



THE LAST MISSIONS

The 392nd BG flew several historic missions in April 1945.

14 Apr 1945

Per the 392nd's Photo Interpreter, "...the division had to ... knock off some fortifications the Jerries used North of Bordeaux. For the 392nd it was the task of destroying the gun emplacements at Point de Susac. Here the Nazis had six 75mm and two 120mm coastal guns as well as some light flak guns. The whole target area being very tiny, the group went in as 6 ship elements to bomb."

Results were generally excellent.

S/Sgt Robert L. Erfurth, 577th gunner and togglier for

2/Lt Oscar Weed's crew, wrote, "Today we attacked the Girande Pocket at Royan, France. It's one of the pockets of German soldiers that have established their own fortress in the hopes of defending themselves. We carried the largest bomb load to date. It was four 2,000 pound [General Purpose bombs]. Really quite a load.

"We took off very early and it was quite dark. To be exact it was 5:40am when we got off and we were the last ones to leave the field. One ship went down on take-off this morning killing all but the engineer. He is in a serious condition. The ship went up in a mass of flames that lit up the sky for miles. Luckily the bombs didn't explode. It would have wrecked all the ships on our field if they had.

"We had no flak today and no fighters. In fact we didn't even carry guns. It was a long trip and we had to travel as

light as possible to carry the heavy bomb load so far. We carried no waist gunners either. If per chance we had met enemy fighters it would have been a pity....

"Because our bombs weren't loaded this morning we had a late take-off and couldn't catch our group. We bombed with another group [the 93rd BG]. We also had a B-17 tagging along. Really was a sight to watch him trying to keep up with us.

"Incidentally, there were supposed to be about 35,000 Germans in the pocket and I imagine there are a few less after today's raid."



On 15 Apr 1945, napalm bombs drop from 15,000 feet. At right, #42-51519, carrying the 579th's Command Authority LtCol Malcolm K. Martin with pilot 1/Lt Henry N. Teipel and crew. Extending from #519's fuselage is the H2X radome. The plane in the background is believed to be #42-50313, Wabash Cannon Ball, with the 578th's 2/Lt Howard D. Nelson crew. The odd tumbling characteristic of the napalm bombs, which so alarmed the air crews, is obvious.

Editor's note: The men on 2/Lt Charles W. Warner's crew, 578th, were the Group's last aircraft-related casualties of the war. Just after lifting off in #42-50446, J.C. Poolhall, the left engines appeared to lose power. With full fuel and bomb loads, the pilots were unable to recover. Seven men were killed immediately. Nose gunner

S/Sgt Donald A. Kight died on 29 May 1945.

15 Apr 1944

The 392nd went back to Royan again, this time armed with a new weapon. The Photo Interpreter reported, "The 392nd led the division in to finish off the job so well started yesterday. Only this time we had another set of guns to ruin. This was a battery of three 155mm casement guns and three 75mm flak guns just above the town of Royan.

See MISSIONS on page 4



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FROM THE EDITOR

Heritage League Reunion. The Heritage League conducted a very successful reunion in England from 24-31 May 2014. 392nd BG attendees were 95-year old 576th Sqdn waist gunner Harvey W. Naber and son Mark; Ralph Winter (son of 579th Sqdn pilot 1/Lt Ralph W. Lamma, KIA 13 Nov 1943); and Doug Dovey, son of 579th lead navigator 1/Lt Arnold J. Dovey.

Highlights included the Memorial Day ceremony at Cambridge American Cemetery (see related story on page 3); the Imperial War Museum at Duxford; the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich; visits to local pubs and manor houses; and a memorial service at the American Chapel in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. 392nd BGMA Director John Gilbert spent a full day showing the Crusaders what remains of Station 118. Harvey remembered the Operations Building where he was briefed for his missions (now a John Deere dealership) as well as the wall on which the route maps were displayed. He even recognized where his Nissen hut had been located on site 6. John also drove the quartet to Sporle so Harvey could re-visit the site where his plane crashed on 29 May 1944 after suffering battle damage during the mission to Politz.



At the Wendling Village Hall. L-R: Mark and Harvey Nabor, Ralph Winter, John Gilbert, Doug Dovey

Recent emails. There will be a reunion for Stalag Luft III POWs, their friends and families next August in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in coordination with the Air Force Academy. We are seeking anyone interested in coming. For more information, contact Marilyn Walton, waltonk9@gmail.com or Mike Eberhardt, mikeceber@sbcglobal.net.

Robert D. Davis, gunner on the Eisemann crew and author of two books, reports that a documentary is being prepared about his experiences. Desert Wind Studios has set up a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/BIFfilm>) and a website (www.BIFtheSeries.com) where you can follow the progress on the documentary—"Before I Forget"—and the film—"The Boys of the 392nd."

John Gilbert alerted us to an article in *The Guardian* about the race to save WWII wall art before time and the elements make them fade away for good. The only photo included in the on-line version (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/17/artwork-yanks-left-behind>) shows the magnificent mural of flying B-24s from what was the 392nd BG's Combat Officers Mess, but is now the location of Jagspares.

September 2014 News. The next issue will include articles about the missions to Friedrichshafen on 18 Mar 1944 and to Berlin on 29 Apr 1944. If you flew either of these missions, please tell me what you remember!

Books. Many books and manuscripts have been written by, for or about the 392nd BG and its airmen. The ones listed below are either available in our PX or on-line. If you know of other books that should be added to this list, please contact me.

In The PX

▲Jack Adams. *Lest We Forget: A Navigator's Tale*. 3 soft-cover copies available, \$15 each.

▲Walt Cranson. *My Combat Diary*. 6 spiral-bound copies available, all signed by Walt. \$15 each or emailed pdf version, \$12.

▲Robert H. Tays. *Country Boy / Combat Bomber Pilot*. In blue binder cover, \$15 each or emailed pdf version, \$12.

▲William C. McGuire II. *After the Liberators: A Father's Last Mission, a Son's Lifelong Journey*. The time is 1944. A navigator on an American B-24 Liberator is reported missing over southern Germany and is presumed dead. At home, his only child celebrates his first birthday. Fifty years later, the son is compelled to learn the details of this one combat death, information he never had. The book includes photos and illustrations, bibliography and index, as well as an appendix of useful sources for tracking military records and information. Available in email pdf version only, \$5.

▲Robert E. Vickers Jr. *The Liberators from Wendling*. The WWII combat story of the 392nd BG, its men and machines. Bob notes, "The purpose of this documentation will be served if ... it can provide value as a reference source to all former members from which their memories, and those for fallen comrades, may be rekindled and, perhaps for a quiet moment, remembered once again." \$50 US mailing, \$60 international mailing.

See BOOKS on page 6

President's Message



This issue, I am delighted to turn my column over to Dan Tison, son of editor Annette Tison. He is in the US Navy, stationed in England. He went in uniform to Cambridge American Cemetery on Memorial Day to pay his respects to the US military personnel honored there, including the 45 airmen from the 392nd buried in its grounds and the 114 named on the Wall of the Missing. Dan sent this account and photos of his experience there.

Even if buried far from home, those who made the supreme sacrifice for our country are not forgotten!

Blue Skies,
Jim Goar

An Honorable Tribute on Hallowed Ground

by Lieutenant Dan Tison, USN

A somber, grey curtain of sky hung over the fields of East Anglia on May 26th as people from far and wide filed into Cambridge American Cemetery to pay their respects to 3,812 comrades buried there—each grave adorned with American and British flags—and the 5,127 names engraved on the Wall of the Missing. Uniforms worn by the American military personnel in attendance mirrored the diverse backgrounds of those being remembered this day.

The somber stillness was fittingly broken by the Pratt & Whitney radial engines mounted on a C-47, painted with D-Day Invasion Stripes, that circled the Cemetery prior to the ceremony. The sound harkened back to the thumping drone that so often marred the otherwise serene English countryside in the 1940s.

The official party took their places to the tones of a Royal Army bagpiper playing classic airs such as "Scotland the Brave." A US Air Force Honor Guard, marching in absolute precision, presented the colors of the United States and her four military services. More than one hundred right arms snapped to a crisp salute as an Air Force band played "God Save the Queen" and "The Star-Spangled Banner."

After welcoming remarks and an invocation, the Lord

Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Mr. Hugh Duberly CBE—the Queen's personal representative for the county that hosted so many 8th Air Force fields—took the stage. His remarks spoke to the valor and sacrifice of so many who fell in the conflict. He also spoke of the true gratitude and thanks of the United Kingdom for that sacrifice, remarking that the United Kingdom has not forgotten, and will never forget, the debt of gratitude owed to so many.

General Merrill McPeak, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and now Chairman of the American Battle Monuments Commission, spoke on the all-too-common tales of gallant heroism and sacrifice that led so many to burial and honor at the Cemetery.

He touched on a Lieutenant in the US Merchant Marine who dove into the dark frigid waters of the North Atlantic after hearing cries for help following a collision at sea. He was able to save two lives, and then went back out again to save more, until tragically succumbing to the cold.

General McPeak spoke of a Technical Sergeant from the 306th BG who remained at his guns in the top turret after his B-17 ditched, continuing to fire at six circling Luftwaffe fighters until his aircraft sank into the depths of the Bay of Biscay. His name and those of his crew are listed on the Wall of the Missing.

These were but two examples of the quality and character of those military personnel who sacrificed everything and are now interred in body or spirit at Cambridge.

Following the speeches, 104 Airmen marched along the Wall of the Missing, each carrying a floral tribute. The Master of Ceremonies then asked the presenters to come forward and stand in front of their wreath. Each presenter had a connection to their tribute, whether as a surviving family member or as the representative of a Command or Memorial Association who had dedicated the arrangement. The Airmen presented the floral tributes to each wreath layer and rendered a sharp salute. The flowers were then placed reverently in front of the Wall.

A 21-Gun Salute ended a moment of silence, which was followed by a lone bugle playing Taps. As the last notes of the salute to fallen comrades echoed out among the grounds, a light rain began to fall, a fitting echo of the tears shed for the loved ones being honored that day.



Clockwise from above: the statue of a US airman in front of the Wall of the Missing; a Comrade in Arms known but to God; hundreds of crosses and Stars of David, each with an American and British flag; USAF airmen stand ready with floral tributes to the fallen.

MISSIONS from page 1

The bombs used were the 75 gallon and 85 gallon belly tank Napalm fire bombs."

2AD's Flak Annex #1 advised "There were 27 heavy guns in the area of the targets which were within range. These however are being attacked shortly before 2AD bombing and it is believed that flak should be nil to very meager and inaccurate." Groups were cautioned, "Routes are over



L-R: 578th armorers Pfc Frank J. Cunningham and Pfc Lionel A. Frith load a napalm bomb. The napalm was carried inside auxiliary fuel "drop" tanks used by fighter planes.

friendly territory; however, there are a few places where channels are not particularly wide and these places should be brought out in briefing. Lately there has been more than one case where crews have strayed over areas not entirely in our control and losses and battle damage has been the result."

No bombs were to be brought back. 2AD's Field

Order gave coordinates for a jettison point at sea. It also mandated "any a/c or unit that does not release all or any of its bombs will turn left immediately and proceed to the jettison point. This precaution is taken to avoid releasing on friendly troops which are only 7 miles from target."

Additionally, "Mickey operators will make certain there is

no shipping in jettison area if undercast conditions exist at time of jettisoning."

Main Briefing

392nd crews were told "there are 122,000 Germans in the area held by the Hun. The region is heavily defended by anti-tank ditches, barb wire, pill boxes and other emplacements. There are many gun positions, well-manned and well-supplied with ammunition. These garrisons have been supplied by submarines, coastal craft and air transport. In recent months these methods have not functioned very smoothly, and as a result, the Nazis have made frequent raids on the neighboring civilians, making off with cattle and food.

"The areas under attack comprise slit trenches, artillery, personnel shelters and barbed wire. The combined efforts of [all] three [8AF] divisions is to neutralize these defenses preparatory to a breakthrough from the east" approximately one hour after bombing.

The French Air Force in this area would be flying Me-110, He-111, SBD Dauntless and JU-88 aircraft, painted blue with French markings. Crews were told that "No a/c of any description will be fired at."

Six emergency landing field options were named but two in France (Y-36 at Cognac and Y-37 at Bordeaux-Mérignac) were preferred as they were under Allied control.

No German fighter opposition was expected so no US fighter support was being provided.

The Mission

The 392nd sent up 33 crews with Group CO Col Lorin Johnson as 2AD's Command Pilot. Thirty planes were loaded with six 85-gallon Napalm tanks and two 75-gallon tanks; the other three each carried 5,200 pounds of incendiaries. Per the Field Order, a/c carrying incendiaries would "fly as 3 ship elements on the tail end of each Group and each element will make an individual run."

See MISSIONS on page 5

392nd BGMA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please look at the mailing label. Your membership status is shown directly after your name. "14" means your membership expires in December 2014; it can be renewed throughout the year. 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 Annette Tison, 9107 Wood Pointe Way, Fairfax Station, VA 22039. 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.

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DONATION \$ _____

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MISSIONS from page 4

(Bombardiers had been briefed on which planes carried incendiaries in order to prevent napalm bombs and incendiaries from being released at the same time. They were also warned not to salvo the napalm bombs through the bomb bay doors.)

Again, the planes flew without waist gunners.

Two crews aborted. 2/Lt Arthur F. Lienemann, 576, later reported, "Right front and left rear gas jelly bombs sprung leaks, flooding bomb bays, filling entire plane with fumes." He jettisoned all eight bombs.

2/Lt Willard R. Barker, 577, said he turned back because "One of jelly bombs fell when strap broke; was pushing against the others. Would have caused the others to spring a leak so all were jettisoned."

Most results were unobserved due to smoke and fire at the target area. When interrogated, 1/Lt Armando A. Garcia, 578, stated, "A lot of the bombs seemed to explode before hitting the ground. Not safe to carry. They tumble in falling."

The 8AF apparently agreed, as napalm bombs were never dropped again in WWII by their crews.

Napalm

Invented by Harvard chemist and researcher Dr. Louis Fieser in 1943, napalm is a form of thickened petroleum with the consistency of jelly. The name comes from two of its gelling agents, naphthenic acid and palmitic acid. Per <http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/PVCC/mbase/docs/napalm.html>, Fieser was "also a pioneer in developing laboratory production of vitamin K, the body's blood-clotting agent, and antimalarial drugs. In the course of his research, Fieser found a perfectly good civilian use for the product: it made a fine crab-grass killer, burning away its seeds while leaving good grass roots untouched."

"During and after World War II, he received several letters of thanks for his invention, which soldiers claimed saved thousands of American lives in battle. No one ever complained to him about the use of napalm until Vietnam."

17 Apr 1945: Beroun, Czechoslovakia

At their briefing, 392nd crews were informed of a 2AD message received that day from US Tactical Army Air Force: "There no longer exists any strategic targets for the heavy bombers of the Eighth Air Force in this theatre. Our missions henceforth will be the support of the ground forces. The tactical air forces will continue to render close support and carry out interdiction close to the front lines. The role of the heavy bombers will be to carry out interdiction along a line of communications farther beyond the front. The heavy bomber role is to paralyze and immobilize transportation forces performing the same role along the front lines. Henceforth, the targets we attack will be those requested daily by the ground forces."

The men were also told they would be "bombing near the Russian bomb line" and they should "fire only at a/c that are positively identified as hostile or those making a hostile commitment." In fact, they were even told to "test fire guns with extreme caution."

If they had to bail out, the fliers were advised to surrender only "to Army, Luftwaffe, and uniformed police but not to

Gestapo, Hitler Youth, SS or civilians" and to "demand immediate registration as a POW."

The day's target was a small railroad yard in Beroun, about 20 miles southwest of Prague. This time, each 392nd ship was armed with ten conventional 500-pound General Purpose bombs.

Results were good to excellent. Per the Photo Interpreter, "The railroad is knocked out at one place for sure and perhaps at two places. This is what the Group set out to do, and as such it was a very successful mission. Damage should be considerable."

It was a long mission, lasting over 8.5 hours. In his diary, 578th tail gunner S/Sgt Albert White in 1/Lt J. Ardinger's crew pointed out he "Flew over six countries to target."

20 Apr 1945: Schwandorf

Three squadrons (576th, lead; 578th, high; and 577th, low) led the 14th Combat Wing against a small marshalling yard near the town of Schwandorf, Germany, 22 miles north of Regensburg. The 44th BG flew one minute behind.

392nd crews were briefed at 4:30am with the first plane airborne at 7:20am. Most planes carried ten 500-pound General Purpose bombs filled with RDX, which had an explosive force more powerful than TNT. Nonetheless, the bombs could be returned to base if not dropped.

The Photo Interpreter noted that this mission continued "the present strategy of attacking small tactical targets."

He reported, "At the I.P. the lead squadron headed for the target, but was forced to make a dog leg to the left to let the 44th Group, which cut the I.P. short, go first. The low squadron did not make the jog to the left, therefore, they bombed the target first in our Group. Although one squadron hit to the right of the marshalling yards, the over all results of the Group's bombing was very good to excellent."

In fact, 91 percent of the Group's bombs were within 1,000 feet of the target with 96 percent within 2,000 feet.



On 20 Apr 1945, 576th Sqdn planes #41-28916 (left, with 2/Lt Lester M. Rohrer Jr.'s crew) and #42-50647 (right, with pilot 2/Lt Philip R. Earl) leave the marshalling yard at Schwandorf in ruins.

25 Apr 1945: Hallein, Austria

The target for what turned out to be the last mission of the war was the train marshalling yard at Hallein, eight miles southeast of Salzburg. The target was requested by the US

See MISSIONS on page 6

MISSIONS from page 5

Third Army as it was near Hitler's Redoubt at Berchtesgaden and on the main transportation route. The secondary target was the main railroad station in Salzburg.

The lead and high right sections were loaded with 250 pound General Purpose bombs while the low left carried incendiaries.

Several planes received battle damage. In their Interrogation Forms, 2/Lt Campbell C. McKellar, 577, reported four flak holes. 2/Lt Robert K. Crowell, 576, said



This photo was taken on 25 Apr 1945 by a camera in #41-51205, Star Swinger, piloted by 1/Lt J. Ardinger. It may show the last explosions from 392nd BG bombs in WWII.

"one a/c of the 392nd got a direct hit by flak and lost control temporarily." 2/Lt Joseph A. Rigney said it happened after leaving the target but the ship did regain the formation.

That plane might have been #42-51519, flown by 1/Lt Ralph B. Linzmeier. He landed at field B-53 near Merville, France, thanks in large part to engineer T/Sgt Edward J. Connor Jr.

Crewmate Claude Specht's journal noted that moderate but "very accurate" flak put "holes in tail, fuselage, and wings" and cut the control cable. Connor fixed or spliced the cable, which held until they landed in France. They left the plane to be repaired and returned on a 44th BG plane, arriving in Wendling at 6:30pm.

Connor was later awarded an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for his effective emergency repairs.

2/Lt Leonard T. Grabarkiewicz also reported "one ship from this Group went over the target twice, number unknown." Perhaps that pilot had a premonition that this was the last time he would fly over hostile territory.

29 Apr 1945: Zoetermeer, the Netherlands

Four days after the last combat mission, a 392nd BG airman was killed in the line of duty. 578th waist gunner S/Sgt John E. McCormick had, with the help of the Dutch resistance, evaded capture since being shot down on 22 Feb 1945. He was not a passive bystander; instead, he accompanied the resistance group on missions, helped prepare false identification papers and did all he could to aid their efforts.

On 29 Apr 1945, about 20 German soldiers surrounded their hiding place. In the resulting firefight, McCormick was killed. He is buried in Zoetermeer, the Netherlands,

next to three Dutch resistance fighters. They share a common headstone which says, in Dutch, "Faithful to Their Fatherland."

For more information, see <http://www.b24.net/stories/McCormick.htm>.

It's Not Really Over...

There was much celebrating when Germany surrendered on 8 May 1945. However, a teletype two days later from Carl A. "Tooey" Spaatz, Commanding General, US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, put the situation in focus. He had just received a message from AAF Command General Henry A. "Hap" Arnold. "Today the might of the German army collapsed when its leaders agreed to allied terms of unconditional surrender. I am happy now to be able to send my congratulations to the Army Air Forces for pressing our attack to a smashing climax. We stand now at the peak of our offensive power.

"As this is written, plans already are in motion to divert an avalanche of military might against our only remaining enemy—Japan. The weapon that strikes home modern warfare is the airplane.

"In our growing offensive against the Japanese, the Army Air Forces will play a vital role. At the same time they must supply the punch to occupation forces throughout the world. Finally, they must maintain a network of supply and transport lines to all corners of the earth.

"A gigantic job remains to be done, and until it is done, no large-scale demobilization can take place in the AAF. Those few men who can be spared will be returned to civilian life as rapidly as possible. They will be released from the AAF under the same standards that govern release from the Army ground forces and the Army service forces. Our rotation system will be accelerated.

"But for most of us, let me make it plain: We are fighting men in a fighting organization, and just as long as a single Japanese ship, submarine, air squadron, or company of infantry remains to challenge us, our job is not done. We are in this fight to the finish."

BOOKS from page 2

▲Robert E. Vickers Jr. *Wendling's Crusaders: Remembrance of the Missing, The Men and Their Missions*. The combat story of the 392nd BG, the men who were casualties and those who paid the supreme sacrifice with their lives in WWII during Eighth Air Force operations. \$50 US mailing, \$60 international mailing.

▲*Preserving the Legacy CD*. \$15 US shipping, \$20 international mailing. This CD has 4 major sections:

- 20th Century Crusaders, The 392nd Bomb Group Anthology*. True tales of the air war over Europe told by those who lived them in the 392nd Bomb Group. Over 100 authors, 175 stories and 100 photos. 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.

- WWII 8th Army Air Force Combat Chronology*. The history of the European 8th Army Air Force compiled from

See BOOKS on page 7

BOOKS from page 6

many sources. Day-by-day accounts of the 8th Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

- European War Strategic Bombing Survey. This bombing survey was established by the Secretary of War on 3 Nov 1944 pursuant to a directive from the late President Roosevelt.

- WWII Posters. Over 350 posters intended for display in libraries, post offices, schools, factories, and other public places during WWII. Some address home efforts for conservation of materials and rationing; others exhort workers to greater productivity and quality output; while others warn of the dangers of innocently leaking critical defense information to an unsuspected enemy. Women are encouraged to work in factories or military support positions. Various series address themes such as nutrition or investment in war bonds.

To order any items in the PX, send a check payable to "392nd BGMA" to Annette Tison. Her address is at the upper left of page 2.

Available in bookstores or www.amazon.com

▲Gerald Astor. *The Mighty Eighth*. Includes information on navigation by 579th navigator Manny Abrams.

▲Peter Bodle and John Gilbert. *The 392nd Bomb Group in Norfolk—a Pictorial History of the USAAF's 392nd Bombardment Group in Norfolk*.

▲Victor Cleary. *The Complete Clarksburg Ohio World War II Guide*. 576th Sqdn navigator Jack C. Morris, POW 7 July 1944.

▲Steve Darlow. *Special Op: Bomber: Daring Missions that Changed the Shape of WWII*. 577th Sqdn navigator 2/Lt John B. Cihon, POW 24 Feb 1944.

▲Robert D. Davis. *Growing Up—and Then Some and Before I Forget*. 578th Sqdn radio operator, POW 29 May 1944.

▲Erik Dyreborg. *The Captured Ones: American Prisoners of War in Germany 1944-1945*. 579th Sqdn bombardier Coleman Jacobson, POW 11 Sep 1944.

▲John S. Edwards. *American Ex-Prisoners of War: Non Solun Amis*. 577th Sqdn 2/Lt James R. Dodd's crew, shot down 28 Jan 1945.

▲Jackson W. Granholm. *The Day We Bombed Switzerland: Flying with the US Eighth Army Air Force in World War II*. He was the defense attorney when 579th Sqdn lead pilot 1/Lt William R. Sincok and navigator 1/Lt Theodore Balides were court-martialed for mistakenly bombing Zurich as their "target of opportunity" on 4 Mar 1945. Col Jimmy Stewart was the presiding officer. The court had to decide whether their mistake was a "reasonable" one. Granholm writes, "I found myself wondering whether 'reasonable' was the right word for [men who flew] great, monstrous airplanes over Germany every day to drop high explosives. It was a sense of duty that sent us out, not reason. A reasonable person wouldn't have walked within five hundred feet of a B-24 bomber." The decision reached by the court and the reasoning behind it are still being used in US military courts martial when bombs or missiles strike the wrong target.

▲Richard H. Hoffman. *Stalag 17B Prisoner of War*. 579th Sqdn nose gunner, POW 5 Nov 1943.

▲Michael E. Lyga. *A Small Town Goes to War: Histories*

of the World War II Veterans of Independence, Wisconsin. 578th Sqdn waist gunner Butch Sobota, POW 28 Dec 1944.

▲John Matt. *Crewdog: a Saga of a Young American*. The autobiography of 576/9th navigator John Matishowski.

▲Jim McGregor. *Don't Call Me Hero "You Don't Send a Man to War and Get the Same Man Back."* A 579th pilot writes about his crew, their missions, and his life before and after war.

▲Cathryn J. Prince. *Shot from the Sky: American POWs in Switzerland*. Per www.amazon.com, "This book is about one of the great, dark secrets of World War II: neutral Switzerland shot down U.S. aircraft entering Swiss airspace and imprisoned the survivors in internment camps, detaining more than one thousand American flyers between 1943 and the war's end. While conditions at the camps were adequate and humane for internees who obeyed their captors' orders, the experience was very different for those who attempted to escape. They were held in special penitentiary camps in conditions as bad as those in some prisoner-of-war camps in Nazi Germany. Ironically, the Geneva Accords at the time did not apply to prisoners held in neutral countries, so better treatment could not be demanded."

▲John H. Roush Jr. *World War II Reminiscences*. 577th ball turret gunner Dale J. Stephen, POW 8 Apr 1944.

▲Peter Schrijvers. *The Margraten Boys: How a European Village Kept America's Liberators Alive*. The story of the US military cemetery in Margraten, the Netherlands, and how the villagers have kept their vow to never to forget the Americans buried there. Includes accounts of many Crusaders interred there as well as comments by 392nd BGMA member Peter Adriaans who has regularly visited the grave of 579th Sqdn engineer S/Sgt Amos Doty, KIA 19 May 1944, since he adopted that grave in 2004.

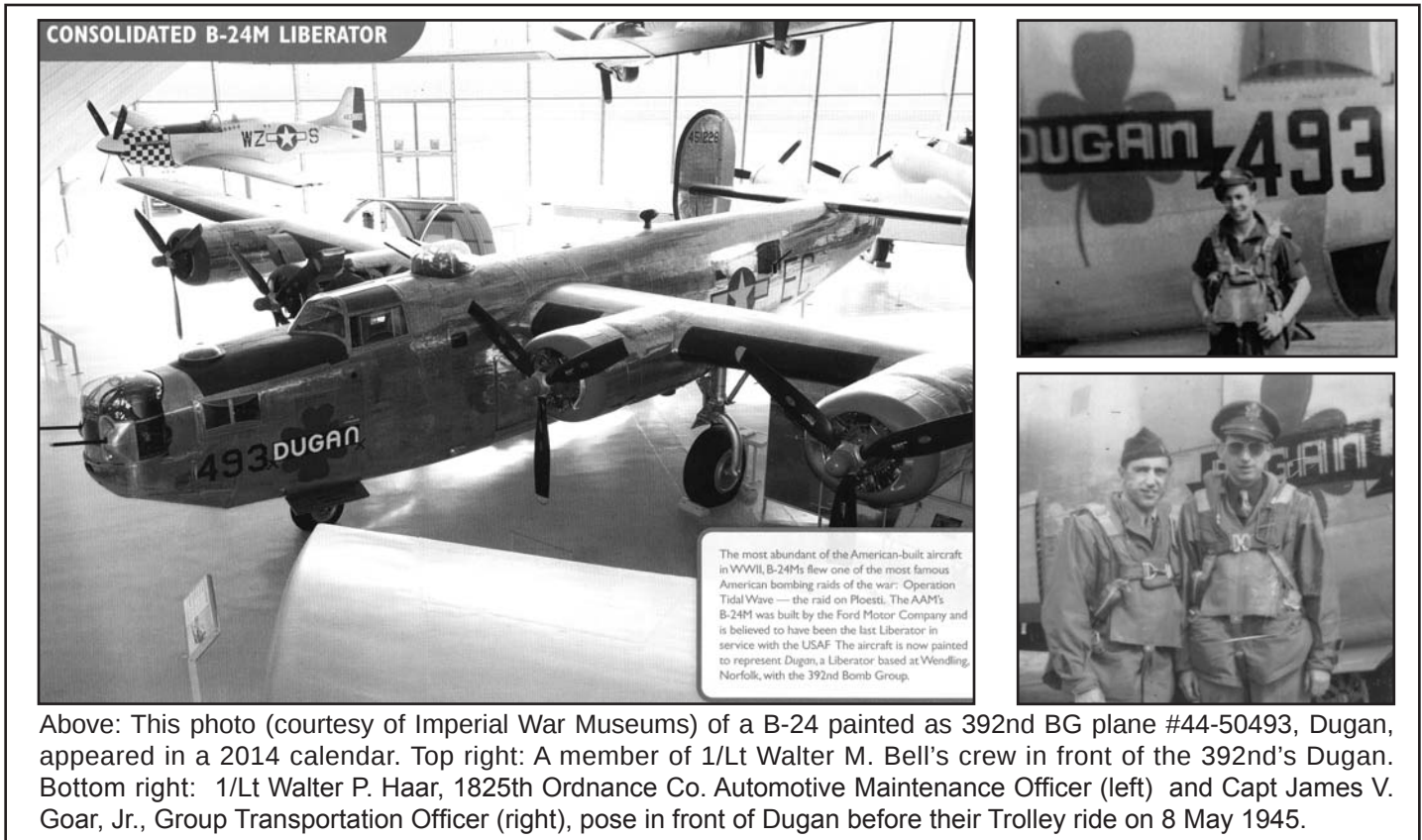
▲Stephen Tanner. *Refuge from the Reich: American Airmen and Switzerland During World War II*. 578th copilot James A. Green, interned 11 Jul 1944, and the mistaken bombing of Schaffhausen, Switzerland, on 1 Apr 1944 by the 392nd BG and other Groups.

▲In 2012, Mark van den Dries published a book in Dutch about the 579th's 1/Lt James A. Gerow crew. The book has now been translated into English with the tentative title *Drop Zone Holland*; it will hopefully be published by the end of 2014. It describes the German occupation of Zeeland, the Netherlands, and the development of a strong and very effective resistance effort there. It then details the 392nd BG's mission on 18 Sep 1944 to drop supplies to allied troops and what happened to the crew after flak damage meant they had to bail out over Holland.

Special emphasis is given to the two Americans who were killed and the two who evaded capture due to the efforts of Dutch patriots. First-hand accounts by the six POWs describe their months of captivity and the difficult conditions they faced on the Black March.

▲Bo Widfeldt and Ralph Wegmann. *Making for Sweden, Part 2: The United States Army Air Force—The Story of Allied Airmen Who took Sanctuary in Neutral Sweden*. More than 1,400 American airmen had to divert to Sweden or ditch in its coastal waters because of battle damage. This book provides details of each incident.

DUGAN, THEN AND NOW



Above: This photo (courtesy of Imperial War Museums) of a B-24 painted as 392nd BG plane #44-50493, Dugan, appeared in a 2014 calendar. Top right: A member of 1/Lt Walter M. Bell's crew in front of the 392nd's Dugan. Bottom right: 1/Lt Walter P. Haar, 1825th Ordnance Co. Automotive Maintenance Officer (left) and Capt James V. Goar, Jr., Group Transportation Officer (right), pose in front of Dugan before their Trolley ride on 8 May 1945.

Alert 392nd BGMA member M/Sgt Allen P. Holtman (USAF, retired) noticed a Liberator painted as a 392nd BG plane featured for March in a 2014 calendar sent him by the American Air Museum in Britain, based at IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire. He asked about it, so here's the rest of the story.

This ship began life as B-24M #44-51228; that number is still on the stabilizers. She was loaned to the Wright Aeronautical Icing Research Laboratory in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in early 1946 and used to study the cause and prevention of icing on planes. Retired from active service in 1953—making her perhaps the last B-24 in the Air Force—the ship was moved in 1956 to Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and displayed outside its Museum for decades.

In August 1997, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, opened the American Air Museum (AAM) as a British tribute to US air power and a memorial to the almost 30,000 US airmen who lost their lives flying from British bases in WWII.

Several years later, the AAM acquired an SR-71 Blackbird and #228 via a plane swap with the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton, Ohio. With major support from Ford Motor Company and donations of over \$1.5 million, AAM restored the badly-deteriorated Liberator and re-installed turrets and other items that had been removed during her time as an icing test platform.

As work neared completion, a major issue remained: how to paint the plane so it represented a B-24 that actually flew in combat. After much thought, the AAM decided on Dugan, #44-50493, a Liberator flown by the late Col Robert E. Vickers Jr. (USAF, Retired). He was a Founding Member of the American Air Museum in Britain, a member of its Board

of Trustees, Co-Chairman of the American Air Museum Legacy Society and a long-time friend of Duxford.

Bob began his Air Force career as a 578th Sqdn pilot. He flew 23 combat missions between January and April 1945 and three Trolley missions in May 1945. After #493 joined the 392nd on 10 Mar 1945, Bob was the pilot for 13 of her 26 combat and Trolley missions.

He named her Dugan (pronounced Doo-gun) after a common family saying: "If it's good enough for Dugan, it's good enough for me." The name was painted across a large four-leaf clover, which the crew regarded as good luck.

That luck was evident on 18 Mar 1945, when Dugan returned from a mission to Berlin with three props chewed up by shrapnel, a gaping slice through the leading edge of the left wing between the #1 and #2 engines, holes in the waist section and with the de-icer boot shot off of the left vertical stabilizer—but none of the crew injured.

The American Air Museum had to be reconfigured to make room for the gleaming B-24 and the SR-71. On 27 Sep 2002, over 2,000 guests joined former President (and WWII Navy fighter pilot) George H.R. Bush, Prince Charles and Prince Edward for a Rededication Ceremony. Special attendees included Bob Vickers and four more members of Dugan's crew.

Prince Charles noted, "The Museum is a fitting memorial to the thousands of American airmen who flew from the UK 60 years ago and never returned. For those of us born after the last war, it is a chance to salute you." As almost 400,000 visitors tour the Museum annually, they are reminded of the 392nd Bomb Group and the men and planes who served our countries so well.

8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion

**October 9 - 13, 2014
Nashville, Tennessee**

Thursday, October 9

Memphis Belle & The Red Nose available for tours & rides.

1:00pm– 6:00pm Reunion Registration open

2:00pm– 6:00pm 8AFHS Board Meeting

6:00pm– 7:00pm Welcome Reception

Friday, October 10

7:30am– 8:30am Full Breakfast for Meal Package #1 participants

TBD– TBD Memorabilia/Gathering Room open throughout the reunion

8:00am–10:00am Reunion Registration open

9:00am– 2:00pm CITY TOUR

9:30am–12:00pm MEMPHIS BELLE & THE RED NOSE

1:00pm– 5:00pm Reunion Registration open

2:30pm– 3:30pm Chapter/Unit Development AND Next Generation Meeting

4:00pm– 5:30pm Dinner Buffet (Pork BBQ and catfish as entrees) for Meal Package #1 participants. Laura Edge will speak during dinner of her father's experiences.

6:00pm– 10:00pm GRAND OLE OPRY

Saturday, October 11

7:30am– 8:30am Continental Breakfast for Meal Package participants

8:30am–10:00am Reunion Registration open

8:30am–10:00am Individual Group Meetings

10:30am– 5:30pm Symposium: Behind the Wire & Mask

2:00pm– 6:00pm Reunion Registration open

6:30pm– 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception

7:00pm– 9:30pm Rendezvous Dinners

Sunday, October 12

7:30am– 8:30am Full Breakfast for Meal Package Participants

8:30am–10:00am General Membership Meeting

11:00am– 4:00pm 8AFHS Board Meeting

11:00am– 2:30pm NASHVILLE NIGHTLIFE LUNCH AND MATINEE

5:00pm– 5:30pm Reunion Registration Open

6:00pm– 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception

7:00pm–10:00pm Banquet Dinner followed by guest speaker and dancing

Monday, October 13

7:00am– 8:30am Continental Breakfast Buffet for Meal Package participants

Registration Instructions. Complete the Registration Form on page 11. For "WWII GROUP," please put 392nd BG regardless of which squadron you were in. 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 8 Sep 2014. You may also register and pay with credit card online at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2014. A 3% convenience fee will be added to online credit card reservations. Forms received after September 8 will be accepted on a space available basis only. Hotel reservations should also be made by September 8.

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, 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. Canceling your hotel reservation doesn't cancel your reunion activities.

Meals/Event Choices

PACKAGE #1, \$212. Includes 7 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Friday (4 breakfasts, 3 dinners).

PACKAGE #2, \$148. Includes 5 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Saturday (3 breakfasts, 2 dinners).

See 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

REUNION from page 9

The continental breakfast buffets include juice, fruit, cereals/milk, yogurt, breakfast breads and coffee. The full breakfast buffets include juice, fruit, eggs, meat, potatoes, pancakes or French toast, biscuits and coffee.

INDIVIDUAL MEALS. Saturday Rendezvous Dinner at \$45 and Sunday Banquet at \$45 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.

TOUR OPTIONS. Prices are listed on the registration form (page 11). All trips require a minimum of 35 people, unless otherwise stated. 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.

CITY TOUR, Friday, October 10. Begin a tour of Nashville with trained professional guides who will entertain your group with interesting facts, colorful legends, and amusing anecdotes of Nashville and her people. Drive through Centennial Park and view the Parthenon, a full-scale replica of the original in Greece. Visit the Ryman Auditorium, where the Grand Ole Opry got its start. Originally a church, the Ryman is now home to numerous musical productions. Stop on 2nd Avenue for lunch on your own at one of several different restaurants. Consider Market Street Brewery, Big River Grille, Hard Rock Cafe, or the Wild Horse Saloon. 9:00am board bus, 2:00pm back at hotel. \$55/Person includes bus, guide and admission. Lunch on your own.

****OR** MEMPHIS BELLE & THE RED NOSE, Friday, October 10.** The Boeing B-17F Flying Fortress, Memphis Belle and The Red Nose, P-51 Mustang will be on location at a local Nashville airport during the reunion. Today's trip is scheduled for those without transportation or wanting to go as part of a group. The planes will be available to view (and ride) at other times during the reunion as well. More details to come. 9:30pm board bus, 12:00pm back at hotel. \$26/Person includes bus and escort.

GRAND OLE OPRY, Friday, October 10. During any given Opry show, audiences can expect the best in country, bluegrass, comedy, gospel, and more by Country Music Hall of Famers, cast members who helped establish the Opry as the home of country music, revered superstars, and young artists just starting to make names for themselves. It is the longest-running live radio show in the world. Sit back and enjoy an American Institution at its entertaining best. 6:00pm board bus, 10:00pm back at hotel. \$63/Person includes bus, escort and show.

SYMPOSIUM: BEHIND THE WIRE AND MASK, Saturday, October 11. During WWII, airmen downed behind enemy lines had few options: if they survived the crash or bail out they faced almost certain capture and internment in a Stalag Luft as a POW; or they could try and get back to friendly territory with aid from the "Helpers" through an elaborate underground network of American sympathizers—Escape and Evasion. Either way, the stories of hardship, courage, sacrifice, and patriotism have been carefully researched, collected, and will be presented in a powerfully dynamic and emotionally charged symposium by renowned researchers and veterans who will share their personal experiences with you. We invite YOU to share your experiences during this interactive forum as well. 10:30am Symposium starts, 5:30pm adjourn. There is no charge for the Symposium;

however, if you want a box lunch during the short lunch break, cost is \$8.

NASHVILLE NIGHTLIFE LUNCH AND MATINEE, Sunday, October 12. Come and experience a celebration of Country Music from both the past and present. Hear songs from many of the great artists of country music history. Enjoy the music from late-greats such as Patsy Cline and Hank Williams Sr. to the superstars of today, Sara Evans and Toby Keith. But first—be sure to bring your appetite—there is a full lunch buffet with salads, vegetables, meats, pasta, rolls, beverages, and fruit cobblers for dessert! Note: A minimum of 70 people is required for this trip. 11:00am board bus, 2:30pm back at hotel. \$65/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch cruise.

8AFHS ANNUAL BANQUET, Sunday, October 12. Assemble in the ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Steak or Tilapia with the usual accompaniments. The guest speaker, Yvonne Daley Brusselmans, will follow and then the music turns up a bit for some dancing if you'd like! 6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Banquet. Cost is included in meal package or \$45 separately.

Sheraton Music City Hotel—Nashville, Tennessee (615) 885-2200

The hotel is located at 777 McGavock Pike, Nashville, TN 37214. Located within minutes of downtown Nashville, the Sheraton offers easy access to many of the city's attractions. Several restaurants and stores are within a couple miles of the hotel.

HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION

Please call the hotel at (615) 885-2200 to make your reservation and reference the 8th Air Force Historical Society. You can also use this link to make reservations: <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=1402066861&key=30784>. All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit.

RATE: \$109 + tax (currently 15.25% + \$2.50/night). Group rate is offered 3 days before and 3 days after the reunion dates, based on group-block availability.

CUTOFF DATE: September 8, 2014. Late reservations will be processed based on space at a higher rate.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 48 hours prior to date of arrival. Call (615) 885-2200 should you need to cancel your room reservation. There is an early departure fee of one night's room/tax if the reservation holder checks out of the hotel earlier than agreed upon date. If you must check out earlier than planned, please notify the front desk at the time of hotel check-in or before arrival. Family and medical emergencies are excused.

Complimentary airport shuttle service is provided to and from the Nashville International Airport. The shuttle runs from 5:00am-11:00pm. From baggage claim, proceed to the phone bank and press button #46 to request pickup. Then proceed to the pickup area which is one level down at ground transportation. The hotel also offers complimentary parking for guests staying in the hotel.

ScootAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Call (888) 441-7575 for details.

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. 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/8afhs2014 (3% will be added to total). All registration forms and payment must be received on or before September 8, 2014. 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 9/8/2014	Price Per	# of People	Total
<u>REGISTRATION FEE</u>			
Includes meeting expenses and other reunion expenses.	\$40		\$
Reg. Fee for children ages 8-16 attending more than 1 function & staying at hotel	\$25		\$
<u>MEAL PACKAGES</u>			
<i>Package #1 includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday</i>	\$212		\$
<i>Package #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Saturday</i>	\$148		\$
Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet:			
Chef's Choice Steak with Cabernet Demi Glace		#	
Tilapia with Lemon Caper Sauce		#	
<u>SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)</u>			
Saturday, 10/11: Rendezvous Dinner (Chicken Marsala)	\$45		\$
Sunday, 10/12: Banquet (please select your entrée)			
Chef's Choice Steak with Cabernet Demi Glace	\$45		\$
Tilapia with Lemon Caper Sauce	\$45		\$
<u>SYMPOSIUM BOX LUNCH</u>			
The symposium is free to attendees. Because of the short lunch break, box lunches are available for purchase in advance.	\$8		\$
<u>TOURS</u>			
Friday, 10/10: City Tour	\$49		\$
Friday, 10/10: Grand Ole Opry	\$63		\$
Sunday, 10/12: Nashville NightLife Lunch & Matinee	\$65		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$

Please Print

MEMBER NAME (for nametag) _____

☐ VET ☐ NEXT GEN ☐ OTHER WWII GROUP (please list BG, not BS) _____

SPOUSE NAME (if attending) _____

GUEST NAMES _____ ☐ NEXT GEN

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/8afhs2013

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER
by Tom Perry, 576th Sqdn Armorer

I feel that I have been given a responsibility to present the word of God to all of you who belong to the 392nd BGMA. Hence I will risk repeating, for emphasis, a message about how you can be sure that you know that you will spend eternity in Heaven with Him.

We are told in The Bible, John 3:16: "For God so loved the World that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned."



**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 late Very Reverend Robert C. Martin, former Dean of the Cathedral at Erie, Pennsylvania.

∞FOLDED WINGS∞

David A. Greene, 579, April 2, 2014
Malcolm A. Thompson, 576, December 13, 2013
Robert L. Reynolds, 579, May 6, 2014
Robert L. Hunt, 577, April 26, 2014
Lester J. Frazier, 576, January 7, 2013
Paul S. Glassman, 576, June 1, 2013
Anthony J. Merda, 578, May 14, 2014