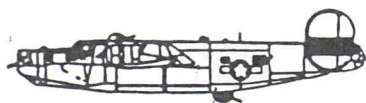


NEWS



392nd BG Memorial Association

VOLUME 3

AUGUST, 1988

MEMORIAL PROJECT UPDATE

from Gil Gilbert and Carroll Cheek

Our letter of July 18 to all members summarized our position presented at the Colorado Springs reunion relative to funding and a time frame for dedication of the new memorial. We'll try to avoid repetition. We would only emphasize again that our countdown has started for a completion date of October 1989.

Considerable planning remains to be done and many details must be resolved. By far the most important: We have to be sure we have the funds in hand before we set the wheels in motion.

Our letter sets a target date of 1 September 1988 to mail donations to our new Treasurer, Charles Dye, Saddle Ridge #832, Portage, WI 53901. Please help by calling or writing members and friends who may not have "gotten 'round to it yet" to contribute. We're certain the dollar goal is within reach, particularly in view of the matching challenge gift offered by one of our members. It is now up to us.

Let's get behind the restoration fund drive and make certain that there will be a fitting memorial in Beeston for generations to come. Only about 40% of our members have contributed. Send a check today and be a part of this lasting memorial. If you have contributed, you may want to consider increasing your contribution. DO IT TODAY!

Wendling Obelisk

It is hard to put into words, the deep feelings you have when you stand in front of the 392nd BG memorial obelisk at Beeston. A moment of silence and the memories come flooding back. This simple, but beautiful memorial reminds us of a very special time in our lives. The fact that first, second and even third generation family members from the surrounding villages were there remembering with us, made it even more touching. [The obelisk, like the rest of us, is beginning to show her age. The drainage tile under the monument has given way to the weight of the granite and the drainage is no longer effective. There are times during the year when water actually stands around the base of the memorial. The wooden gate has been replaced several times over the years, but needs to be replaced with a permanent metal gate. Jerry and I stopped by the day before the memorial services and found our dear English friend, Roy Parker, painting the old gate (in the rain) so it would look nice for the services.]

The love and respect as displayed by our English friends was overwhelming. Signs in the windows "Welcome Home Yanks" and "Thanks for Coming Back" were heart rending. The Tea they had for us was held in a barn. Old crocks were filled with fresh cut flowers. Beeston Parish Council Chairman Jill Scott gave a beautiful, short speech in

which she said England would have lost the war had we not joined the fight and that they would be eternally grateful. The fact that they fought the war alone for four or five years before we arrived was never mentioned.

I think it was best summed up by Ned Twining who commented "This is love in its purest and most simple form." I couldn't reply. I was too choked up.

Return to Wendling

The Gathering of The Crusaders took place at London's Heathrow Airport. Flights from the West Coast, Chicago, New York and Miami all arrived within an hour and a half of each other. We were met by two tour buses who whisked us via Dual Carriage Way (that's divided highway), to the beautiful Dukes Head Hotel in Kings Lynn.

We were greeted at a buffet that evening by the Mayor and Mayor-ess of Kings Lynn. We presented them with a copy of "Liberators from Wendling" for the Library. The manager of the Dukes Head gave us some history on the hotel. It seems that Queen Victoria spent a night there. He asked who was occupying Room 12, as that was where the Queen stayed. Who else but Emily and J. D. Long. Now the room is really famous (according to J. D.).

The next morning the buses headed for the Queen's home at Sandringham. There is no truth to the rumor that they are raising funds for a memorial to the Queen's pet swan who paid the supreme price during the war. After a tour of this beautiful place the buses traveled on to Norwich and a visit to the 2nd Air Division's Memorial Room at the Library.

After a good nights sleep we boarded the buses for the Imperial War Museum at Duxford. Lunch was served at the Officers Club. After the museum it was on to visit the famous Ely Cathedral and back to the Dukes Head.

On Saturday we went for a memorable day at Wendling and Beeston. We stopped at the memorial obelisk for a short memorial service. It was misting rain but the services were simple, but beautiful. A wreath was laid by J. D. Long and Bill Richards. Following the services we had a tour of the base. The short runways have been pretty well chopped up. Portions of them are used as roadways. The main runway is covered with turkey brooders. They raise one half million turkeys there. Most of the remaining perimeter has been reduced in width to about one third its original size. There are very few buildings remaining. The bomb dump has been purchased by a naturalist group and is being transformed into a nature preserve. There is a bumper crop of partridges in the area.

After the town, it was back to Beeston. The villagers hosted a tea in a local barn. The turn out of our English friends was great. We were honored by the presence of members of the Beeston Parish Council. We were certainly made to feel at home. After the tea we split up with one bus going to the Plow Shear in Beeston and the other to the Rose Cottage at Wendling for lunch and more visiting. That evening we had a farewell banquet at the Dukes Head. We had a few comments from various crusaders and a lot of laughs. We were honored by the presence of two crusader widows, Nirissa Shaw and Jean Clendenning. Art and Teddy Egan also brought their son Bert. Several of the crusaders had local guests. We were most pleased to have Dennis and Hillary Duffield, Wendy Carter, Secretary of the Beeston Parish Council and her husband Peter, also as our guests. A highlight of the evening was when Ker Farley's war bride, Katheryn, said she was the only war bride to have a B-24 full of soldiers flown to her wedding. She also confessed to spending our last night at Wendling on the base with her husband Ken. She closed by saying that we were all Americans by virtue

of fate but that she was an American by choice.

On Sunday morning it was farewell to Kings Lynn and on to Cambridge for lunch at the beautiful University Arms with our old friend Roger Freeman. After lunch it was on to the American Cemetery at Madingley. Gil Bambauer and Howard Ebersole laid a wreath during the 392nd Memorial Services. The graves of all sixty plus crusaders who are still buried there were marked with American flags. It was interesting to note that the only memorial plaque on the administration building was to a 392nd (577 Bomb Sqdn.) crew who crashed their plane rather than bailing out and chancing a crash in one of two villages. It was presented by the people of those two villages.

The last two days were spent in London doing the normal sight-seeing and still visiting with old friends. The "Return to Wendling" was most successful and we are looking forward to going back again. Our hats are off to Pat and Keith Roberts for putting it all together.

Profile by Jim Goar

Claire Paul Burtner, Known to 392nd personnel as "Burt" died June 23, 1987, of cancer.

He was original cadre, serving as 578th armament officer. Later, at Wendling, he became Group armament officer.

Peg reports that he "died like he lived--a gentleman." She lives at 10800 Gainsborough Road, Potomac, Md. 20854.

Profile by Jim Goar

Walter J. Mateski was S/Sgt. Mateski, a gunner-engineer, right waist position, in Sabourin's crew. He joined the 578th January 29, 1944, and flew 31 missions.

Then he did 40 years with Western Electric, retiring in 1981.

Margaret and Walter have one son and one grandson, and live at 237 Chicago Ave., Downers Grove, Ill. 60515

Profile by Jim Goar

Louis A. Stephens was a co-pilot on his first tour, joining the 578th a couple of months after the Group arrived in the ETO.

While back in the States between tours, Lou did his best to bounce his landing gear wheels on the parade ground at West Point, barely missing the roof of the Commandant's quarters resulting in a thrill both to the Commandant and Lt. Stephens. Lt. Stephens thrill lasted longer.

On the second tour, this time flying as pilot, on the 10th or 11th mission, to Mainz, the aircraft took a direct hit and blew up. Stephens and one other crewman were blown clear, and because he was wearing a back-pack, he was able to parachute safely to the ground, although badly burned.

Upon arrival at POW camp, he met John Buschman, in whose bunk at Wendling he had been sleeping since John went down.

He worked for the Air Force as a civil servant after the war, and in the 50's was in Mainz on Government business. There was still a lot of bomb damage around the rail station, but Lou thought it politic not to point out to his German hosts that he personally might have been responsible for one or two of the bomb craters.

Lou and wife Delores had two sons, one deceased, and have three grandchildren. They live at 301 Rumson Drive, Englewood, Ohio, 45322. Lou is retired, but does consulting work and raises a few calves on his farm.

2nd Air Division Association

The 2nd Air Division Association Reunion was held in Colorado Springs. There were over 1,500 in attendance. Considering the sizzling temperatures across the nation, the high eighties felt good.

The 392nd had 75 or so there. Our group dinner was great. Anytime Crusaders get together it's hard not to enjoy yourself.

The reunion featured a trip to the Air Force Academy with services at the Chapel and a 2nd Division plaque dedication. There was also a trip to the breath taking Royal Gorge.

The 392nd BGMA held a general meeting. We were all saddened to learn that Gil Bambauer was resigning as Treasurer. He served as our unit contact for the 8th Air Force Society for eight years. He was a co-founder of the 392nd BGMA and served two years as our Secretary and three years as Treasurer. None of you can realize the endless hours he and Martha have spent on this organization. They both deserve our eternal thanks. An election was held to fill Board of Directors vacancies created by the expiring terms of Gilbert Bambauer, Luther Beddingfield and Lawrence Gilbert. Elected to three year terms were:

Lawrence Gilbert

Charles Dye

Barney Glettler

Charles Dye was elected by the Board of Directors to the office of Treasurer.

Carroll Cheek, Chairman of the Memorial Committee and our President Lawrence Gilbert, gave a report on their trip to England and their meeting with the Battle Monuments Commission. We voted to have a dedication of the restored monument in September or October of 1989.

PX

Colonel Myron Kielman's War Stories are now available in book form. Myron has donated all proceeds to the 392nd BG Memorial Restoration Fund. If you haven't read these stories you will want to order a copy from the PX. The price is \$20.00.

We still have copies of "Liberators from Wendling". This was written by Colonel Robert Vickers. The price is \$25.00.

We have a new supply of 392nd BG caps available at \$9.00.

Send your check to:

392nd BG Memorial Association

% Gil Bambauer

2032 E. LaMadera Drive

Tucson, AZ 85719

Midwest Regional Meeting 2nd ADA - Oshkosh

The 5th annual Midwest Regional Meeting will be held September 30-October 2, 1988 at the Experimental Aircraft Association Complex in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Registration deadline is August 30th. Contact Wilbur Stites - 9334 Kahl Road, Black-Earth, Wisconsin 53515.

1988 Dues

Please send a \$10.00 check for your 1988 dues. There are still a few of you who have forgotten.

Apologies

In our last newsletter we did a profile on Hervy Stetson. Due to a sudden senility seizure we spelled his name as Henry. Sorry Hervy!

The following recognition plan was adopted for the Wendling Memorial Fund and is repeated for your information:

Up to \$199.00	-----	1	STAR	DONOR
200.00 - 499.00	----	2	"	"
500.00 - 999.00	----	3	"	"
1,000.00 - 1,999.00		4	"	"
2,000 or more	-----	5	"	"

The following list includes all new contributors and those who have increased their initial giving to advance in the STAR CATEGORY recognition plan. Dates involved were from April 12, 1988 thru July 26, 1988.

5 STAR DONORS

Bernard U. Glettler (up from #4)

Myron H. Keilman (up from #4)

3 STAR DONORS

Luther L. Beddingfield (up from #2)

J. D. Long, Jr. (up from #2)

2 STAR DONORS

Arthur J. Berg

Randell S. Mayer, Jr. (up from #1)

James M. Conley (up from #1)

Albert Morse

Odell F. Dobson (up from #1)

Stanley C. Zybort (up from #1)

Walter C. Lienemann

1 STAR DONORS

Anthony Albino

John J. Rickey

James L. Braman

William E. Smith

Margaret L. Burtner (Memorial
for Paul Burtner)

Henry C. Vaughan

Charles B. Divers

Norbeck J. Wick

John J. Kolodziejski

Marion V. Winters

Edward M. Popek

James A. Gump

Eldon B. Yoak

Ralph W. Kieffer

We wish to thank each of you for your
very generous donations.

I N M E M O R I A M

Alex Gereben

Arthur Murphy

Alton W. Kramer

Martin Yanora

Albert R. McCafferty

Membership Drive

We are running a little behind in our membership drive. We need about 15 new members by the end of this year. I hope some of you who are reading this newsletter will fill out an application and send it with your check for \$10.00. This will pay your dues through 1988. Believe me, there is strength in numbers. Why not join our Association today? We need each other!

392nd BG Memorial Association Membership Application

Name: _____
 First Middle Last

Address: _____
 Street Apt. No.

 City State Zip Code

Unit or Squadron _____ ☐ Associate
Dues are \$10.00 each calendar year (Jan. thru Dec.)
Send check or money order to 392nd BG Memorial Assoc.
C/O Gil Bambauer, 2032 East LaMadera Drive, Tucson,
AZ 85719

☐ Check if this is a gift membership.

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Tucson, AZ 85719

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