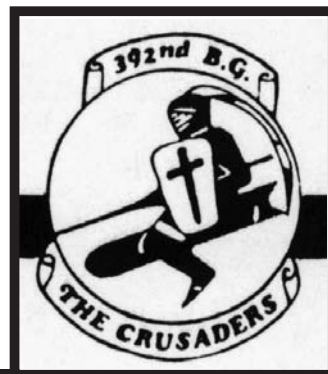




ANATOMY OF A MISSION, Part 2

This article continues a review of mission execution. Roger Freeman's book, *The Mighty Eighth War Manual*, was a major source.

Getting Ready

576th Sqdn pilot William T. Kamenitsa wrote, "We called the cockpit *The Front Office*. Now, there are not many flight instruments in the cockpit—only the airspeed indicator, needle and ball, altimeter, and climb indicator. The rest are engine instruments.

Before takeoff the copilot, pilot, and engineer coordinate everything. The pilot set all the throttles and fuel mixtures the same; the copilot checked the magnetos and energized the start-up motor. This was a heavy duty thing that would rev up to high speed and then engage the engine. It would turn the props over like a starter on your car and it made that special high pitched whining sound as the engine engaged. *It was the sound of World War Two for many of us.*

"You'd taxi out for takeoff and you were ready to go to work."

Assembly

After takeoff, a pilot usually kept on a straight course for about two minutes, in part because the B-24 was not very maneuverable until it had gained speed and altitude. The pilot then climbed at a predetermined rate (about 300 feet per minute at 150 mph Indicated Air Speed) to the assembly area assigned to the 392nd. A ship, usually #41-23689, Minerva, orbited a radio beacon at the prescribed altitude and fired designated colored flares to signal 392nd BG a/c.

The specified assembly altitude was based on cloud

conditions. Clear skies meant assembly could be at 5,000 to 10,000 feet. Often, though, pilots had to climb to 20,000 feet or higher to get above the clouds, relying on instruments to maintain headings, speeds and timed legs.

After finding the Group's formation, 392nd pilots took their positions in the lead, high and low squadrons. Her job done, Minerva returned to Station 118 while the Group headed to the Wing assembly area.



The 576th Sqdn during the 22 Mar 1945 mission to the jet airfield east of Schwabisch Hall. Clockwise from upper right: 41-29476, Gashouse Gus, with pilot 1/Lt Frederick T. DePalma; 42-51340, with pilot 2/Lt William Raczko; 41-28991, Gravel Gripper, with pilot 2/Lt Donald E. Ault, and 42-95299, with pilot 2/Lt Herchel E. Proctor.

Sometimes, a pilot was unable to locate his own Group. He then had to choose between two less-than-ideal options: aborting or joining another Group on its way to an unknown target.

"Prior to D-Day," 579th navigator R.W. "Red" Sprowls says, "we formed at higher altitudes in England in order to reach the European coastline near our target altitudes. This, of course, made us less vulnerable to 88s and 105 antiaircraft fire. After the invasion we formed at lower altitudes in England

and generally had more time to climb to a bombing altitude while flying over occupied European territory."

See MISSION on page 4

2012 Reunion with 2ADA

The 392nd's Executive Board has decided to meet with the 2ADA in Chicago from 6-9 Sep 2012. Dissolution of the 2ADA will be a major topic of discussion. Complete details and reunion forms for both the 2ADA and 8AFHS reunions begin on page 6.



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Jim Goar

FROM THE EDITOR

Maxine Mackey. The 392nd BGMA mourns the passing of Maxine Mackey on 22 March 2012. Married to Oak for 62 years, Maxine embraced the 392nd BGMA and the 2ADA as enthusiastically as Oak did. She was Chairman of Conventions and Director of Correspondence for the 2ADA and fully supported Oak during his two terms as President of that organization. Anyone who attended a 2ADA reunion in recent years saw Maxine at the registration table. She coordinated the 2011 reunion for the 2ADA and had plans for the 2012 convention well in hand before her passing. We'll miss her vibrant personality.

"Anatomy of a Mission." 576th waist gunner Bud Guillot wrote, "Wow—was I impressed with the quality and depth of the articles! They open a complete new window for me of the 392nd BG's scope and depth. I had always assumed the fly boys were the anointed ones in the 392nd. Now I realize we were just the icing on the cake; the real core of the 392nd BG, its bedrock, was its management team, planners, Intelligence, weather analyst, mechanics, electricians, and technicians. They were the real force that won the war... I salute the planners and ground crews of the 392nd Bomb Group."

Pilot Lou Stephens, 578th, emailed, "I thought the article was great—simply great. This brought back some memories. I would like to see a similar article about the maintenance guys. They also did a lot of night work in lousy weather. They did a great job and I never had doubts about the ability of that B-24 to fly when they said it could. As an aside, I flew with Cliff Edwards a few times and knew members of that crew, including Bill Braddock. We used that radio release but I never knew he devised that system. Let me tell you it was an improvement. I'm aware of situations when bomb drops were delayed because a crew failed to see the lead ship drop."

The series continues in this issue. Since so much space was needed for reunion details, the focus is just on assembly procedures. The September edition will describe what the crews did once they were airborne, "working" conditions aboard a B-24, procedures as the formation neared the target and re-formed after bombing, and what happened on the ground when the planes returned. Please contact me if you have an anecdote or information to share! I would especially like to hear from ball turret gunners who can add to the information on page 5.

Photo IDs. The men dressing for a mission in the photo on page 6 of the March 2012 issue have been identified. At left is S/Sgt John Bross and at right S/Sgt Perry Onstot from 578th Capt Walter M. Bell's crew. Compare Perry's war-time photo to the one in the December 2011 *News*. He hasn't changed much!

We Remember. Memorial Day is now past, but 465th Sub Depot instrument technician Dick Giesing reminds us of the 350,000 men and women who served in the Eighth Air Force during WWII, the 28,000 who became prisoners of war, and the more than 26,000 who never returned home.

578th pilot Neely Young flew the last of the 392nd's three missions on D-Day. In June 2010, he was interviewed by the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* (Richmond, VA) about that day. The article says, "The skies cleared enough for Young to look down and eyeball the shoreline. 'I could see what was going on down there,' Young said, 'but I wish I hadn't seen it. You could see all these bodies laying around, guys fighting, all this gunfire. You could see flashes. It was a bad scene. I give all the credit to the boys on the ground. I often wonder if I had enough intestinal fortitude to do what they did.'"

Recognition. 392nd BGMA friend Philippe Vanderdonckt (December 2011 *News*) and wife Cathy were recently invited by the American Ambassador to Belgium and the President of the American Overseas Memorial Day Association to a "reception to recognize those in Belgium who tirelessly dedicate their time and talents to perpetuate the meaning and memory of Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice in the First and Second World Wars." The 392nd BGMA appreciates all that Philippe has done to remember 577th Sqdn 1/Lt Henry P. Bolick Jr.'s crew and their first navigator, 2/Lt Gilbert Malrait.

Diamond Jubilee. Congratulations to Queen Elizabeth II as she celebrates 60 years as monarch. Many in the 392nd BGMA will remember that Princess Elizabeth joined the British Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service in World War II and trained as a driver and mechanic. John Gilbert, our representative in England, writes, "Have had a great day here in Cawston celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in our village. I put on a display in the village hall from the 392nd BG of the visit to Sandringham and the VE Day parade in Kings Lynn. I had the biggest display in the village hall and everyone enjoyed it. So, the 392nd BG was part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee."

President's Message



Jack Rotzien, 392 BGMA Director, had a grandson running for political office in the Spring primaries. The grandson, Luke Messer, used television for his campaign. Central Indiana television viewers regularly caught a glimpse of Jack, complete with his Crusader cap, in the ads. Luke won, so Jack's endorsement must have meant something.

Our footprint in St. Louis is adequately filled by M/Sgt Allen Holtman, USAF retired. Each Memorial Day Allen decorates the 20 392nd graves in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, complete with flags. He then spends the day, in his dress Blues, on vigil. To complete his duties, he delivered the 392nd Prayer at his church.

One of the frustrations accompanying a leadership position in the 392 BGMA is our far-flung membership. It is possible to have a face-to-face relationship with only a few members and some relationships are relegated to the e-mail and telephone media.

I had such a relationship with Dr. George Barger, who served as our Chaplain and for years produced a one-paragraph mini-sermon in the 392 BGMA News. He was a Ph.D. college professor and also an Episcopal priest. At Wendling he was a bombardier in the 579th. George died last May 14 and I mourn his passing.

I had a somewhat like relationship with Robert C. Martin, also an Episcopal priest and the author of our 392nd Prayer. For years we searched for him, because he never attended any of our meetings or otherwise corresponded with us. Finally a couple of years ago he signed up for a reunion, only to be a no-show because of an illness. But that instance gave us an address and I was able to open a telephone relationship with him, only to have him pass away before I could really get to know him. Father Martin was a pilot in the 576th.

I must confess that I have an affinity or at least an admiration for the British monarchy. I have watched, via the news media, Queen Elizabeth II from a very young woman when we were at Wendling to her 60th Jubilee. During that time she coped with several Royal family crises, all under the intense scrutiny of the world press. And those hats! She's great with hats.

In my last message I reported that both Annabelle and I were scheduled for surgery. We made it ok.

Blue Skies,
Jim Goar

THOSE THRILLING DAYS OF YESTERYEAR...

The Collings Foundation's B-24 is making its annual flight across America. 576th waist gunner Bud Guillot says, "My son Keith phoned me and said there was a B-24 bomber at the John Wayne Airport and he had scheduled us a flight on May 12. I was surprised but pleased he wanted to take the flight with me in my WWII vintage B-24 airplane.

"I immediately went to the barber shop and told the barber I wanted a military cut. The barber said, 'That will be awfully short; are you sure you want a military cut?' I told the barber I wanted the real thing because I had a schedule that afternoon to take a flight in an old bomber like the one I flew combat missions in over Germany during WWII—the same type of bomber I was shot down in during a mission to Berlin 68 years and 13 days ago [29 Apr 1944].

"The barber snapped to attention and said, 'Yes, sir, a military cut it will be.' Soon most of the barbers had left their customers sitting in the barber chairs while they ganged around me asking questions. The longest time I ever spent in a barber's chair and the military cut was on the house.

"For the flight I played it to the hilt and wore my old leather flying jacket with the 8th Air Force patch. The pilot gathered his ten passengers to brief us about the flight. I told him that I hoped he would do a better job landing that B-24 than the pilot did on my last landing in a B-24 and I showed the pilot the photo [below]. He could not believe seven people of the ten man crew survived that crash.

"It was a fun flight and lots of reminiscences. I visited the position of each man on my crew and focused on what that person meant to me. I enjoyed the flight experience immensely. I was the only one of the passengers who had previously flown in a B-24. Several of the passengers were sons or daughters of WWII B-24 crewmen."

For a complete tour schedule for the Collings Foundation's B-24 or to arrange your own ride, see <http://www.collingsfoundation.org/menu.htm>.



Top left: Bud Guillot grips a waist gun for the first time since 29 Apr 1944. Bottom left: That day, the left



wing and aileron of Bud's plane were broken off when a badly-damaged B-24 piloted by 2/Lt Leo Ofenstein hit his plane. Bud's pilot, 2/Lt William Kamenitsa, headed for a large field. It was a

picture-perfect landing until the nose wheel hit a ditch and collapsed, burying the nose in the ground and plowing a furrow for a few hundred yards. The white object is Bud's parachute, which he was going to use to burn the plane. That plan was abandoned when a head count showed three men were still in the wreckage. Killed were navigator 2/Lt John J. Caulfield, bombardier 2/Lt Gene A. Miller, and radio operator S/Sgt Joseph R. Trivison.

MISSION from page 1

Hundreds of planes from bases all over England went through the assembly process almost simultaneously. Depending on the briefed altitude, weather conditions, and number of planes involved, assembly could take between 30 and 90 minutes. And, on every mission, there were pilots going through the process for just the first (or second, or third) time. To further compound the difficulty, 8AF planes often were forming up as RAF a/c were coming back from their night bombing missions.

Danger in English Skies

Many airmen thought that assembly in English skies was almost the most dangerous part of a mission. After all, hundreds of planes fully loaded with bombs and fuel were being launched at the same time, in limited airspace, often in total darkness, with complete radio silence and no radar guidance from the ground. Statistics bear this out: 89 men who were or had been Crusaders were killed in action while forming up. (See page 5 for more information.)

Groups→ Wings→ Divisions

After each Group assembled, they formed into Wings and then Divisions. It was critical that each Group and Wing get to their assembly points at the specified time and altitude in order to take their designated position in the bomber stream. To help, assembly routes included dog legs, or L-shaped course changes. If a Group or Wing was behind schedule, it could cut across the dog leg to make up time. If it was early, the planes flew in circles or in an "S" pattern to kill time. As the formation grew, it became more cumbersome to maneuver and harder for late planes or Groups to merge in.

Once fully assembled, the formation headed to war.

Editor's Note: The September 2012 issue will continue the saga of mission execution and return.

BALL TURRET GUNNERS: AN ELITE GROUP

Ball turrets occupy a special place in aviation history. The B-24 and B-17 bombers are the only aircraft to have ball turrets. In the 392nd, their time in combat was limited to September 1943 through summer 1944.

The Ball Turret

Due to its low ground clearance, a B-24's ball turret (BT) was housed in the fuselage just aft of the waist guns during take off and landing. Once lowered into position below the plane, the ball turret could move in a complete circle horizontally and rotate 90 degrees downward. Its gunner fired on enemy a/c coming from any direction below.

Combat

As the plane flew toward enemy territory, the BT gunner used a hand crank to point the guns straight down, thereby making the hatch door accessible. Unfastening the hatch, the airman lowered the turret using a hydraulic valve. After disconnecting his oxygen hose, interphone and electrically heated flying suit, the gunner stepped down into the turret. He sat on a metal shelf; the door served as his back rest. There may have been a clip-on safety strap but certainly no elaborate mechanism to keep the gunner from falling if his turret were damaged.

Once inside, the gunner refastened his cords, latched the door and turned on the hydraulic and electric drive motors. After charging the two .50-caliber machine guns by pulling handles located at his feet, he was ready for action. Until the ship was out of enemy range on the return trip, he'd be on his back, feet straddling the 18-inch viewing plate and knees bent in a fetal position. To fire below the plane, he had to rotate the turret until he was positioned nearly upright. Thumb buttons fired the guns and moved the turret. The intercom talk switch was under his right toe; beneath his

See TURRET on page 5

392nd BGMA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please look at the mailing label. Your membership status is shown directly after your name. "12" means your membership expires in December 2012. 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 want to receive the News by postal mail OR [] \$20/year for receipt by email
Please feel free to renew for multiple years! Just let us know what your wishes are.

Hardship Waiver []

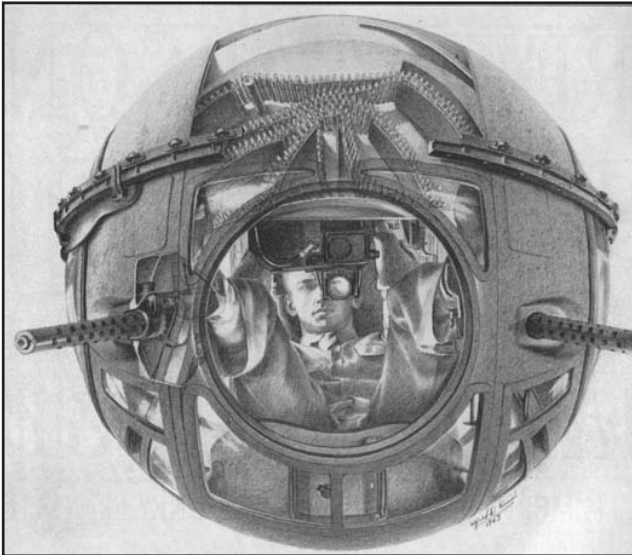
DONATION \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

TURRET from page 4

left heel was the spring-loaded range pedal for the Sperry computing gunsight.

The guns and ammo cans left little space for the airman and no room at all for his parachute. The cans held 1,150 bullets total, enough for 90 seconds of constant firing. (That would burn out the gun barrels, though, so gunners fired only



This drawing in the 29 Jan 1944 issue of *Life* magazine shows a ball turret gunner in his combat position.

in very short bursts no matter how intense the combat.)

The gunsight was mounted in front of the gunner's face. A mechanical analog computer, it was sophisticated for its time. The gunner tracked an attacking a/c in azimuth and elevation and raised the range pedal as the enemy fighter closed in. The gunsight advised when the target was at a firing range of 1,000 yards. The sight automatically led the target and compensated for bullet drop over distance.

Removal of the Ball Turret

A 2AD memo to 8AF dated 21 May 1944 recommended removing ball turrets from its B-24s. "Operational experience" suggested that "the benefit derived from the Sperry ball turret may not be commensurate with the weight and parasite drag involved in this installation."

As proof, 2AD gave statistics showing that ball turrets accounted for only 5.1 percent of 1,022 gunner encounters with enemy a/c between November 1943 and April 1944. The tail turret was highest, at 30.5 percent, followed by top turret (17.2 percent), nose turret (16 percent), and waist guns (15.6 percent each). Additionally, the ball turret position had the smallest number of claims approved as destroyed (3 percent), probably destroyed (4.4 percent), or damaged (4.4 percent).

2AD said the small number of claims by BT gunners did not justify the extra gas consumption caused by the 1,500 pound turret. 2AD also reported that of its 14 Group commanders, five wanted to remove all ball turrets, two wanted to remove them from some planes, and seven did not want to remove them yet but might want to do so at a later date.

2AD suggested the ball turrets be stored at each Group in case they were needed in the future.

8AF gave its approval, but the date is not known. Bert Prost,

576th waist gunner, flew his last mission on 29 Jun 1944. He is positive the 392nd's ball turrets were still in use then.

465th Sub Depot

Sheet metal workers in the 465th worked long hours to make covers to patch the holes and then to build wooden crates for storage and eventual shipment to the US. 576/9th pilot Don Scharf says, "The hole in the bottom of the plane was covered over with the regular aluminum skin and the hole in the waist section by corrugated aluminum flooring to match the flooring where the waist gunners stood."

The 465th history for August 1944 reports, "The tough problem of securing the lumber held up the packing and crating for some time but this month finds close teamwork between the boys in Sub Depot Supply and the Engineering Carpenter Shop. There are still a few more of these turrets to be packed but there is no particular hurry as the turrets have to be held here until the ship to which the turret is assigned either goes down in action, becomes salvageable or war weary, or is transferred to another station. The packing and crating of the turrets is not an easy job due to their shape and weight. Much credit is due both departments for this splendid and efficient teamwork, the same kind of teamwork that the

See **TURRET** on page 6

392nd Casualties during Assembly

576th radio operator George Michel recalls that on one mission, "The gunners in the plane ahead of mine on the taxiway must have pulled the cotter pins from their bombs as it was easier to do on the ground than to squeeze back there with a walk-around bottle of oxygen and no parachute. Anyway, they crashed right after takeoff and the bombs exploded. My plane flew through the explosions. It was the worst flak I ever experienced."

The Casualties

On 29 Jan 1944, 577th pilot 1/Lt William F. Usry collided at 14,000 feet with a plane from the 482nd BG flown by 1/Lt James N. Taylor. Aboard the 482nd BG a/c was Command Pilot Maj Clyde T. Gray, 576th Sqdn CO. Taylor and nine men in his crew had flown several missions with the 577th Sqdn before their transfer to the 482nd to be a Pathfinder crew. Everyone on Usry's plane was killed, as were Gray and seven others in his ship (including six former Crusaders).

On 6 Mar 1944, 1/Lt Paul F. Shea, 579th, took off when fog limited visibility to 100 yards. His plane crashed and exploded about 2,000 yards from the end of the runway. The entire bomb load exploded and the a/c was completely burned. All 10 crew members were killed.

Assembly on 9 Apr 1944 was done under instrument conditions through a thick overcast. At about 7,000 feet, 578th pilot 2/Lt Hubert F. Morefield collided with a 389th BG plane. Eight men from the 392nd and nine from the 389th were killed.

Icing is the likely reason the left wing on 577th 2/Lt Louis F. Bass's plane broke off during assembly on 21 Apr 1944. The plane crashed at North Tuddenham with eight men killed. The entire 8AF formation was eventually recalled, but not before two other B-24s also crashed in England.

Maj Clinton P. Schoolmaster was the 577th Sqdn CO before

See **CASUALTIES** on page 8

TURRET from page 5

paper headlines proclaim is being used by the Allied Armies in making a rat race out of the German forces in France."

After Removal

What happened to the 392nd's BT gunners after their turrets were removed? In many cases, the man was taken off his own crew to become a permanent substitute, filling in on any crew that needed a gunner due to injury or illness. Other crews apparently rotated their four gunners through the three guns in the waist and tail. Still others used the BT gunner in the nose turret where previously the bombardier had manned the guns. Eventually, crews ordered to the 392nd did not include a ball turret gunner.

Safety

Although the ball turret seems the most dangerous crew position, statistics show it was the safest. The Office of the Chief Surgeon, European Theater, analyzed 8AF battle casualties between June and August 1944. Of 1,117 casualties due to missiles, 20.9 percent were waist gunners, 17.6 percent were bombardiers, and 12.5 percent were tail gunners. Only 5.9 percent were ball turret gunners.

Of 963 casualties from flak, 21.6 percent were waist gunners, 15.8 percent were bombardiers, 13.2 percent were navigators, and 12.6 were tail gunners. Only 5.5 percent of flak casualties were ball turret gunners.

These statistics are somewhat skewed because each plane carried two waist gunners. Also, by the time of this analysis, the ball turrets had been removed from some or most B-24s so BT statistics were mainly for B-17s.

Editor's Note: The details of ball turret operation come from an article by 445th BT gunner Jesse N. Bradley at <http://home.comcast.net/~ralph608/ballturret.htm>.

S/Sgt Zigmund
T. Kaminski,
465th Sub
Depot Supply
Technician,
stands behind
an upside down
ball turret. The
.50 caliber guns
fit into the holes
on either side of
the observation
window, whose
Plexiglas was
about two inches
thick. The photo
shows why the
man in the ball
turret was often
the smallest
gunner on his
crew.



Second Air Division Assn.'s 65th Annual Reunion Hilton Rosemont Hotel in Chicago, Illinois

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

Please note: This form is to register **ONLY** for the convention activities listed at the top of page 7. For hotel reservations, complete the form on the bottom of page 7 and mail it to the hotel OR call (888) 452-6943.

Name _____ Bomb Group _____

Name of Spouse and Others in Your Party _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ Fax Number _____

Email address _____

PRICE PER PERSON: \$339.00 **NUMBER IN YOUR PARTY** _____ **TOTAL \$** _____

Price for the convention includes breakfast on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and dinner on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The price per person includes the \$20 registration fee to pay for the hospitality room, entertainment, and miscellaneous administrative expenses.

REGISTRATION FORM AND PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 10, 2012.

Only check payments (payable to "Second Air Division Association") can be accepted. Your cancelled check is your receipt. Complete the form, then mail it and your check to:

Oak Mackey, Convention Chairman, 6406 E. Presidio St., Mesa, AZ 85215

2ADA REUNION ITINERARY

Thursday, September 6

2:00pm - 4:00pm Convention registration open
5:00pm - 6:00pm Cocktail party; cash bar
6:00pm - 9:00pm Dinner

Friday, September 7

7:00am - 9:00am Buffet breakfast
9:00am - 12:00pm Business meeting
10:00am - 12:00pm Convention registration open
5:00pm - 6:00pm Cocktail party; cash bar
6:00pm - 9:00pm Dinner

Saturday, September 8

7:00am - 9:00am Buffet breakfast
9:00am - 392nd BGMA business meeting
5:00pm - 6:00pm Cocktail party; cash bar
6:00pm - 9:00pm Banquet dinner

Sunday, September 9

7:00am - 9:00am Buffet breakfast

Plans for tours and entertainment are still being finalized.

for many members. Because the 8th Air Force Historical Society Convention is in October, the early September date was considered best for us.

"I think you are going to enjoy the Hilton; it is a small hotel with just 350 rooms and was renovated in 2010. There is an up-to-date fitness room, indoor heated swimming pool, and seasonal sun deck. On the lobby floor is the Liberty Tavern, a full service restaurant serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and the Lobby Cafe is a Starbucks coffee shop for a quick snack.

"It's going to be a fun convention—if you haven't been to one before, maybe this is the time. We expect a big turnout this year, so don't delay—make your reservation before the rooms are all gone. See ya in Chicago!"

Hilton Rosemont Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

The hotel restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. Good Food at a reasonable price. Room service for food and drinks is available 24/7. Also there is a bar and lounge.

The hotel provides complimentary shuttle van service between O'Hare Airport and hotel. After collecting your luggage in the luggage claim area, ask at the Information Desk for the location where you can catch the shuttle van. Or have a porter help with your luggage and he will take you to the van. The van operates every 20 minutes to and from the hotel.

The hotel is providing complimentary parking in the hotel parking lot for all Second Air Division Association members and family who are driving to the convention.

Before her death, Maxine Mackey was the convention chairman. She wrote, "Once again we are back in the Windy City. Last September at our annual business meeting it was decided that Chicago would be the place for our 2012 Convention. There are lots of non-stop flights from many cities and it is centrally located within driving distance

----- MAIL THIS FORM TO THE HOTEL -----
HILTON ROSEMONT HOTEL RESERVATIONS FORM
SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION SEPTEMBER 6-9, 2012

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM WITH _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ APPROX. TIME _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

of rooms needed _____ # of people in room _____ Handicap Access? _____

King Bed _____ 2 Double Beds _____ Smoking _____ Non-Smoking _____

RATE: \$109 plus tax (Sales tax 10.5%; Hotel Occupancy Tax 13%)

CUT OFF DATE: 21 August 2012

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is cancelled 24 hours prior to your planned date of arrival. All reservations must be guaranteed by a credit card or a check for the first night enclosed with this form.

AMEX _____ VISA _____ MASTERCARD _____ DISCOVER _____

Name on Credit Card _____

Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature (regardless of payment method) _____

Mail to: Hilton Rosemont Hotel, 5550 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 Attn: Reservations

For phone reservations, call 888-452-6943; for other information, 847-678-4488. Hotel website: www.rosemont.hilton.com

CASUALTIES from page 5

being moved up to 14th Combat Wing Headquarters. On 25 May 1944, he was piloting a P-47 Thunderbolt and monitoring the form-up of the Wing's three Groups. When he didn't return, it was presumed he crashed at sea.

1/Lt Owen H. Filkel's crew (576th) was the first a/c to take off for Brunswick on 5 Aug 1944. Haze limited visibility to just 600 yards. The plane cleared the runway but crashed at 0925 hours near Sparrow Green, Gressenhall, killing the ten men aboard. The next plane in line took off 30 seconds later, flying directly through the smoke and flames.

A week later, 2/Lt John D. Ellis's plane (577th) was nearing London on its way to bomb an airfield east of Paris. Heavy overcast skies had already caused six 392nd planes to abort and put the sortie 30 minutes behind schedule. Contrails from Groups ahead merged into dense clouds. Ellis ran into "prop wash"—horizontal tornado-like turbulence caused by the clockwise rotation of hundreds of propellers—and flipped upside down. The a/c spun violently all the way down; the ten men were killed on impact near Cheshunt, Hertfordshire.

Capt James B. Stauder flew missions in the 578th from September 1943 to September 1944. In November 1944 he was sent on detached duty to the 2AD's Scouting Force,

co-located with the 355th Fighter Group at Steeple Morden, Cambridgeshire. According to <http://www.littlefriends.co.uk/gallery.php?Group=sf>, the Scouting Force, flying P-51s, was tasked with "helping the Squadrons, Groups, Wings and Divisions to form up over England, leading the bomber stream through bad weather, appraising the mission commander of weather at the primary, secondary, & tertiary targets, helping tighten bomber formations, and defending the bomber stream against enemy fighters." While performing these duties during the mission to Bingen on 25 Nov 1944, Capt Stauder was lost at sea.

On 25 Mar 1945, the 392nd had just finished Group assembly and was moving to the Wing assembly area. After entering clouds at about 12,500 feet, 578th pilot 2/Lt Phillip W. Kaiser and 576th pilot 1/Lt Clifford O. Markuson collided. Sixteen men were killed.

The 14 Apr 1945 target was a gun emplacement north of Bordeaux, France. 2/Lt Charles W. Warner, 578th, had just cleared the runway when his two left engines lost power. The fully-loaded B-24 crashed at 0445 hours. The remaining planes took off over the burning wreckage. Seven crewmen were killed immediately; the eighth, nose gunner S/Sgt Donald A. Kight, died in a hospital on 29 May 1945. He was the last 392nd casualty of the war.

8th Air Force Historical Society Annual Reunion

Crowne Plaza Riverwalk San Antonio, October 3-7, 2012

Wednesday, October 3

2:00pm— Memorabilia/Gathering Rooms open
2:00pm— 8AFHS Board Meeting
6:00pm— 7:00pm Welcome Reception with Cash Bar

Thursday, October 4

7:30am— 8:30am Continental Breakfast
9:00am—11:00am Reunion Registration open
9:45am— 2:30pm BUCKHORN MUSEUM; EL MERCADO
2:00pm— 6:00pm Reunion Registration open
3:00pm— 4:00pm Unit Advisory, Chapter & Unit Development Meetings
4:30pm— 6:00pm Next Generation Meeting
6:30pm— 7:00pm Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm— 9:30pm Welcome Dinner Buffet, followed by guest speaker George Ciampa of www.letfreedomringforall.org

Friday, October 5

7:00am— 8:30am Full Breakfast
8:00am— 1:30pm LACKLAND AIR FORCE BASE
9:00am—12:00pm CITY TOUR
9:00am—11:00am Reunion Registration open
2:00pm— 6:00pm Reunion Registration open
2:00pm— 3:30pm Individual Group Meetings
4:00pm— 5:30pm WWII Q&A SESSION
6:30pm— 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm— 9:30pm Rendezvous Dinners/"Hangar Flying"

Saturday, October 6

7:30am— 8:30am Full Breakfast Buffet

9:00am—10:30am General Membership Meeting
12:00pm— 5:00pm 8AFHS Board Meeting
1:00pm— 5:00pm CITY TOUR/B-17
5:00pm— 5:30pm Reunion Registration Open
6:00pm— 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm— 8AFHS Gala Banquet

Sunday, October 7

7:00am— 8:30am Continental Breakfast

Registration Instructions. Complete the Registration Form on page 11. For "WWII GROUP," please put "392nd BG." This information will be used to tally totals for each group, nametags, and seating arrangements. If you prefer to sit with a different group, please give that information too. Remit by mail with check or money order payable to Armed Forces Reunions by 31 Aug 2012. You may also register and pay with credit card online at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2012. A 3% convenience fee will be added to online credit card reservations. Forms received after August 31 will be accepted on a space available basis only. Hotel reservations should also be made by August 31, 2012.

Cancellation Policy. For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less a \$5 per person processing fee. Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow,

See 8AFHS REUNION on page 9

8AFHS REUNION from page 8

less a \$5 processing fee. Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9am until 4pm Eastern Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion. Cancelling your hotel reservation doesn't cancel your reunion activities.

Meals/Event Choices

Choice #1, \$196. Package includes 7 hotel functions starting with breakfast on Thursday. Tours are separate.

Choice #2, \$138. Package includes 5 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Friday. Tours are separate.

Breakfast menus: The continental breakfasts on Thursday and Sunday include juice, breakfast breads, cereal, yogurt, fruit, coffee, and tea. The breakfast buffets on Friday and Saturday include juice, biscuits, eggs, meat, potatoes, French toast or pancakes, coffee and tea.

Choice #3, Individual Events. Friday Rendezvous Dinner at \$42 and Saturday Banquet at \$44 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.

TOUR OPTIONS. Prices are listed on the registration form (page 11). Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices. Please be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time. All tours must have a minimum of 35 people, unless otherwise stated.

BUCKHORN MUSEUM AND EL MERCADO, Thursday, October 4. It all started in 1881 when trappers, hunters and cowboys traded deer antlers for beer or whiskey at Albert Friedrich's saloon. Now, the Buckhorn Saloon and Museum's Hall of Horns, Hall of Feathers and Hall of Fins house not only the largest, but also some of the most impressive collections of native and exotic wildlife around. Next door you'll find the Texas Ranger Museum which contains priceless artifacts documenting the history and lore of the Texas Rangers. From there you'll visit El Mercado, the largest Mexican marketplace outside of Mexico. It occupies three blocks of plazas and historic buildings full of shops, restaurants, art galleries, and more! The shops feature a wide range of products including leather goods, piñatas, jewelry, Mexican dresses, stained glass, art, pottery, and blankets. There are also authentic Mexican restaurants, many with open air patios. The plazas are alive with music, dancing, mariachis,

and other entertainment. 9:45am board bus, 2:30pm back at hotel. \$43/Person includes bus, escort, and admissions. LACKLAND AIR FORCE BASE, Friday, October 5. Begin the day with the parade and graduation ceremony at Lackland Air Force Base. Take a stroll along the parade grounds and view Lackland's static display of vintage and modern aircraft. Take a short trip to the History and Traditions Museum, which houses a collection of rare aeronautical objects. The museum's aircraft, engines, instruments, and air weapons span the years of aviation development from its origin to the aerospace age. Next, head to the Gateway NCO Club for lunch, consisting of a turkey croissant with salad, chips, and dessert. NOTE: This trip is limited to the first 100 people registered. 8:00am board bus, 1:30pm back at hotel. \$47/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch.

CITY TOUR or CITY TOUR / B-17 SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY, Friday, October 5 OR Saturday, October 6. From the earliest Spanish Missionaries in 1691 to today's traveler, San Antonio's appeal continues to draw attention. Enjoy a narrated tour of San Antonio's unique blend of rich heritage, traditions, and natural beauty. Points of interest include San Jose Mission which is still an active church and is part of the National Park Service; the Alamo; San Fernando Cathedral, the original church of the Canary Island settlers; and the Riverwalk. **On Saturday,** the buses will stop at the Stinson Municipal Airport to view the B-17 Sentimental Journey. This plane is on location especially for our group. For those wanting to go inside the aircraft, a \$5 donation will be collected at the plane steps (not included in tour price). Lunch is on your own before or after the tour. **Friday:** 9:00am board bus, 12:00pm back at hotel. \$28/Person includes bus and guide. **Saturday:** 1:00pm board bus, 5:00pm back at hotel. \$29/Person includes bus and guide.

RENDEZVOUS DINNERS, Friday, October 5. Units (BGs, FGs, etc.) with about 50 or more people in attendance will have a private room. Smaller groups will be combined with others. Think of this as your "reunion within the reunion." Dinner features Chicken Marsala. 6:30pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Dinner. Cost is included in both meal packages or \$42 separately.

8AFHS BANQUET, Saturday, October 6. Assemble in the
See 8AFHS REUNION on page 10

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

8AFHS REUNION from page 9

ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Tilapia with Lemon Caper Sauce or Flatiron Steak with Cabernet Demi Glace and the usual accompaniments. After dinner, we'll proceed with the guest speaker. 6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Banquet. Cost is included in both meal packages or \$44 separately.

Crowne Plaza Riverwalk, San Antonio

The Crowne Plaza Riverwalk San Antonio is located at 111 East Pecan Street, San Antonio, TX 78205. Call the hotel at (210) 354-2800 for accurate driving directions. This hotel is within walking distance of Hemisfair Park and Tower, the San Antonio Convention Center, and the River Center Mall. The Riverwalk is just outside the door.

The Crowne Plaza Riverwalk offers 410 rooms. Handicapped and non-smoking rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservations. Each room features cable/satellite tv, coffee maker, hair dryer, iron and ironing board and free morning newspaper delivered to room. High-speed internet and wireless internet access are available for a fee. Guests may also enjoy the hotel's full fitness center, whirlpool, and roof top pool. **The 111 Bar & Grille** serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner featuring South Texas influences with Mexican Flair. Room service is available.

Hospitality Suites are available for group socialization. There are two traditional parlor suites and a few meeting rooms that will allow byob privileges. The parlors of traditional suites will rent at the group rate (adjoining sleeping room at group rate as well). The meeting rooms will rent for \$100 per day and will be used on Friday for group business meetings and Rendezvous Dinners. Please contact DonnaLee@afri.com for more information.

SA Trans provides shuttle service from San Antonio International Airport. Currently, rates are \$19 per person one way; \$34 per person round trip; all pricing subject to change. Shuttle tickets are sold at the baggage claim area in Terminal 1 & Terminal 2. You can make advance reservations by calling (210) 281-9900. For a discount, make your 8AFHS reservations online at <http://saairportshuttle.hudsonltd.net/res?USERIDENTRY=AFR&LOGON=GO>. Self-parking at the hotel is offered to guests at a discounted rate of \$10 per day with in and out privileges. Check-in is at 3:00pm and check-out is at 11:00am.

The hotel does not have parking available for RVs. Should you require full hookup service, please call Fiesta Campground at (210) 821-6494 or Alamo KOA San Antonio at (210) 224-9296.

ScotAround rents manual and power wheelchairs by day or week. Call their toll free number at (888) 441-7575.

***** CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL *****

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY REUNION – HOTEL RESERVATIONS OFFICIAL REUNION DATES: OCTOBER 3-7, 2012

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS (if available) _____ TELEPHONE # () _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ TIME _____ AM/PM DEP. DATE _____

NUMBER OF ROOMS NEEDED _____ NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN EACH ROOM _____

SPECIAL REQUESTS: Wheelchair accessible room _____ Nonsmoking room _____ King Bed _____ Two Double Beds _____ Room/Bed types are not guaranteed.

RATE: \$109 + tax (currently 16.75%) Single/Double occupancy. Rate will be honored 3 days before and after reunion dates, based on availability.

CUT OFF DATE: 8/31/12. Reservations received after this date will be processed on a space available basis, at the prevailing public rate.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 72hrs in advance of arrival date. Record your cancellation number. Call (210) 354-2800. If a guest checks out prior to the guest's reserved checkout date, the Hotel will add an early departure fee, currently \$50.00, to that guest's individual account, except for officially documented medical or family emergencies.

GUARANTEE: Reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

MC _____ VISA _____ AM. EXPRESS _____ CARTE BLANCHE/DINERS _____ DISCOVER _____

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

Mail To: Crowne Plaza Riverwalk, 111 Pecan Street, San Antonio, TX 78205, Attn: Reservations

Or Visit <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/8thAirForceHistorical>

8th AFHS ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order. Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. You may also register online and pay by credit card at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2012. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before August 31, 2012. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form. Returned checks will be charged a \$20 fee.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.

322 Madison Mews

Norfolk, VA 23510

ATTN: 8th AFHS

OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # _____ Date Received _____
 Inputted _____ Nametag Completed _____

CUT-OFF DATE IS 8/31/12		Price Per	# of People	Total
REGISTRATION FEE				
Includes meeting expenses and other reunion expenses.		\$45		
Reg. Fee for children ages 8-16 attending more than 1 function & staying at hotel		\$30		
MEAL PACKAGES				
<i>Choice #1 includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Thursday.</i>				
<i>Choice #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday.</i>				
Choice #1		\$196		\$
Choice #2		\$138		\$
Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet:				
Flat Iron Steak			#	
Tilapia w/ lemon caper sauce			#	
SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)				
Friday: Rendezvous Dinner (Chicken Marsala)		\$42		\$
Saturday: Banquet (please select your entrée)				
Flat Iron Steak		\$44		\$
Tilapia w/ lemon caper sauce		\$44		\$
TOURS				
Thursday: Buckhorn Museum & El Mercado		\$43		\$
Please choose one of the following two tours:				
Friday: Lackland Air Force Base		\$47		\$
Friday: City Tour		\$28		\$
Saturday: City Tour / B-17		\$29		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.				\$

Please Print

MEMBER NAME (for nametag) _____

☐ VETERAN ☐ NEXT GEN ☐ OTHER WWII GROUP (for seating purposes) _____

SPOUSE NAME (if attending) _____

GUEST NAMES _____ ☐ NEXT GEN ☐ OTHER

PHONE # (____) _____ - _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____ @ _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

MUST YOU BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS? ☐ YES ☐ NO (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

Register Online at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2012

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

by Tom Perry, 576th Sqdn Armorer

I was reading my Bible in the New Testament book of the Acts of the Apostles where the Apostle Paul (the former Saul of Tarsus) was taken to Athens where certain Epicurians and stoic philosophers brought him to the Aeropagus to talk to them about the new doctrine of Jesus Christ. He then said he observed they were very religious, considering the objects of their worship included an altar to the unknown god. He then told them of receiving eternal life through belief in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the world. This turned my thoughts to John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."



**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**

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

First Class Mail

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∞

Gaetano "Guy" Spinelli, 578, Feb. 7, 2012
Bernard Weisberg, 10SCS, Aug. 28, 2011
Maxine Mackey, spouse of Oak, 578, Mar. 22, 2012
Peter Loncke, Assoc, Mar. 24, 2012
Clyde B. Eaton, 578, Aug. 25, 2011
Dr. George W. Barger Jr., 577, May 14, 2012
Jewell Gill, spouse of Jessie, 576, Nov. 28, 2011