flying to great heights to show his feelings for Dorothy, a Whittier College student.

*A couple foots the bill for a movie about a romance during wartime, a story much like their own.*

“One time, I was supposed to be flying to Las Vegas, but I took a turn and came to Whittier College — I went over it at 1,500 feet,” he says.

As a gesture, it was effective — as a way to win a bride, less so.

“He wanted to get married or engaged before he went overseas and I said, ‘No, no, no!’” Dorothy says.

In 1944, six months after they’d started dating, Willis headed for England, soon getting orders to be lead pilot in the bomber runs.

“I said, ‘But sir, that’s the one they shoot at!’ And he said, ‘You’re learning fast.’”

Willis piloted the Starduster for 30 missions and never lost a man on his plane, though he came close. Once, a shell hit the plane, briefly knocking out him and his co-pilot. Three times, they crash landed.

Dorothy wrote him daily, while Willis had six red roses delivered to his girl every week.

“It took all my money, but I did it,” he says. “I thought I was going to get killed, so I wanted to send her flowers while I could.”

By March 1945, he was due to come home, though a general offered to make him a colonel if he flew two more weeks.

“He wrote and said ‘Should I stay?’” Dorothy says. “And I said, ‘Don’t push your luck.’”

Back in the States, Willis traveled by train, plane and automobile to Los Angeles, where Dorothy went to pick him up at his hotel.

The moment she arrived, Willis asked again, and this time Dorothy said yes. They’ve been married 62 years.

Willis started college, but when the first of seven children arrived, he quit for a job he didn’t want to do — farming.

It paid off in time, though. The land he bought to farm he developed in later years, moving his farm operations out of Orange County.

Willis and Dorothy’s original link to Hollywood was through their son-in-law, Brad Sublett, who knew a producer of the “Beautiful Dreamer” project.

So, when “Dreamer” — with its nostalgic story of a dramatic era in their own lives — later ran into trouble, the family had resources to invest more.

“They’ve never been ones to go away from a risk,” says daughter Dottie Miller-Sublett, who with Brad Sublett has helped

with the business end of the film venture.

The Miller family decided not only to put in the cash needed to finish the film but also to buy out all the other investors.

In effect, they bought and now own the entire movie, paying cash for a film with a budget that Brad Sublett will only say is “less than \$1 million.”

“The reason we got into it is as a tribute to my dad and his crew,” said Dottie Miller-Sublett.

“And for what they did for our country,” Brad Sublett says.

What the Miller family did for the film, once they decided to take it over, was make sure that it would be as good as it could get, says director Terri Farley-Teruel.

“It was 100 percent essential to get the movie that we all ended up getting,” says Farley-Teruel, herself an Orange County native, making her feature-directing debut.

“The fact that the movie is likable, lovable, adorable — their acquiring the film is what made it survive in this fashion.”

“It’s only successful because of them,” Farley-Teruel says.

The movie stars a mix of character actors and up-and-comers. Its best-known star — James Denton — shot it right as his career was taking off as the hunk on “Desperate Housewives.”

And though it’s won best feature in the three film festivals it has played so far, plans for theatrical and DVD release are still up on the air.

Sublett hopes to find a distributor and get it into a limited number of theaters — including Orange County — this year. A companion documentary titled “Starduster,” the story of Willis’ crew, is also looking for a home on TV.

As for Willis and Dorothy, executive producers of the film, after seeing it at the Temecula Film Festival, they came away moved.

A love story at its heart, “Dreamer” also carries lessons on the hardships families undergo during war, a point Willis thinks is one reason why people enjoy it.

For those who lived it, as he and Dorothy did, some of it was difficult for the memories it provided.

“So many men that I lost, I can’t forget,” says Willis of the three or four planes that usually didn’t return from most missions he led.

“I’ve always carried that in my head.” ■

# Birth of a mighty friendship

BY STEVE SNELLING • REPRINTED FROM EDP SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2007

**I**t was a special relationship born out of war that has left a lasting legacy. Now a novel, inspired by the friendships developed between East Anglian children and U.S. airmen, explores that unique bond.

The scene is a school classroom on the frozen fringes of Norwich. The date is January 1944, and what appears, on the surface at least, to be just another day in a very long war is about to be transformed into an event so special as to alter the course of some of the children's lives forever.

Air that had been thick with rumour and pent-up excitement is suddenly rent by a distant rumbling of aircraft engines. For a few moments, an "aviation-mad" boy called David Freeman speculates whether they belong to friend or foe...



*"The drone became louder, closer. Vibrations sent tremors through his body. He waited for air raid sirens, but they didn't sound. It wasn't the Germans. It was the Yanks!"*

*"Suddenly, every chair in the classroom scraped back, as boys scrambled to the window. David was one of the first searching the cold blue sky and seeing what he'd hoped for. Roger stood next to him, watching wave after wave of huge, low-flying, four-engine bombers. Even the teacher stood at the window, staring in awe..."*

The words belong to Marjorie Hodgson Parker, award-winning writer of children's fiction from North Texas, but the experience so vividly described belongs to David Hastings and it marked the beginning of an enduring relationship with the men of the United States 2nd Air Division which has seen him play a leading role in the continuing commemoration of their courageous sacrifice, in the course of which he has gone from aircrew mascot to governor of the division's unique memorial trust and co-pilot of one of the most memorable trans-Atlantic flights of recent times, the



**Above: Youngsters make friends with the Yanks at Old Buckenham.**  
**Left: David Hastings as a young boy during the war.**

return of the B-24 *Diamond Lil*.

His has been a truly extraordinary aeronautical journey that is just about to take a new and remarkable twist with the publication in America of Marjorie Parker's latest novel.

For David and the Mighty Eighth, the story of the impact of "friendly invasion" of Norfolk by thousands of American airmen as seen through the eyes of one very impressionable schoolboy, is based in large measure on his own childhood memories and he's plainly "tickled pink" by the results of a special collaboration spanning almost two years and two continents.

"What's really wonderful about this project," says David enthusiastically, "is that we have an author who's telling the story that really hasn't been told before, of how the great friendship between the Americans and we young English kids and our families began.

"There have been an awful lot of books about the various bombing missions, with all their heroism and heavy toll, but no one has ever focused on the children's perspective, and while it's flattering that some of my recollections have been used in the book, the truth is that these were experiences shared by thousands of kids in Norfolk during the war.

"I don't think you should ever underestimate the impact these Yanks had on our lives. As I always tell them when I go out to visit them, their arrival was like a bright light at the end of a log tunnel. They were a tremendous boost despite having flashy uniforms and a lot more money than the rest of us."

Certainly, there seems little doubt that the book's evocative fusion of fact and fiction will strike a chord with many who grew up in a corner of rural England transformed by conflict into a "Little America" where relationships forged between airmen and the civilian population have yielded a legacy of camaraderie unparalleled in the history of the war's grandest alliance.

More than six decades after the war, veterans of the greatest and most costly air struggle in history continue to regard the towns and villages of East Anglia as homes away from home. These are places where they left an indelible mark on communities impoverished by years of war and where a rash of memorials endure to honour not just the sacrifices, but the mutual support which has grown rather than diminished with the passage of time.

It is this unique aspect of the special relationship, sustained in many instances by a generation who were among the greatest beneficiaries of American generosity and largesse, which lies at the heart of Marjorie Parker's poignant coming-of-age tale.

And yet, for all its obvious cross-generational appeal on both sides of the Atlantic, this was a project that nearly did not get off the ground.

Speaking from her home on the Parker Ranch, near the Red River in Texas, Marjorie Parker traced the origins of the book back to a visit to the 8th Air Force Museum in Georgia where her mother, a distinguished aviator and member of the Women's Air Service during the Second World War, was opening a special exhibition.

*(continued on next page)*

## BIRTH OF A MIGHTY FRIENDSHIP

(continued from page 13)

"While we were there," she recalls, "we had lunch with the museum's historian and when she found out I wrote books for children she said the museum needed a book about the Eighth Air Force that children could relate to. What's more, she offered me personal accounts from which I could concoct a story."

The taped memoirs she was given were those of East Anglian farmer turned Eighth Air Force chronicler Roger Freeman, the man who had coined the expression "The Mighty Eighth" for his landmark history book more than thirty years ago.

There was, however, one proviso. "She told me I'd have to hurry," says Marjorie, "since Roger had got cancer and was not expected to live long. So, I came home and listened to his memoirs and thought they were just wonderful.

"But, by the time I got in touch with Roger, which was only a few weeks later, his wife told me he had died. I was at a bit of a loss. I spoke to my mum and she suggested I contact a man she'd met at an air force convention. They'd kept up a correspondence by e-mail during which he'd sent her details about his childhood growing up during the war and in particular his contact with an American pilot.

"Luckily, mum saves everything, and as I read those e-mails I thought, my goodness, here's my story right here..."

The writer of the e-mails was David Hastings, successful businessman and former chairman of Broadland District Council from Salhouse, near Norwich.

"I was stunned initially at being invited to help with the book," recalls David. "But it turned out to be a fantastic experience. Almost every week for more than a year Marjorie would e-mail asking for information about this or that and all the time she was unlocking memories about things I'd long forgotten about. But bit-by-bit, we slowly progressed through the whole lot. It was incredible."

At the heart of his childhood story was the relationship he forged with one pilot, Al Dexter, and a single B-24 Liberator, *Pugnacious Princess Pat*, part of the Hethel-based 389th Bomb Group, re-cast in the book as *Tex* and *Pugnacious Patty*.

"Looking back," says David, "I was so lucky to have made friends with Al. He was an outstanding pilot and a super guy. And to be adopted by the crew was almost too fantastic for words for an aircraft-mad boy of 12."

Some years ago, while I was researching a book on the Americans in Norfolk during the Second World War, David gave me an account of his time spent with the Yanks.

In it, he recalled playing truant to watch the Liberators land at Horsham St. Faith,

being handed a silver quarter (which he still possesses today), being "captured" three times by U.S. military policemen while roaming on Rackheath base, and, after the Americans had departed, cycling full tilt down the main runway of a ghostly deserted Hethel base. Mostly, however, he remembered with great affection his cycle rides to Hethel and the friendship forged with Lieutenant Dexter.

Remembering his memorable first meeting, he wrote of being lifted over the fence and introduced to the crew of the "Pat." "Then, as usual," he noted, "the MPs arrived and Al offered them three choices: They could shoot him, which he doubted; they could confine him to the barracks, which would be great as he would not have to fly more missions; or they could get the hell out of there. They left."

After that, every school holiday was spent at Hethel. "We saw them go out and counted them back," he recalled. "Al would always walk me around the aircraft on his return, with his hand on my shoulder, pointing out the battle damage..."

It was only many years later, after David had renewed acquaintance with his wartime friend, that the real significance of that post-flight ritual was revealed. "Al's wife Pat explained that the crew had come to regard that little walk as a good-luck thing."

Such experiences, or a thinly disguised version of them, have all found their way into the book, merged with purely fictional events and other adventures gleaned from the memoirs of Roger Freeman and a host of people whose stories Marjorie read and absorbed during the course of her research.

"The stories of the two boys fell together beautifully," says Marjorie. "And the more I wrote, the more the character of David Freeman came alive and began to take on his own personality. So much so, in fact, that now I get mixed up trying to remember which was David's experience and which one came from Roger."

David, for one, is delighted with the results and his only regret is that Roger did not live long enough to see the book's completion. He believes it a measure of Marjorie's skill in blending the myriad experiences into a single compelling narrative that she has succeeded in capturing not only the spirit of a vanished era, but the reality behind the human ties which have helped forge a special and sustained relationship reflected in the 2nd Air Division's 'Living Memorial' Library at The Forum.

It is a bond born out of a common struggle that still has the power to reduce the book's author to tears. "We don't appreciate nearly enough the freedom that has been brought to us," she says. "The heroism and fortitude of the British people during which they hung on all by them-

selves until the Americans could come to the rescue just astonishes me."

Marjorie, who hopes to tour the former wartime base for the first time next year, adds: "As I got deeper into this project, what struck me most forcibly was the way human courage and love manifested itself even amid the darkest of times."

And it must be said, for all its life-affirming qualities, Marjorie's story does not shy away from the harsh realities of war. One particular incident, based on David's memories, looms large and is featured in artist Mark Postelthwaite's graphic cover illustration. It depicts a B-24 trailing flames as it roars just above rooftops before crashing to earth in a fiery inferno.

Even now David shudders at the memory. "It was awful," he recalls. "I was at home in Colman Road, Norwich, when suddenly we heard a crackle of gunfire. And then it all started. It was all hell let loose. Standing in the garden, we saw this Lib, on fire from the wings aft, going down to crash into Daniels' nursery."

It later emerged that enemy intruders had followed the bomber streams home, striking just as they were about to land. In the space of a few minutes a succession of hapless aircraft were shot down within sight of their bases.

That night David's family had an American with them and they drove him to the base at Attlebridge. "We ended up in the aircrew hut," remembers David, "and for me, as a youngster, it was terrible. Many of them were in tears. They were shattered; blaming each other because in the chaos and confusion everybody was firing on each other.

"Events like that really brought home to you what they went through and, though it didn't register with me at the time, I've since come to understand why the friendships made with local families, often through the children, meant so much to them.

"As Al's wife Pat told me, 'it meant so much to him just to get away from the base and to be with an ordinary family. Even if it was only for half a day, it offered an escape from the war.'"

More than sixty years on, David hopes Marjorie's book based on his own experiences will reach out to a new generation and help preserve that special friendship.

As Marjorie put it herself, "the kids of today have a new kind of war to contend with, but we all need the kind of courage, togetherness and determination to stand up and be counted that was displayed by airmen and civilians alike in East Anglia all those years ago.

***David and The Mighty Eighth* by Marjorie Hodgson Parker is published by Bright Sky Press, priced \$17.95. To order, or to obtain more details about the book, log on to [www.brightskypress.com](http://www.brightskypress.com). ■**





BY CLARENCE LUHMANN

I hope you all had a good holiday time and a very happy New Year!

While watching some of *The War* by Ken Burns, I began to reminisce about back in 1942. My draft number was probably near, so a friend and I decided to enlist in the Army Air Forces. We went to Minneapolis, where we passed the tests. We had to get a release from the local draft board. We had a very tough board chairman. He wasn't going to release us — no way. But after being confronted with a phone number to Minneapolis, he grudgingly let us go. We were sworn in on August 8. We waited until early March 1943 before going to Santa Ana for our Pre-Flight. There I met a fellow from S. San Francisco named Art Lundburg. We became roommates by alphabetical order. My friend from home went to bombardier school. I went on to Twenty Nine Palms for Primary. Art was also there with me. Then I went to Pecos, Texas for Basic. Art also came there. At Pecos I married my hometown sweetheart. We were good friends with Art. We moved on to Williams Field, Chandler, Arizona. Art was still with me. There we received our wings and 2nd Lt. Commission in the class of 43K. After a short time back in Minnesota, I went to Salt Lake City. Art was there too. There Art was put with Charles Morgan as his copilot and I was put in a crew as copilot for Burr Miller. Then I went to Casper, Wyoming where our crew assembled and trained in the B-24. Still there was Art. Then I went to Liberal, Kansas where we got our B-24, and on to West Palm Beach to take the southern route to England. Art and Morgan also flew that route, but I never saw them on the way.

Guess what? When I got to Tibenham there also was Art in the 445th BG and the 701st Squadron. We flew many of the same missions during the period of May through August 1944. I returned to the States before Art did. We kept in touch over the many years. My wife and I visited him in S. San Francisco. He joined us in Bran-

son for a 445th mini-reunion.

Charles Morgan sent the sad news in 2003 that Art had passed away. We miss hearing from Art as he called periodically, usually to check on our Minnesota weather.



Newton, Iowa found some use for a retired colonel — here's the local newspaper article from July 4, 2007 by staff writer John Jennings:

### BOB SUCKOW NAMED PARADE GRAND MARSHAL

This year's grand marshal for Newton's Fourth of July parade is a decorated veteran of World War II, a successful businessman and active in his community's civic affairs.



Bob Suckow enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1941. He became a pilot in the new Army Air Force and was eventually sent to England to join the 445th Bomb Group, Second Air Division of the Eighth Air

Force. He flew a number of missions into Germany as a wing-man in formations of B-24 heavy bombers. He became a Squadron Operations Officer, and took command pilot training under Jimmy Stewart at Wing Headquarters. He had the responsibility to get the squadron to the target and return safely to base.

Suckow was awarded four Campaign Medals, the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Presidential Unit Citation, and the Good Conduct Medal. The personnel of the 445th Bomb Group were awarded the French Croix de Guerre.

After the war, Suckow served in the Air Force Reserves for 18 years, and retired as a Lt. Colonel in 1972 with 24 years of service.

Today, Suckow continues to volunteer as a speaker to stress the importance of remembering the lessons of World War II. He served as a board member of the Iowa Chapter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society; is a member of the American Legion Post #111; is an active member of the Service Corps of Retired Executives; owned his consulting firm R.W. Suckow and Associates since 1978; serves as a docent at the Jasper County Historical Museum; is a past board member of the Jasper County Concert Association; is active with the Vision, Entrepreneurial Business Services Cluster in Newton; and is a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church.

He has owned his own aircraft and has flown for business and pleasure through-

out the United States and Canada. Suckow is married to Shirley, and they have three children, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

### FOLDED WINGS



Raymond Wayne Ray, age 82, of Hamilton, Ohio, died December 28, 2007 at Fort Hamilton Hospice Inpatient Unit. Born on May 25, 1925 in Clay County, Kentucky, Wayne was the son of the late John and Telia

(Campbell) Ray. Wayne was a member of the Hamilton High School graduating class of 1946 and was employed with Mosler Safe as a service technician for over thirty years. Wayne served his country during World War II in the 8th Air Force and received a Purple Heart and the Republican Senatorial Medal of Freedom for his service. He was also a lifetime member of the DAV and the American Legion, a charter member of the National World War II Museum and the Presidential Victory Team; a member of the Kassel Mission Memorial Association and the Republican Task Force, and an Amateur Radio Operator. ■

## Forgotten Fields of America

*Forgotten Fields of America, Volume IV*, Lou Thole, Pictorial Histories Publishing, 144 pp, illus, hbk, \$21.95 — No stranger to the pages of *FlyPast*, Lou is one of the first authors to write about U.S. airfields and their histories. Brilliantly illustrated,



nicely designed and well written, this volume takes the reader to such iconic sites as Edwards Air Force Base, Roswell Army Airfield and the world's largest basic flying training school at Marana. With plenty of then-and-now photography backed up with superb period illustrations. If you are not familiar with this series, now is the time. It is building into an exceptional reference package. For further information, e-mail [phpc@montana.com](mailto:phpc@montana.com).



# 458th BOMB GROUP

HORSHAM ST. FAITH



BY RICK ROKICKI

Dick Pulse advised me that he found it necessary to resign as our group vice president because of a health problem. As it turned out, I missed the Grand Rapids convention because of my own health problem. I was in the midst of several tests which were slated at convention time and no options to change on short notice. Happy to report that the tests gave me a clean bill of health. It was disappointing to not be able to attend the convention, as it was the first one I missed since joining the 2ADA in 1975. We're planning to attend the Dallas one in October (Lord willin'). I sincerely hope that we will have a big 458th showing.

## B-24 DEDICATION, BALBOA PARK

Dick Butler, past president of the 2ADA and current 44th BG VP, was kind enough to send me a memorial pamphlet from the dedication ceremony of the bronze B-24 installed in the Veterans Memorial Garden at San Diego's Balboa Park. Dick was one of the speakers on the program. He sent me a photo of the bronze plaque which lists all the 2ADA groups under "Military Units." Also included in the listings are Dick Pulse and Bert Betts as memorial plaque donors.



Situated on a one-acre site, the Veterans Museum has three individual gardens honoring veterans of air, land and sea. The Air Garden pays tribute to both crew members, ground and flight, and the citizens of San Diego who designed and built the B-24. Almost 40% of all Liberators were built at the Consolidated Aircraft plant in San Diego. This is a "must see" on any visit to the area.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

In some recent correspondence with Mike Bailey, artist, writer, historian and honorary 2ADA member, he has advised of two books that have been published. The first one, done with Peter Bodle, is entitled *The 458th Bomb Group in Norfolk*. It features photos, many of which have not been previously published, from Mike's huge collection. The text is by Peter, whose desire is to

put the history of the 458th with previously published 44th, 389th, and 491st/492nd histories. Book size is 8" x 5.75", 60 pages, soft cover, and illustrated painting of "Rough Rider" of the 755th Squadron. This painting was originally done for Darin Scorza. The centerfold is of the Ralph Dooley aircraft striking the bell tower of St. Phillip's Church in Heigham Road, Norwich. Mike advises that he and Maureen were married in that church years later. The book is available from: Adam Smith, 24647 S. Stoney Island Ave., Crete, IL 60417, tel. 708-367-1563, e-mail: raflad@comcast.net. I'm sorry to say there is no price shown on this book.

The other book is 11.625" x 8.25", 96 pages, soft cover, and shows Howard Slaton and his crew with background of "Arise My Love and Come With Me," 754th BS, 458th BG. The book is entitled *B-24 Liberator Groups of the 8th Air Force in Focus*. Priced at £17.95, there is no USA distributor, but you can purchase it direct from: Red Kite, P.O. Box 223, Walton on Thames, Surrey KT12 3YQ, England. Tel. 01932-243165, e-mail: www.redkitebooks.co.uk. The ISBN is 9780954620196. The book also features the following B-24 groups: 34th BG at Mendelsham, Suffolk; 486th BG at Sudbury, Suffolk; 487th BG at Lavenham, Suffolk; 490th BG at Eye, Suffolk; 493rd BG at Debach, Suffolk; 801st BG at Alconbury; 482nd BG at Alconbury/Cambridgeshire; 803rd BG at Oulton.

Also, East Anglia Books of Bishop Stratford are going to publish a book of Mike Bailey paintings — 48 in all. Various types, from the WWI Bristol Fighter, the DeHaviland Dragon Rapide (cabin biplane), and several types of "between-the-wars" aircraft. Looking forward to this publication. If you are interested, drop Mike a note at: 91 Waterworks Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4DB, England.

Finally — do your best to stay healthy — take your pills! ■

## Idaho Needs to Get on Board!

BY JACK WENDLING (466TH)

The Idaho State Veterans Cemetery in Boise, dedicated in 2004, includes a Memorial Walk featuring monuments honoring veterans' organizations, including Idaho Women Veterans, U.S. Navy ship crews, American Legion and VFW. The U.S. 8th Air Force, created in 1942 and active to the present, deserves representation as well. The 8th U.S. Army Air Force, England WWII, was the greatest air armada of people and machines to ever exist, and it lives on today as the U.S. 8th Air Force with headquarters at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. If you are an Idaho 8th AF veteran, contact me at once!

A memorial honoring the 8th AF and its veterans, departed and living, at the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery would be a fitting tribute to their service. Our flag flies 24/7 at the Veterans Cemetery and the ordered tranquility of the facility deserves your visit and inspection.

The fixed cost of an organizational monument (all are like-sized with a bronze plaque for logo and wording) is \$2500 payable to the cemetery. A donor collection account has been established at U.S. Bank, 98 Highway 30, Filer, ID 83328. Checks should be made to "8th Air Force Monument." It is desired to order the monument by mid-January 2009 to hopefully have it in place by Memorial Day 2009. Should donations exceed the cost of the monument, the excess will be donated to the Cemetery's indigent veterans burial fund. Donations are not tax deductible, unfortunately, as a tax-exempt entity has not been established in the interest of getting the fund drive up and running with the least delay.

For added information or thoughts for the memorial plaque, contact Jack Wendling, 3622N 2000E, Filer, ID 83328 (phone 208-326-4198 or e-mail wendling@filertel.com). An attempt will be made to advise donors of progress toward the memorial, and suggestions for the plaque are invited. ■

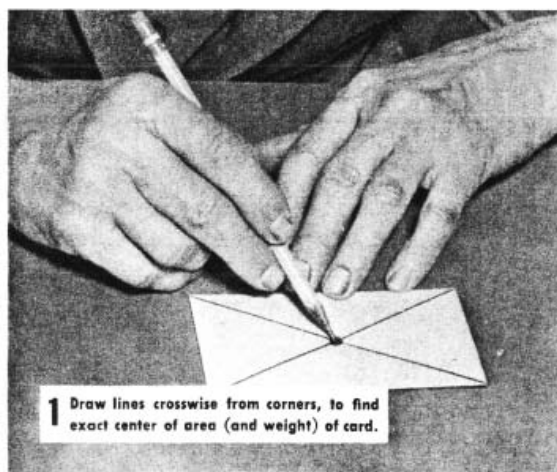
**BILL STOUT  
TELLS YOU**

# How an Airplane Flies

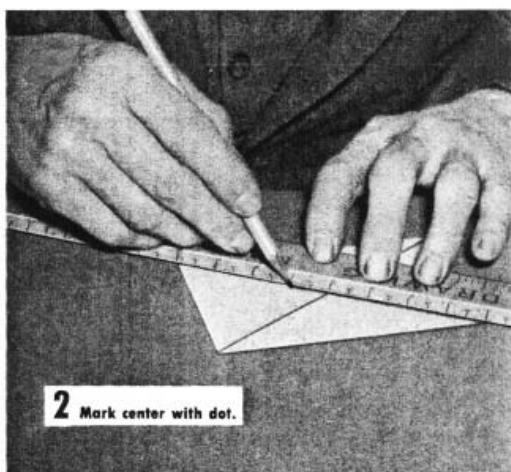
You can demonstrate how an airplane flies with just a 3 x 5 inch filing card and a paper clip. We'll use the force of gravity as the motor. This simplest of all flying machines will then travel over a hundred times its length, and then make a perfect landing, *if* you know how to handle it. Pictures on this page show you. Start at top.

William B. Stout, one of aviation's outstanding designers, is Director of the Stout Research Division of Consolidated Vultee. He once used the demonstration he gives you on this page to convince 128 men of means they should each contribute \$1000 to finance the building of one of his early planes.

Stout is famous not only for many improvements in airplane and auto design but for an unusual ability to explain things simply.



**1** Draw lines crosswise from corners, to find exact center of area (and weight) of card.



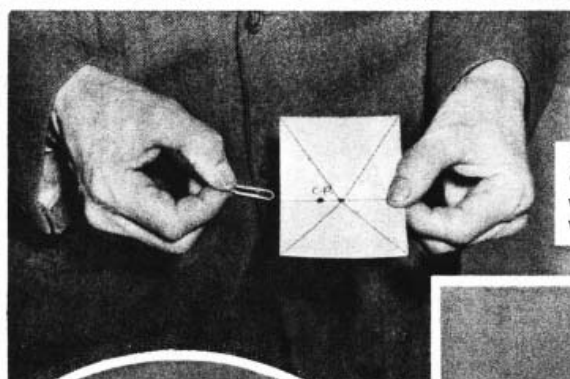
**2** Mark center with dot.



**3** Bend card at slight angle across center line. To demonstrate that dot is at exact center, balance card on pencil.



**4** Now, when card is dropped straight down, it falls flat. This is because the center of air lift is at center of weight (dot), and is pushing down. If you drop card with forward motion, it spins to floor, because "center of air lift" has moved up forward.



**5** (Left) Now fasten the paper clip to leading edge at center line. Adjust the clip so that dot, marked  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the way back from the front edge, will show new center of weight. Test accuracy by balancing on pencil at new dot.



**6** Your flying machine is ready to take off. Hold it as shown here. Then drop, with slight forward motion.



**7** She will fly under control clear across the room. Steady flight is obtained by having center of lift just back of center of weight.

# Map of the Fort Worth-Dallas Area

Grapevine is marked with a ★ symbol.

Whatever you are looking for, you will find it in Grapevine, TX. Grapevine Mills Mall, Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World, and the Grapevine Historic District offer everything from art and antiques to trendy clothing and sporting goods. Enjoy award-winning festivals throughout the year, including Main Street Days (May) and GrapeFest (September). Experience the Grapevine Vintage Railroad, several wineries and tasting rooms, 81 holes of golf, lake activities and more. Additionally, Grapevine is centrally located to all Dallas/Fort Worth area attractions.

Over 200 restaurants offer everything from family-owned to national favorites to tea rooms. Whether you're hungry for barbeque or Italian, fast food or a five-course meal, you'll find a menu to match your appetite.

For more information, call 1-800-457-6338 or log on to [www.GrapevineTexasUSA.com](http://www.GrapevineTexasUSA.com).





# 2008 Second Air Division Association Convention 17-19 October 2008 • Grapevine, Texas

BY CHUCK WALKER (445TH)

At the 2007 2ADA convention in Grand Rapids, the Dallas/Fort Worth area was suggested as the site for our 2008 convention. We have no idea who actually made the suggestion, but those of us living in the area think it is an excellent one, and we have made a great start.

About ten minutes from the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport, there is a relatively new venue, the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center. It is probably one of the three finest convention/reunion venues in the country. We hesitated to even approach them because of our dwindling attendance, and our fear that it would be out of our price range. Nothing ventured, nothing gained, so approach we did. We found them to be very receptive, anxious to help a veterans group, and very competitive price-wise. They also realize we are “elderly,” so they offered wheelchairs, motorized scooters and even Segways – (that should prove interesting) – available for a minimal fee.

There are free Jitneys every hour to the Grapevine Mall – one of the largest in the country, to Historic Downtown Grapevine and to a huge Bass Pro Shop for the “outdoor man” (woman, too). Of course you will need an entire day to just “DO” the hotel itself.

The complex is actually located on Lake Grapevine and all rooms face either the lake or a beautiful atrium. Explore for yourself at their Internet site, [www.gaylordhotels.com](http://www.gaylordhotels.com). On the left side there is a dropdown – click on TEXAS, or scroll down to pictures and click on TX. On the right side is an e-mail contact also.

We think you will be as excited as we are with the location, amenities, lobbies, pools, and much more! Your Dallas friends are busy exploring new ideas and surprises to make your stay memorable.

We do, however, need your help! If there is even the remotest chance that you will be coming to our 61st convention, please send in your reservation NOW! NOW! NOW! It is easier to cancel a reservation than to make one at a later date. There are other conventions at the same time as ours and they are usually booked to capacity. Make a deposit with Evelyn Cohen (*address under Directory on page 2*) now.

We are not getting any younger these days, and travel can become difficult. Let's make this one a really special one!

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Here's some additional information on the Grapevine area:

**General** – Prior to settlement in 1850, this well-watered location on the blackland prairie was the site of important negotiations between Indians and Gen. Sam Houston, which led to the signing of the Treaty of Birds Fort that opened this North Texas settlement. It was named for the wild mustang grapes that grew throughout the area. The population was 1,813 in 1950 — today it is 47,950, growth that parallels that of most Metroplex cities, and the location of the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport has stimulated growth.

Much of Main Street is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. A walking map tour of the historic renovated downtown area is available at the Convention and Visitors Bureau in the re-created Wallis Hotel building at One Liberty Park Plaza. The original 1891 hotel was near the railroad depot; closed in 1926, the building was demolished in the 1930s.

Three championship public golf courses are open daily. The city's annual GrapeFest celebration is held the second weekend in September, and in 2003 it was selected as one of the “Top 100”

events in North America by the American Bus Association. Shoppers find bargains galore at the Grapevine Mills Mall and the Bass Pro Shops, both just off Texas 121 north of Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport — one of the world's largest airports with more than 2,300 scheduled domestic and international flights daily. Group tours of the airport are available through the D/FW Airport Public Relations Office. Some other points of interest:

**Grapevine Historical Museum** – Housed in restored railroad depot. Built in 1901, the depot served the city as a railroad station until abandoned by the railroad and moved off site in 1973. The Grapevine Heritage Foundation purchased the land and moved the depot back. Museum displays, local and pioneer history exhibits.

**Grapevine Opry** – Showcase of country/Western entertainment in historic Palace Theatre. There's a foot-stompin', hand-clappin' family-style show every Saturday night featuring local, regional, and national artists.

**Grapevine Railroad District** – Original site of Cotton Belt Railroad depot and cotton docks. Three-acre site is being developed as an artists' center housing artisans who demonstrate and teach their craft. Gifts and custom orders available.

**Grapevine Vintage Railroad** – Beautifully restored steam excursion train makes round-trips between Grapevine and Fort Worth's Stockyards. While in Fort Worth, the train makes a cross-city excursion to the city's south side along a 10-mile course to Eighth Avenue. Turn-around in Grapevine is on a 1927 Santa Fe Railroad turntable.

**Heritage Walking Tour** – A walking map tour provides information on Grapevine's historic homes and buildings. Much of Main Street is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Wineries & Tasting Rooms** – Six vineyards and wineries have locations in Grapevine:

*Cross Timbers Winery* is located on a historic farmstead that once belonged to the town's first physician. Many artifacts of early farm life are on display.

*Delaney Winery & Vineyards* is a landmark along the freeway where a 10-acre vineyard produces several varieties of grapes. The winery architecture reflects a classic French-inspired style from the 18th century. The focal point of the facility is the huge Grand Barrel Room with soaring vaulted ceilings, lined with vintage French oak tubs, vats, and barrels.

*Homestead Winery & Tasting Room* is in a historic home on Worth Street and provides its customers with personal attention that makes them feel right at home.

*La Bodega Winery & Tasting Room*, located in the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport, features a wide variety of Texas wine.

*La Buena Vida Vineyard*, in the heart of Grapevine's Historic District, features a demonstration vineyard and a variety of wines.

*Su Vino Winery* offers visitors the chance to enjoy fine wine or to make their own wines and participate in the six-week process that begins with adding the nuances of flavor to the juice through bottling, corking and labeling.

The city's annual GrapeFest in September pays homage to the fruit of the city's namesake.

**Visitor Center** – Located in the historic 1901 Cotton Belt Depot, the visitor center operated by the Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau can provide additional information on events, accommodations, and other visitor information. Stop by the center at 705 South Main Street or call 817-410-8136. ■



## WENDLING 392nd BY OAK MACKEY

**N**ow hear this! The next convention of the Second Air Division Association will be held October 16-20, 2008 at the Gaylord Texan Resort Hotel in Dallas, Texas, located on a peninsula jutting into Lake Grapevine just a few minutes north of the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. For complete information and a virtual tour of the hotel, go to [www.gaylordhotels.com](http://www.gaylordhotels.com). (As I write this in November 2007, the info above is preliminary; accuracy is not guaranteed.)

The oldest 2ADA *Journal* in my collection of *Journals* happens to be dated June of 1977, only it wasn't called the "Journal" then; it was the "NEWS LETTER" with just 16 pages. The front page related a visit to the Second Air Division Memorial Library by Mrs. Anne Armstrong, U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain. She was accompanied by Tom Eaton, Chairman of the Memorial Trust Board of Governors; Lady Mayhew; Mark Cheyne; David Gurney (the latter three were members of the Board of Governors); and Raymond Fro-

stick, Lord Mayor of Norwich. Mrs. Armstrong commented on the special relationship that exists between Britain and the United States. Principal Assistant Librarian Joan Benms escorted the entire group on a tour of the Library, including the Roll of Honor.

The 2ADA president in 1977 was Earl Zimmerman (what comes around, goes around). J.D. Long was executive vice president; Evelyn Cohen was VP of membership; Bill Robertie was News Letter VP; Dean Moyer was treasurer; and Mrs. Milton Veynar was secretary. Jordan Uttal was 2ADA representative to the Memorial Trust Board of Governors. The 392nd BG VP was Col. Robert E. Vickers, Jr. (Ret.)

The Second Air Division Association convention that year was in July at the Playboy Club in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Do you remember that one?

In 1977 the annual dues were \$5.00. Well, like everything else, the price of the annual dues has increased over the past thirty years; however, dues have held steady at \$20.00 for the past five years. At the recent Executive Committee meeting in Grand Rapids there was considerable debate on whether to raise the dues to \$25.00. With the total membership at 3,000 and dues at \$20.00, total income is \$60,000. It costs \$11,000 for each issue of the *Journal*, or \$44,000 for four issues. That leaves just \$16,000 for all other expenses. In order

to keep the dues at \$20.00, the Executive Committee decided to ask for voluntary contributions of at least \$5.00 for the *Journal*, and there is a line for that purpose on the last dues notice you received from Evelyn Cohen. The *Journal* is the life blood of the 2ADA, and four issues a year are deemed essential. Please be generous with your voluntary contribution.

This paragraph is of special interest to 392nd BG Memorial Association members. You may recall reading about the Wendling Memorial Trust Fund Drive in the August 2007 392nd BGMA NEWS. The purpose of the fund drive was to increase the amount of the Memorial Trust Fund to ensure ample income to pay for the maintenance of the 392nd BG memorial grounds into the foreseeable future. Carroll Cheek made an initial challenge donation of \$10,000 to be matched by donations from members of the 392nd Memorial Association. In a letter dated November 24, 2007, Treasurer Bill McCutcheon proudly announced that donations, including Cheek's, totaled \$23,569.25. Bill was also careful to state that the fund drive was NOT considered closed, and further donations are certainly welcome. Bill's address is 20620 Milton Court, Brookfield, WI 53045. Make checks payable to 392nd BG Memorial Association.

Best wishes to you all in this New Year of 2008!! ■

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## A Navigator Who Could Not Find His Way to the Officers Club

REPRINTED FROM "CROSSHAIRS," SEPTEMBER 1993

**E**lmer N. Horey was on his seventh combat mission when his B-24 was shot down on 11 April 1944. His first four missions were flown as the right waist gunner and his last three as navigator, all as part of the 576th Bomb Squadron of the 392nd Bomb Group, flying out of Wendling, England (Station 118). How did he become crew navigator?

Apparently, from his records it was learned that Sgt. Horey had previously been "within weeks" of graduating from the Army Air Force navigator's school at Hondo in Texas. Horey says his air work was good but something went wrong with his applying an angular value to a celestial calculation during a written examination and he was washed out. Reclassified as a gunner, he was immediately on his way

to join a B-24 crew that was forming up.

After his fourth mission as a gunner he was given a navigator check ride. When he attempted to turn in the navigator's tools and equipment he had checked out for the ride, he was told to keep it all; that he would from then on fly as a navigator.

Not only did the 392nd have an acute shortage of navigators, but the navigator on his crew had been sent off to Pathfinder Crew school and Horey was told that he was his crew's replacement navigator. Also, somewhere along the line he was told that he would be advanced in rank, most likely to a flying officer's rank of flight officer or 2nd Lt.

Sgt. Horey never saw any of the officers of his crew after they were shot down. The last time he saw his bombardier was

just before bailout when Lt. Gragg was screaming for help in getting out of the front turret. Sgt. Horey opened the turret door for him and followed him in bailing out over the nose wheel.

Horey remained a POW; never heard anything more about being advanced in rank; and was never awarded a Purple Heart after breaking an ankle when he hit the ground. His mother had been given his earned Air Medal awarded posthumously and did not learn of his being a freed POW until Elmer called her from Buffalo on his way home.

Sgt. Elmer N. Horey can claim the unique distinction of having served in the 8th Air Force as an enlisted navigator! Are there any others who can make that claim? ■



HARDWICK

# Open Letter to the 93rd

BY CHARLES SILL

I have recently been appointed as the Group VP for the 93rd, replacing John Lee who is now the Executive Vice President of the 2ADA. I was a radar observer ("Micky") in the 409th and 329th Squadrons in 1944-45. I returned to the States in June 1945 with a recommendation for pilot training. After completion of that training, I was assigned to Pacific Division, Air Transport Command (MATS after 1948). I flew C-54s across the Pacific and in the Berlin Airlift. I flew the B-29 in the Korean War and then KC-97s in SAC. I left the Air Force in 1956 to fly for Pan American until I reached the age 60 pilot retirement age. I continued to fly corporate aircraft until 1994. I have been a member of the 2ADA since 1994 and have attended several of the conventions.

The 93rd BG had a great reunion in Minneapolis, 27-30 September 2007, with 136 in attendance including 26 veterans. It was superbly organized by our ground crew of second-generation members. Our British guests especially enjoyed the Mall of America, due to the favorable (for them)

exchange rate plus U.S. prices that are generally lower than those in the U.K.

I was privileged to be in Norwich in early November for the Annual General Meeting of the Memorial Trust Governors. Thirteen people, including four veterans, were there. We attended Remembrance Day ceremonies at City Hall and the Norwich Cathedral on 11 November; the meeting on 12 November; the Memorial Trust biennial lecture by Lord Hurd, a former Foreign Secretary, on the 14th; and a special remembrance service in the American Chapel at St. Paul's Cathedral on the 15th. Several other activities, including visits to the bases and watching the start of a fox hunt, were offered to us.

After observing the General Meeting, listening to the reports, and conversing with several of the Governors I had not previously met, I can assure all of you that the Trust is in competent, caring hands. I am sure that Earl Zimmerman, Chuck Walker, and John Lee will report more completely on the meeting. ■

## David Tallichet dies

World War Two bomber pilot and warbird legend, David Tallichet, died on October 31, aged 84. David flew with the 350th Bombardment Squadron, 100th Bomb Group, from Thorpe Abbots, Norfolk, carrying out 23 combat missions at the controls of a B-17 Flying Fortress.

After the war, he returned to the U.S. and became a very successful businessman and founded the Specialty Restaurant Corporation, which featured a 100-strong chain of aviation-themed eateries.

David was a leading light in the fledgling warbird movement, setting up the Military Aircraft Restoration Company and helping to recover, restore, and fly many precious machines, including the B-24 Liberator. He remained current on the Flying Fortress and had flown a B-17G '124485' (N3703G) in 2007. ■

## Folded Wings

### 44th BG

Jesse M. Burton  
Lyle B. Latimer  
James C. McAtee  
Loy L. Neeper

### 93rd BG

George Fox, Jr.  
Rollin C. Reineck (HQ)  
Lawrence A. Reynolds

### 389th BG

Leonard H. Block  
Victor F. Nemetz  
Walter E. Rosson  
Gilbert B. Tilghman  
Lawrence A. Wojcik

### 392nd BG

Guy D. Carmine  
James R. Maris  
Lorn W. Matelski  
Bernard Paroly

### 445th BG

Andrew E. Haley  
Raymond W. Ray  
Charles J. Scheer

### 446th BG

Edward Avena  
Eugene B. Darr  
J.A. Risley

### 448th BG

Edward A. Butler  
Ernest J. Delia  
Boyd L. Hatzell  
Richard M. Kennedy  
Bert J. LaPoint  
Larrel C. Scott  
John Shia  
Donald Zeldin

### 453rd BG

Carl J. Kinell  
Winford R. Pace  
Michael Pastelak  
Norman C. Raeber

Walter S. Rash, Sr.  
Clifford B. Rhodes  
Earl Thorsen  
Col. N.D. Thurman

### 458th BG

Harold E. Armstrong  
Stanley J. Lentowicz  
Doyle M. Matz

### 466th BG

Arthur J. Dyson  
John H. Nacey  
John R. Roche

### 467th BG

John D. Goggin  
G.G. Gregory  
George W. Reed

### 489th BG

John C. Leo

### 491st BG

John Fulmer

# Horsing Around in Old London Town

BY T.W. JENKINS • REPRINTED FROM "THIS ENGLAND," WINTER 2007

At the end of the 19th century, it has been calculated that there were 300,000 horses in London. When you consider that more than 10,000 cabs were plying for business, together with all the omnibuses, milk-carts, coal-carts, grocery carts, the cavalry and all the Queen's horses — it is easy to see how London was a real horse city.

Amongst the horse-drawn trade carts, one industry was pre-eminent, the breweries. London has had a reputation for enjoying good beer since early times. In Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1387-92) the pilgrims to the tomb of St. Thomas a Becket start their journey from a Southwark tavern called The Tabard, where they had lodged and, indeed, it is the landlord Harry Bailey who proposed they tell tales to pass the time while on their pilgrimage. In the *Tales* there is reference to the drinking habits of some of the pilgrims: the Miller, for example, "far-drunken was all pale," and the Cook, "wel koude he knowe a draughte of London ale."

In the early 14th century there were 354 taverns and an incredible 1,334 small breweries in London. By the 16th century the problems of drunkenness were so acute that 200 breweries were closed down. Thomas Brown (1663-1704), the English satirist, said that judging by the number of taverns and ale houses, anyone coming to the capital "would imagine that Bacchus is the only God worshipped there," and Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-94) said "a man is never happy in the present unless drunk." So, it is easy to see why the brewery business flourished. While the upper classes drank wine, the less affluent drank ale and beer, and as London increased in size, there were many more of the latter who needed to be catered for.

Brewing was a major industry: Barclay and Perkins had a 10-acre site where, from four o'clock in the morning, they dispatched their beer and ale on 200 drays, long strong carts for heavy goods, each one pulled by two huge horses. Other great names in brewing — Whitbread, Charrington, Courage, Truman Hanbury Buxton, and Youngs — were equally productive.

One of the sights of London was the brewers' dray horses, and traditionally they were the heavy breeds — Shire, Suffolk Punch, Clydesdale or Percheron. Usually the Shire was the choice of horse, for it had the weight and muscle to pull tons of beer and ale around the city for anything up to a twelve-hour day.

Henry Young, a boss at Young's famous Ram Brewery in Wandsworth, said, "We



**Sculpted by Shirley Pace, the statue of Jacob the Shire horse, in Southwark, London, commemorates the work of the dray horses.**

have no prejudice against the motor, but we have prejudice in favour of the horse." Beers and ale were once delivered three times daily by horse-drawn drays to the 47 Young's taverns in London. Now all that has ended, and in 2006 Young's stopped using their famous and well-loved Shire horses. They had been the last brewery to do so.

Not only have all the horses gone, but so have many of the breweries, especially those situated along the River Thames in Southwark. They have been replaced

by office blocks and luxury flats, and in October 1987, hovering above one such development was a helicopter and slung beneath it was a gigantic bronze horse. It was Jacob, a beautiful Shire horse sculpted by Shirley Pace.

On the pedestal on which he stands is a plaque, on which is written:

*The famous Courage dray horses were stabled on this site from the early 19th century and delivered beer around London from the brewery on Horsley Down Lane by Tower Bridge. In the 16th century the area became known as Horse-lydown, which derives from Horse-lie-down, a description of working horses resting before crossing London Bridge into the City of London.*

The Shire horses were chosen for their muscle and manners; they were gentle giants. It is a shame we can no longer see them so regularly in the streets of London, but every year in November, Shire horses pull the carriage of the newly-chosen Mayor at the Lord Mayor's Show. They are also a traditional sight at agricultural shows. No matter where they are seen, they always arouse affection and applause in the crowd.

*Ed. Note: There is an old English proverb that says, "You can head a horse to drink, but you can't make him water." 8th AF airmen did both in Old London Town. ■*

## Wartime Romance

COURTESY OF 8TH AF BADGER NEWS

An elderly Italian man who lived on the outskirts of Monte Casino went to the local church for confession and said to the priest, "Father, during the war a beautiful woman came to my door and asked me to hide her from the enemy. So I hid her in my attic."

The priest replied, "That was a wonderful thing you did, my son! But you have no need to confess that."

"It's worse than that, Father. She repaid me with sexual favors."

To which the priest replied, "By doing that you were both in great danger. However, two people under those circumstances can be tempted to act that way. But if you are truly sorry for your actions, you are indeed forgiven."

"Oh, thank you, Father. That is a great load off my mind. But I do have one more question."

"And what is that," asked the priest.

"Should I tell her the war is over?"



# Patricia's enduring mission

BY ANGI KENNEDY • REPRINTED FROM EDP SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2007

The wind rattled the doors of the empty buildings, as Patricia Everson stood silently staring down the distance of the airstrip. Where the B-24 Liberators of the USAAF had once thundered to their take-offs, now tufts of grass and weeds were insolently breaking a way through. Natural decay was slowly but surely reclaiming this deserted airbase at Seething, south-east of Norwich.

The village teenager had gone there in search of wild cowslips, but instead found herself pledging a promise that, many years later, would set her on a remarkable, life-changing mission.

Patricia remembers that April day clearly. "Everything was so charged up with what had happened there. There and then, I swore that I would never forget the men who had been based there."

Life and the years rolled on. Soon there would be little clue to the airbase's story left to catch the eye of anyone passing through Seething. Only the older people of the communities around the former base would share the frisson of excitement whenever a trans-Atlantic accent was heard from a rare American visitor to the villages.

## SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY:

Patricia as a young girl; and at right, a recent photo taken at the 448th Bomb Group's Seething control tower.



*For Patricia Everson, remembrance isn't something that only happens every November; it is part of every single day. She tells how a whispered promise on a deserted 448th BG Norfolk airbase helped shape her life.*

It was the early 1980s, and moves were afoot to create a memorial in the village and at the airfield to the 400-plus men based at Seething who had lost their lives in the Second World War. Patricia Everson, by then in her mid-40s, offered her help, raising funds for the event at which some of the former airmen and their families would be present.

For her, this would be a chance to fulfill a secret longing that had been burning away at her since childhood.

Patricia was a five-year-old schoolgirl when war was declared. She was one of the generation who can even now summon up the smell of the claustrophobic gas mask and the dank, stale air of the shelter in the garden.

She grew up in days of rationing, of course; of cod liver oil and malt supplements for undernourished youngsters; of sanctioned days off when she and her fellow schoolchildren would pick soft fruit, rose hips to be made into syrup, acorns to feed the pigs, and to collect aluminum foil and metal scrap to help the war effort.

Her father, Fred Knights, had joined up as a driver with the RAF. Patricia and her young brother, Reggie, did their best to help their mother, Jean, grow vegetables for

their meals and collect water from the well.

Although she has no memory of hunger in those days of hardship, Patricia certainly recalls a sense of drabness. But that was to change in 1943. America had entered the war, and East Anglia was ideally placed to become its "airbase." Airstrips were being carved into the landscape, accompanied by mess halls, billets and control towers.

A mile outside the little village of Seething, the 58th Station Complement Squadron turned acre after acre of open field into a new airbase, ready for the arrival of the aircraft and flight crews of the 448th Bomb Group of the USAAF.

"I was nine years old when they came," Patricia said. "Suddenly we went from the 300 to 400 people in the village to having 3,000 young Americans down the road with these huge four-engined B-24 Liberator bombers.

"We had been at war for quite a few years by then and, to some extent, we were still living under that sort of Victorian thing of us children being seen and not heard.

"But now the Americans treated us like equals, and they really endeared themselves to us children, happy to spend a lot of time talking to us. They were so friend-

*(continued on next page)*



**PATRICIA** (continued from page 23)

ly to everyone . . . and they made quite an impression on the older girls too!

"They would cycle through the villages, and because all the road signs had been removed to confuse the enemy, they were forever asking where the nearest pub was and if we had got a big sister at home.

"You must remember, many of them were only young boys themselves. Their average age was 19 — anyone in their mid-20s was called the old man of the crew!"

Many were astonished by the tough conditions that the English had been living in. "They wrote begging letters home, asking for things to give to the children," said Patricia. "They were extremely generous. When they heard that the Jenny Lind Children's Hospital was running short of supplies, they took things there, and they had a choir that would go singing round the wards.

"One of the Americans said he never realised how bad things had been here. He had an orange in his pocket and decided he would give it to the first child he came across. He gave it to this little boy who'd never seen one before, and he bit into it — he didn't know you had to peel it first.

"Most of the children wanted chewing gum, they called them 'the gum chummers,' but I loved the comic strips out of their newspapers the most."

The highpoint was the Thanksgiving and Christmas parties though, when the children of the surrounding villages, homes and evacuees were invited to the base. "For the Thanksgiving party in 1943, they came down to the school in their trucks and I can remember even now the excitement of being lifted over that tailboard.

"When we got there it was the first time I had heard live music outside church, and the food was so different to ours — even the gravy was a different colour.

"I wanted to ask a lot of questions because I didn't know much about America. But I was seated at a long table with all the young Americans and they were firing questions at me. Suddenly I was too shy to ask anything and I just said yes and no and thank you."

The regret at this missed chance stayed with Patricia, and resurfaced all those years later in 1984 as the preparations took shape for the memorial service. This time, she told herself, she would have the courage to talk to the Americans about their lives.

"I was so looking forward to it," she said. "But two and a half weeks before the service, my brother and mother were killed outright in a car crash at Kirkstead."

For the tight-knit family, who had lived just doors apart at Seething, it was a terrible blow, and a shock for the community too which had been so focused on the memorial that it was about to see put in place for the U.S. airmen of four decades earlier.

"I went to the service, but I wasn't emotionally able to do what I wanted to," said Patricia. "After the Americans had gone home, I really felt I had failed myself for a second time.

"So I managed to get the names of the people in America who had sent contributions for the memorial. I wanted to write to them to ask them about their experiences.

"There was no one more badly equipped than myself. I couldn't type or write letters, but there was a drive inside me pushing me to carry on.

"First in my letters I had to clear the air so that they knew I wasn't an illegitimate child or an ex-girlfriend trying to track them down. Sometimes I would send out fifty letters and not get back a reply.

"Some of the men just weren't ready to look back. But the first time I got a letter with some black and white photos of when that man was at the base, I thought 'Yes, I can do this.'"

And gradually the letters began to arrive through the post, some just a few notes or names, others pouring out remarkable wartime memories.

Today she has some fifty albums of their writings and hundreds of photographs, from official poses to relaxed off-duty shots of the Americans on and around the base.

Over the past twenty years, Patricia has gradually pieced together the jigsaw of names, numbers, memories and missions to build a comprehensive picture of life at Seething airbase from November 1943 to June 1945, when the Americans left. And in the process she has brought about reunions of old crewmates, friends, colleagues and, of course, people from the villages around the base.

"I was able to reunite a whole crew of ten and to put them in touch with the young boy from the village whom they sort of adopted while they were here."

For her too there have been many revelations. Although she lived through the war, she saw it with a child's eyes; it was not until many years later that she was able to comprehend the true toll on the men who were based at Seething.

"As a child it was exciting. It is only when you are older that you realise how many people had died. There was one particular night when we lost two whole

crews, twenty men, including one man who had been shot down just two days earlier and saved by the air-sea rescue.

"How brave they had to be. They were so young and I am sure a lot of them never thought it would happen to them."

Since hearing from Patricia, many of the old airmen have visited Seething to see the base once more and to pay their respects at the memorials to their fallen colleagues. And she has also gone over to America to take part in the large reunions there as the historian of the 448th Bomb Group collection.

Her husband, Ron, has also played an important part in the Seething airbase story. He was part of a small group that restored the base's near-derelict control tower which is now a "living memorial," home to a collection of memorabilia, donated uniforms and equipment from its wartime days, as well as being a focus for those making their pilgrimage to the airfield.

Opening the latest letter to arrive at Stanmare, her home on The Street at Seething, Patricia never knows what to expect, although more often these days they are the requests of grandchildren and great-grandchildren eager to discover information about their elderly or late relatives' wartime experiences.

"Some of the families say they didn't even know he was in the forces in the war," she said. "I think that quite a lot of the men buried it inside themselves when they returned home. Because so many of them were still quite young, a lot had to go back to education and then get themselves a job so that they could start paying for their house and to get their children through their education.

"When they stand on the runway and think of their friends who didn't make it, yes, it is very emotional," she said.

"I have worked hard to get as many records as I can, but I can't get the personal details unless the men tell me them. But they do talk to me because although I was a child then, I knew what it was like for them in some ways.

"Sometimes their families will stand there with their mouths open because they have never heard him tell these stories before. They say, 'Why didn't you ever say anything?' and the men say, 'You never asked.'"

"It's hard now because so many of them have become personal friends and we are losing them fast," she added, "but I feel I was able to share their golden years with them and put them in touch with each other when they hadn't been in contact since they finished their missions." ■

# KETTERINGHAM HALL DIVISION



BY JIM REEVES

The daily propaganda broadcast was received in England in late afternoon or early night. The broadcast came at a time that most military personnel could listen. While I was stationed at Horsham St. Faith before moving to Ketteringham Hall, Axis Sally made the following broadcast:

*"Attention to the personnel of Horsham St. Faith aerodrome . . . The clock on the west wall in your dining hall is three minutes slow . . . please correct your clock."* The clock was checked immediately and found to be three minutes slow. This made us wonder if we had spies among us.

The following article was written by Dale P. Harper and was originally published in the November 1995 issue of *World War II* magazine:

## "AXIS SALLY" - Remember Her?

She was named Mildred Elizabeth Sisk when she was born in Portland, Maine, on November 29, 1900. Her parents, Vincent Sisk and Mae Hewitson Sisk, were divorced in 1907 and a few years later Mildred's mother married a dentist, Dr. Robert Bruce Gillars. From that time on the child was known as Mildred Gillars.

The family moved around a great deal during her early years, but Mildred Gillars eventually graduated from high school in Conneaut, Ohio, in 1917. Then it was on to Ohio Wesleyan University in the small town of Delaware, where, hoping to pursue a stage career, she majored in dramatic arts. Gillars did well in speech, languages and dramatics but did not graduate because of her failure to meet all university requirements and standards.

According to her half sister, Gillars worked at a variety of jobs after leaving college — clerk, salesgirl, cashier and waitress — all to further her ambition to become an actress. In 1929 she went to Europe with her mother and spent six months studying in France before returning to the United States.

Eventually Gillars went to New York, where she worked in stock companies, musical comedies and vaudeville, but never made enough impact to gain any real recognition. In 1933 she returned to Europe and worked in France as a governess and salesgirl. She moved to Germany in 1935 and became an English instructor at the Berlitz School of Languages in Berlin. English teachers were paid less than Russian instructors — a possible reason for her decision to accept employment by Radio Berlin as an announcer and actress. This was a job much more to her liking, and she stayed with it until the defeat of Nazi Germany in May 1945. Gillars' propaganda program was known as "Home Sweet Home" and usually aired sometime between 8 p.m. and 2 a.m. daily. Although she referred to herself as "Midge at the Mike," GIs dubbed her Axis Sally. Her broadcasts were heard all over Europe, the Mediterranean, North Africa and the United States from December 11, 1941, thorough May 6, 1945. Although most of her programs were broadcast from Berlin, some were aired from Chartres and Paris in France and from Hilversum in the Netherlands.

Once the war was over, her broadcasts would come back to haunt her. At a listening post operated by the Federal Communications Commission in Silver Hill, Md., all her programs had been monitored and recorded and would provide the prosecution with damaging evidence at her trial. The prosecution charged that her broadcasts were sugarcoated propaganda pills aimed at convincing U.S. soldiers that they were fighting on the wrong side.

Most GIs agreed that Gillars had a sultry, sexy voice that came over the radio loud and clear. Like her counterpart in the Pacific, Tokyo Rose, she liked to tease and taunt the soldiers about their wives and sweethearts back in the States. "Hi fellows," she would say. "I'm afraid you're yearning plenty for someone else. But I just wonder if she isn't running around with the 4-Fs way back home."

She would get the names, serial numbers and hometowns of captured and wounded GIs and voice concern about what would happen to them, in broadcasts that could be heard in the United States. "Well, I suppose he'll get along all right," she would say. "The doctors don't seem... I don't know... only time will tell, you see." At sign-off time she would tease her listeners some more, telling them, "I've got a heavy date waiting for me."

Perhaps Sally's most famous broadcast, and the one that would eventually get her

convicted of treason, was a play titled *Vision of Invasion* that went out over the airwaves on May 11, 1944. It was beamed to American troops in England awaiting the D-Day invasion of Normandy, as well as to the home folks in America. Gillars played the role of an American mother who dreamed that her soldier son, a member of the invasion forces, died aboard a burning ship as it attempted to cross the English Channel. The play had a realistic quality to it, sound effects simulating the moans and cries of the wounded as they were raked with gunfire from the beaches. Over the battle action sound effects, an announcer's voice intoned, "The D of D-Day stands for doom... disaster... death... defeat... Dunkerque or Dieppe." Adelbert Houben, a high official of the German Broadcasting Service, would testify at Axis Sally's trial that her broadcast was intended to prevent the invasion by frightening the Americans with grisly forecasts of staggering casualties.

After the defeat of Germany, Gillars was not immediately apprehended but blended into the throngs of displaced persons in occupied Germany seeking assistance from the Western Allies in obtaining food, shelter, medical treatment, location of relatives and friends, and possible employment. She spent three weeks in an American hospital in 1946, and then was taken to an internment camp in Wansel, Germany. About Christmastime 1946, when she was granted amnesty and released, she obtained a pass to live in the French Zone of Berlin. Later, when she traveled to Frankfurt to get her pass renewed, she was arrested by the Army and kept there for more than a year. At the end of that detention she was flown to the United States and incarcerated in the Washington D.C. District Jail on August 21, 1948. She was held there without bond. Later she was charged with 10 counts of treason (eventually reduced to 8 to speed up the trial) by a federal grand jury. Her trial began on January 25, 1949, in the district court of the nation's capital, with Judge Edward M. Curran presiding. The chief prosecutor was John M. Kelley, Jr., and Gillars' attorney was James J. Laughlin.

Prosecutor Kelley pressed home some important points right from the start. First was the fact that after being hired by Radio Berlin she had signed an oath of allegiance to Hitler's Germany. He also put witnesses on the stand who testified that Gillars had posed as a worker for the International Red Cross and persuaded captured American soldiers to record messages to

*(continued on next page)*

## AXIS SALLY (continued from page 25)

their families and relatives in order to garner a large listening audience in the United States. By the time she finished weaving propaganda into the broadcasts, the POW's messages to their loved ones were not exactly messages of comfort.

Gilbert Lee Hansford of Cincinnati, a veteran of the 29th Infantry Division who lost a leg in the Normandy invasion, said Gillars visited him in a Paris hospital in August 1944. "She walked up with two 'German officers,'" Hansford said, and she stated that she was working with the International Red Cross. She then told a group of wounded captives, "Hello, boys, I'm here to make recordings so your folks will know you are still alive."

Hansford said he and others talked into a microphone, recording messages for broadcast to their families at home. A courtroom playback of the messages as picked up by the American monitoring stations showed that Nazi propaganda had been inserted between the GIs' messages. One insertion by Gillars said, "It's a disgrace to the American public that they don't wake to the fact of what Franklin D. Roosevelt is doing to the Gentiles of your country and my country."

On February 10, 1949 an American para-

trooper from New York, 36 year old Michael Evanick, told the jury he was captured on D-Day, June 6, 1944 after parachuting behind German lines in Normandy. Pointing his finger, he identified Gillars as the woman who interviewed him in a German prisoner-of-war camp near Paris on July 15, 1944.

"I'd been listening to her broadcasts through Africa, Sicily and Italy and I told her I recognized her voice," Evanick remembered. "She said, 'I guess you know me as Axis Sally,' and I told her we had a name for her." The witness said Gillars gave him a drink of cognac and a cigarette and told him to make himself comfortable in a chair. After a few drinks, he said, she sent for a microphone and began the interview, asking him if he did not feel good to be out of the fighting.

"No, ma'am," Evanick said he replied. "I feel 100 percent better in the front lines where I get enough to eat." At that, he said, Gillars angrily knocked the microphone over, but regained her composure and offered him another drink.

On February 19, Eugene McCarthy, a 25-year-old ex-GI from Chicago, was called to answer a single question. Defense attorney Laughlin asked him if Gillars had posed as a Red Cross worker when she came to make recorded interviews with American POWs at Stalag 2-B in Germany. The soldier stated that she did not. Then in a dramatic outburst, shouting over the defense counsel's angry protest, the witness told the jury: "She threatened us as she left — that American citizen, that woman right there. She told us we were the most ungrateful Americans she had ever met and we would regret this."

Following McCarthy to the witness stand were veterans John T. Lynskey of Pittsburgh and Paul G. Kestel of Detroit. Both testified that when Gillars visited them in a Paris hospital she identified herself as a Red Cross worker.

Defense counsel Laughlin argued that treason must be something more than the spoken word: "Things have come to a pretty pass if a person cannot make an anti-Semitic speech without being charged with treason. Being against President Roosevelt could not be treason. There are two schools of thought about President Roosevelt. One holds he was a patriot and martyr. The other holds that he was the greatest rogue in all history, the greatest fraud, and the greatest imposter that ever lived."

Laughlin also tried to point out to the court the great influence that Max Otto Koischwitz had on Gillars. Koischwitz was a former professor at Hunter College in

New York who became romantically involved with Gillars when she was one of his students. She had attended Hunter briefly while trying to pursue a stage career before finally abandoning the effort and going back to Europe in 1933. German-born Koischwitz eventually returned to Germany, renounced his U.S. citizenship, and became an official in the Nazi radio service in charge of propaganda broadcasts. He thus was Mildred's superior.

In her trips to the witness stand, Gillars was usually tearful. She said Koischwitz's Svengali-like influence over her had led her to make broadcasts for Hitler. She and the professor had lived together in Berlin, she said, and she burst into tears when informed that he had died.

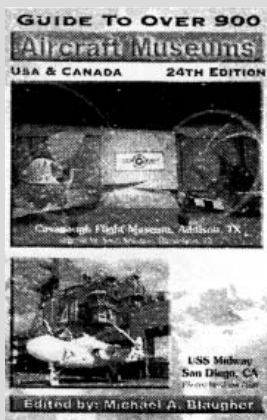
In his final summation before the jury, prosecutor Kelley told them Gillars was a traitor who broadcast rotten propaganda for wartime Germany and got a sadistic joy out of it, especially those broadcasts in which she described in harrowing detail the agonies of wounded American soldiers before they died. "She sold out to them," he said. "She thought she was on the winning side and all she cared out was her own selfish fame."

The trial ended on March 8, 1949 after six hectic weeks. The next day Judge Curran put the case in the hands of the jury of seven men and five women. After deliberating for 10-1/2 hours, they were unable to reach a verdict and were sequestered in a hotel for the night. They met again the next morning and after 17 hours of further deliberation they acquitted her of seven of the eight counts pressed by the government in its original 10-count indictment. However, they found her guilty on count No. 10, involving the Nazi broadcast of the play *Vision of Invasion*.

On Saturday March 26, Judge Curran pronounced sentence: 10 to 30 years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, eligible for parole after 10 years. Mildred Gillars, alias Axis Sally, was then transported to the Federal Women's Reformatory in Alderson, West Virginia. When she became eligible for parole in 1959, she waived the right, apparently preferring prison to ridicule as a traitor on the outside. Two years later, when she applied for parole, it was granted. At 6:25 a.m. on June 10, 1961 she walked out of the gate of the Alderson prison a free woman.

Gillars taught for a while in a Roman Catholic school for girls in Columbus, Ohio and then returned to her old college, Ohio Wesleyan. She received a bachelor's degree in speech in 1973. Gillars died on June 25, 1988 at the age of 87. ■

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# HALESWORTH 489TH NOTES

BY  
MEL PONTILLO

This article will provide you with information regarding two separate subjects. As has been my practice in the past, I like to keep members apprised of reunion events. So my first part relates to the reunion activities at Branson, Missouri. As you probably know, Branson has developed into a very large and famous entertainment center in this country. A reunion at Branson, therefore, makes for a lively and interesting event.

The second part of my agenda today involves a fellow airman. Because of this column I have had the pleasure and honor of meeting and talking to so many of my fellow airmen from WWII. When space permits, I like to share with readers the combat experiences of our fellow flyers in the 489th Bomb Group. The first-hand accounts of the men who were there and made it happen and their recollections of events relate history and provide testimony to the unique experience of being a member of a flying Liberator combat crew.

## THE BRANSON REUNION

The 2007 reunion of the 489th Bomb Group was held in Branson, Missouri, September 24-27. The reunion was well-organized and well-conducted. Our host and hostess, Richard and Mary Engel, did a magnificent job. This was the second reunion that was arranged by them. The other one was the 2005 reunion held in Little Rock, Arkansas. We of the 489th Bomb Group commend them for their hard work and appreciate their effort. It was a very good reunion. My opinion is that it was a great experience, as everyone in attendance had an enjoyable time.

There were thirty-eight who attended this reunion. The only disappointment was that only ten members of the 489th Bomb Group attended this delightful get-together. The rest of those in attendance were family members, friends, and associate members. The reunion was well-planned and provided more time to visit with old friends, as well as to make new friends. The hotel was great, and the service was excellent. The hospitality room was very popular every day and was open until 11:00 p.m. to provide good snacks and fellowship.

The Branson agenda was a good mix. The first-day events included the morn-

ing viewing of the Yakov Smirnoff show, held at the Yakov Theatre. This was a high quality comedy show and very amusing. The Russian dancers were terrific. In the early evening we attended the Andy Williams show. "Charo" (from Murcia, Spain) was also in the show. That made for a very entertaining event. Upon an early evening return to the hotel, everyone was invited to the hospitality room for a Special Welcome. It was decorated like a New Year's Eve party. The party was enjoyed by all. I did not see anyone leave at 11:00 p.m. This party topped off a very enjoyable day.

The next day was the Showboat Branson Bell luncheon cruise. We had a very good lunch, and saw a very good show that everyone seemed to enjoy. We returned to the hotel at about 3:00 p.m. For the rest of the day, we were free to do as we pleased. The last day, the bus left the hotel at 9:15 a.m. for the "Celebrate America" show. It was a patriotic show and very well presented. We returned to the hotel at 12:15 p.m. The membership was free until the 4:00 p.m. business meeting. Those who did not attend the meeting were free to do as they pleased until the 6:00 p.m. banquet.

The business meeting was short and sweet. It lasted about an hour. There will be minutes of the meeting available. Regarding future meetings of the group, Diane Quinn, daughter of member Jim Gililland, volunteered to arrange for the group reunion in Dallas, TX in 2008. The banquet ended the reunion in its usual grand style. It was very elegant and enjoyed by all who attended.

## PILOT JACK McMULLEN

I would now like to take you back to memory lane, and present to you the pilot of the first 489th crew to complete its tour of duty. It only took him 68 days to complete his 32 combat missions. He was also the pilot who flew to Oxford, England in order to pick up combat-wounded Colonel Leon Vance from the hospital and assist him in flying back to Halesworth. The pilot I am referring to is Jack McMullen.

He enlisted in the new Army Air Forces on June 25, 1941, five months before the war in Europe became World War II. Having attended the Chanute Air Force Base aircraft mechanics school, Jack graduated in December 1941. Then, while stationed at Mitchell Field in New York, he applied for pilot training. His next stop was Maxwell Airfield in Alabama for preflight training. His primary training was in Helena, Arkansas, and his basic training was held in Blytheville (also in Arkansas). Advanced training was at George Field, Illinois.

On December 13, 1942, Jack received his wings. He was then assigned to an anti-sub unit at Grenier Air Field in New Hampshire where he participated in patrolling

the Atlantic in search of Nazi submarines. His patrol craft was the O-47. "O" stood for observation plane. Jack was then transferred to Langley Field, where his patrol vehicle was changed to the MAD B-18. MAD stood for "magnetic air detection" and it was the metal of the U-boat that the MAD B-18 could detect. All in all, concerning his days as an anti-sub patroller, Jack said, "We never did see an enemy naval craft — lots of icebergs, though. We practiced bombing them, but not with depth bombs. It was a very relaxing time. There were times when we thought we saw something, but it would disappear from radar. We had no visual sightings. It was good duty during my first year as a pilot."

In November 1943, the Navy took over all operations involving the patrolling of the American Atlantic coast, and the 20th anti-sub group in Newfoundland was sent back to Mitchell Field. For his next assignment Jack was sent to Casper, Wyoming in order to participate in the founding of the 489th Bomb Group. This was the time when he found himself in the company of Colonels Leon Vance and Ezekiel Napier. This resulted in a trip with the colonels' cadre to Pinecastle, Florida, followed by a stay at Colorado's Peterson Field for B-24 standardization.

When Jack arrived at Wendover, Utah, he became an instructor. He then became a participant in the Dugway Chemical Testing mission which took place in Tooele, Utah. Shortly thereafter, he was assigned to be the pilot of Crew #1 of the newly formed 489th Bomb Group, as there was much more of the Nazi war machine to be destroyed.

As was previously mentioned, Jack was the one who went to Oxford, England, to take Colonel Vance from the hospital back to Halesworth. About this trip, Jack said, "He did a fine job by trimming the rudder trim tab to compensate for his missing foot. This was his [Colonel Vance's] last flight." Colonel Vance landed the plane that day. About his relationship with the Colonel, Jack said, "We were not buddy-buddy. We were friendly, but not close."

Jack's first combat mission was on May 30, 1944. It sent him to Oldenburg, Germany. His last mission was on August 5th, and it took him to Brunswick, Germany. Jack's most difficult mission was his tenth one, which occurred in the vicinity of Paris, France. His #3 engine was hit, and engine #2 would not feather. So, after his bombardier dropped the airship's ordnance, Jack had to peel off and descend. It took four P-38s to escort him to the English Channel. On another occasion, Jack lost an engine due to mechanical trouble, halfway to Munich. He had to return his airship to England without fighter escort. His com-

*(continued on next page)*



BY DICK BUTLER

What was the origin of the 44th Bomb Group "Flying 8 Balls" insignia that appears at the top of this column? It is a unique one, and there are several stories about how it came into existence. It came about as a result of what was happening in the growth of the Army Air Corps starting in 1940. On January 15, 1941, at McDill Field in Florida, the 44th was activated with personnel from the 2nd and 29th Bomb Groups. It was the first group to receive and train in that new B-24 Liberator aircraft. In February 1942, the 44th moved to Barksdale Field near Shreveport, Louisiana.

At Barksdale the 44th was designated as an OTU (Operational Training Unit) and split not once, but twice to form both the 98th Bomb Group and then the 90th Bomb Group. While still an OTU at Barksdale, the 44th was given the additional duty of flying anti-submarine patrols over the Gulf of Mexico. This began in April 1942 as German U-boats were taking such a

horrendous toll of merchant ships. On one mission a submarine was sighted, attacked, and very possibly sunk, as much debris and a dark patch believed to be oil were sighted by the crew. Then the 93rd Bomb Group was formed and split from the 44th as well.

Then in July the 44th was removed from OTU status and transferred to Will Rogers Field at Oklahoma City. Each time personnel were taken from the 44th to form those other bomb groups, the men left behind wondered, "Are we eight balls? How come we didn't get to go to those new outfits?" That could well have been the beginning of the Flying 8 Ball title. But the most likely source of the title, from several that have been circulated, came from the Group Commander, Colonel Frank Robinson. While he was talking to Captain Goodman Griffin (a former 2ADA president) about the scheduled upcoming overseas deployment of the 44th, Colonel Robinson is reputed to have said that he could not understand how the Air Force could even think he could go into combat with this group of misfits, ninety-day wonders, and odd balls. He said that he "had never seen such a bunch of eight balls in his entire military career."

This harsh judgment of the overall Group's performance was turned into a positive matter when "Flying Eightball" insignias were painted on the noses of the B-24s. There was a different colored insignia nose for each of the three bomb squa-

drons, the 66th, 67th, and 68th. The fourth squadron, the 404th, had been diverted from Will Rogers Field to Alaska to help stop the advances of Japan into Alaska.

On 29 August 1942 the ground echelon started leaving Will Rogers Field by train for Fort Dix, New Jersey. The air echelon started leaving two days later for Grenier Field, New Hampshire. The aircrews in their B-24s proceeded from there across the North Atlantic in very bad weather and all managed to make it to bases in Scotland and England. The first B-24 of the 66th Squadron arrived at Cheddington, England on 1 October 1942 and was met by 44th ground personnel who had arrived previously. This was just a very temporary base for the 44th, and then all personnel went to Shipdham Airfield, the 44th's permanent base where it remained until 15 June 1945.

The 93rd Bomb Group (the 44th's last "offspring") was the first B-24 group to arrive in England, preceding the 44th by about a month. The 93rd also flew the first mission from England but only one week before the 44th's Flying 8 Balls first mission on 6 December 1942 to attack the Abbeville-Ducat Airdrome at Abbeville, France.

Those 8 Ballers from Barksdale and their successors, the Shipdham 8 Ballers, went on to establish an enviable World War II record and contributed immeasurably to the successful completion of the war in Europe. ■

**489TH NOTES** (*continued from page 27*)  
ment on the experience was, "It was a lonely feeling going back home alone."

Even before the 489th became operational, Jack witnessed two B-24s engage in a fatal mid-air collision during a practice mission. This occurred on the day before Jack's first mission. "I was flying on Lt. Hall's right wing when Lt. Jones collided with him from above. I saw the cockpit of one of the planes spin straight down to the ground. It was like watching something in slow motion," he said. That collision was photographed, and the photos made their way into a Look Magazine edition. Jack made sure that his dad kept a copy of the magazine. Jack still has the copy. These photos also appear in the book, *History of the 489th Bomb Group*. There were no survivors.

During yet another combat mission, Jack saw the wing of a B-24 fold back and descend to the ground. He said that every collision and every hit looked like it was transpiring in slow motion. He also said, "Everybody saw someone get hit." In those instances, "You tell your crew member to look for parachutes." Incidentally, I expe-

rienced the same slow motion effect in the mid-air tragedies that I witnessed.

One of Jack's most successful missions was a perfect hit on a bridge in Les Foulons, France on July 17, 1944. Jack described the bombing as clusters of bombs concisely hitting the bridge. During another mission, Jack saw the bomb bay doors of a B-24 open above him, ready to drop its ordnance on Jack's B-24. About it Jack said, "Looking up at the open bomb bay, it sure was a scary sight." He was aware of the amount of explosive power that was ready to be released from the B-24 above him, as well as the damage that it could do to his airplane below. His quick evasive maneuver prevented a disaster.

Jack was in the air during D-Day, near the St. Lo area. Being that it was an overcast day, no one could drop any bombs. The risk of hitting Allied troops was too great. A mission to St. Lo and the Pas-de-Calais region is usually a short trip, consisting of four to five hours in the air. However Jack spent seven hours in the air during D-Day, somewhere near cloud-covered St. Lo.

Jack piloted one trip to war-torn Or-

leans, France, delivering flour in a B-24. "The flour was all over the control cables in the bomb bay," Jack said. He also said that the crew chief was not happy about it. Jack called his trip to and from Orleans enlightening, saying that "it brought to mind what war was all about."

Jack was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, receiving it from Colonel Ezekiel Napier, for completing 32 combat missions in addition to his submarine patrolling missions. Jack did not go home after his tour of duty. Rather, he stayed in the 844th Squadron, scheduling crews for missions with the friend who became the best man at his wedding, George Mullet. Jack later spent his civilian career as a pilot for American Airlines, and retired after 30 years of service.

Last November, Jack and his wife Helen celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary. Interestingly, his bride's wedding gown was made by his mother from Jack's own silk parachute, at Washington, Pennsylvania in 1945. This same wedding dress is placed on display at the 489th Bomb Group museum every summer.

Hope to see you at the next reunion. ■



# The Last Mission of S/Sgt. Jack Gonzalez

BY JACK GONZALEZ (458TH), P.O.W. #2369

On a cloudy Sunday morning on June 18, 1944, we left the coast of England. It was around 6:00 a.m. and we were bound for Germany. Our target was Hamburg. We were flying in a B-24 Liberator called "Rhapsody in Junk." I was the radio operator on the crew.

At the briefing that morning, our crew was informed to head for Sweden if the plane was heavily damaged. On our way to Hamburg while flying over the North Sea, we test-fired the turret and flexible guns. Our squadron arrived at our primary target in Hamburg on schedule. Because we had cloudy weather and poor visibility, we didn't bomb our target. So we went to the secondary target. We were flying at 21,000 feet on the target bomb run and getting closer to our I.P., when the plane was hit with very intense flak. The number one engine was hit and our B-24 rocked abruptly to one side, which caused the plane to suddenly leave the formation, and also caused the plane to lose altitude. We descended about 3,000 feet before Lt. Northrop eventually was able to level out the plane. Soon after leveling out the plane, Lt. Jeffers salvoed the bombs.

With the plane damaged and one engine out, Lt. Northrop quickly asked Lt. Diemel for a heading to Sweden. This new heading was in a direct path over Kiel, Germany. Kiel, at that time, had a large submarine base, which was well-defended by many flak guns. On our way to Sweden, another engine started having mechanical trouble. With all the damage and engine problems to the plane, we slowly started losing altitude. The crew had to lighten the plane, so we started throwing out flak suits, radio equipment, and anything that was excess weight. On the way to Sweden, I saw Lt. Jeffers kneeling down on one knee, praying and hoping that some way we would survive. We were flying at about 10,000 feet when the plane reached Kiel. The flak was very intense, so Lt. Northrop was having a very hard time trying to maneuver the plane through it, but it was to no avail. He put down the landing gear, which is a sign of surrender. We were hoping the firing would stop, but it didn't. The plane had flak holes everywhere, and we wondered how the plane stayed airborne. With the heavy flak over Kiel, another engine was hit. With all the flak damage and two engines out, Lt. Northrop thought it would be impossible to keep this plane in the air. Within a few seconds after flying over Kiel, Lt. Northrop set off the bail out alarm.

I quickly bailed out the camera hatch, which is located near the tail section. I think Lt. Jeffers, Lt. Brodek, and Sgt. Clifford all bailed out after me from the camera hatch. Lt. Northrop, Lt. Diemel, Lt. Butler, Sgt. Cardenas, S/Sgt. Dean, and S/Sgt. Flaughter bailed out the bomb bay. S/Sgt. Flaughter became fearful and couldn't jump. He told the crew members to push him off. According to Lt. Butler, after he was pushed off, his parachute opened without any trouble. I bailed out headfirst and went into a tumbling motion. When I finally stabilized, I could see some of the crew in the distance, as well as the ocean, the sky, and the green farmland. At one point, it looked like I would land in the ocean, so I tried to direct my parachute away, but it just rocked me so violently that I gave up. As I came down, the wind brought me inland. As I got closer to the ground, I heard rifle fire whizzing by me. I wasn't sure if it was soldiers or farmers trying to shoot me down. Sgt. Alex Cardenas told me afterward that he heard it on his way down too.

I hit the ground hard, but I didn't see or hear anyone. It was midmorning and very quiet. I remembered in a briefing that they told us to head for Denmark, as there was an underground escape

*Suddenly, there were three German soldiers and two barking dogs surrounding me. The soldiers did not speak English. They spoke in German, motioning at me and pointing their machine guns.*

route there. They said the Danish underground would take American airmen to Sweden on fishing boats. I knew I had to get out of there fast, so I buried my parachute and started walking, then walking faster, and then running, hoping I would make it to Denmark. I ran for about an hour when I ran through a berry field and the thorns scratched my face. All of a sudden I heard barking dogs in the distance. I knew it was just a matter of time before the German soldiers and dogs would catch up.

Suddenly, there were three German soldiers and two barking dogs surrounding me. The soldiers did not speak English. They spoke in German and motioned for me to put my hands up, and they searched me. The soldiers walked to me where they were holding Sgt. Dean. These soldiers were young marines, probably from the naval base. The soldiers motioned for us to start walking. Suddenly, one soldier from behind hit me very hard with the barrel of his sub-machine gun and knocked me to the ground. They surrounded me and pointed their machine guns at me. Speaking in German, he apparently wanted me to walk faster. Along the way we met up with Lt. Brodek. The three of us were taken to a Kiel naval guardhouse, where we stayed in a large conference room and were seated in huge chairs at a very long table. While S/Sgt. Dean and I were being interrogated at one end of the conference room, a very loud-speaking German was interrogating Lt. Brodek at the other end of the long table. He spoke to Lt. Brodek in German. When the interrogator finished talking to Lt. Brodek, he said to him, "Do you understand me?" Lt. Brodek hesitated for a minute, then looked at the interrogator straight in the eye and said, "No, you S.O.B." S/Sgt. Dean and I were very surprised and proud of the answer he gave him.

We stayed at the guardhouse for about one hour. We were then loaded into a German truck where the rest of our crew was. As I looked around, I could see everyone except S/Sgt. Jack Flaughter. I asked where he was and they pointed to a large box on the truck. I opened the lid and looked in to see S/Sgt. Flaughter lying there with some terrible head wounds near his temple. German soldiers probably inflicted these wounds. We later learned his parachute had landed on a military base. After I was liberated by General Patton's forces in Moosburg and flown to France, I turned in a crime report to the Geneva Convention on the Flaughter situation. We later stopped at a cemetery and carried the box with Flaughter's body in it to a gravesite. An interesting thing happened at the gravesite. As the crew was leaving the cemetery, an elderly German woman put a bouquet of flowers on top of Flaughter's casket. The government of Belgium wanted to do something for the American soldiers for helping to liberate their country, so after the war, Flaughter's remains were moved to Ardennes American Cemetery in Belgium.

From the cemetery the crew was taken by truck to a Gestapo headquarters called Schloss Gottoff Castle. The Gestapo interrogated us because they thought we were a spy crew. They threatened us in many ways as well as telling us they would shoot or hang us in the morning.

*(continued on next page)*



## THE LAST MISSION OF S/SGT. JACK GONZALEZ

*(continued from page 29)*

We had a very unusual crew on June 18, 1944 on this Hamburg mission. We flew with a crew of five officers and five sergeants. A normal flying crew consisted of four officers and six sergeants. A lone B-24 bomber flying over Kiel, soon after the D-Day invasion, was very confusing to the Gestapo. What they didn't know was that one of our crew members, S/Sgt. Joe Risco, was in the hospital in England recovering from injuries. 1st Lt. Brodek replaced S/Sgt. Risco on this mission. The only information the Gestapo got out of us was name, rank, and serial number. After the guards were finished interrogating us, they put us in underground cells for the night. The cells were very dark inside. The door to the cell was very large and made of iron. It had a small peephole in it. We were only given water to drink.

The next morning, June 19, 1944, we left Kiel by train and arrived that afternoon in Frankfurt, Germany. The railroad station was in a shambles from the 8th Air Force bombings. After we got off the train, civilians began surrounding us and started shouting profanities and spitting at us. The German soldiers ran them off, as they had strict orders to get us to the interrogation and solitary confinement center without any delays. We were interrogated every day and were in solitary confinement with no food and very little water. On June 21, 1944 we were taken to an assignment camp in Wetzlar, Germany. At the assignment camp, officers were sent to Stalag 3 and enlisted men were sent to Stalag 4. On June 22, 1944 I boarded a train for Stalag 4 and we arrived at the railroad station in Kiefheide, West Prussia on June 25, 1944. The railroad station was about three miles from Stalag 4, which is near the Baltic Sea and the Russian border.

The fall and winter months were very cold and it snowed a lot. The POW camp didn't have bathing facilities, so we used a pan of water to wash ourselves. The bunk beds we slept in were three high, and the mattresses were made of burlap bags filled with shredded paper that was infested with lice, so most of the men slept without mattresses. We had a potbelly stove, but no wood, so we used the lice-infested mattresses to burn for warmth, as heating was non-existent. The food was horrible and consisted mostly of barley soup and occasional sauerkraut or horsemeat.

Stalag 4 was close to the Russian border, and when the Russian army was closing in and about to take Stalag 4, all the POWs were ordered to evacuate. As we were leaving, the German soldiers were passing out Red Cross food parcels to us. This was the same food parcel that the Germans stored in their own warehouses and didn't give to us the whole time we were in the camp.

We had to walk three miles to the railroad station in Kiefheide. The weather was very cold that winter day. It was about twenty degrees and snowing. There was a lot of snow on the ground. We had to throw more than half of our food parcels away because they were so heavy as we tried to walk through the snow with them. On January 31, 1945, 3,000 POWs were loaded into small boxcars. The guards slammed the sliding door shut and locked it. We didn't move for two days at the railroad station before the train hooked up and started moving. These boxcars have a capacity of about forty men, but they put about seventy into each one. They were so crowded that the men would have to take turns standing up and sitting down to rest. They gave us very little food and water, so it was a blessing that we had a little of our food parcels to eat. And worst of all, there were no restroom facilities in any of the boxcars. All we had was a large empty can in one corner of the boxcar.

On February 5, 1945 the train stopped in the Berlin railroad yard. The air raid horns were blaring because the 8th Air Force was on a bombing mission over Berlin. The guards and the engineer left in a hurry to get to air raid shelters. We were locked

in the boxcars and there was nowhere to seek shelter. The boxcars were rocking from side to side and trembling. Fortunately, by some miracle they didn't hit us. When the all-clear horns came on, the guards and the engineer came back and the train started moving again. We arrived in Nuremberg, Stalag 8 on February 8, 1945.

While in Stalag 8, the POWs got to see bombing raids and fighter plane dogfights over Nuremberg. The 8th Air Force would bomb during the day and the RAF would bomb at night. On one of the night missions, the RAF hit an underground storage ammunition facility not far from Stalag 8. These explosions went on for days and nights. The night explosions would light up the sky like daylight. During our stay in Nuremberg we heard the sound of artillery fire not too far away. As the Allied forces were getting closer, we were told to evacuate Stalag 8.

On April 4, 1945 we left Nuremberg and went to Moosburg, Stalag 7. At this time, 6,000 POWs were put on a forced march. It was tough on the road. On about the third day of the march, we went through a horrifying experience. As we were marching, some fighter planes were flying above us. Some of us thought they were either P-51s or P-47s. Suddenly, they started down in our direction and opened fire on us. All the POWs and the German guards ran into the woods along the road. I got in back of a large tree for protection. We had some German vehicles traveling alongside of the POWs, and I believe our pilots thought that the German vehicles and marching men were on the move, not realizing it was American POWs. Some of the POWs were wounded or killed.

One night while on the march, it was raining and we couldn't make it to a village by nightfall, so we slept in an open muddy field. On that same rainy night, another fellow POW that I had made friends with decided that we would escape in the morning. When the other POWs and the guards moved out at dusk, we stayed under the wet blankets. The plan was working well until three guards came back to the muddy fields on a last-minute area check and found us hiding under our blankets. Since they were German guards and not the SS soldiers, they just talked to us and told us to join the other POWs. They told us that if it had been the SS that found us, we would have been shot. They told us that the war would soon be over and we would all be going home.

My friend Russell and I decided to try another escape, and this time we got away with it. We were still on the march to Moosburg and we had stopped in a small village to rest for the night. The village was well-guarded, but we managed to find a way out and get past the guards. We got out of the village by crawling out in between the guards. Once we got out, we saw a nearby farmhouse. The farmer and his wife and their two kids looked afraid of us and ran into the house. We knocked on the door and told them not to be afraid and that we would not harm them. We told them we were American POWs and we were looking for food. The farmer could speak English, so he did all of the talking for his family. They came out of their house and gave us ham, cheese, bread, cake and fruit. They put the food into a plastic bag, and we thanked them and left.

When we got back to the village, the guards had changed their guarding positions, so we had to wait until darkness to crawl back between the guards and back to the barn area. Once we got into the barn we felt relieved and we passed out all the food to the other POWs. The next morning we were again marching toward Moosburg.

On April 16, 1945 we finally arrived in Moosburg, Stalag 7. While in Moosburg we could hear the sound of cannon fire close by, and knew the American army would soon be here. On April 29, 1945, General Patton's armored tank division took the

*(continued on next page)*

# HETHEL HIGHLIGHTS



BY JOHN M. RHOADS

Greetings to all of you 389ers wherever you are. As I stated in my previous HIGHLIGHTS, I would like to pass the baton to a volunteer. However, no one stepped forward to assume the position of vice president during the meeting of members of the 389th Bombardment Group Association during the 2ADA convention in Grand Rapids.

Because of health problems, I was not able to attend the convention in Grand Rapids and I will not be able to attend any future conventions of the 2ADA. Therefore, I can no longer represent you as your vice president. However, I promised our new 2ADA president, Earl Zimmerman, that I would write one more article for the HIGHLIGHTS. By then Earl will have had a volunteer step forward or he will have appointed a member of the group as vice president.

I was discharged from the hospital on November 4th after ten days' confinement for internal bleeding. After a few days of in-home physical therapy and RN visits, I have recovered enough

to drive to doctor appointments for Millie and me. I will continue in-home physical exercises recommended by the visiting RN. I have found a lawn maintenance company to assume permanent care for the lawn.

Since Earl Zimmerman has recently returned from an extended visit to the UK during which time he visited Hethel, you may receive from him a detailed report. So I will not include here any information I have on the chapel museum.

At the risk of annoying you with my repeating this, I still want to stress the importance of recording your personal experiences of life during WWII at Hethel and the surrounding areas. Your family and your future generations need to know. If you don't do this now, it will be a sad loss. This has been brought out recently in an e-mail received by the 389th BG Yahoo groups forum from the daughter of a 389th BG pilot seeking information we may provide about her father. He never spoke with his family about his WWII experience. Her case is not unusual. Many WWII veterans have failed to tell of their experiences. Another illustration of this is an account by a Pearl Harbor survivor who is a member of my church. During his talk at a school assembly about WWII, one of the boys asked, "Who won the war?!" That boy's grandfather, uncle or other relative had never spoken to him about WWII. We veterans must do what we can to reverse this trend. So let us begin now with our stories. And please be sure to send a copy of your story to Kelsey McMillan, editor of our group's NEWS, at 1905 Avenue D, Katy, TX 77493-1658. She wants to collect your experiences and, with your permission, include them in our group's NEWS. ■

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## THE LAST MISSION OF S/SGT. JACK GONZALEZ

*(continued from page 30)*

town of Moosburg. The German soldiers walked out of Stalag 7 waving white flags. It was a grand day to see the German flag come down and the American flag go up. It was so good to see General Patton in person and to hear him deliver a speech to all the POWs. Liberation day had finally arrived, and we were finally free.

Beginning on April 29, 1945, all POWs were flown to Le Havre, France. I arrived on May 7, 1945. We left France on May 16, 1945 on a Navy victory ship. We sailed to South Hampton, England and arrived on May 17, 1945. We left England on May 19, 1945 on the same victory ship, sailed to Boston, Massachusetts, and arrived there on May 29, 1945. I left Boston on May 31, 1945 on a train filled with soldiers and reporters interviewing us on our way to Camp Beale in Marysville, California. I was at Camp Beale for about a week for processing, and then I finally got to go home on a two-week furlough before I was to report to the Douville Hotel in Santa Monica that had been turned into a convalescent hospital for soldiers. I was there for about four months. I was discharged from the Air Force on October 26, 1945 in Santa Ana, California.

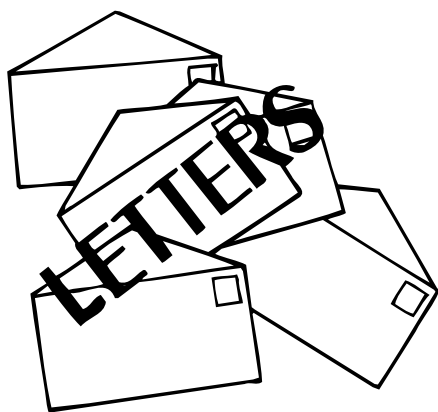
I have three brothers who also served in WWII. S/Sgt. Henry Gonzalez served in the infantry in Italy. He was awarded the Purple Heart, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star. S/Sgt. Manuel Gonzalez served in the Pacific Islands of Guadalcanal, Bougainville, and Maunda airstrip, New Guinea, Luzon, Leyte and the Philippines. He was in the 7th Army Infantry, 43rd Division. After the war, he went to Yokohama, Japan for occupation. He was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star. Seaman 2/class Richard Gonzalez served on the U.S.S. Nevada in the South Pacific. This ship had the honor of firing the first shot at Iwo Jima. The ship was also attacked twice by Kamikaze planes.

## WORLD WAR TWO AWARDS

After sixty years of waiting, I was finally awarded my World War II medals. After the war I was informed by the St. Louis military record center that my military records were probably destroyed by the fire they had there. Years after the fire, the job of finding my military records began. The persistence and hard work of my daughter, Linda Waddington, my brother-in-law, Jack Whetstone, and congresswoman Linda Sanchez started the search for my military records. They were in constant contact with all the military record centers. The record centers they were working with were located in Washington, D.C., St. Louis, Philadelphia, and Air Force headquarters at Randolph Field in Texas. Their hard work proved to be successful, as some of the records were found at Randolph Field. The medals were sent to me from the Philadelphia record center and the AF base at Randolph Field.

I probably would never have received my medals had it not been for my daughter Linda, my brother-in-law Jack, and U.S. Rep. Linda Sanchez. I have thanked them many times for all their hard work, and I would like to thank them again.

The City of Cerritos has its annual 4th of July "Let Freedom Ring" celebration every year. They decided this would be the perfect place for my medal ceremony. My family and friends were invited to the medal presentation and ceremony. They gave me a private party before the event. My grandson, Robert Waddington, who served in the Afghanistan-Iraqi war, was standing beside me while Congresswoman Sanchez presented me with my medals. I was presented with the following: Purple Heart; Prisoner of War; European-Mediterranean with 2 Bronze Battle Stars, Air Offensive over Europe; American Campaign; National Defense – World War II; 50th Anniversary – World War II; Good Conduct; and Honorable Service Button – World War II. Pending is the air medal from the French government given to American airmen in gratitude for helping to liberate their country. ■



To the Editor:

I hope you or one of the *Journal* readers can help me with what seems to be a bit of a mystery.

I was reading about Lt. George Lymburn, a command pilot, and the nose art on his aircraft. "SUTZROBBISHPLUTZ MOYMOYSURAKE" was emblazoned on his B-24. In the article it was stated that no one knew what it meant, but it was thought to be a Polish saying.

The Deputy Defence Attaché at the Polish Embassy in London assured me that it was definitely not in his language, and he had no idea as to what language it was in. Can you or anybody out there enlighten me? Unfortunately the aircraft and all its crew failed to return from a raid to Ludwigshaven on 5 March 1944. On that occasion the pilot was Lt. Lester Elke.

John Threlfall  
30 Lower West Avenue  
Barnoldswick  
Lancs BB18 6DW  
ENGLAND

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To the Editor:

This is the most difficult and sad letter I have ever written.

Due to a physical collapse, I can no longer prepare and publish the quarterly 3D SAD Newsletters. Presently I am living by a tube from an oxygen concentrator attached to my nose.

Previously I have suffered two cardiac arrests; and my knees are too weak and sore to lift my body from a chair (I have to use both arms to push up). When I go out to pick up the morning paper in my front yard, I am totally exhausted upon return. My physical condition does not allow me to perform any yard work or tasks about the house. Earline is so gracious in taking care of every little need I have, but it is so depressing for me to see her having to do everything. My problems are physical, not mental.

It was in March 1972 that the first 3D SAD newsletter was published. For 35 years I have dedicated my life to our 3D SAD. I have been solely responsible for

our reunions (with much assistance from local volunteers at the reunion locales), our newsletters, and in managing our association. In this endeavor, I feel that I have been successful.

Does this mean that 3D SAD Association is over? Legally YES, unless someone volunteers to do these things, but personally NO. Our members will not suddenly forget all the new friendships made, and all the pleasure enjoyed at our reunions.

How can anyone forget the USO girls at Norfolk; the world champion Junior Cloggers and the Western rodeo at Salt Lake; or the U.S. Navy Jazz Band followed by Louisiana Cajun band in New Orleans?

Remember Albuquerque, under a huge tent where we enjoyed a wine tasting (with all the free wine), and the great Western meal with the Mexican musicians. Forget? No way, José!

My personal favorites were the Whistling Midgets at Spokane, and the surprise everyone had when they removed their tall hats!

I will never regret all the time, work and personal money I put into 3D SAD, as it has been such a rewarding task. Nothing could have been more pleasant than to meet old ETO buddies again!

3D SAD visitors are always welcome at 7266 Goodwood Ave. I have two oxygen canisters so that I can go out for eight hours at a time.

Wiley S. Noble  
7266 Goodwood Avenue  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
Tel. 225-925-8454  
E-mail: Edwsn3dsad@aol.com

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To the Editor:

I'm Albert Sanders, lead pilot in the 448th Bomb Group. I had an interesting experience and have always wondered if anyone else had a similar one:

I was leading the low left and my tail gunner reported that the upper right was gaining on us. On looking up I could see he was right and I radioed its leader to back off, but he responded that he was near stalling speed already. Well, at about one minute to bombs away, I looked directly up and saw only looming open bomb bay doors. So I pulled my squadron about 200 feet to the left and we watched the 500 pounders drop right by us on the way to the target. I radioed the group lead that we still had our bombs, and he instructed us to close the doors in order to stay in position, but to find a target of opportunity not far off the bomber string and get rid of our bombs. We did this, hitting a small marshalling yard in a smallish city. At debriefing I was royally chewed out for not hitting the prime target, and my excuse was pretty much not believed. I

never heard anything more, though, so I guess the upper right leader must have verified my story. Only much later did I read of the winds around Japan being so strong at higher altitudes. So my theory is that the high right had a ten to twenty mph tail wind that the lead and lower left didn't have.

Incidentally, the respect that I got from a number of pilots after this event was quite satisfying.

Al (Crash) Sanders (448th)  
408 Summit Drive  
Richardson, TX 75081  
Tel. 972-231-2458

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Dear Boyhood Heroes, dear Friends:

It's with great sadness that I have to tell you that another good human being is gone: Will Lundy. One of my boyhood heroes called him a giant, but I prefer to describe him as an ordinary man who did extraordinary things. I think it's also an appropriate definition of the citizen soldiers.

Will Lundy will be remembered as the man who dedicated his life after retirement from Southern California Edison to documenting and preserving the story of his group, the 44th BG (Heavy). First, it was to honor the men who gave it all. In the process, Will and his wife Irene built up an in-depth record of all the missions involving his group: the "Roll of Honor" (which was continuously updated and upgraded over 20 years). Will also put down the story of his squadron, the 67th. The 44th BG history overtook his interest in woodworking (he loved to bring out the beauty of wood).

Will Lundy must be remembered for his eagerness to record but also for his eagerness to SHARE and SPREAD the story of his group worldwide. He was the opposite of a collector and really deserves to be called Historian (probably helped by his major in Psychology and his minor in Anthropology).

Will Lundy should be remembered as a man who was saved by his glasses (and by friendship?) Before the war was declared, he tried to volunteer in all of the military services including the reserves, but flunked each time due to his need for glasses. Then he was drafted and he attended aircraft maintenance school, but once again was turned down for combat engineer. He went over to England in September 1942. At that time, there was nothing like decent fighter escort when the U.S. heavies were crossing the enemy coast. The only escort they got were unfriendly, seasoned Luftwaffe fighter outfits. The 44th BG suffered terrible losses, and ground crew members had to be called to combat status. Will saw this as another

chance for him to fight. He went to talk with First Sgt. Robert Ryan to get his approval. Ryan said no, he would not permit Will to fly combat due to his position as assistant crew chief. As Ryan and Lundy were good friends, maybe his chief was just trying to save his friend's life. All his friends who ended up as air gunners were soon MIA or KIA.

I, as well as many others, shall remember Will as a man always on the run. Since January 1996, Will and I had an extensive correspondence. Not only because we shared common interests, but also because it was the easiest way for us to "talk" to each other. At veterans' meetings, it was very hard to speak with Will for five minutes in a row without being interrupted!

The first time we met was in October 1996 in St. Louis, MO, where the 44th BG was holding its annual reunion. But we never did get a good opportunity there to sit down and discuss things together. Despite being always on the run, Will seldom saw or talked with the many people he was writing to and had been wanting to meet in person. At that time, he was seriously thinking about setting up a table or desk and a couple of chairs, and then taking up residence there to be available. He never did that and just kept on running (Sophie nicknamed him the Electric Man).

In fact, the only way to speak for a longer time with the Lundys was to have them over here, in Belgium. We were fortunate to have them two times in our country (with a group of other 44th BG veterans). Twice we met their group at the Ardennes Cemetery, in Neuville-en-Condroz, where many Eightballers are resting forever in Belgian soil. The first time, Sophie, Irene, Will, and I had a very nice dinner out, overlooking the river Meuse and the city of Liege. In 2002, I was able to join the 44th BG during the Belgian part of their trip. Will and Irene even met my dad.

Now, the Lundys are united again, this time in heaven.

The Lundys will meet their dear friends, Ray & Mary McNamara, another American/British couple. And they will go to "The 200 Club" where Bill Cameron is sipping a drink with the crews of *Little Beaver* and *Buzzin Bear*. Of course, Irene will have to share her beloved assistant crew chief with *Miss Diane*.

But first of all, Will and Irene (whom Will described as "the best thing that ever happened to me"), are now talking with the KIA and MIA of the 44th BG, those who will live on because of the dedication of the Lundys.

From Belgium,  
Luc Dewez  
E-mail: fa590792@skynet.be



**Will and Irene Lundy, relaxing at home**



**Will and Irene at Neuville-en-Condroz**

To the Editor:

Thank you for publishing my poem "Better Listen" (Fall/Winter 2007 *Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 4).

I realize that in getting the poem to fit into a column, it had to be re-formatted, but a word substitution was made that I assume was inadvertent. The word "can" was substituted for the word "who" in the fourth line of the fifth stanza. It should read as follows:

*Three thousand in five years? –  
Try three thousand in one day –  
day after day.*

*Better listen – you who claim to be  
taking care of their country  
They gave their lives for their own  
united nation – not a United  
Nations*

*Better listen, they are growing  
restless*

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

Robert D. Davis (392nd)  
2882 Boa Vista Drive  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

To the Editor:

As I was reading the *Journal*, the article by Oak Mackey on the 392nd Bomb Group caught my attention since my father-in-law Willis Miller was part of that group.

I am forwarding a copy of an article that appeared in our local newspaper, *The Orange County Register*, a few months ago. I think you will find it interesting. (Ed. Note: See page 12.)

Enclosed is a copy of the movie "Beautiful Dreamer" which is a tribute to Willis Miller and the crew of the "Starduster." It additionally features WWII heroes, pilot Willis Miller, copilot James Cassity and engineer Hal Hagopian taking you on a journey back in time with stories and war footage to illustrate the thirty death-defying missions they survived along with their heroic crew of the B-24 Liberator bomber called "Starduster."

Veterans of the 2ADA and the 392nd might want to check this out as well. It has received more than a dozen awards at various film festivals. It is a delightful wartime love story and has the Dove rating as a good family film. The movie is available at [www.beautifuldreamerthemovie.com](http://www.beautifuldreamerthemovie.com).

If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please contact me at 714-450-0777. Thanks and keep up the good work!

Brad Sublett  
Executive Producer  
Dott's Starduster, LLC  
13090 Old Bolsa Chica Road  
Westminster, CA 92683

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To the Editor:

I read the "Willow Run Story" with interest and pleasure because I worked there.

Waiting to be called up from the Air Force, I dropped out of school and went to work as a payroll clerk for Carlson Brothers sheet metal contractors. When I arrived there were just some steel structures, and I was there long enough to see the completed plant and the first B-24 roll off the line.

Speaking of that first B-24, Rosie the Riveter and 300,000 rivets, when that first plane landed after its flight around the field, it had popped 10,000 rivets! How reassuring when I was assigned to B-24s.

It was a busy, fun time with lots of interesting stories.

Don Whitefield  
1434 Martin  
Houston, TX 77018

Ed. Note: You still had 290,000 rivets holding it together — that's 96.7%! Nothing holds up that good nowadays.

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To the Editor:

The Fall/Winter 2007 Journal arrived safe and sound this day. A most enjoyable read, and I thought the front cover "All is Secure" is a brilliant piece of work.

With regard to the article on the back cover, regarding Ol' 927, I wish to point out that the landing accident that occurred in July '41 in Albuquerque, New Mexico did *not* preclude her from flying to the UK.

For some reason or other, and your guess is as good as anyone else's, this aircraft was selected to be retained in New Mexico to be used by a detachment of the USAAC as a training aircraft by aircrews on multi-engine aircraft for long distance flights over water. The aircraft, due eventually to the landing accident, did not leave the USA and was not destined to do so.

As I previously said, I enjoy reading the *Journal* as well as my continued correspondence etc. with former members of the 2nd Air Division.

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

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To the Editor:

Howard Thompson (93rd BG) and I would walk our dogs into the mountains every morning rain or shine (that is after Howard read the *Journal* and then passed it on to me.)

The *Journal* story of Hamburg (Summer 2007) caught my eye. I was stationed at Rhein-main AFB in Germany. After WWII when my tour was over, I shipped my car back to the States. While driving on the autobahn, there was a German soldier in uniform. He was hitchhiking home to Hamburg. I stopped and told him I was very tired, and as he spoke excellent English, he said his parents would take care of me and provide me with bed and breakfast. What a surprise I got in the morning. They were living in the basement of a bombed out church, or what was left of the church. His father was a minister. He thanked me for bringing his son home. What a breakfast: coffee, and good German brown bread, and homemade sausage. That's my memory of Hamburg.

"Joe" from Albuquerque

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To the Editor:

I'm referring to pages 248 and 249 of the *Attlebridge Arsenal* (466th Bomb Group) by Earl Wassom and Chris Brassfield.

I sent them a copy of my 30 missions signed by Capt. Norman R. Crosson, Oper-

ations Officer, with the official group seal (466th) on it well before publication.

For some reason they listed my 30 missions but didn't include the specific leads shown. They were one 8th AF lead; three Division leads with General Peck aboard, nine 96th Bomb Wing leads, eight 466th Group leads, nine Squadron (785th) leads, etc.

They didn't mention that we were a lead Pathfinder Crew. Our write-up was "ordinary."

They didn't mention that I was awarded the French Croix de Guerre avec Etoile d'Argent. (Only two pilots in the 466th received this award.) I received mine for leading the 96th Wing over the bridge on the Loire River at Blois, France, on June 11, 1944. We had to bomb at 5500 feet in 3 ship formations, carrying 2000 lb. bombs. The other Croix de Guerre was awarded to my old buddy, pilot William Thompson, for leading the 8th AF on D-Day.

No mention that I was awarded the DFC twice and had six Air Medals, etc.

Before I pass on I would be grateful to see this in print.

I always look forward to receiving your fine *Journal*.

Joseph W. Tikey (466th)  
4604 S. Lamar, Apt. D-302  
Austin, TX 78745

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To the Editor:

Thank you for your letter in which you were so kind to ask for any answer regarding J.W. Tikey's feeling that his accomplishments as a lead pilot and his decorations have been taken lightly or slighted by Chris Brassfield and I who co-authored the 466th Bomb Group's history, *Attlebridge Arsenal*.

Mr. Tikey has "dressed me down" several times and what I told him, I will repeat to you for the record. The book is large and comprehensive with over 350 pages, fully indexed with 2400 names listed and has pictures and narrations on 250 plus crews (this is all we could find after half-a-century). In addition, a sizable amount of attention and documentation was given to the brave and dedicated ground echelon. As the book emerged after three and a half years of research, we concluded that the men of every aircrew and the mechanics, medics, cooks, operations, etc. were ALL HEROES, *not just a select few of them*. We properly identified the aircraft and crews who went down and those who perished or ended up as POWs. Space for a reasonable description and pictorial presentation was limited. All crews were given at least a one-page treatment and most were given two pages. The standard treatment of Mr.

Tikey's crew may be found on pages 248 and 249. In fact, one whole page is dedicated to a narration written by Mr. Tikey himself that is a hero's account of a flying episode encountered by this aircrew. We did not emphasize rank or decorations. It would have been impossible to document the heroism and bravery of everyone at Attlebridge or any other 8th AF unit. Many medals, promotions, and accolades were available on many crews, but they too were not mentioned because of space limitations. In no way did we intentionally slight anyone. If it is within the editorial policies of the *Journal*, you might include the achievements of this crew.

I have a new book almost ready for release called *Hello Darkee*. I hope it is as popular and read as carefully by my 8th Air Force friends as was *Attlebridge Arsenal*.

May 2008 be a great year for you and all our WWII buddies.

Earl Wassom (466th)  
548 Brentmoor Avenue  
Bowling Green, KY 42101-3772

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To the Editor:

Here I am again. I received the 392nd Memorial Magazine from you today. You asked if I can remember any of the planes. Well, Ray, I can, and a few more that are not in there. I had the magazine before as I am a member of the 392nd M.A. I am a non-paying member as Jim Goar says I am a friend. I have met up with him a few times, as well as with Col. Lawrence Gilbert, the 392nd's last C.O.

My wife and I are both members and Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial and receive our "Second Thoughts" newsletter each quarter. We go to meetings at Hardwick Air Base with a friend of ours who worked in Col. Johnson's quarters at the 44th BG during the war. We also go on bus trips to other museums and old bases. We know a lot of the members, including David Woodrow who owns Hardwick Base and his sons-in-law, Paul Thrower who has the four Nissen huts full of war-time things and Maurice Hammond. My wife Audrey often speaks to Pearl Neale, the treasurer and secretary of The Friends.

I have been having a look through some of the *Journals* you sent me and was so set back when I looked at the Spring 2004 issue and saw the picture of the 392nd BG memorial in 1979 and an article about it. If you are interested I will give you more information. In July or August 1945 when I was working in the MET Section of the Air Ministry on the base, I was asked by my boss to take our small crane to the plot where it stands to unload three pieces of Aberdeen granite that my father and another

er man had been to Wendling railroad station to collect on a tractor and trailer that he drove a day or two later. I had to go back and lift the piece into place for a man from Scotland to erect it. I have a couple of pictures that I took on the dedication day, the 2nd of September 1945. The plot of land was donated by a Mr. Felix Garner who owned it and he lived and farmed at Longham Hall at the other end of the base. The Mrs. Littleproud the article mentions who laid a wreath was an old lady who had a small cafe adjoining the village of Fransham where a lot of the G.I.'s used to go. The Reverend Gale it mentioned was our rector for many years. He was a Canadian by birth. I knew the other two as well, and also Col. Joseph Bush. The first person to look after the plot was a small farmer by the name of Alec Rowlands and his two sons, Keith and Michael, who both live in the village of Beeston now. There were others later; an ex-RAF officer and his wife and a young chap by the name of Gerald Gage, and one or two others until it was moved to where it is now.

Here is a list of some of the ships I remember: *Puss in Boots*, *Alfred the V*, *Sweet Charmot*, *Rose of Juarez*, *Liberty Bell*, *Sally*, *Trips Daily* (one of the best), *The YMCA Flying Service Short Snorter*, *Madame Shoo Shoo*, *Our Gal*, *Double Trouble*, *Picadilly Lilly*, *Wild Hair*, *Ford Folly*, *Hell Wagon*, *Bull Bat*, and some more that are not in the magazine. One I shall never forget was *Exterminator*, which blew up in the middle of the night when the battery-charging machine flew afire and set light to it. It was fully loaded for the next day's mission. I can't forget as it brought down one of the ceilings in one of our bedrooms. I am not sure of the date or the squadron the ship belonged to, but I think a crew chief or two got medals as they taxied two more ships to safety.

Some others were *Pegasus*, *Birdie Smyth*, *Hung Low*, *The Ruptured Chinaman*, and *Sad Sack*. One that is in a book or two is *Pregnant the 2nd* that was put down in a field at a village called Ashill not far from the North Pickenham Base, the home of the 492nd and 491st BGs and the engineering department at Griston adjoining RAF Watton. The pilot was Bob Copp from Vermont. I met him and his wife on the airfield in the late '70s. They were over on a visit so his wife could see the place he flew from. They came to our house and had a chat and a bit of lunch. He told me they had to abort the mission and return home because of the fog. They could not see the base and the fuel was running low. He said they were too late to bail out, but he wanted to save his crew. There came a little break in the fog



Above: B-24 models made of wood by Ernie Parke. They have markings of the 392nd, 491st, and 93rd Bomb Groups. Below: The 392nd BG memorial, which is located 400 yards from Ernie's house.



and they saw the church. They were below the steeple. Then this cornfield appeared that had been cut, so they put her down, but the nose wheel hit the bank at the side of the road, which broke it. They strapped some electric poles in the fuselage and he went twice to fly it but the wind was not right, so some other guy did. Later he got a medal for it. I stayed in touch with Bob after his visit, but sadly he passed away on the 6th of January 2007.

I also remember the ship Lt. Caldwell flew, but not its name, as the picture I have of him and his crew does not show the whole ship. I knew this crew pretty well, as I used to play cards with them. On the day they flew home after VE Day, I had a day off from work and they said that if I went with them to their ship I could have the best of the bicycles. One of them carried me on his crossbar and I stayed

until they taxied off. They said they were going to refuel at Shannon in Ireland, and if I wanted to climb in with them, someone would fly me back. I refused, as I could see myself ending up in the States.

I hope, Ray, that you don't think I'm making all this up, as it is all as it happened. You have not received this letter before, but I had written most of it last year when my wife was in hospital. When she came out just before Christmas 2006, it was such a busy time caring for her. The letter got mislaid, but the other day I found it, so "better late than never."

Ernie Parke  
1 Herne Lane  
Beeston, Kings Lynn  
Norfolk PE32 2NB  
ENGLAND

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# Farewell to our 2ADA Past Presidents



**Geoffrey G. Gregory (467th)**



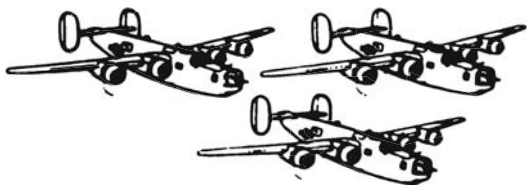
**Richard M. Kennedy (448th)**

**GEOFFREY G. GREGORY** of Garland, Texas, 2ADA president in 1995-1996 and 2004-2005, was born August 24, 1923 in Rhode Island, and passed away January 13, 2008 in Dallas, Texas at the age of 84. Mr. Gregory was a member of the 467th Bomb Group. He is survived by his loving wife, M. Teresa Gregory; son, Ken Gregory and wife, Marta; grandsons, Christopher and Andrew Gregory; sister, Julia Gregory; niece, Peggy Wolf; nephew, George Wolf; many other nieces and nephews; and numerous great nieces and nephews. Mr. Gregory was laid to rest at Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library, c/o E.W. Nothstein, 1359 Harwood Lane, Macedon, NY 14502.

**RICHARD M. KENNEDY**, 2ADA president in 1991-1992 and member emeritus of the Board of Directors for the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, passed away December 14, 2007. Mr. Kennedy flew 35 combat missions in a B-24 as a radio operator in the 448th Bomb Group. He also flew as a radio operator on special assignments known as the "Ackerman Relay" involving radio relay missions. Mr. Kennedy's decorations include the Air Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters, Good Conduct Medal, and four Battle Stars for campaigns in Ardennes, Rhineland, Normandy and Northern France. He was a retired owner, Chairman of the Board, and Chief Executive Officer of MDIA (Middle Department Inspection Agency, Inc.). He was married to his loving wife, Bobbie, for more than 67 years, and had two daughters, Patricia Kennedy Beaver and Colleen Kennedy Conlow. In 2002, Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy presented a window in the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles on the Mighty 8th AF Museum grounds in Savannah, GA, in recognition of Mr. Kennedy's World War II service in the Eighth Army Air Force. The window also pays homage to the 448th Bomb Group, 2nd Air Division, Eighth Army Air Force. The window shows the B-24 Liberator, the emblem of the 448th Bomb Group, and the Silver Wings insignia. Underlying and sustaining the well-being of the aircraft and crew is the ever-present and protective figure of Christ.



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



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