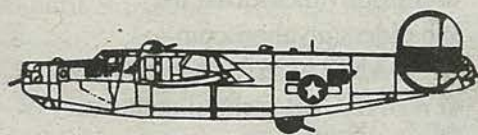


NEWS



392nd BG Memorial Association

VOLUME 22

February, 2007

2ADA AND 8AFHS REUNIONS- A TALE OF TWO CITIES

392nd BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASS'N
REWARDS FAITHFUL SERVANTS
CHARLES DYE AND ERNEST BARBER

At the annual Group meeting at Falls Church last October plaques were ordered to acknowledge the contributions to the Association by Dye and Barber.

Charles Dye is presently serving as President, and before that has held the post as Treasurer for many years. At Wending he was Base Ammunition Officer, serving in the 1825th Ordnance Company.

He also has been active in the leadership of the 8AF Historical Society, having been its President and having held other posts of responsibility in that organization.

Dye is a retired lawyer and practiced in the transportation industry. He also was an instructor at the University of Wisconsin.

He is married to Helen, a former Navy nurse, and they live at 300 Valencia Drive SE, No. 10, Albuquerque, NM 87108.

Ernest Barber has been the archivist of the 392nd, taking charge of our memorabilia and for many years transported it in his pickup truck to our meetings. Although now somewhat handicapped by failing eyesight, he is also busy at his computer acting as part of a team that answers questions posed by visitors to the Group's web site.

He was a crew chief in the 578th, joining the 392nd at Biggs Field in March, 1943. He received the Bronze Star for crewing a B-24 for 32 missions without an abort. He crewed 7 combat a/c with a total of 143 missions without a mechanical abort.

He retired from the U. S. Postal Service in 1981. A widower, he lives at 5726 Thomson Hiway, Lincolnton, GA 30817.

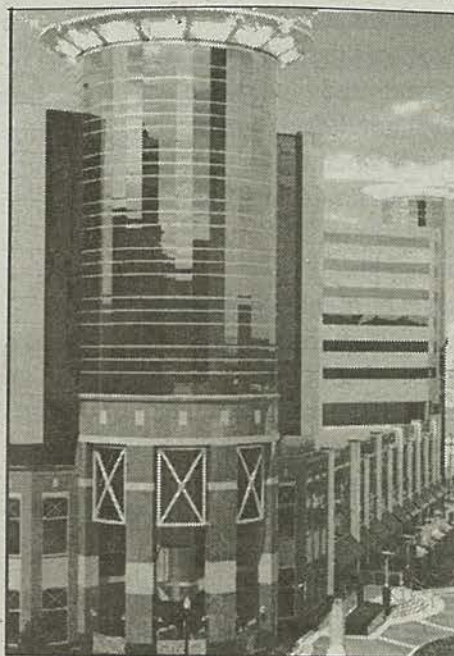
TWO GREAT CITIES IN MICHIGAN WILL
HOST THE 8AFHS AND 2ADA MEETS:
8AFHS JULY 17-22; 2ADA AUG 31-SEPT 3

It's the Radisson Plaza in Kalamazoo for the 8AFHS and the Amway Grand Plaza in Grand Rapids for the 2ADA. The official annual meeting of the 392BGMA will be with the 8AFHS at Kalamazoo this year, but Crusaders are urged to attend both if possible.

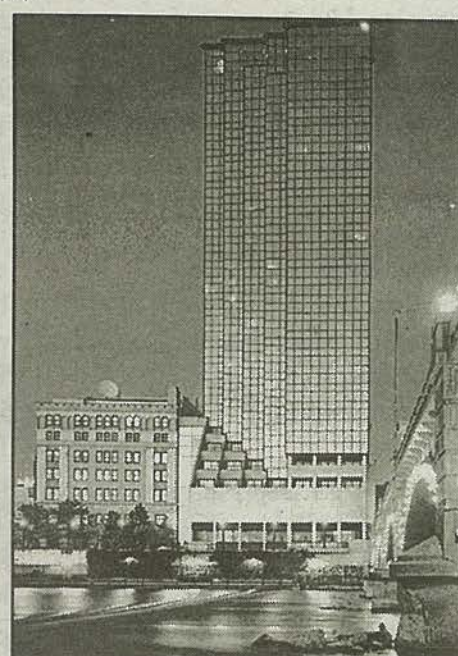
Summer dates are expected to encourage more second, third, and fourth generation involvement. The guest speaker at the 8AFHS reunion will be Jonna Doolittle Hoppes, granddaughter of General James H. Doolittle. Also at Kalamazoo will be a fly-in of the B-17 "Yankee Lady", and limited rides at \$400 will be offered.

8AFHS officials are urging early hotel reservations, as several Fighter and Bomb Groups new to the organization have expressed an interest in attending.

Watch these pages and the magazines of 2ADA and 8AFHS for more information, and the 8thafhs.org website will also furnish current details.



Radisson Plaza, Kalamazoo



Amway Grand Plaza, Grand Rapids

392BGMA ELECTRONIC DIRECTORY

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www.b24.net

8AF Museum, Savannah

www.mighty8th.org

392ND ANTHOLOGY EDITOR CREATES CROSS-INDEX WITH 392ND A/C LIST

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392nd SUPPORTS CROSSING THE RHINE AT WESEL

By Jim Goar

This brief introduction to Annette Ticen's impeccable documentation of the Wesel mission might put the operation into perspective:

By March of 1945, with D-day in June 1944 and the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944-January 1945 behind them, the Allies had arrived at the position for which they had come to Europe: to invade Germany and force them to surrender. Allied forces were drawn up all along the Rhine River, and British General Montgomery was at the north end with combined British and American troops. Operation Varsity was part of their crossing of the Rhine, and according to one authority "the unqualified success in the north was the signal for all the Allied armies to begin the victory sweep through Germany".

By Annette Ticen

The mission on 24 March 1945 was in support of Allied troops engaged in Operation Varsity. The 2nd Air Division's Field Order stated, "Varsity can be considered the most important combined operation since the invasion of France. 2AD's mission is the D-day supply of assault and airborne forces which will have landed on the German side of the Rhine shortly before our crews drop supplies to them. The magnitude of an operation of this sort makes it essential that for its complete success each part of the job by each force participating must be carried out with exactitude. 2AD is committed to drop supplies in the places designated."

It was the largest single-day airborne operation in history. Paratroop and ground troops from the US, Britain, and Canada were delivered behind enemy lines by nearly 1,600 aircraft and gliders. Dropped with them were equipment and supplies such as artillery, weapons and vehicles. Fifteen minutes later came 240 B-24s from the 2nd, 14th, and 20th Combat Wings to drop bundles with ammunition, ordnance, grenades, rations, blankets, medical supplies, etc. Half the bundles were for American troops and half for British use with the drop zones about four miles apart.

Mission briefings were quite thorough, lasting nearly four hours at each of the nine Groups involved. Squadrons were to be flown as loosely as possible without straggling, by both element and wing men. Positions should be maintained fairly well abreast with maximum spread laterally. The formation was to close up for dropping and spread out again on climb and withdrawal. Planes were not to begin their climb until after crossing the Rhine; units withdrawing were to give way to units penetrating.

Pilots were instructed to uncover at the turn after hitting the French coast; to hit the Initial Point (IP) at 500 feet, let down to the deck, and then pull up. They were warned not to exceed 150 mph indicated air speed at time of dropping lest parachutes be destroyed and the supplies lost. Bundles were to be released from a height of 300-500 feet. Pilots could use 10-15 degree flaps as needed, but wheels were not to be lowered.

It was stressed to all crews that the warning bell would be used to signal the

release of bundles, not as a bail-out signal. Gunners were warned repeatedly not to fire at ground positions, for fear of hitting Allied troops.

It was hoped that intense anti-flak operations preceding the drop would put most of the German flak guns out of action. With an estimated 25,000 German troops on the ground, mission planners thought that the greatest danger to the bombers would come from small arms fire. Pilots were told that the best defense against flak after the drop was to fly as close to the deck as possible and to recross our own lines as quickly as possible. However, the turn back should not be made too sharply as an aircraft presents a larger target to the gunner when it is banking steeply.

A few practice missions were flown in France and special intelligence briefings were held with sand box mock-ups of the Rhine River and drop areas.

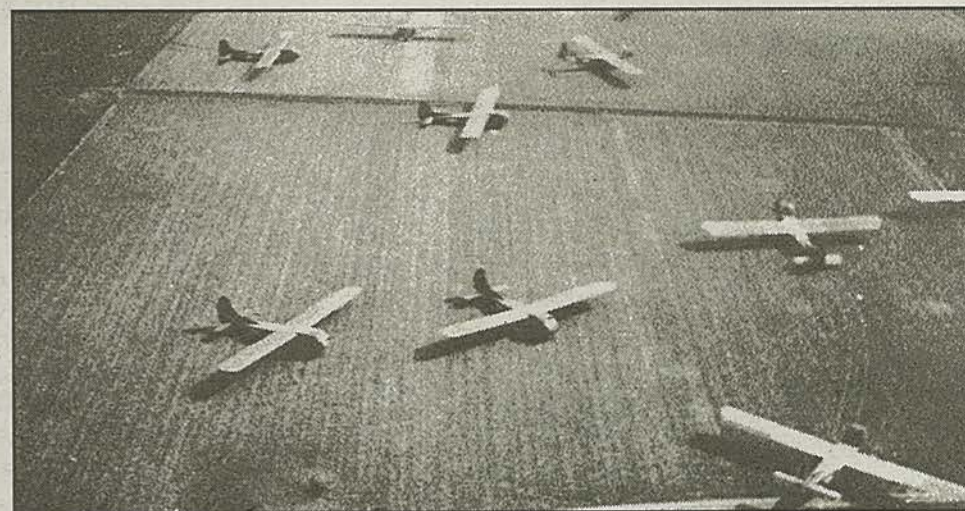
392nd BG take-offs began at 0930 on 24 March. As they neared the landing zones, crews saw chaos on the ground. Gliders and tow planes littered the terrain. Buildings were on fire and troops were moving quickly on the ground. Haze and smoke were everywhere.

In the air, the mission was uneventful for the 13 a/c with bundles for American troops. For the ships with bundles for British troops, including the Proctor, Hummel, and Frazier crews, it was far from easy.

Proctor crew

After dropping their British loads, the Proctor crew flew over German-held territory as they turned west. They were hit immediately by ground fire. One engine quit; as soon as it was feathered, they were hit in the waist area. Several fires resulted but no injuries. Moments later, a second engine died because its fuel lines had been sliced by the bullets.

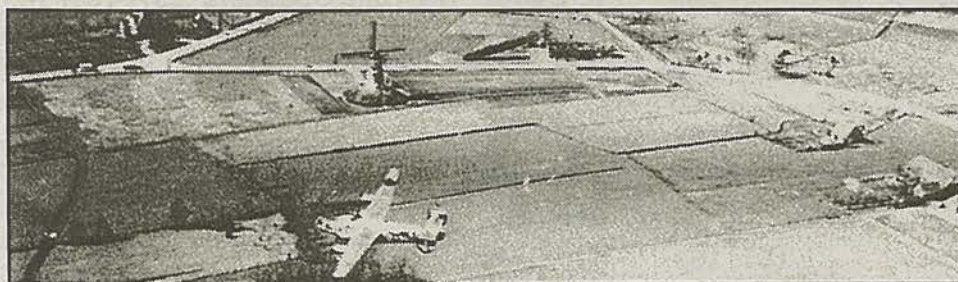
With two engines gone, the pilots couldn't maintain altitude. Just a hundred



Gliders were everywhere as 392nd BG crews flew over the drop zones.

or so meters above the trees, pilot 2/Lt Herchel Proctor and copilot 2/Lt Carroll Russell began searching for a clearing in the woods. They told the crew to assume crash positions.

Proctor spotted a field just ahead and ordered the wheels down. Down went the landing gear and then the flaps. #476 touched down with as nice a landing as Proctor ever made. Luckily, the nose wheel broke and they stopped 100 yards short of a brick house. Once outside the plane, they gave first aid to radio operator S/Sgt Desmond Kerfoot, whose leg was broken when he was thrown out through the cargo hole. Thankfully, Gas House Gus had gotten them as far as Allied-controlled Belgium.

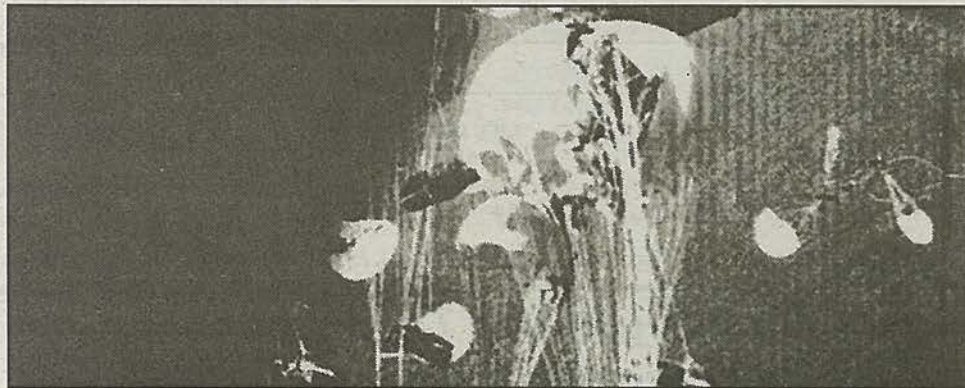


2/Lt R. K. Crowell's crew in a/c #650. Note the Dutch windmill.

Hummel crew

The Hummel crew was not so lucky. They entered the drop zone at about 250 feet. The crew could hear small arms fire hitting the ship during the supply drop. Radio operator Cpl James Deaton readied himself to pull back the static lines when the drop was finished. He had just moved into the bomb bay when they received intense ground fire from 20 mm and 30 mm shells.

Suddenly, copilot 2/Lt James Reynolds saw that the #3 engine was on fire. He feathered it, cut off the gasoline supply, closed the cowling flaps, and cut



Bundles leaving a/c 792, Cohn crew, photographed by cameras on board.

the electrical switches. The fire continued to burn. Pilot 2/Lt Jack Hummel yelled that #2 engine had been hit and oil pressure was dropping. Due to their low speed, they couldn't gain much altitude. Hummel coaxed the ship up to around 500 feet and then hit the bail out bell. Only navigator 2/Lt Bernard Knudson and nose gunner Sgt Ellis Morse heard the bell and abandoned ship.

With #3 engine still on fire, Hummel landed in the first field he saw. It was about two miles east of the drop zone in the midst of German troops. The pilots exited via a large hole in the plane. Hummel had a bad cut on the back of his head and several broken ribs; Reynolds was bleeding from cuts on his forehead.

Hearing voices, they realized for the first time that not everyone had bailed out. They walked to the waist and saw their men getting ready to crawl out of the plane. Approaching German soldiers began firing. The shooting stopped after one of the crew opened a parachute and waved it at the enemy soldiers. The cease fire came too late; Sgt Elmer Milchak was killed by a German sniper as he leaned out the waist window.

Hummel, Reynolds, engineer Sgt Herb Finney, left waist Pvt Paul Keagle, and tail gunner Sgt Hollis Powell were taken prisoner by Wehrmacht troops. None of them knew what had happened to Knudson and Morse. If they were in the nose of the aircraft, they couldn't have survived the crash. Deaton's fate was also unknown. German soldiers moved Milchak's body from the plane moments before it went up in flames. Reynolds then said the 23rd Psalm over his body.

The Americans were taken to a nearby chateau and searched. The building was full of German soldiers, some of whom were shooting at B-24s as they flew overhead. Each man was individually interrogated and the pilots' wounds were treated.

After about four hours, the airmen were rescued by US soldiers from the 513th Paratroop Infantry Regiment. A member of that unit, PFC Stuart S. Stryker, would be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his action this day. The citation states that Stryker's "gallant and wholly voluntary action in the face of overwhelming firepower ... so encouraged his comrades and diverted the enemy's attention that other elements of the company were able to surround the house, capturing more than 200 hostile soldiers and

much equipment, besides freeing 3 members of an American bomber crew held prisoner there."

Sgt Morse joined his crew at a US aid station the next day. After bailing out, he had landed in a woods surrounded by German troops. Following the instructions given at the mission briefing, he crawled toward the US lines and was soon picked up by American troops. He had seen Knudson's chute come out of the pack but thought it never opened.

The crew learned later that Deaton had either fallen out of the bomb bay to his death or been hit by rifle fire as they passed over enemy territory.

Frazier crew

There was one final casualty this day, aboard aircraft #42-52770, Ruptured Duck. This ship had received heavy ground fire and two of the crew were wounded. Pilot 2/Lt Lester Frazier landed at a U.S. airfield at Sint-Truiden, Belgium, so his men could get medical attention. He later said the bottom of the B-24 looked like a sieve from all the gunfire.

The injured airmen were treated at the 40th Field Hospital. Radio operator S/Sgt Hervy V. Latour had been wounded in the arm and back while waist gunner S/Sgt Raymond Hamment's arm was badly shot up. S/Sgt Hamment died of his injuries later that day at 298th General Hospital in Liege, Belgium.

When interrogated after the mission, 392nd crews reported dropping their bundles at altitudes ranging from 100 to 500 feet. 2/Lt Mathew Ansbro in a/c #477 was so low that he saw a couple of British soldiers escorting German prisoners back toward the Rhine.



Peter Loncke photo

Gas House Gus, #476, some time after it crashed at Hechtel-Eksel, a village in northeast Belgium.

Many planes were hit by small arms fire but only two additional men were injured. Aboard 2/Lt Campbell McKellar's ship (#875), both radio operator Sgt Nicholas Bova and waist gunner Sgt Theodore Hodge were wounded in the legs.

During the Wesel re-supply mission, the 14th Combat Wing dropped 4,856 bundles of supplies weighing 598 tons. 100 percent of the American loads were dropped in the target area. Intense flak near the British drop zone resulted in only 85 percent of those loads being on target. A total of fifteen B-24s of the Combat Wing were lost with 110 airmen killed in action.

Author's note: Peter Loncke, a friend of the 392nd, provided the details about the Hummel, Proctor, and Frazier crews as well as other information about this mission; Ben Jones provided several photos; and 392nd pilot Roland Sabourin interpreted the briefing instructions for me.

WESEL A/C LOADING LISTS

576th Sqdn. A/C 194
P Raczkowski, W. 2nd Lt.
CP McGill, C.L. 2nd Lt.
N Cline, A.P. F/O
B Holland, J.R. S/Sgt.
R VanDeven, J.K. T/Sgt.
E Reynolds, J.R. T/Sgt.
RW Parker, R.J. S/Sgt.
LW Kracker, E.A. S/Sgt.
TG Adkins, J.E. S/Sgt.

576th Sqdn. A/C 357
P DePalma, F.T. 1st Lt.
CP Austin, G.E. F/O
N Oppenheim, R. 2nd Lt.
B Margarones, J.J. 2nd Lt.
R Corboscio, J.L. S/Sgt.
E Betterini, A. T/Sgt.
RW Bryan, C.F. S/Sgt.
LW Mowery, H.J. S/Sgt.
TG Ferdinando, A.P. S/Sgt.

576th Sqdn. A/C 476
P Proctor, H.E. 2nd Lt.
CP Russell, C.E. 2nd Lt.
N Plagenhoef, S.C. 2nd Lt.
B Wade, T.E. S/Sgt.
R Kerfoot, D.A. S/Sgt.
E Seyfried, W.J. S/Sgt.
RW Gill, J.B. S/Sgt.
LW Kouzes, G. S/Sgt.
TG Dippel, W.L. S/Sgt.

576th Sqdn. A/C 916
P Smith, W.E. 2nd Lt.
CP Malmberg, F.L. 2nd Lt.
N Vealey, C.B. F/O
B Linderman, W.T. S/Sgt.
R Kroll, M.E. S/Sgt.
E Lyon, H.H. S/Sgt.
RW Devish, M.G. S/Sgt.
LW Werner, W.T. Sgt.
TG Farley, R.L. Pfc.

576th Sqdn. A/C 650
P Crowell, R.K. 2nd Lt.
CP Berkley, J.B. 2nd Lt.
N Byrnes, W.B. 2nd Lt.
B Colquhoun, R.N. S/Sgt.
R Waggener, L.R. T/Sgt.
E Hough, J.F. M/Sgt.
RW Anastas, G. S/Sgt.
LW Tracy, R.D. S/Sgt.
TG Moffa, A.J. S/Sgt.

576th Sqdn. A/C 545
P Sommers, O.L. 1st Lt.
CP Perkins, G.A. 2nd Lt.
N Judd, G.C. 1st Lt.
B Williams, A.R. 1st Lt.
R Fender, J.F. T/Sgt.
E Drummond, W.D. T/Sgt.
RW O'Kane, R.P. S/Sgt.
LW McNeill, C.A. S/Sgt.
TG Luciano, S. S/Sgt.

576th Sqdn. A/C 709
P Hummel, J.R. 2nd Lt.
CP Reynolds, J.E. 2nd Lt.
N Knudson, B.L. 2nd Lt.
B Morse, E.H. Sgt.
R Deaton, J.A. Cpl.
E Finney, H.H. Sgt.

RW Milchak, E.A. Sgt.
LW Keagle, P.E. Pvt.
TG Powell, H. Sgt.

576th Sqdn. A/C 770
P Frazier, L.J. 2nd Lt.
CP Linder, E.P. 2nd Lt.
N Robinson, R.L. 2nd Lt.
B Penders, D.P. S/Sgt.
R Latour, H.E. S/Sgt.
E McGrath, L.R. Sgt.
RW Leach, R.H. Sgt.
LW Hammett, R.E. S/Sgt.
TG Rohde, R.E. Sgt.

577th Sqdn. A/C 118
P Myers, C.E. 2nd Lt.
CP Anderson, K.W. 2nd Lt.
N Wamitz, K. F/O
B Zgurich, E.E. 2nd Lt.
R Jaklinski, B. S/Sgt.
E Payton, J.B. S/Sgt.
RW Thornton, A.H. S/Sgt.
LW Gillette, R.E. Sgt.
TG Kirk, G.A. S/Sgt.

577th Sqdn. A/C 792
P Cohn, A.J. 2nd Lt.
CP Runyon, D.S. 2nd Lt.
N Cottone, P.P. 2nd Lt.
B Norton, W.R. S/Sgt.
R Kincaid, M.M. T/Sgt.
E Cross, G.H. T/Sgt.
RW Korpi, W.B. S/Sgt.
LW Nogales, D. S/Sgt.
TG Avery, W.R. S/Sgt.

577th Sqdn. A/C 507
P Enyart, D.W. 1st Lt.
CP Froehlich, S.S. 2nd Lt.
N Mertens, J.A. 1st Lt.
B Snyderman, J. 2nd Lt.
R Aycock, C.E. S/Sgt.
E Gersten, G. T/Sgt.
RW Arneson, J.A. S/Sgt.
LW Mohan, V.L. S/Sgt.
TG Barlow, S.N. Sgt.

577th Sqdn. A/C 079
P Gridley, J.N. 2nd Lt.
CP Hunt, R.L. 2nd Lt.
N Self, W.H. 2nd Lt.
B Venier, A.C. F/O
R Braunhut, J.S. Sgt.
E Segal, D. Sgt.
RW McCormick, F.C. Sgt.
LW Wright, W.M. Sgt.
TG Hall, D.M. Sgt.

577th Sqdn. A/C 906
P Eyles, E.E. 2nd Lt.
CP Foley, R.T. F/O
N Augustensen, H.R. F/O
B Stutzman, R.J. Sgt.
R Barrett, W.R. Sgt.
E Mattera, A.P. Sgt.
RW Shrum, T.H. Sgt.
LW Carpenter, B.E. Sgt.
TG Wengress, C.P. Sgt.

577th Sqdn. A/C 875
P McKellar, C.C. 2nd Lt.
CP Owen, J.L. 2nd Lt.

N James, H.P. 2nd Lt.
B Yeary, B.J. Sgt.
R Bova, N.G. Sgt.
E Cole, E.W. Sgt.
RW Hodge, T.H. Sgt.
LW Higbee, W.J. Sgt.
TG Holler, J.G. Sgt.

577th Sqdn. A/C 697
P Grabarkiewicz, L. F/O
CP Phillips, C.E. 2nd Lt.
N Hickson, R. 1st Lt.
B Axvig, W.E. S/Sgt.
R Quagliano, F.A. T/Sgt.
E Duggan, J.J. T/Sgt.
RW Baker, E.R. S/Sgt.
LW Trofnoff, F. S/Sgt.
TG Moskowitz, S. S/Sgt.

577th Sqdn. A/C 901
P Jackson, C.J. 1st Lt.
CP Parrish, C.E. 2nd Lt.
N Pillsbury, A.A. 2nd Lt.
B Wolfe, P.G. S/Sgt.
R Paren, J.H. S/Sgt.
E Jenkins, J.H. Sgt.
RW Webb, J.H. S/Sgt.
LW Korb, L.J. S/Sgt.
TG Roe, W.L. S/Sgt.

578th Sqdn. A/C 511
P Henning, J.C. 2nd Lt.
CP Moser, F.E. 2nd Lt.
N Humiston, M.R. 2nd Lt.
B Regan, J.H. Sgt.
R Wilkins, R.A. Sgt.
E Regester, R.B. Sgt.
RW Stockard, J.C. Sgt.
LW McLaughlin, E.J. Sgt.
TG Davis, G.L. Sgt.

578th Sqdn. A/C 436
P Vaden, J.C. 2nd Lt.
CP Tichenor, N.K. 2nd Lt.
N Vrabie, E.G. 2nd Lt.
B Smith, C.W. S/Sgt.
R Crockett, J.G. S/Sgt.
E Perry, C.E.O. S/Sgt.
RW Wojtowicz, C.T. S/Sgt.
LW Wheelwright, C.D. Sgt.
TG Beaton, S.O. S/Sgt.
DeVoe, H. Cpl.
(photographer)

578th Sqdn. A/C 804
P Clarke, J.C. 1st Lt.
CP Mackey, O. 1st Lt.
N Eaton, C.B. 2nd Lt.
B Lowe, R.C. 2nd Lt.
R Brown, J.T. T/Sgt.
E Brunett, E.C. T/Sgt.
RW Heckman, J.K. S/Sgt.
LW Peer, G.R. S/Sgt.
TG Killea, K.B. S/Sgt.

578th Sqdn. A/C 477
P Ansbro, M.J. 2nd Lt.
CP Wernsman, J.B. 2nd Lt.
N Christman, H.E. F/O
B O'Farrell, R.H. S/Sgt.
R O'Brien, B.M. S/Sgt.
E Brierley, A.R. S/Sgt.
RW Nichols, P.F. Sgt.

LW Lowry, J.O. S/Sgt.
TG McLaughlin, M.M.
T/Sgt.
Paddock, K.Q. Maj.

578th Sqdn. A/C 495
P Joyce, J.F. 2nd Lt.
CP Bowman, J.A. 2nd Lt.
N McQuade, R.N. F/O
B Andrews, Q.Q. S/Sgt.
R Brown, F.J. T/Sgt.
E Albino, A. T/Sgt.
RW Gorham, R.L. S/Sgt.
LW Kurkornelis, G.C.
S/Sgt.
TG Richter, R.H. S/Sgt.

578th Sqdn. A/C 772
P Warner, C.W. 2nd Lt.
CP Smith, J.E. 2nd Lt.
N Peppard, J.M. F/O
B Kight, D.A. S/Sgt.
R Hathaway, E.O. S/Sgt.
E McGee, O.W. S/Sgt.
RW Brooks, E.J. S/Sgt.
LW Neel, L.E. S/Sgt.
TG Richmond, T.C. S/Sgt.

578th Sqdn. A/C 249
P Ebersole, H.R. 2nd Lt.
CP Culp, A.B. 2nd Lt.
N Sauter, J.C. 2nd Lt.
B Martin, M. 2nd Lt.
R Chew, W.B. S/Sgt.
E Gabris, J.M. S/Sgt.
RW McDonald, C.L. Pvt.
LW Greene, H.B. S/Sgt.
TG Lynch, H.F. Pvt.

578th Sqdn. A/C 493
P Rose, P.E. 1st Lt.
CP Pratt, D.M. 1st Lt.
N Rohde, C.R. 1st Lt.
B Hamden, R.G. 1st Lt.
R Croy, O.N. T/Sgt.
E Scott, W.A. T/Sgt.
RW Davidson, S.A. S/Sgt.
LW Manelick, N.L. S/Sgt.
TG Beane, H.A. S/Sgt.

579th Sqdn. A/C 568
CA Keilman, M.H. Maj.
P White, E.J. 2nd Lt.
CP Whalen, J.M. 1st Lt.
N Weissberger, M. 1st Lt.
B Shumaker, M.C. 2nd Lt.
R Tribbett, L.L. T/Sgt.
E Hayden, R. " " Sgt.
RW Oakes, E.L. S/Sgt.
LW Outman, H.W. S/Sgt.
TG White, R.A. S/Sgt.

579th Sqdn. A/C 589
P Beder, J. 1st Lt.
CP Samsell, J.A. 1st Lt.
N Matishowski, J. 1st Lt.
B Murray, J.G. 1st Lt.
R Murgatroyd, R.S. T/Sgt.
E Morley, J.P. T/Sgt.
RW Carr, R.P. S/Sgt.
LW Roeber, C.H. S/Sgt.
TG Schodrof, R.H. S/Sgt.

TIME TO RE-UP FOR 2007

The Board of Directors, faced with declining membership, increased the dues in 2003 by a modest \$3, to \$15. They remain the same for 2007. Also, if you feel that you are in a position to help the Treasury with an extra donation, there is a provision for it below. It is possible that Life Members might feel that the Lord has been good to them and that they have lived beyond their actuarial years and an extra payment might be in order. Your dues status can be found right after your name on the mailing list. If the number is 07 or higher, you're current. LM means Life Member, and Frnd means that you are our guest.

The Board of Directors has ruled that no Crusader will be denied membership because of financial difficulty, so if you are in strained circumstances check the Hardship Waiver box. Fill out the form and send it now!

Name _____ Ground [] Air [] Sqdn _____ Assoc []

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Dues for 2007, \$15	LIFE MEMBERSHIP	DONATION
	Age 61-65 \$120 ☐	
	Age 66-70 \$96 ☐	\$
	Age 71 and over \$78 ☐	

Hardship Waiver ☐

Send with check to Bill McCutcheon, 20620 Milton Court, Brookfield, WI 53045

**We Bought Out The Publisher
And Have Further Reduced the Price:
Now only \$36.50, postpaid**



All copies will be autographed by Col. Lawrence G. Gilbert, our final Commander.

Order from the PX order blank contained in this newsletter.

Over 100 authors, including Ian Hawkins and Ernie Barber, have contributed to this anthology, edited by Bill and Marge Braddock. There are personal stories of bombing missions, aerial dogfights, air-sea rescues, aircraft crashes, life-saving parachute bail-outs, captures by the enemy, evasions, escapes, resistance-fighters assistance to downed airmen and airmen returning to England.

THE ECONOMICS OF THE BARBER PROFESSION

By Jim Goar

I received the low-down on the red ink/black ink of the barber business the other day; sitting in my barber's chair.

"November and December are my busiest months, being the Christmas season," he declared.

"You can go to church, a wedding, or a funeral without a hair cut. But if you go to Grandma's house for

Christmas without a fresh hair cut, you don't get no noodles"

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Gen Carl Spaatz designated Commander, AAF- Mar. 1, 1946.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

300 B-29's made incendiary night raid on Tokyo, destroying about 1/4 of city- Mar. 9, 1945.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

4,738 tons of bomb dropped by 1,079 bombers on Essen, Germany- Mar. 11, 1945.

PROFILE

1/Lt William O. Beaton was the co-pilot of the 576th plane that crashed on take-off at Topeka prior to the 576th's leaving for the ETO.

(See the August 2006 issue, "Last Squadron to Leave the U. S.")

What happened to him after the crash is an interesting story. He didn't stay with the 392nd; he was assigned to ground duty at Ryan Field in Baton Rouge, LA. From there he was assigned to a P-47 squadron on Iwo Jima, and then to the Philippines. He was there when the war was over.

While in Hawaii awaiting transportation to Iwo, he was sent to an infantry jungle training course, followed by another course in infantry weapons.

Following the war, he obtained a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Washington. He joined the lumbering firm Crown Zellerbach and for 27 years was employed by them in numerous capacities in both the U. S. and Canada. He retired as the company's Group Vice-president in Canada.

He flew again after the war and he was checked out in 17 different a/c, including an amphibious Grumman Goose and an acrobatic Decathlon. When he entered instruction for acrobatics, his instructor was a WWII German ME 109 pilot.

He and his first wife Ruth had three children. Ruth died in 1967 and he is now married to Betty.

They live at 863 Oceanmont Blvd., Gibsons, B. C., Canada V0N 1V8.

Editor's note: There are "what ifs" in this story. What if Bill had remained with the 392nd and faced the terrible attrition rate that we encountered early in the ETO? Would he have survived that? And what if the bomb hadn't been dropped on Japan and the U. S. was forced to invade? His infantry

training was a clear signal that Air Corps personnel could become Infantry if the need arose.

PROFILE

1/Lt Everett J. (Ike) Isakson was the navigator on the William Kilmer crew in the 576th. They arrived at Wendling in August 1944 and finished their missions Jan. 5, 1945.

After finishing his missions, Ike flew weather and relay for the 2nd Air Division. Ike, remembering this tour of duty, said,

"Sometimes we were the lone plane scouting weather over England despite weather conditions. We also relayed radio messages to and from Division bomber control; fighter control communications were automatically relayed through equipment in our plane."

"We had some scary incidents in the three months that we were assigned this duty. At one base which housed no combat operations the tower radio was so weak that we couldn't hear it in the final approach. Later, when we were operating from a combat base, procedures and discipline were so lax there that we were glad to have flown our combat missions with the 392nd."

Leaving the Service in October 1945, he returned to the University of Minnesota and graduated from their School of Architecture in 1948. He worked for architectural offices in Minnesota until he moved to Texas in 1953. After 43 years in architecture he retired as in-house architect for the Lewisville School District in 1991.

Since retirement he has become interested in writing and has taken some related college courses. He has completed 3 full-length novels which as yet have not been published.

His spouse is Ruth, and they have two sons, a daughter and four grandchildren. One son is a West

Point graduate.

They live at 1407 Bishop Drive, Salado, TX 76571-9577.

"STARDUSTERS" - A MUST READ FOR CRUSADERS

"Stardusters" is a fictional portrayal of a B-24 crew in combat in the 8AF. While the Group to which they were attached was labeled "400th", the Group could easily be the 392nd.

The character of each member of the crew is vividly drawn, as well as the character of the plane's crew chief.

Two reader's comments: by a retired City Library Director: "A page turner. The reader is made to feel that he is present with the characters." and by a 50-year old X-generationer: "Now I know how the air war was fought"

And why not: the book was written by Jim Cassity, co-pilot on the Willis Miller crew in the 579th.

Here's Jim's thumb-nail biography

in his own words.

"Before and after WWII I was in the music industry as a Big Band, Night Club vocalist, radio vocalist and recording artist. I became a district manager for a chain of film theaters in New York.

I came back to by home state, California and became a member of the Screen Writers Guild in 1958 and became the owner of a film distribution company.

Currently I own an advertising agency and am vice-president of JEM Productions, where two of my screen plays are under contract to be produced.

My wife started me writing "The Stardusters" in 1947 and it took only 10 years to get it to the point where it was completed."

The book may be purchased for \$23.95 from Vantage Press, Inc. at 419 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

600 heavy bombers dropped 1,600 tons of bombs in first major attack on Berlin-Mar. 6, 1944.

PX ITEMS

Anthology, "20 th Century Crusaders". (Hard cover book) \$36.50 postpaid	\$
Anthology, "20 th Century Crusaders" (CD) \$15.00 postpaid	\$
Book, "Remembrance of the Missing", by Col. Bob Vickers, \$37.00 postpaid	\$
Book, "The Liberators From Wendling", by Col. Bob Vickers, \$35.00 postpaid	\$
Book, "Country Boy Combat Bomber Pilot", by Col. Bob Tays, \$13.50 postpaid	\$
Book, "My Combat Diary", by Walt Cranson, \$13.50 postpaid	\$
Cap, black, 392 nd Bomb Group w/gold braid, summer, \$10.50 postpaid	\$
Cap, black, 392 nd Bomb Group w/gold braid, winter, \$10.50 postpaid	\$
Directory, \$10.00 postpaid (ALL DIRECTORIES ARE NOW WITH CURRENT DATA)	\$
Jacket, white nylon, w/ 392 Bomb Group and Crusader patches, \$29.00 postpaid	\$
(Circle size wanted) M L XL XXL	\$
Print, "The Flying Crusader", reduced to \$16.50 postpaid	\$
Video, 392 nd 's memorabilia photos, \$15.00 postpaid	\$
DVD, 392 nd 's memorabilia photos, \$25.00 postpaid	\$
Video, from Albuquerque Reunion Symposium, "The Early Days", \$17.50 postpaid	\$
Video, Symposium above, "The Ground Support Teams Prepare For A Mission", \$17.50 postpaid	\$
Video, Symposium above, "The Tough Missions", Pt 1: Bremen, Keil, Gotha, Friedrichshafen both parts \$27.50pp	\$
Video, Symposium above, "Tough Missions", Pt 2: Politz, Berlin, Bernberg, Bingen, Wesel, both parts \$27.50 pp.	\$
Video, Symposium above, general scenes from the reunion, 2 parts, \$27.50 postpaid	\$

Total (Send with check to Bill McCutcheon, 20620 Milton Court, Brookfield, WI 53045) \$

Book, "After The Liberators, A Father's Last Mission, A Son's Lifelong Journey", by Bill McGuire, son of 579th navigator Bill McGuire Sr., KIA Friedrichshafen mission. Order direct from publisher, Parkway Publishers: PO Box 3678, Boone, NC 28607, \$20.95 postpaid (Mention 392BGMA newsletter in your letter and you can take 10% off the total bill)

Book, "Joey, Joe, and Joseph" by William A. Damerst, 576th navigator. Order direct from publisher, Publish America: PO Box 151, Frederick, MD 21705-0151. \$21.95 postpaid

Book, "Stalag 17B, Prisoner of War", by L/C (USAF, Ret) Richard H. Hoffman, ball turret gunner, 579th. Order from publisher, Xlibris Corp, phone 888 795 4274, or on line at www.xlibris.com/html/bookstores. Also at Amazon.com. No cost figures furnished.

Book, "Don't Call Me A Hero", by Jim McGregor, pilot, 579th. Order from Publisher, Wilco Publishing, 702 Foxborough Sq. W, Brentwood, TN 37027. \$19.95 postpaid.

Book, "The Stardusters", by Jim Cassity, co-pilot, 579th. Order from Publisher, Vantage Press, Inc., 419 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

NEWS



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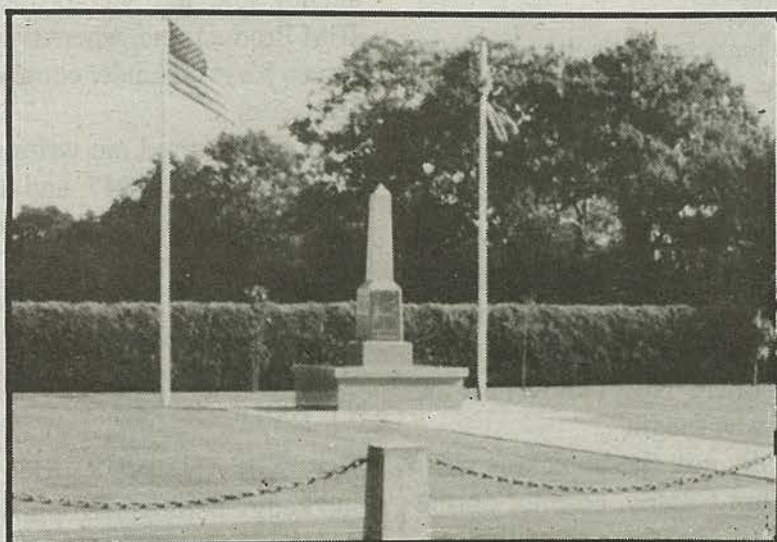
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THE 392nd MEMORIAL AT WENDLING

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.

-Prayer composed by 576th pilot the Very Reverend Robert C. Martin, retired Dean of the Cathedral at Erie, Pa.

Folded Wings

John William Bell, 579, Mar 21, 2006
Frederick Charles Doutel, Aug. 31, '96
Pete G. Kotsifakis, 579, Dec. 5, 2006
George Brauer, 577
William Moles, 579
Anne Barbee, January 20, 2007
wife of Boyce Barbee, 578

But we..shall be remembered:

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



392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n NEWS
1555 N. Main St., #106
Frankfort, IN 46041

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FOLDED WINGS REPORT (PLEASE REPORT ANY DEATH OF SPOUSE AS WELL AS OF MEMBER)

Name of deceased _____ Sqdn _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of death _____ Survivors (Send copy of obit from newspaper if possible)

Reported by _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

[] Record a memorial contribution to 392nd BGMA in my name, check made out to 392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n., enclosed. Send this report to Jim Goar, 1555 N. Main St., #106, Frankfort, IN 46041.

Chaplain's Corner

By George Barger, Ph. D.
(aka Bombardier, 576/7)

It has long been a custom in some denominations to make a memorial gift when a loved one, perhaps a close friend, dies. It's a way of saying "thank you" to God and to the person. The gift can be designated for some particular interest the person had-music, mission, research, an organization-the list is endless. One need not be naive about this. Over time the significance of a particular gift will be lost-only God gives gifts that last. Still, we can rejoice when God loves our heart towards thanksgiving, and of course it is a blessing to us as well.