



VIPs VISIT IN FALL OF 1944

In August and September 1944, the 392nd BG was visited by two VIPs. Major Glenn Miller and his Army Air Force Band performed in August. The following month, British Field Marshal Lord Ironside came. The two men couldn't have been more different, yet both exemplified the highest standards of patriotism for their respective countries.

FIELD MARSHAL LORD IRONSIDE

by Jim Goar, Associate Editor

Aid for the preparation of this story was furnished by Annette Tison, Editor, and Jill Scott. Jill and husband Tom are Trustees for the Wendling Monument.

In September 1944, the 392nd was visited by a very prestigious retired British Army officer, Field Marshal Lord Ironside. The visit was purely of a goodwill nature and not military, as Lord Ironside had retired in 1940. ARC Aero Club Director Birdie Schmidt (later Birdie Larrick) states in her memoirs that he was a speaker at the Aero Club that month.



Field Marshall Lord Ironside, center, the photo probably taken at the Aero Club. He is surrounded by GIs and two host S-2 (Intelligence) officers—Capt Don McCammond, left, and Lt Walter Whelan, far right. Intelligence was tasked with public relations. *(Editor's note: This photograph, languishing in our files, has always been a puzzle to us. Finally, we did some research on both sides of the Atlantic and came up with the explanation in the accompanying story.)*

He was somewhat of a neighbor, as our encyclopedia states that he retired to write, lecture, and run his farms in Norfolk. Closer study reveals that the farms were near Hingham, about 15 miles west of Norwich.

About Field Marshal Lord Ironside

Ironside was born 6 May 1880 and died 22 Sept 1959. His military career began with the Boer War in 1899 and

covered WWI and part of WWII. (Coincidentally, Sir Winston Churchill's career also began with the Boer War.) At the end of WWI he had attained the rank of Brigadier General.

At the onset of WWII, General Ironside was Chief of the Imperial Staff. On 10 May 1940, the Germans began their attack on France and by the middle of June, France had fallen.

The British recovered their troops from Europe by heroic actions at Dunkirk by the RAF, the Royal Navy, and numerous civilian boats. Between 27 May and 24 June 1940, 338,226 men had been evacuated from France, including about 120,000 French and Belgian troops. Only men were recovered; the Brits left 2,000 guns and 60,000 trucks behind.

These events left Britain to face Germany alone, with their land forces in Britain virtually unarmed. These were desperate times, and the Brits looked to younger men to lead their armies. On May 25 Ironside was appointed Commander in Chief of Home Forces with the responsibility to plan the defense of Britain. However, that post lasted only until July 19 when he resigned. At the end of August he was appointed Field Marshal and a few months later he was raised to the peerage as Lord Ironside. He retired to the country and was never given another military posting.

In 1944 the Nazis were on the run and Ironside, a lord of the realm and retired as one of the highest ranking officers in the British Army, came to visit us. How About That!

MAJOR GLENN MILLER

by Annette Tison, Editor

By 1941, Alton Glenn Miller was a highly successful composer and big band leader. Nonetheless, he wanted to get personally involved in the war effort. In February 1942 he requested a commission in the U.S. Naval Reserve, but the Navy turned him down.

Undeterred, he offered his services to the Army, because he felt his music "would help considerably to ease some of the difficulties of army life." He also wanted to update the military bands because in his opinion they were still playing the same music in the same style as they had in WWI.

The Army accepted. In October 1942, Miller dissolved his civilian orchestra. After completing officer training on

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FROM THE EDITOR

My mistake. The September 2010 *News* included an article about the burial of S/Sgt John Bonnassiolle. I incorrectly reported that his crewmate, Sgt John Harringer, would be buried in October. Harringer's relatives have not yet been notified whether any of his remains have been identified. Sgt Michael Chiodo is the crewmate who was interred on 20 Oct 2010. 392nd navigator F/O George Richner attended the funeral; his account is on page 4. I regret the error.

Thank You! Many thanks to everyone who has shared photos, diaries, and military documents pertaining to their, or a loved one's, service with the 392nd. All help us perpetuate the legacy of the Group and the men and planes who served it so well.

Happy Birthday! The 576th and 579th Sqdns turn 68 this month, both having been activated in late December 1942. The 578th was activated on 20 Jan 1943 followed nine days later by the 577th. The 578th began service as the 566th Sqdn and the 579th as the 567th; both were redesignated on 1 Feb 1943 to the numbers we knew them by. The 392nd BG was formed per orders issued by HQ, 2nd AF, Fort George Wright, Washington, on 26 Jan 1943.

Can you believe it? According to Steve Birdsall's *Log of the Liberators*, "In 1951 only one B-24 appeared on the USAF's inventory, a B-24M used by the Aero Icing Research Laboratory, an almost unbelievable fact when peak Liberator strength had been 6,043 in the Army Air Forces in September 1944. That was approximately fifteen hundred more than the highest figure for the B-17, and by that time the Liberator was liberally spread throughout foreign air forces and the Navy. Of fifty-one heavy bomb groups activated and sent overseas between March 1942 and June 1944, thirty-seven were B-24 units."

Turkeys. Anyone who has visited Wendling in the past 50 years or so remembers the turkey pens on the main runways. Their owner, Bernard Matthews, began his turkey farms in the 1950s; the business expanded until it is the largest turkey firm in Europe. Ben Jones, 392nd Director, notified us of Matthews' death on 25 Nov 2010 at age 80. Ben wrote, "Without a doubt, he managed to save most of the still-surviving airfields from WWII in the East Anglia region, Wendling included. When he was starting up his business he purchased a lot of the former airfields from the Air Ministry and set up his turkey sheds on the runways, having the idea that these were perfect spots as nobody wanted to live near a turkey farm." Ben adds, "Ironically he should die on Thanksgiving!"

200th Mission. The 392nd's 100th and 200th missions occurred on equally historic days in 1944—D-Day (6 June) and Armistice Day (11 November). It took ten months to fly the first 100 but only five to fly the second 100 (an average of two missions every three days). 1825th Ordnance Co. records show that over 2,100 more tons of bombs were dropped during the second 100 than the first 100 missions.

B24 Fuel System. Per copilot Oak Mackey's B-24 Pilot Operating Manual, a Lib could carry 2,344 gallons in its four main tanks and 450 more in auxiliary fuel cells, all located in the wings. Pilot Bob Tichel reminds us that a gallon of aviation fuel weighs 6.2 pounds, so the total fuel weight is over 17,300 pounds. However, the auxiliary tanks did not feed directly to the engines. Thus, one of the engineer's main jobs was to carefully monitor fuel consumption and transfer fuel from the auxiliary to the main cells when necessary. Otherwise, the B-24 could run out of gas while still having fuel aboard. (Pilot Roland Sabourin recalls that "the engineer spent a lot of time transferring fuel.") Yet, the gauge for monitoring how much fuel remained in each cell was surprisingly simple (see photo at right, provided by 389th BG researcher Kelsey McMillan). The Flight Manual for B-24 Liberator warned pilots, "Check the fuel supply frequently lest an unexpected leak or excessive consumption place you in a difficult position."

1944 Christmas Press Release from the 392nd. "...As the holidays fall on Monday, when England's Public houses are open and begin their weekly ration of mild and bitters, Yank and Tommy can wish each other 'Merry Christmas' at their regular gathering places, though War may intrude and G.I. Joe may have to regulate his schedule by a mission going out. In any case, his most fervent wish will be for an end quickly with the next Christmas at home."



President's Message



Your officers are kept busy during our annual reunions attending to the affairs of the Association. But during the year they also become very busy when something comes up that requires immediate attention.

Such was the case over the past few months when we became aware that our tax-free status with the Internal Revenue Service was

threatened.

Our by-laws define us as a veterans' association, and the IRS requires 97% veteran membership to qualify for tax-free status. Our veteran membership is declining and second-generation and others are on the increase, so it became necessary for us to change our by-laws to an educational organization. And we needed to get it done immediately to accommodate the IRS tax filing schedule.

So there was a flurry of activity within the Executive Committee, led by vice-president Bob Books, ably abetted by secretary Annette Tison and treasurer Bill McCutcheon. As president, I just stood by and let them have at it, because they needed little or no guidance from me.

When we sent out the notice to the membership about the by-laws change, we said "please return your vote to Jim Goar and if we don't hear from you we will count it as an approval vote."

Many returned their approval vote by mail, e-mail, or telephone. And, believe me, it was a heart-warming experience for me. Many appended notes, and those and just the signatures rekindled memories of my contacts over the years.

One of the early ones was from Warren Van Pelt, who wondered about the legality of the automatic yes vote. This caught my attention and I decided that if we ever experienced an audit it would be better if we could produce a recorded majority of approval votes. It took only a few phone calls and e-mails to get this done, and the voting record is now in the hands of the Secretary in the event that the IRS or anyone else desires to see it.

Here are some, but not all, of the notes received with the votes: From Willard Pennington, Sqdn Executive Officer of the 577th—at the ripe old age of 98, he may be our oldest living member. From Bruce Sooy, 578th pilot, who said "I remember March 18, 1944" (the infamous Fredrichshafen mission when we lost 14 a/c). From Anne Brooks, daughter of Col Gilbert. From Nell Metz, widow of Bill Metz, Group Ordnance Officer.

From Ann Horn, widow of Tom Horn, NCOIC Group Armament. From Al Lester, formerly Al Lishka, pilot of one of the 578th's original crews. From Harold Bandelier, the Colonel's driver. From Olen Levell, 576th, the sole surviving Sqdn Commander. From John Muka, 577th, who simply said "How can I help?" and from Rupert Sutphin, sole survivor of his 578/9 crew and also a survivor of the fatal crash of the 578th's venerable P-Bar.

Many expressed appreciation for the work of the officers of the Association.

Annabelle and I wish all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. "God bless us, everyone."

Blue Skies,
Jim Goar

NEW BY-LAWS APPROVED

392nd BGMA members who were eligible to vote overwhelmingly approved the new by-laws proposed by the Board of Directors.

The 392nd BGMA is currently registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a non-profit veterans organization. As our membership continues to swell with descendants and other non-veterans, we will soon not meet IRS standards for a veterans organization. The new by-laws are the necessary first step as we transition to a non-profit educational association.

The purpose of the 392nd BGMA remains unchanged: "To perpetuate for future generations the legacy and history of the 8th Air Force, 392nd Bomb Group and the memory of lost comrades." Added in the new by-laws is a stronger emphasis on how we will accomplish that mission: "Through the work of its members and other entities it supports, the 392nd BGMA promotes educational, social, cultural and commemorative activities which compellingly present its rich history to succeeding generations."

The documentation required to change our status has been submitted to the IRS.

REPORT FROM ENGLAND

John Gilbert, a 392nd BGMA Director and our official representative in England, has been very busy on our behalf this year. He has escorted 14 Americans and friends around the base. The tours usually include visits to Wendling Village Hall which is looked after by John's sister-in-law, Mrs. Doreen Gilbert. The mural on the stage wall, a picture of the base painted by a local artist and school children, is in memory of the 392nd BG.

Then on to Jagspares, former site of the Combat Officer's Mess and still home to beautiful wall art; the Ben Burgess John Deere dealership, built over and around the former Operations Building; Honeypot Wood (where the bombs were stored); and much more.

John makes a point of bringing relatives to the sites where their loved ones lived and the hardstands next to the perimeter runway from which their fathers, uncles and relatives flew the B-24s, an emotional event for everyone.

This is possible only through the kindness of local landowners, who themselves have an emotional tie to the 392nd BG: Keith and Edor Rowland (Site 8); Guy and Margaret Littleproud (Site 10); Mr and Mrs. Billy Butcher and daughter Jill (of Manor House Farm, next to Honeypot Wood and the T2 hangar area). Our many thanks to these local landowners!

The entire Gilbert family work to make the tours so meaningful. After the trip around the base, John brings the visitors back to his home in Cawston. When they finish looking through John's extensive collection of 392nd photos, documents, and other memorabilia, wife Doris serves a meal

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SGT MICHAEL CHIDO INTERRED IN OHIO

On 20 Oct 2010, 579/6th navigator George Richner attended Sgt Michael Chido's funeral service in Chesterland, Ohio. He provided three articles from the Cleveland Plain Dealer about the event, from which this article draws.

Sgt Chido was a gunner on 2/Lt Robert R. Bishop's crew in the 578th. They were shot down on their way to Berlin, 29 Apr 1944, with everyone killed. In 2005 and 2007, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command recovered bone fragments from the crash site, some of which were recently identified as Chido's.

Rose Chido—the only survivor of the 12 children in the family—was there to welcome her brother home. They grew up in a two bedroom, one bath house. Rose remembers that Michael was “very, very cheerful” and that “when he got a job he bought us our first radio, a stand-up Philco.”

Rose expected very few mourners at the funeral. Instead, over 150 people attended. Members of Rolling Thunder and the Patriot Guard also provided a motorcycle honor guard to escort Sgt Chido to the cemetery. Hardly anyone except Rose knew Michael personally, but they all wanted to honor him for his service to our country.

The ceremony began with a bagpiper played “Going Home” from Dvorak's “New World Symphony” and ended with “Amazing Grace.” In between, a retired Army chaplain spoke of “paying a debt of honor, gratitude and respect” to Chido. Members of the Ohio National Guard demonstrated that when they carefully folded the American flag that had draped his coffin and presented it to Rose with the thanks of a grateful nation. A 21-gun salute followed the interment.

Rose is thankful that the POW/Missing Personnel Office

was able to identify Michael's remains through his DNA. She is also grateful to the Army for the dignified and respectful way they treated her brother Michael from the airport, to the mortuary, to the cemetery.

An Army veteran herself, Rose served as a lab technician at military hospitals in Texas and New York during WWII.

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4 December, he became a Captain in the Army Specialists Corps.

The Army Air Force

Shortly after (so the story goes), an alert Army Air Force officer requested the transfer of a Capt Alton G. Miller from the regular Army to the AAF. The reassignment was approved by an unsuspecting Army and Glenn Miller became an airman.

After he was appointed Director of Bands Training for the AAF Technical Training Command, he began recruiting some of his old musicians. One, Tex Beneke, had already joined the Navy. Miller wrote him, “I was very happy to get your letter and to know that you are all set, even if you are in the Navy. Of course you know the Air Corps is going to win the war, and I had so hoped you could have been in on it.”

In mid-1943, Miller started a weekly radio program called “I Sustain the Wings.” Broadcast for nearly a year—first by CBS, then by NBC—it featured Miller's full orchestra and a steady recruiting campaign for the AAF.

The band also played at many war bond drives, once raising pledges for over \$10 million in just three shows.

To England

Miller wanted to do more. He begged the War Department to let him take the band to Europe. Finally, permission was granted and in June 1944, the band moved to London. Near

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392nd BGMA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please look at the mailing label. Your membership status is shown right after your name. “10” means your membership is expiring and you need to renew promptly. LM means Life Member and FRND means that you receive the News with compliments of the 392nd BGMA. Send this form and your check (payable to 392nd BGMA) to Bill McCutcheon, 20620 Milton Ct., Brookfield, WI 53045. You may also join or renew on-line at <http://www.b24.net/392nd/join.htm>.

The Board of Directors has ruled that no Crusader will be denied membership because of financial difficulty, so if you're in straitened circumstances, check the Hardship Waiver box. If you feel that you can help the 392nd BGMA treasury with a donation, there is a provision for it below.

Name _____ Ground [] Air [] Sqdn/Unit _____

Mailing address _____

Email address _____ Telephone number _____

If a spouse, friend, or relative served in the 392nd, please give us his name and unit: _____

Dues:

☐ \$25/year if you wish to receive the News by postal mail OR ☐ \$20/year for receipt by email

Hardship Waiver ☐

DONATION \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

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misses by buzz bombs led Miller to relocate the band to Bedford, about 50 miles north of London.

During their five and a half months in England, Glenn Miller and his band broadcast first 13, then 17 radio programs a week. The entire concert orchestra performed as well as smaller ensembles such as the 17-piece dance band led by T/Sgt Ray McKinley, the 7-piece jazz group, the string section ("Strings with Wings"), and a small group highlighting singer Sgt Johnny Desmond. These programs were aired over the Allied Expeditionary Forces Network.

Flying out of airfields at Thurleigh and Twinwood Farm, the band also played 71 live concerts before nearly 250,000 military and civilian listeners. During one performance, LtGen Jimmy Doolittle said, "Next to a letter from home, Capt Miller, your organization is the greatest morale builder in the ETO."

During one afternoon concert, the band had just started playing its first tune, "In the Mood," when a buzz bomb was heard. Miller directed the band to keep playing, but much softer, as he wanted to make sure that he could hear if the buzz bomb's engine stopped, the sign that it was getting ready to impact. Luckily, it flew past them.

In the Air

It's been estimated that Miller and his men logged about 600 hours of flight time while they were in England, more than some combat airmen. Ironically, Miller hated to fly. The non-pressurized aircraft caused ringing in his ears, often lasting a day or more. He experienced frequent close calls when planes carrying his 62 band members and their gear started to land just as combat formations were taking off.

Capt Miller was also concerned that transportation was usually in "war-weary" planes. 2/Lt Don Haynes, Miller's manager before and during the war, said Miller frequently asked the brass, "How can you risk the lives of all those musicians? Aren't they more important than some of the bombs you carry on the *good* planes?"

Visit to the 392nd

579th pilot Jim McGregor remembers that he was on duty



Maj Miller (left) is greeted by 392nd CO Col Lorin Johnson (right). Transportation for the band may have included the plane behind them, 42-50284, Shoo Shoo Baby, one of the war-weary aircraft Miller was so worried about. In effect, the concert was Johnson's promotion party, as he became a full Colonel on 25 Aug 1944.

when he got a call on 25 Aug 1944 that the newly-promoted Maj Miller had a cancellation in his tour. If some bombers could fly down and get him and the band, they would do a show at Wendling.

McGregor rounded up the pilots and planes to bring the orchestra to Station 118. He was impressed at how "the band unloaded the

planes, organized themselves in a military manner and got set up in short order."

392nd CO Col Lorin Johnson commented to Miller that doing three performances in one day must be pretty hard work. Notwithstanding his routine schedule of 18-hour days, Miller replied, "We haven't lost a man yet, Colonel."

The large T2 hangar—usually the site for mechanical repairs on Liberators—became a concert hall. McGregor says the "hangar was packed, men hanging from the rafters, hospital wounded and all." He was quite concerned "about the guys in the rafters because you just couldn't sit still during one of Glenn Miller's shows."



The T2 hangar was literally packed to the rafters with Crusaders who wanted to see Glenn Miller in person.

579th Sqdn pilot Harrison S. Cassell described the event in letters to his wife Sally. "We are having Maj Glenn Miller & his band here ... what a treat that will be. We will have to hold it in a hangar to get them all in. I'll probably just stand & listen to him. He...says it is better than the one he had back in the states." Then, "Maj Glenn Miller and his orchestra played for us for an hour this afternoon... His orchestra has about 60 men in it and members from all big name bands and even a band leader Sgt Ray McKinley is his drummer. Pianist is from Benny Goodman, also a first trumpet from B.G.'s band, sax from Artie Shaw, Vaughn Monroe and others, including a string orchestra 15 violins and 2 cellos from symphony orchestra.... This all happened just after a mission [to the FW-190 assembly plant at Schwerin] landed so all the boys got to hear him. He still uses the same theme song and is his music sweet—boy was it good to hear him."

The day was especially eventful for 579th 1/Sgt Ted Zeman and S/Sgt Robert A. White. Zeman had a great voice. During the performance, he was part of a duet that sang with the band.

White, a gunner on the Ruvolis and Pardue crews, was the lucky winner of a \$1,000 war bond. Miller had asked 1/Lt Nancy Luce, a WAC cryptographer, to draw the winning raffle ticket.

Two men in the audience had a personal connection to Miller. Before enlisting in September 1942, S/Sgt Nevin W. Geary (ball turret gunner on Cassell's crew) had played alto sax with Glenn Miller's band. When Miller arrived at the

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Miller dazzled the 3,000 airmen in the audience at Wendling with his skill on the trombone.

base, he looked over, saw Geary, and yelled, "You son of a ----! Are you going to play with us tonight?" He then ignored the waiting 392nd brass, walked over, and gave Geary a big hug. Geary did play with the band during their show.

While growing up, navigator 2/Lt David Greene was best friends with drummer Buddy Rich's younger brother. Rich introduced him to Miller, who called him "Buddy's buddy." After Greene landed from the mission on 25 August, he learned that Miller was performing in the T2 hangar. He forced his way through the audience until he reached the bandstand. Miller recognized Greene, and after finishing a trombone solo, walked over to Greene and said, "Buddy's buddy, good to see you!"

Jack Teufel, CO of the 1825th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Co., made sure he was at the concert. He remembers that the band played many of the old favorites as well as some newer songs. He "thoroughly enjoyed the show" and said it was "a great morale booster."

Even before the program ended, three B-17s arrived to transport the band to their evening performance for the 388th BG at Knettishall.

Going to the Continent

In mid-November 1944, Miller was finally given the offer he'd been yearning for—an invitation to take his band to Paris for six weeks and entertain troops in the hospital or on leave from the front lines. For it to happen, though, the band would have to pre-record the 102 radio programs that would be aired while they were gone.

Over the next 18 days, the band recorded all those shows in addition to performing their regularly scheduled live broadcasts.

The band finished recording on 12 December and then began packing for their trip across the Channel.

Anxious to get started, Miller decided to fly to Paris before the band. He wanted to arrange transportation and billeting for the band and set up their performance schedule.

He also intended to make sure that the band would be allowed to stay on the Continent for six months or until the end of the war (whichever came last).

Gen Eisenhower issued orders for Miller to commence travel by military aircraft on or about 14 December. Unfortunately, a period of bad weather had set in, bad enough to ground the 392nd from 13-22 December. It also grounded the military shuttle that regularly flew between London and Paris. However, LtCol Norman Baessell, an

acquaintance of Miller and Haynes, had business in Paris and had scheduled his own flight. Miller accepted Baessell's offer to join him.

Final Flight

On the afternoon of 15 Dec 1944, pilot F/O John R.S. Morgan flew a UC-64A Norseman single-engine plane to Twinwood Farm to pick up the two men. After completing a combat tour aboard B-24s, he was the personal pilot for General Goodrich at Army Headquarters. He'd flown the England-to-Paris route many times.

Had this been a combat mission, though, it would have been scrubbed. The temperature was just above freezing, there was a steady rain, and the cloud ceiling was about 200 feet. The conditions were ideal for icing yet the Norseman had no de-icing equipment.

While waiting for Morgan, Miller wondered whether the pilot would be able to find Twinwood Farm as "even the birds are grounded." Then, Morgan descended through the clouds and landed.

With the prop still turning, Miller and Baessell threw their bags on the plane and said their last goodbyes to Haynes. Miller then asked Baessell, "Where the hell are the parachutes?" to which Baessell jokingly replied, "What's the matter, Miller? Do you want to live forever?"

They took off at 1:55pm and in less than a minute were out of sight.

On 18 December, the bad weather finally cleared long enough for the band to fly to Paris. It was only then, when Miller didn't meet them, that anyone realized he had not arrived in Paris.

A search was made, but no trace of the men or plane was found.

The Band Played On

On 21 December, the band played its first concert without Miller, for 4,300 combat troops on 48-hour passes from the front. The enthusiastic reaction led the top brass to realize the band's impact on morale was still unsurpassed. Under the leadership of T/Sgt Ray McKinley and T/Sgt Generoso Graziano (also known as Jerry Gray), the band entertained troops on the Continent until the war ended.

On the 23rd, Miller's wife Helen was notified by telegram that her husband was missing in action; soon after, Gen Henry H. "Hap" Arnold called to offer his personal condolences. The next day, a press release about Miller's disappearance was issued. It emphasized that no other members of the band were on the missing plane.



Jack Teufel, 1825th Ordnance Co. CO, took this photo of Miller shaking hands and signing autographs after his show at Wendling.

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The final performance of Maj Glenn Miller's AAF Band was on 13 Nov 1945 in Washington, DC. President Harry S. Truman and Generals Dwight D. Eisenhower and "Hap" Arnold were in the audience. When the band began playing Miller's signature tune, "Moonlight Serenade," President Truman led the audience in a standing ovation for Glenn Miller—the man, the musician, and the patriot.

Impact

The band was disestablished effective 15 Jan 1946. It had been in existence for 1,032 days. Noted music historian Edward F. Polic notes that "During that period it became the greatest band that ever existed and performed fully in every possible way to improve the morale of the Allied soldiers and to help win the war. Glenn Miller gave up everything, including his life, to serve his country."

Theories

Theories about what happened to Miller abound. One suggests that he was a secret agent who "disappeared" in order to perform clandestine work on the Continent. Another is that he really died of cancer and his Missing in Action status was an attempt to make his death seem more noble.

In 1984, the navigator on a British Lancaster bomber said that on 15 Dec 1944 he had seen a Norseman flying well below his plane just before they jettisoned a 4,000 pound bomb over the Channel. The tail gunner then reported seeing the Norseman spiraling down toward the sea. Is the story true? Was it Miller's plane? No one knows for sure.

The official military inquiry decided that the Norseman probably developed icing problems on the wings or carburetor freezing and sank in the English Channel, where the water temperature was about 25 degrees Fahrenheit.

Since no trace of the plane or the men has ever been found, Miller's fate remains a mystery.

Cambridge American Cemetery

The names F/O John R.S. Morgan (35th Repair Squadron, 35th Air Depot Group), Maj A. Glenn Miller (Army Air Force Band), and LtCol Norman F. Baessell (Headquarters Squadron, VIII Air Service Command), are listed on the Tablets of the Missing at Cambridge American Cemetery.

Editor's note: Information for this article is from George T. Simon's book, Glenn Miller & His Orchestra, the two-volume set The Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band by Edward F. Polic, and Sideman: Stories about THE Band by Paul Tanner. Another source is the conversation in 2008 between 579th pilot James A. McGregor and Allen "Mac" Cassell (son of 579th pilot Harrison S. Cassell). Cassell also gave permission to quote from his father's letters.

THE CRUSADERS DANCE BAND

Miller's wasn't the only band to perform at Station 118. In fact, the 392nd had its own dance band. 576th Sqdn navigator James R. Longenecker told his wife that the band played at station dances and "it was a lot of fun." Members were from both air and ground support units: Accordion, Lou Mennini; Vocalist, John Flohr; Clarinet, Walter Harvie; 2nd Tenor Sax, Leroy Maule; band director and 1st Alto Sax, Nevin Geary; 3rd Alto Sax, Herb Mintz; 4th Tenor Sax, Dick Longenecker; Piano, Bob Henry; Guitar, Carl Hulshaver; Trombone, Tom Jordan; 1st Trumpet, Bud Babcock; 2nd

Trumpet, Harry Ashman; 3rd Trumpet, Donald Viera; Guitar, Arnold Landsburg; Drums, Joe Roweane; Bass, Carl Conrath.



The Crusaders performing on 4 Mar 1945. Photo from Nevin Geary as seen in the book *Legacy of a Lead Crew: The Boys of the "Sally Ann"* by Mac Cassell.

31 DECEMBER 1944

Dick Esenwein, right waist gunner on 2/Lt Alex E. Majesky's crew in the 577th, recalls New Year's Eve, 1944.

We were trying to bomb a bridge [at Euskirchen, Germany], but we got hit by fighters—six ME-109 German fighters. They shot out three of our engines. As this happened, I was in the bomb bay trying to drop the bombs. They didn't want to fall from the bombardier position so I had to use a screwdriver to get them loose.

The fighters hit us while I was there. I was standing on a metal track, six inches wide, with the bomb bay doors open and only the sky and earth below. It was just like the Fourth of July with the cannon shells going off.

When I got back in the waist of the plane, I found that Sgt Seymour Adelman, the other waist gunner, had been wounded and that Sgt Joseph F. Martin Jr., the tail gunner, had glass in his eyes. I told him to keep moving his guns so the Germans would know we were still alive. I called the radio operator, Sgt Melvin A. Ivey, to bring back morphine. He was to keep it warm and from freezing. I put it in Adelman's leg and the morphine went crunch—it was frozen. Then I put a bandage on his leg.

We were very lucky. We landed just after that on an old fighter runway near Reims, France. It turned out to be the 101st Parachute reserve base. There was a field hospital there. I took Adelman and Sgt Francis M. "Pat" Patton, our engineer, took Joe.

Pat and I were both asked if we wanted a Purple Heart for our scratches, and we both said no. I knew Dad would get a notice of it at the newspaper before I could write a letter explaining it. We didn't know it was worth five points toward discharge.

We stayed with the 101st paratroopers that night. They were going in to the Battle of the Bulge. I had a good time with them. I traded my flying boots for a German pistol and a pair of paratrooper boots.

That night we had a bomb attack and all the troops went out to a shelter. I stayed in bed. I celebrated New Year's Eve the same night at their NCO club. Lots of champagne, etc.

We saw our plane the next day. In the seven feet between my waist position and the tail were 126 holes.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Jill Scott, Trustee of the 392nd BG Memorial with husband Tom, provided this information and photos of the Remembrance Sunday service at the Memorial. Held this year on November 14, Remembrance Sunday is akin to our Memorial Day. The photos show that the 392nd BG is still near and dear to the hearts of those who live near Station 118.

For once, the weather was kind to us. No wind, no rain and not too cold! Still a few leaves left on the beech trees. The colours this autumn have been wonderful. There was a very large crowd. Many of them had been at the earlier Service in Beeston church where, at the War Memorial, a two minute silence was kept and wreaths laid in memory of those villagers killed in the two World Wars. A Service in the church followed.



The flags at half-mast before the Service.



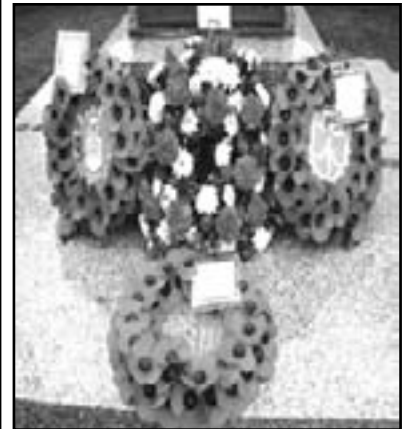
The villagers arrive at the 392nd Memorial.



Rodney Walthew and Kim Wheeler are ready to raise the flags at the appropriate time.



Tom Butler-Stoney presided over the service at the Memorial and the earlier one in the church. This photo shows the Standards of the British Legion and the Brownies lowered in commemoration of the 392nd airmen who lost their lives in service to our two countries.



The four wreaths: The 392nd's wreath (with red, white and blue flowers); a wreath given by the Parish Council on behalf of the village; a wreath given by the Brownies; and a wreath placed by Chris Quinn, whose uncle T/Sgt Norman Lancy is one of the casualties whom the Memorial honors.



Chris Quinn (left), served in the USAF for 30 years. Ernie Parke (right) spent much time at Station 118 while a boy and laid the wreath on behalf of the 392nd BG.



Memorial Trustee Tom Scott (left) and Ernie Parke (right).

FATHER ROBERT MARTIN'S PRAYER

by Jim Goar, Associate Editor

We first discovered our Prayer at a reunion in England many years ago when Jill Scott handed the manuscript to Carroll Cheek. It had been passed to her from the local vicar, and was for use at the annual Remembrance ceremony at the Wendling Memorial. All we knew about it then was that it was composed by a former 576th pilot named Robert Martin who had become an Episcopal priest.

It was so eloquent and compelling that we immediately claimed it as our own. We print it in every edition of the newsletter; we had it placed in the narthex of the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles at the Mighty 8th AF Museum at Savannah; and we hear that Crusaders use it at Rotary Clubs and other service organizations, churches, and many other public occasions.

Over the years, we searched for the elusive Robert Martin and finally found him last summer when he registered for the Detroit meeting. He was unable to attend, but from his registration data we made contact with him. From a couple of phone conversations we are now able to introduce the author of our Prayer to our readers and to 577th Sqdn bombardier Dr. George Barger, our other Episcopal priest and our former chaplain.

1/Lt Robert C. Martin, Jr. was able to finish his A. B. degree at Harvard University before he entered pilot training. He and his crew were assigned to the 576th on 31 May 1944 and by 15 September they had completed their 30 missions.

Back in the States, he was an instructor pilot on B-24s and later the monster B-36. He left the Service in August of 1945, and by 1950 had obtained his Master's degree from Harvard. He attended seminary and in 1951 was ordained in the Episcopal church.

His first parish was at Marietta, OH. After that, he became the founding vicar at the Episcopal Church at Wright-Patterson AF Base at Dayton. He held this post for three years and then was on the staff of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church for some nine years.

Then, after serving at Meadville, PA, he went to Erie, PA, and retired from there as Dean of the Chapel in 1979.

It was on a visit to Wendling when he gave the Prayer to Reverend Jonathon Boston, then the presiding vicar of the church at Litcham.

His wife Louise is deceased, and he has one son and two daughters. He lives at 7935 Slate Ridge Blvd., Reynoldsburg, OH 43068.

GILBERT from page 3

fit for a king. Throughout, son Adrian provides technical expertise in the form of scans, photocopies, etc.

Visitors this year: Annette and Don Tison (Annette's uncle, 579th Sqdn navigator 2/Lt Douglas Franke, was killed on 29 Apr 1944); John Clendening and family (John's father was 577th Sqdn radio operator T/Sgt Roger Clendening); Mr. and Mrs. Doug Semler (Doug's father was 579th Sqdn navigator 1/Lt Robert E. Semler); Sharon and Darrell Cohoon (Sharon's father was 577th waist gunner S/Sgt Ambrose R. Pfeifer); Chris and Carmel Quinn with friends Gary Gould and family (Chris is the nephew of 577th radio operator T/Sgt Norman J. Lancy, killed on 4 Aug 1944); and Chuck and Patricia King, with friends Reg and Jean Staniford (Chuck's father was 578th engineer T/Sgt Charlie C. King).

As described in the June 2010 News, Gary Gould's mother was engaged to T/Sgt Lancy before his death. When Lancy's nephew Chris Quinn visited the Memorial, Gould and his family met them. RAF Marham kindly provided their Mini-bus to transport the extended Lancy family around Wendling, with John Gilbert as their guide. Special thanks to Group Captain S.P. Rochelle who welcomed the group at RAF Marham, Sgt George Denham TMS who was the driver for the day and girlfriend Laura, Corporal Robert Swanson TMS, and photographer Matthew Reeve. The assistance provided by RAF Marham is greatly appreciated!

The Gilbert family wishes everyone in the 392nd BGMA a very happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.



During his visit to the memorial on 22 November, Chuck King adds a cross with his father's name to those placed for the Remembrance Sunday service.

FOLDED WINGS REPORT

Please report the death of a member or spouse and provide a copy of the newspaper obituary if possible.

Name of deceased _____ Unit/Sqdn _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of death _____ Survivors _____

Reported by _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

The 392nd BGMA is engaged in a fund-raising effort to financially support our website, www.b24.net. It contains the history of the 392nd Bomb Group. You could make no greater tribute to your loved one than a donation for this living and ongoing memorial to the 392nd. Please send this report, hopefully with your check payable to the 392nd BGMA-Website, but send it with or without it, to: Annette Tison, 9107 Wood Pointe Way, Fairfax Station, VA 22039

How Cold Was It???

In his memoir, From Plowboy to Flyboy, pilot Carl Scharf provides details about the winter of 1944-45. He had been assigned to the 576th before being transferred to the 579th as a lead crew.

There was one difference between the 576th and the 579th squadron sites. The 576th had a large pile of coke to use in our little coke stoves in the huts when the weather got cold. The pile was enclosed by a block wall about four feet high and maybe 40 feet square. The coke, much like our charcoal briquettes, had probably been elevated into the enclosure and the pile was about 20 feet high in the center. I believe this stash of coke was supposed to supply all the little coke stoves on the base for the winter of 1944-1945.

In early December, the weather turned steadily worse. We had snow, ice and frost. Each of our rooms had a little cast iron stove about the size of a 10-gallon milk can. We were allotted only one small sack of coke a week to fuel this little stove. That ration lasted only two or three days, so remembering the big pile of coke back at our old 576th squadron site, we decided to do a little midnight requisitioning. We crept down the lane and over to the pile and filled a couple of sacks and dragged them home. This worked pretty well for a few days, until one night we snuck over there and saw a guard with a rifle over his shoulder guarding the pile. Needless to say, we snuck right back home.

It seems a lot of other guys had the same wonderful idea that we did. Worse yet, in a few days the pile was almost completely gone. This coke pile supplied the whole base and the continued cold weather had caused the pile to be used up very early in the winter. As our fuel supply dwindled away, bombardier James B. Thomas Jr. had a great idea. He noticed that the incendiary and personnel bombs came in heavy wooden crates made of 2x4s and inch-thick boards. Somehow we managed to get some of them back to our hut, knock them apart, and store them inside, so we were prepared when the coke supply ran out.

One cold day, a couple of guys in a 6x6 truck backed into our squadron site and dumped off a pile of assorted logs, some of them 10 feet long or more. They then threw a two-man cross-cut saw and an axe on top of the logs and drove away. Nothing happened for a couple of days, and the weather got worse. All of a sudden, there were Lt. Colonels, Majors, Captains, and Lieutenants out there sawing up and splitting firewood. It was either that or freeze.

The temperature on the flight deck of a B-24 would register 50 below zero on the thermometer on the instrument panel at 25,000 feet. There were no heaters on the planes but we had electrically heated flying suits and gloves, which were great as long as they worked. If someone was hit by a piece of flak, it would generally cut a wire in the suit and the whole thing would short out or even catch on fire. If the electrical system of the plane was hit, none of the suits would work.

When we were in Topeka before going overseas, we were all issued two or three sets of "long johns" wool underwear. They were made up of two pieces: a bottom and a long-sleeved top like a sweatshirt. Some of the preppy college-type guys stated they wouldn't be caught dead in long underwear and

threw theirs in the trash. Well, at the base in England there were no long johns to be had in supply, as they had already been issued to us. These same guys were now running around pleading on bended knee for someone to sell them a pair of long johns. As far as I know, no one gave or sold them anything. It served them right!



Regardless of the weather, the men of the 392nd BG enjoyed Christmas festivities. Top photo—a fancy meal on 25 Dec 1943; middle photo—party games the same day at the just-opened Red Cross Aero Club; bottom photo—celebrating Christmas at the Red Cross Aero Club, date unknown.

2ADA NEWS

2010 Reunion Report

by Oak Mackey, our 2ADA Chairman

The 63rd Annual Convention of the Second Air Division Association met in New Orleans, Louisiana September 10-13, 2010 at the Omni Royal Hotel. Our special guests from Great Britain were Matthew Martin, Chairman of the Memorial Trust Board of Governors, and his wife Patsy; David Gurney, Governor; Andrew Hawker, Governor, and his wife Andrea; Anthony Harmer, Governor, and his wife Elizabeth; and Pat Ramm, a friend of the 453rd BG.

The grand total of all those who came to New Orleans was 157, including 51 veterans of the Second Air Division. From the 392nd BG were just Maxine and myself.

Events on Friday, Sep. 10, were a Tour of New Orleans, Cocktail Party, and Dinner. Saturday featured the Annual Membership Business Meeting, Annual Heritage League Meeting, Cocktail Party followed by an excellent Cajun Dinner. The after-dinner entertainment was provided by a Cajun Band and Dancers who demonstrated and taught dances such as the Cajun two-step, Cajun waltz, and others. It was lively, it was good, it was unique, something not seen nor heard outside of Cajun country.

The Dancers soon had the dance floor full of old folk learning the two-step and everything else, and it went on for two full hours. Governor Tony Harmer must have danced every dance, he had a great time, and it was his first visit to a 2ADA Convention.

On Sunday Sep. 12th, there was a tour of the National WWII Museum. Those who went reported the Museum was well worth seeing; those who didn't go there, like myself, wished they had. After Cocktail Hour, the evening program began with the Presentation of the Colors provided by the New Orleans Police Department, then the Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation, Star Spangled Banner, God Save the Queen, and the Candle Lighting Ceremony. Following the tasty roast beef banquet dinner, we were entertained by the St. James Snazzy Singers, a women's choral group, an appropriate end to the three day convention.

Betty Lee, wife of Past President John Lee, was the Conventions Committee Chairman and is to be congratulated for a well planned and somewhat unusual Convention. It was a fun event.

Chuck Walker was elected President of the 2ADA and he lives in Dallas. The 2011 Convention will be in September on a cruise ship. Chuck has appointed Maxine Mackey as Convention Chairman. It will be a good one.

Cataloguing Project

Much progress has been made on the Evelyn Cohen and Jordan Uttal Memorial Cataloguing Project for 2AD items held by the Memorial Library. The project will improve and update the existing catalogue and record new accessions to the archives of the 2AD held at the Norfolk Record Office.

The project began in June 2010 and will take 10 months.

The venture is funded mainly through memorial donations to the 2ADA in honor of Evelyn and Jordon as well as by contributions from the Norfolk Record Office and the Norfolk Library and Information Service. For more information, see http://www.2ndair.org.uk/Archive_collections/NCC081499.

2011 Convention

by Maxine Mackey, 2ADA Convention Chairperson



Lucky you! Here is all the available information on our next 2ADA Convention, 17-22 Sept 2011. It may, or may not, cheer you up depending on which part

of the country you live in. And, don't forget—Christmas is almost here. How about a cruise as a gift for your spouse, parent, or children?

The convention will be aboard the cruise ship "Enchantment of the Seas," departing Baltimore, Maryland, on 17 Sept 2011, cruising to Bermuda, then returning to Baltimore on 22 September.

For complete information and prices, contact Terri Lane, Catchawave Vacations, 9637 W. Runion Dr., Peoria, AZ 85382

Phone: 972-824-0202

email: terri_catchawave@cox.net

<http://www.CATCHAWAVEVACATIONS.COM>

CABIN CATEGORIES RESERVED FOR THE 2ADA:

Inside, Category L; Deck 2,3,4 \$629.31 per person Qty 18

Outside, Category I; Deck 2 \$779.31 per person Qty: 8

Outside, Category H; Deck 3 \$789.31 per person Qty: 25

Outside, Category G; Deck 4 \$809.31 per person Qty: 4

Note: Rates above are based on double occupancy. Single, Triple, Quadruple occupancy rates are different. Please check with Terri Lane for correct prices.

Price is for cruise only and includes government taxes, trip insurance and transfers to and from the ship. The deposit for your cabin is \$200; however, the 2nd Air Division is paying the first \$50 of your stateroom deposit. The remaining deposit of \$150 is due by April 2, 2011 to reserve your stateroom. Final payment for your stateroom is due by July 4, 2011. Passports are required.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL VETERANS: The Association is paying the full deposit of \$200 for your stateroom. Please call Terry Lane by April 2, 2011 to book your stateroom. You will be responsible for the remaining balance due on the stateroom of your choice by July 4, 2011.

Airfare arrangements may be made through Royal Caribbean by contacting Terri Lane. Should you choose to make your own airfare arrangements Royal Caribbean has no obligation for your on-time arrival to the pier.

If you like, you may prepay the suggested gratuities of \$48.25 per person upon booking.

Pier side assistance is available for the handicapped or disabled. Wheelchair rentals are available through a third party for a fee. The wheelchair would be waiting for you in your stateroom. When booking your reservations please let Terri Lane know that you need this service. There is also a doctor on board the ship to handle any medical attention a passenger may need.

Terri Lane is standing by to answer all your questions, so call her today!

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

by Tom Perry, 576th Sqdn Armorer

We are in the season of the year when we traditionally celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the savior of the world, which had been predicted hundreds of years earlier.

My thoughts about Jesus have been concentrating on Him from the beginning through the end of time.

Genesis, Chapter One, opens with "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The gospel of John, Chapter One, opens with, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...all things were made through Him and without Him nothing was made...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

In the book of Revelation, Chapter 21, He says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts."

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Blessed New Year.

392nd Bomb Group Memorial Association
9107 Wood Pointe Way
Fairfax Station, VA 22039
USA

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

First Class Mail



**THE 392ND MEMORIAL
AT WENDLING**

But we...shall be remember'd;



**We few, we happy few,
we band of brothers.**



**For he to-day that sheds
his blood with me
Shall be my brother...**

William Shakespeare
Henry V

Almighty God, Who has blessed us with the will and courage to do our duty, we praise You for our comrades whose death kept freedom living. We praise You also for giving us the years we have lived since their departure. We pray that You will strengthen and sustain our devotion to truth and justice, so that we may be faithful beneficiaries of their sacrifice. Continue Your mercy to our comrades; keep them in Your care; and bring us all at last into Your presence there to rejoice Eternally. Amen. — Composed by 576th pilot the Very Reverend Robert C. Martin, retired Dean of the Cathedral at Erie, Pennsylvania.

∞FOLDED WINGS∞

Helena Zybort, widow of Stan, September 2010

Robert E. Lane, 578, Sept. 23, 2010

Orlando H. Friesen, 577, Oct. 7, 2010

Herman L. Craighead, HQ, Sept. 22, 2010

Donald C. Bailey, 578/9, July 11, 2010

James R. Longenecker, 576, Mar. 17, 2002

Ruth V. Newlands, friend of

Joe McNiel, 578, Nov. 14, 2010