



## E Bar, E for Easy

*Joseph M. Cook recently joined the 392nd BGMA. Copilot on 2/Lt Robert H. Johnson's crew in the 578th, he was shot down on 7 Oct 1944. Six crewmen became POWs while four were killed in action.*

*Capt Ben Alexander, also 578th, reported that their plane "was apparently hit by flak at the target, #3 engine catching fire, forcing the ship sharply out of formation. Shortly after leaving formation, the ship went into steep dive on left wing, and right wing was seen to be severed by an explosion at about 10,000 ft. No chutes seen."*

*Here is Joe's account of his crew and their last mission. It has been greatly condensed; the complete article is at <http://www.jmcook.net/WW2/Memorial.htm>. The title is the radio call sign for #42-94966, Madame Shoo Shoo.*

My purpose is to honor the memory of those four members of my B-24 crew who were killed in action, shot down over Kassel, Germany, on October 7th, 1944.

**Robert H. Johnson** was an ideal bomber pilot. I don't know where they got these guys, mostly out of small towns in Iowa, I think. There was a supply of them. Bob wasn't a macho warrior type. He didn't like having to kill Germans. He must have wanted respect for volunteering to serve his country in such a dangerous job but he wasn't a glory seeker or a position-of-command wanter. He commanded the crew with a steady authority that just assumed without ego or pomposity that we all wanted to be part of the team and that he was here to do his part.

He knew B-24s. He knew what every gauge on the big complicated control panel meant and what to do about it if one of them got out of range. And he knew every position on the plane so he could make sure that every crew member knew their job and how to act in an emergency, including what exits to leave by if that became necessary and what to do if those exits were blocked and what to do next if even that didn't work.

Why would anyone want to pilot a big clumsy bomber? I enlisted to fly a fighter, not a four-engine bomber. I was too big to fit into a P-39 Aircobra so when I later had to fill out a form I put down multi-engine, figuring that the rest of the form would obviously put me into a twin-engine P-38—but the Army saw multi- and cleverly scheduled me for twice as many engines. I was just asked to do a trucking job, leaving Bob free to handle higher executive functions which was fine with me. I got my four-engine rating overseas, on the job.

I was good, very good at formation flying but didn't feel as confident on landing. Bob did most of that. On those

days when I did land the ship I could feel the gunners back amidships checking me out. Anxiety. Would I grease it in or bump it down—or worse, have to slam all four throttles forward and go around for another try or—worse yet, drag a wingtip and go cartwheeling down the runway with the gunners rattling about amidships?

Well, I did OK, mechanically, visually, mathematically, without an intimate feeling for the air and the ship. But at altitude, I was confident. I could hold a thirty-ton bomb-overloaded boxcar in tight formation in the slippery partial-vacuum of 20,000 feet on long missions.

And it was the copilot's job to do the bomb runs. Bob had to be conscious of the total system, the ship, crew and battle damage. My job was to be narrowly conscious of just one thing: lock on to our lead ship, tight, no lateral drift to spoil our squadron's afterwards-scored Circular Probable Error, or inflict collateral damage. ("Collateral damage"? I wasn't thinking of that at the time, or now.)

The Luftwaffe watched for ragged formations. I could hold by my young strength without modern fly-by-wire help or even servos, just occasional trim-tab adjustments, nothing between me and the slip-stream but metal-on-metal linkages in a plane whose aluminum skin could (it is said) be cut by a kitchen knife.

Decades later I read that the B-24 was purposely designed to be a difficult plane to fly. Now they tell us! It had a higher wing loading (pounds to be supported by each square foot of wing-area) than the B-17. We had the famous

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## 392nd BGMA Pres. Jim Goar Receives Indiana Honor

In a late December 2015 ceremony, 392nd BGMA president Jim Goar was named a Sagamore of the Wabash by Indiana Governor Mike Pence. It is the state's highest civilian honor.

The ceremony is usually held at the governor's office in Indianapolis, but due to Jim's age (he turned 96 a few days later) and inclement weather, the award was presented at the Clinton County Chamber of Commerce offices in Frankfort by District 38 State Rep. Heath VanNatter, who had nominated Jim.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

**Col Rendle.** Col Lawrence G. Gilbert's children, Larry Jr. and Anne Brooks, emailed two stories featuring Col Rendle that their dad often recounted.

The 392nd Bomb Group came over to England with the first B-24H model Liberators. Since they were the first heavy bombers there with electronically-powered nose turrets and flexible twin machine guns, General Jimmy Doolittle immediately flew to the 392nd to see the new aircraft.

As Col Rendle and his staff waited outside, General Doolittle crawled through one of the new planes from nose to tail. He finally descended and, while chatting with Rendle, said, "I don't see how the damn thing's going to fly!"

Col Rendle said goodbye to General Doolittle, then turned to his staff and said, "Don't EVER repeat that to anyone!!"

About a year later, the 392nd BG hosted a visiting team of inspectors led by Major General Junius Jones. Their purpose was to inspect the B-24 bombers at the base to be sure proper maintenance and testing had been done on the aircraft. The inspection team spent four or five days examining the planes and evidently found some discrepancies from the rulebook back in the States. For example, according to the report, the inflatable life rafts had not been properly inspected.

At a post-review briefing, General Jones instructed base big-wigs that in view of the discrepancies, the entire 392nd would be grounded for several days to correct the matter. Lieutenant General William E. Kepner, commander of the 2nd Air Division, was part of the assembled group, which included Col Rendle and our father.

It was reported that General Kepner, a man of modest height, suddenly seemed ten feet tall when he replied to his superior, General Jones, that "you're going to do no such thing," pointing out forcefully that we are at war, there is already a shortage of aircraft to meet mission needs, and there is no way we are going to ground our fleet of operational bombers. General Jones' response, after a protracted silence, was something to the effect that those present should be excused "while we talk about this matter." Missions continued unabated.

**2016 reunion.** Information and registration forms for the St. Louis reunion are on pages 8-11 and at [www.b24.net](http://www.b24.net). We have been assigned a large hospitality suite so there will be lots of room for Crusaders to meet, look at memorabilia, exchange information, and

enjoy themselves. **WWII VETS ATTENDING THE REUNION ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A \$250 REBATE TO HELP COVER REGISTRATION AND MEALS. IT WILL BE AVAILABLE AT REUNION CHECK-IN.** For planning purposes, please note that our business meeting and Group dinner will be on Thursday.

**Chapter Meeting in Southern New York.** 392nd BGMA member and chapter president Pat Keeley advises, "The New York State Southern Wing Chapter of the 8th AFHS will have its Spring Luncheon at the Plainview LI NY Holiday Inn from 11am to 3 pm on Sunday, May 22, 2016. We will be inviting WWII and post-WWII veterans from all of our Armed Forces and also, as successfully done in the past Luncheon, other foreign veterans who reside in the area. The 72nd anniversary of D-Day, June 6, 1944, will be the theme. Please join us for a great time with great food and the conversation spanning 70+ years of experiences. For further information please check the Chapter's website: <http://blogs.ny8thswcafhs.org/>."

**Taxes.** As you work on your 2015 taxes, remember that the 392nd BGMA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

**PX Update!** We have a new supply of white, short sleeve 392nd BGMA polo shirts—2 Small, 6 Medium, 7 Large, 7 Extra-Large, and 1 Extra-Extra Large. PX Chairman Bill McCutcheon's wife Gloria graciously tried on a Small and Medium size shirt to see what our female members should order. She reports they're definitely larger than the corresponding women's sizes, but not outrageously so. So, if a woman is a small Medium, she should order a Small; if she's a large Medium, she should order a Medium. The cost is \$30 for US shipment and \$40 for international mailing.

We also have 18 khaki caps and 6 blue caps available. The cost is \$25 for US shipment and \$35 for international mail.

Order at <http://www.b24.net/392nd/lit.htm> or send a check payable to "392nd BGMA" to Annette Tison, 9107 Wood Pointe Way, Fairfax Station, VA 22039.



## President's Message



Most air fields have numbered hangars, each with a prescribed use. On my imaginary field, I'm assigned to Hangar 96, headquarters for all Crusaders and Crusaders' spouses who are aged 96 or above. I'm aware of only a few who would be in Hangar 96, mostly because when we were

forming up this organization back in the Eighties we didn't include birthdays when we designed our data base. But who then was thinking of birthdays? Most of us were of middle age, living our lives as if there were no tomorrow. So, if you're assigned to Hangar 96, drop me a line or e-mail.

We recently received the publication of the 2AD Memorial Library in Norwich, cleverly named 2ADialogue. In it, they noted that all their collection has been digitalized and that they were preparing to launch their website. This and other projects have been made possible by some very hefty bequests from members of other Groups in the 2AD.

Sadly, the Library reported the passing of Tony North, a long-time Friend of the 392nd. He held the position of Trust Aide on the Library staff. Among his many qualifications as a docent was his expert knowledge of the B-24 Liberator and aviation in general. His effectiveness was even greater because of his first-hand knowledge of the times when Yanks swarmed all over England, some of them inebriated.

Elsewhere in this issue, Annette tells of 8AF Historical Society's offer of a \$250.00 rebate on their bill to any WWII veteran at the October reunion at St. Louis. Sounds like an offer we can't refuse.

Blue Skies,  
Jim Goar

## France Honors 579th Sqdn Airman for WWII Service

579th Sqdn navigator Manny Abrams recently received the French Legion of Honor for his participation in the liberation of France during WWII. He completed 30 missions between 16 July and 28 Dec 1944.

In his cover letter to Manny, Valéry Freland, Consul General of France in Boston, wrote, "This award testifies to France's high esteem for your merits and accomplishments. In particular, it is a sign of France's infinite gratitude and appreciation for your personal and precious contribution to the United States' decisive role in the liberation of our country during World War II.

"The Legion of Honor was created by Napoleon in 1802 to acknowledge services rendered to France by persons of exceptional merit. The French people will never forget your courage and your devotion to the great cause of freedom. It is a true pleasure for me to convey to you our sincere and warm congratulations."

In 2004, the French government began awarding the

Legion of Honor to US veterans from all military branches who helped free France from Nazi tyranny. The award is the highest decoration in France and is divided into five degrees of distinction; the one given to WWII veterans like Manny is the first—Chevalier (or Knight).

Manny comments, "I love my Legion of Honor medal, which I keep in my pocket except at night—in my pj's I have no adequate pockets. I love to show it off and ask the viewer(s) to identify it!! I have made some good friends doing this."

8th Air Force Historical Society Vice President Dr. Nancy Toombs says, "Every eligible veteran should apply as soon as possible, as it can take up to one year to be approved. Please go to <https://8thafhs.org/reunion/french.htm> for instructions and the application form or call me at (501) 681-3126 and I will send you a package of information.

"This award cannot be given posthumously unless the application has been received AND approved prior to the veteran's death.

"If you, a loved one, or a WWII veteran you know may be eligible, please pass this information along to them."

### Eligibility Criteria

Recipients must have served in at least one of these major campaigns: Normandy, Southern France, or Northern France. Late arrivals to the 392nd qualify if they flew either of the missions to southern France on 14-15 Apr 1945.

A combat airman's discharge document contains a block listing battle and campaign ribbons awarded or authorized. If one of the three campaigns is listed, eligibility is easily established. If you flew one of the qualifying missions in April 1945, contact Annette and she can give you a copy of the crew load list from the National Archives to prove you did fly in combat to help the French.

For support crew members, establishing eligibility is not as direct, but Nancy says several have been awarded the Legion of Honor. They wrote a narrative explaining their duties, how vital their service was to the aerial war effort, and length of time overseas as justification.

For example, crew chiefs might cite what their job entailed,

**See LEGION OF HONOR on page 6**



At left, 19 year old aviation cadet Manny Abrams; at right, 91 year old Chevalier Abrams holds his French Legion of Honor.

## E for Easy from page 1

Davis laminar-flow wing, thinner and weaker, not tested successfully in wind-tunnels or the professors' theories but successful in real air though we had to make lower, more flak-vulnerable bomb runs down where that air was thick enough to hold us up.

And the higher wing-loading made for hotter landings. With a B-17, one eased back to stall just before touch-down. With our tricycle landing gear, our tail-wheel was in the nose. We just flew down the runway until the tires squealed. All this allowed us to carry a heavier bomb load farther and faster than the B-17s. It was the solution to a problem in differential calculus: Plot bombs-on-target per crew-death-rate and find the maximum of the curve.

Bob wanted to pilot a heavy bomber from the beginning. Why? Not because he was outwitted into it like I was. He thought that this was the way he could best serve the nation. He was a patriotic young male doing what he thought young males were supposed to do when their country, our country, was attacked.

**7 Oct 1944**

In the bomb run over Kassel we got hit in the number three



# 4 2 - 9 4 9 6 6 ,  
Madame Shoo  
Shoo, was named  
for a character in  
the *Terry and the  
Pirates* comic strip.  
This photo shows  
2/Lt Cook's copilot  
window and T/Sgt  
Charles F. Lang's  
top turret.

engine and it caught fire. Then we did everything according to the manual. We feathered the prop and cut off all fuel, oil and electricity to the engine. Now what? We had done everything right. What do we do now?

We sat there, hoping, but nothing worked. I looked up over my right shoulder and saw that the fire had burned through the de-icer boot. Looking back through a big hole, I could see the entire engine on fire. It was a goner. I felt let down by the manual-writers. "Hey, guys, you said that if we did everything right then everything would be all right, right?" But I could almost hear them reply, "No, we just promised that this would push the statistics in your favor. Sorry. You are just having not-good luck. It's statistical. Bye" with their (imaginary) voices fading back through the intercom. "Bye."

So I hollered to Bob and he unstrapped himself and leaned over for a look and right away hit the bail-out button which set off a loud announcement that everybody was to head for their pre-planned exits. I held the ship straight-and-level while he set up the auto-pilot. Then he went back and strapped himself in, yelled into the intercom, "Bail out, bail out!" (I remember that voice) and jerked his thumb at me, meaning "Go, go." So I went, pulling a trail of heating wires and oxygen pipes behind me through the narrow passageway into midships.

I could see that everybody there and in the tail was clicking on their chest packs. There was nothing left for me to do. I was ready to go. I went for the reopened bomb bay door and out. (The other bomb bay door was stuck shut.) Out! That was a relief. A wonderful feeling. It was like going off of the high board at the pool except that then I didn't have time to relax. Now I had lots more time to think things over before making my next decision.

I landed hard. No, I mean really, really hard. Combat  
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## 392nd BGMA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please look at the mailing label. Your membership status is shown directly after your name. **"16" or higher means your membership is current. Thank you!** 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.

Hardship Waiver [ ] DONATION \$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## E FOR Easy from page 4

chutes do not let you down as softly as Hollywood chutes do. Our other five jumpers all sustained some form of physical damage but I, lucky Joe as always, landed in a soft-dirt plowed field for my head to snap back in to. Then I got up and started running towards Allied lines, hundreds of miles away, in my stocking feet because my heated boots had come off when I pulled the chute, but I was immediately captured by the Volkssturm. They could run faster than I could because they were on horseback.

I can't complain about the next seven months in Germany. Fighters from the 8th were by then strafing everything that moved across Germany, including the trains carrying the Red Cross parcels that were all that stood between us and rutabagas. As best an in-the-process-of-being-defeated Germany could treat anybody, I was treated according to the Geneva Convention. People want me to say bad things about the Nazis but I owe it to the Luftwaffe to be honest about that in my case. They were just guys, like us, fighting for their country.

As for a bomb run, it has its own way of fusing a crew together. It is the final purpose of a crew. That is what they are for. The horizon tilts and the formation aligns itself onto a small brown cloud in the sky. Flak. The bomb bay doors open, exposing our interior to the hatred glaring up from below. Our interior is now ready to—return the hatred? No. Just to scold.

The bombsight of the lead ship takes control of all of us and with total mechanical nonhuman courage flies straight into that now-big, now-enveloping brown cloud, rattling with shrapnel, smelling of gunpowder (imagined?), the flak like a big inverted foot stomping up on the bottom of our ship. And us? Together in focus on the moment, intense waiting together for the lead-ship's RBR (Radio Bomb Release) to release our bombs and release our selves. Then I see his bombs stringing out into the sunlight. Beautiful sight. And I can feel ours leaving. The ship wants to nose-up, me pushing the wheel down, Bob furiously rolling trim-tabs forward, but we are at last unloading. Wonderful feeling, like a healthy bowel movement. Then watch for his aileron to flick, giving me the fraction of a fraction of a second's warning before Newton's second derivative begins to accumulate and I corkscrew down out with him, still in formation.

After the debriefing, sitting for a while around a table with the standard-issue shot of whiskey (like the grog of Nelson's cannoneers) there wasn't much said about the run. Reality is untalkable. It's just there. As Phillip K. Dick defined it, Reality is that which, when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away.

Academics have questioned the effectiveness of the Allied bombing campaign versus its cost in material and personnel. Would those resources have been more effectively spent on building tanks or landing-crafts or whatever? We had plenty of tanks and enough landing crafts. We out-numbered the Wehrmacht, one of history's great armies, in all those ways. We had to hit them, on top of that, in another way. Omaha beach was a close thing. Strafing runs down the beach would, maybe, have stopped the whole thing, but there were no strafing runs. There was no Luftwaffe. Hitler was insanely furious at our bombing of his cities. He sent the

Luftwaffe up at us until none of it was left. Bad strategy.

Well, some of the Luftwaffe was left. Take the 445th BG for example. Ten days before we went to Kassel they had a bad time there. On 27 Sep 1944, 25 of their B-24s got shot down by fighters. Only 4 Libs made it back to England. The few returnees were told to "get lost" for a few days while the 445th pulled itself back together.

We were on that same mission, which I don't remember as being especially nasty. On that day the Luftwaffe was busy elsewhere, with them, not us.

**Albert L. Kielblock** (KIA) was assigned at the last minute to our crew to intercept German messages for decoding later by experts. I never got to know him. He evidently flew on an irregular schedule with different crews, sharing their luck, which turned out to be our luck that day.

**Charlie Lang** from Detroit served as engineer and top turret gunner. He helped **Lloyd Lauger**, who had been off of oxygen too long while getting the bomb-bay doors back opened (only half-opened as it turned out)—helping him shed his flak vest and hook up his chute. Then he pushed him out of the plane before following him.

Lloyd was our radio operator. I spent some time among small town Iowa library records looking for him but was stymied by the fact that the government had misspelled his name [as Langer]. Can you believe that a government bureaucrat would do a dumb thing like that?

When on leave together between missions, he was a moral guide for our behavior. A few of the guys, turned loose in wartime London, needed that guide. It was his standards which made him stand out in morally over-heated times, standards which were connected to his deep but quiet (he never tried to impose his theology on us) religious convictions. I suppose that was connected with his reason for enlisting in the first place and then volunteering for an extremely dangerous task, a danger of which I have become even more impressed in recent years. My grandkids ask questions so I did some research among official historical records: The combat aircrews in the Eighth Air Force suffered higher casualty rates than did any other branch of our armed services except for the submariners in the South Pacific, higher even than the marines, higher than our infantry in Europe.

So why did Lloyd volunteer? I guess it was just because he thought it was the moral thing to do. Then he got to live out a long life, dying surrounded by warm friends and a large family, comforted by his belief that the universe is in good hands.

**Fred Stickley**, waist gunner, was from a backwater Virginia small town of which he was quite proud. He had a "good" time on leave in London, to Lloyd's quiet disapproval, and was blown out of a waist window.

**José Castaneda** (KIA) had just become an American citizen. The day before we got shot down the gunners went with him to the ceremony to vouch for his character and patriotism. He also got a promise from them not to leave him behind in case his rotating turret got stuck at bailout time. He got out of his turret without help but then, when the wing came off, centrifugal force trapped him back into the tail of the ship, an American citizen for one day.

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**Nathan Van Alstine** (KIA), another Iowa farm boy (Fort Dodge), was the midship disciplinarian. With the ship spinning down on one wing he and Kielblock may have been trapped by centrifugal force while fulfilling their promise to Castaneda.

**Joe Waters**, our navigator, was perfect for his job. Perfect? That's a big word. Like the philosophical word infinity and the theological word eternity, it is supposed to correspond to something beyond all human comprehension. So, should I say that Joe was a perfect navigator? Well, for all the evidence I ever had, yes, he was perfect. He got us there and back perfectly, every time, except when our wing came off, but that wasn't his fault. He was an intelligent guy, emotionally mature and well-balanced.

Bombardier **Jonas Weiss** (KIA) had an H for Hebrew on his dog tag. He said that if the Nazis ever got hold of it he would tell them that H stood for Hindu. The gunners said that he was careless with his chest pack, that he just tossed it off into some corner of his compartment and quit being aware of it. Then, maybe, in the confusion, he didn't hook it up right.

So, my parents having been moved out of the Midwest to the eastern seaboard during the war, it became my job to go and talk to his sister in Newark. I told her that not-having-one's-chute-to-open was a painless way to die. We all, unplugged from our oxygen source, delayed opening to get out of the rarefied air. (Lauger says that he got so fuzzy even before leaving the plane that he doesn't remember going.) And we wanted to avoid attention from Luftwaffe fighters which were in the vicinity.

I told her that it was like sitting on an upward 115mph hurricane with no feeling of falling. (115mph is the terminal velocity of a freely falling human body.) I told her how I



Standing L-R: S/Sgt José A. Castaneda, ball turret; S/Sgt Nathan G. Van Alstine, tail gunner; Sgt John D. Luton, waist gunner; S/Sgt Lloyd Lauger, radio operator; T/Sgt Charles F. Lang, engineer; S/Sgt Fred F. Stickley, waist gunner. Kneeling L-R: 2/Lt Robert H. Johnson, pilot; 2/Lt Joseph M. Cook, copilot; 2/Lt Joseph F. Waters, navigator; F/O Jonas E. Weiss, bombardier. Not in photo: S/Sgt Albert L. Kielblock, German voice interpreter.

was sitting on this cushion, watching a rotating road below slowly getting closer, figuring that I still had plenty of time.

Heck, 20,000 feet should be plenty of time. Should I pull? Would this still be high enough to avoid enemy pilots above and enemy viewers below? Maybe not yet. Well, maybe yes. So I pulled the D-ring and it came out so easily that the thought began to grow in my mind that the girl back at the base who had packed my chute had forgotten to connect it. That thought grew for only the fraction of a second before I felt a surge on the risers. Then, immediately, the ground came up at me. I had almost pulled too late.

For Jonas, that welcome surge never came. So for how long did that thought grow in his mind? We don't know, but it couldn't have been long. We were all moving pretty fast. If you gotta die, as do we all, his is one of the briefest ways to do it.

That was long ago. Look again at our crew picture, the standard government-issue picture. Smiling, life-loving guys. Should make me smile, too, in remembrance, but it doesn't. It makes me feel sad. Not just for our crew but for all the 8th Air Force crews ... for all such crews everywhere and every when, under whatever flag.

Our four KIAs. Why them and not us? Normally they would have gone on with their lives, gone back to school to pick up their text-books right at the bookmarks they had left behind three years before, exchanging war stories with buddies for a while, then getting tired of hearing them. Knitting together a break in what would have been a normal life as if it had never happened. Not repressing. Just moving on, getting on with a career and colleagues and friends and a family and birthday parties and the Golden Years before being laid out under a tombstone alongside their wives to be remembered for a slowly fading while but having left behind part of their selves in the great flood of humanity, flooding towards—whatever humanity is flooding towards.

Why us and not them? There was no moral difference between us and them, no difference in the futures looked forward to by all healthy young males.

So then. Question: Why us and not them? [no reply]

Now that it is all over, was it worth it?

Yes.

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the decisions they made, the long hours they worked, and how they directly contributed to the war effort: if the planes couldn't fly, the bombs couldn't drop. Ordnance personnel can write a similar justification: if the bombs weren't on board, it wouldn't matter whether the planes got to the target.

Annette can review her 392nd BG files and help ground crew members decide if their duties meet the French criteria; Nancy will be happy to help you craft the narrative.

### Crusader WWII Campaigns

The 392nd BG is credited with service in six WWII campaigns: Air Offensive, Europe (4 Jul 1942-5 June 1944); Normandy (6 June-25 Aug 1944); Northern France (25 Jul-14 Sep 1944); Rhineland (15 Sep 1944-21 Mar 1945); Ardennes-Alsace (16 Dec 1944-25 Jan 1945); and Central Europe (22 Mar-11 May 1945).

*Please let Annette know if you've applied for the Legion of Honor. If you've already received it, send her your photo with it!*

## Col Lorin LaVar Johnson: the Second Commander

“Var” Johnson, as he was called by his family, was born on 23 Jan 1917 and grew up in Payson, Utah. He attended Brigham Young University from 1935-1939, where he was a member of the Utah National Guard.

Having wanted to be a pilot his whole life, he resigned from the National Guard in September 1939 and enlisted as a Flying Cadet in the Army’s flight training program. He reported for duty at Ryan School of Aeronautics Primary Flight Training Program in San Diego, California, and was commissioned a pilot on 21 June 1940.

2/Lt Johnson reported to March Field, Riverside, California, in July and was assigned to the 19th BG which flew B-17 and B-18 aircraft.

In mid-May 1941, he participated in the first mass flight of land based planes (21 B-17Ds) from San Francisco to Hickam Field, Hawaii. He was awarded the Air Medal and Oak Leaf Cluster for successful achievement as “an over water flight of that distance [2,400 miles] by land based aircraft had never before been attempted.”

He returned to California by sea. In June, he was sent to New Orleans, Louisiana, then to Muroc Air Base in California. He was soon transferred to the midwest US as a four-engine heavy bomber instructor pilot. While he was there, Pearl Harbor was attacked and his group at Muroc was sent to the South Pacific.

Without a Group attachment, he trained with units in Olathe and Topeka, Kansas. In February 1943, he was promoted to Major and led a B-17 Bomb Group to the South Pacific. After turning over his unit to 7AF, he went back to the US and was assigned to the 392nd BG as Air Executive.

In August 1943, he left the US for the third time and began his combat career. Promoted to LtCol in September, he served the 392nd until March 1944 when he was detached to become Chief of Staff for 14th Combat Wing CO Brigadier General Leon W. Johnson. During his absence, Operations Officer LtCol Lawrence Gilbert assumed his duties.

On 21 June 1944, Johnson was promoted to full Colonel and returned to the 392nd as Commander. At 27 years of age, Johnson was one of the youngest Colonels in 8AF to command a heavy bombardment group. (Long after the war, Group Transportation Officer Jim Goar said he was absolutely astonished to learn that Johnson was only three years older than he.)

Johnson flew 30 missions and diversions with the 392nd and still more with other Groups in the 14CW. He was awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received during the mission to Norway on 18 Nov 1943. As Command Pilot during the mission to Gotha on 24 Feb 1944, he trusted his navigators and chose the course that enabled the Group to virtually destroy the target (and for which the 392nd was later awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation).

For this effort, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, his first of three.

Johnson was also presented the Soldiers Medal, the highest military award for gallantry not in action against an enemy. Per the citation, he “saved new equipment in an explosion

of a bomber at his group’s station in England upon its return from a mission to Germany.” No other details are known.

He was transferred back to the US in late May 1945. In his May 26 farewell memo to the Group, he wrote, “It is with a deep feeling of regret that I have to leave my command.

“I am sincerely proud to have served with you and deeply appreciate your support in this command which is so highly rated among many others of its same type. Whatever your new assignment might be remember our successes with justifiable pride, and carry on with the same effort and efficiency.

“To all responsible I can only say “THANK YOU” and best of luck to each and every one of you.”

Col Johnson served as Deputy Commander, then Base Commander, at airfields in California. He returned to Brigham Young University in 1946 and graduated in June 1948 with a B.S. in Marketing. He then completed the Army’s Command and Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and a tour at the Pentagon. In 1949, he became Deputy Base Commander of the 41st Air Force Unit at Kirtland AFB, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

On 30 Nov 1950, while on a routine navigation mission from Kirtland to Hill Field in Ogden, Utah, he was killed in a flight accident. His twin-engine C-45 army transport plane crashed at about 8,000 feet on Mount Pennell in southeastern Utah. Search planes from the Air Force, Utah Air National Guard/Civil Air Patrol and Wyoming Civil Air Patrol flew nearly 37,000 air miles in ten days trying to locate the plane.

Col Johnson was just 33 years old. His four children—Judy, Becky, Mary Jo and Jeff—were all under the age of 10.

In 1990, they, along with aunts, uncles, and cousins, made it up the mountain and erected a cement monument listing all the medals Col Johnson had received. The children also made handprints in the cement. Around the base of a nearby tree were planted flower bulbs provided by Col Johnson’s widow, who was too ill to make the pilgrimage.

In 1996, Col Johnson became one of the original 11 inductees into the Utah Aviation Hall of Fame, housed in the Hill Aerospace Museum at Hill Air Force Base.

Eldest daughter Judy Doerflinger says, “The trip up the  
**See COL JOHNSON on page 8**



Col Lorin LaVar Johnson

## SAGAMORE from page 1

In summarizing the reasons Jim was honored, Frankfort Mayor Chris McBarnes noted, "We are very blessed to have Jim Goar in Frankfort and Clinton County. Jim and Annabelle have been such great citizens and have been drivers of the community for decades now. Jim and other visionaries were instrumental to helping our county survive the decline of the railroad in the 50's by creating the Frankfort/Clinton County Industrial Park we drive by every day where 4700 people go to work and create items and food millions consume. Not only did Jim protect the citizens of Clinton County from harsh economic times but he also is a WWII veteran. Jim was assigned to a bomber wing in WWII, one of the most dangerous assignments in all the military. Thanks, Jim, from the Chamber for all you have done for all of us!"

Jim says, "Of course I felt a warm feeling of gratitude for the community's expression regarding my efforts toward community industrial development. But at the same time I felt humbled, because I was only one of quite a few members of the business and professional community who were donating their time and skills to the cause. And our efforts were not altogether altruistic. Industrial development meant jobs and jobs meant customers for us."

Indiana Governor Ralph Gates, who led the state from 1945 to 1949, created the Sagamore of the Wabash Award, according to the governor's office. He was to participate in a meeting with leaders from Kentucky and Ohio and learned that the Kentucky governor planned to present him and Ohio Senator Robert A. Taft with the Kentucky Colonel, Kentucky's highest honor. To reciprocate, Gates developed the Sagamore of the Wabash certificate to present to his Kentucky peer.

"The term 'Sagamore' was used by the American Indian tribes of the northeastern United States to describe a lesser chief or a great man among the tribe to whom the true chief would look for wisdom and advice," according to the state.

We in the 392nd BGMA have benefitted for decades from Jim's wise counsel and hard work. We extend our heartiest congratulations to Jim for this well-deserved recognition!



Indiana District 38 State Representative Heath VanNatter (left) holds the certificate proclaiming Jim Goar (right) a Sagamore of the Wabash while Frankfort Mayor Chris McBarnes looks on.

## COL JOHNSON from page 7

Mountain was so memorable, never thinking this experience

would ever happen. We thank our Dad's dear brother Dr. Gordon K. Johnson. His dream and love for his brother made the trip all possible."

Nephew Dr. Gordon S. Taylor also gave tribute to Col Johnson in another, indirect way. While mayor of Payson, Dr. Taylor led a coalition of concerned citizens to save a historic building from demolition, turning it into The Peteeetneet Museum and Cultural Arts Center. He then paid to have a plaque erected to honor his family's ancestors.

The inscription commemorates "Pioneers, Soldiers, Heros, Citizens & Loving Fathers" and says, "We are so very grateful for our strong heritage and for the great principles taught through the whispering echos of their lives:

The dignity of hard work  
The strength of the family  
The nobility of sacrifice  
The courage to support a cause  
The faith to carry on."

Although written decades after his death, these are principles that Col Johnson emulated throughout his life.

A devout Mormon, Col Johnson neither smoked nor drank and had a serious, disciplined personality. As a result, 392nd annals are not filled with anecdotes about him as they are with larger-than-life Col Rendle. Instead, he led by quiet example and set a standard of excellence that enabled the 392nd BG to achieve outstanding results.

## 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion October 19 - 23, 2016 St. Louis, Missouri

### Wednesday, October 19

- 1:00pm– 6:00pm Reunion registration open
- 1:00pm– until ? Memorabilia/Gathering Room open throughout the reunion
- 1:00pm– 4:00pm 8AFHS Board Meeting
- 6:00pm– 7:00pm Welcome Reception, followed by dinner on your own

### Thursday, October 20

- 7:30am– 8:30am Continental breakfast for Package #1 participants
- 8:00am–12:00pm Reunion registration open
- 8:30am– 9:45am **392nd BGMA Meeting**
- 10:00am–11:30am American Indians in WWII
- 11:45am– 4:00pm OUR MILITARY HERITAGE TOUR
- 1:00pm– 6:00pm Reunion registration open
- 6:00pm– 9:00pm Cash bar open
- 7:00pm– 9:00pm **392nd BGMA Rendezvous Dinner**

### Friday, October 21

- 7:30am– 8:30am Full breakfast for Meal Package participants
  - 8:00am–12:00pm Reunion registration open
  - 9:00am– 1:00pm GATEWAY TO ST. LOUIS CITY TOUR
- See REUNION on page 9**

## REUNION from page 8

1:00pm– 6:00pm Reunion registration open  
2:00pm– 3:30pm Presentation on AAM Duxford  
3:45pm– 5:00pm Q & A WWII Vets  
6:00pm– 9:00pm Cash bar open  
7:00pm– 9:00pm Dinner buffet; presentation by  
Donald Miller

### Saturday, October 22

7:30am– 8:30am Continental breakfast for Meal  
Package participants  
8:00am–12:00pm Reunion registration open  
8:45am–10:15am 8AFHS General Membership Meeting  
10:30am–11:30am Researchers/Webmasters Meeting  
12:00pm– 4:00pm 8AFHS Board Meeting  
12:15pm– 4:30pm ANHEUSER-BUSCH BREWERY/  
GRANT'S FARM TOUR  
1:00pm– 6:00pm Reunion registration open  
6:00pm– 9:00pm Cash Bar Open  
7:00pm–10:00pm Gala Dinner and Program

### Sunday, October 23

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

RESERVE YOUR HOTEL ROOM FIRST! The reunion hotel has a liberal cancellation policy, but if you wait until the last minute to reserve your room, you may not receive the reunion rate or rooms may no longer be available.

COMPLETE THE REGISTRATION FORM. Fill out the entire registration form (page 11). Write your name (and any others registering with you) as they should appear on your name tags. Please indicate if you are a WWII veteran, a POW, a 2nd Gen or from a Gold Star family. For "BG or FG Affiliation" put "392nd BG."

**WWII VETS ATTENDING THE REUNION ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A \$250 REBATE TO HELP COVER REGISTRATION AND MEALS. REBATE AVAILABLE AT REUNION CHECK-IN.**

Meal packages include either seven hotel meals (package #1) or five hotel meals (package #2). If you purchase a meal package, do NOT select separately priced meals. If you plan to attend some or all of the dinner functions but do NOT wish to include breakfast, simply select the dinners you wish to attend in the area indicating "Separately Priced

Meals." Be sure and select your entrée if you plan to attend the Saturday evening gala.

Three tour options are available. After reading the information on each tour, make your selection on the form. MAIL IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM. After completing your registration form, total up the amount owed and include a check or money order (payable to 8th AFHS), or complete the credit card information on the form, and mail to: 8th AFHS, P.O. Box 60369, Savannah, GA 31420-0369.

To guarantee your place, ALL registration forms MUST be received by September 15, 2016. Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that our vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less a \$5 processing fee. *Canceling your hotel reservation does NOT cancel your reunion activities!*

If you have any questions, please contact 8th AFHS Managing Director Debra Kujawa at (912) 748-8884 or [ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org](mailto:ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org).

Reunion information and forms are also available at <http://www.b24.net>.

**TOUR OPTIONS.** Driver and Staff gratuities are included in the tour prices. All tours require a minimum of 40 people. Please be at the bus boarding area at least 10 minutes before the scheduled departure time.

OUR MILITARY HERITAGE TOUR, Thursday, October 20, includes the Missouri Civil War Museum and a driving tour of Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. *A boxed lunch is included.*

Your first stop is the Missouri Civil War Museum. Originally designed and built as an athletic and activity center for soldiers, it was later transitioned into a troop barracks for WWI and WWII. After abandonment in 1964, it took 60 years for a restoration project to transpire. Through grassroots efforts of fundraising and hard work, the Civil War Museum came to fruition. Enjoy viewing the artifacts significant to the Civil War efforts in the Missouri area.

Enjoy your boxed lunch while driving through the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. The fourth largest cemetery in the nation, it was established after the American Civil War in an attempt to put together a formal network of military cemeteries. It started as the Jefferson Barracks Military Post

**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](http://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**

Cemetery in 1826 and became a US National Cemetery in 1866. The cemetery is administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. It covers 331 acres with a total of about 188,000 interments. The cemetery is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Depart 11:45am, return to hotel 4:00pm. Cost is \$45 per person.

**GATEWAY TO ST. LOUIS CITY TOUR**, Friday, October 21. Your Destination St. Louis certified tour guide will trace the history of St. Louis beginning with the city's original settlement, Laclede's Landing. It is now a nine-block historic district filled with renovated turn-of-the-century buildings with shops, eateries and offices. See the famous Gateway Arch, the Nation's tallest monument, which commemorates the gateway to the west for thousands of 19th century pioneers.

Enjoy a view of the Old Cathedral, the oldest cathedral west of the Mississippi. Across the street is the Old Courthouse, the setting for cases involving slavery, the fur trade and equal rights, including the notable Dred Scott Freedom Trial. You will pass Busch Stadium, home of the 2011 World Champion St. Louis Cardinals. Continuing west on Market Street, you will pass several of St. Louis's civic buildings and plazas, as well as Citygarden, a unique urban oasis blending art, architecture and landscape. St. Louis Union Station, once the busiest rail terminal in the world, has undergone a magnificent renovation and is home to a luxury hotel and restaurants.

Next, enjoy a stop in the Central West End for lunch on your own. The area is filled with century-old homes, sidewalk cafes, shops, and galleries. Depart 9:00am, return to hotel 1:00pm. Cost is \$25 per person.

**ANHEUSER-BUSCH BREWERY/GRANT'S FARM TOUR** is perfect for the whole family! Experience a visit to Grant's Farm, the 281-acre estate of the late August A. Busch, Jr., which is operated by Anheuser-Busch Companies. The adventure begins at Grant Station where you will board a tram for a tour of the grounds. The 20-minute tram ride will wind through the Deer Park—a game preserve where antelope, buffalo and other animals roam in a natural 160-acre habitat. Pass Grant's Cabin, a log home built by Ulysses S. Grant, 18th President of the United States, and former owner of the land where Grant's Farm is today.

Your tram will then stop at the Tier Garden where you may enjoy elephant and bird shows. Then stroll to the historic Bauernhof which was built in 1913. Here you may enjoy refreshments while viewing the elegant stables and the Busch family's world-renowned carriage collection. A visit to the Clydesdale stallion barn will complete your visit.

En route to the King of Beers—the Anheuser-Busch Brewery—your Destination St. Louis tour guide will familiarize you with the rich history of the colorful Busch family. In a 100-acre complex with over 70 red brick structures, the Brewery buildings are known for their unique architecture and several are National Historic Landmarks.

During the 45-minute walking tour, you will see the World Famous Clydesdales, the Beechwood Lagering Cellar, the Brew House, and the Bevo Packaging Plant. After visiting the Plant, a trolley will take guests back up to the tour center. No visit would be complete without sampling the family of

Anheuser-Busch products during the tour! Depart 12:15pm, return to hotel 4:30pm. Although limited refreshments will be available for purchase during this tour, we recommend you eat lunch before boarding the bus. Cost is \$37 per person.

## **SHERATON WESTPORT LAKESIDE CHALET**

**191 Westport Plaza**

**St. Louis, MO 63146**

**314-878-1500 or 888-627-7066**

<http://www.sheratonwestport.com/sheraton-westport-chalet-hotel.html>

**HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION.** Call the numbers above and reference "Chalet" and 8th AFHS.

**GROUP NAME:** 8th Air Force Historical Society

**REUNION DATES:** October 19-23, 2016

**RATE:** \$109 + tax (currently 15.363%). Rates are offered 3 days before and 3 days post reunion, based on availability.

**CUTOFF DATE:** September 15, 2016. Late reservations will be processed based on space availability at a higher rate.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** All reservations have a 48 hour cancellation policy, or the attendee will be charged one night's room rate plus tax.

The Sheraton Westport Lakeside Chalet is located in Westport Plaza, which features 18 shops, popular restaurants, and entertainment venues like the Westport Playhouse, The Funny Bone Comedy Club, Jive and Wail Piano Bar, and Backstreet Jazz and Blues. Guests will enjoy convenient access to popular destinations and attractions. We're just 10 minutes from historic St. Charles, 15 minutes from Forest Park, home of the St. Louis Zoo, Science Center, Art Museum and the History Museum. We're also close to the world-famous Gateway Arch, the St. Louis Cardinals baseball stadium, Six Flags® and Missouri's Wine Country.

The hotel provides complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport. Go to Baggage Claim/Hotel Shuttle exits—the shuttle runs every half hour.

Enjoy complimentary wireless High Speed Internet in all public areas, concierge service, plus signature amenities you'll only find at Sheraton. Wake up energized after a restful night's sleep in a plush Sheraton Sweet Sleeper® Bed. Sheraton Club rooms and suites provide guests with special access to the Sheraton Club Lounge, offering complimentary breakfast, evening hors d'oeuvres, and a variety of beverage options. Stay connected at our lobby's connectivity hub, the Link@Sheraton™ experience with Microsoft®. Stay fit with a visit to our Sheraton Fitness center, programmed by Core Performance™.

The Terrace Restaurant and Lucerne Restaurant feature a wide variety of menu items served in a friendly, casual atmosphere. There is also a private dining area perfect for intimate gatherings. In the summer, enjoy poolside refreshments every weekend at the Tiki Bar, serving snacks, beer, wine and frozen drinks. We also offer guests the convenience and privacy of in-room dining service. Stroll through the Westport Plaza Complex and visit any one of their many casual and fine-dining options, from seafood restaurants to specialty cafés.

ScootAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Call (888) 441-7575 or visit [www.scootaround.com](http://www.scootaround.com) for details and to make reservations.

# 8th AFHS ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM ~ 19-23 OCT 2016

| CUT-OFF DATE IS September 15, 2016                                              | Price Per | # of People | TOTAL |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------|
| <b>REGISTRATION FEE</b>                                                         | \$ 40     | #           | \$    |
| Registration fee for children ages 8-16                                         | \$ 25     | #           | \$    |
| <b>MEAL PACKAGES</b>                                                            |           |             |       |
| #1 Includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast Thursday, Oct 20             | \$ 212    | #           | \$    |
| #2 Includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast Friday, Oct 21               | \$ 148    | #           | \$    |
| <b>Please select your entrée choice for the Gala banquet Saturday, Oct 22:</b>  |           |             |       |
| Sliced London Broil with Bordelaise Sauce                                       |           | #           |       |
| Pan Seared Salmon w/Balsamic Reduction                                          |           | #           |       |
| <b>SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (If not purchasing a meal package)</b>               |           |             |       |
| Thursday, Oct 20 — RENDEZVOUS DINNER Chicken Marsala                            | \$ 46     | #           | \$    |
| Friday, Oct 21—EVENING DINNER BUFFET Roasted Pork Loin & Grilled Chicken Breast | \$ 46     | #           | \$    |
| Saturday, Oct 22—GALA BANQUET (Please select entrée)                            |           |             |       |
| Sliced London Broil with Bordelaise Sauce                                       | \$ 46     | #           | \$    |
| Pan Seared Salmon with Balsamic Reduction                                       | \$ 46     | #           | \$    |
| <b>TOUR OPTIONS:</b>                                                            |           |             |       |
| Thursday, Oct 20: Military Heritage Tour— <b>INCLUDES BOX LUNCH</b>             | \$ 45     | #           | \$    |
| Friday, Oct 21: Gateway to St. Louis City Tour—Lunch on your own                | \$ 25     | #           | \$    |
| Saturday, Oct 22: Anheuser-Busch Brewery/Grant's Farm Tour                      | \$ 37     | #           | \$    |
| <b>Total amount payable to: 8th AFHS</b>                                        |           |             | \$    |

MEMBER NAME (for name tag): \_\_\_\_\_

WWII Veteran \_\_\_\_\_ BG or FG Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ POW: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Gen \_\_\_\_\_ Gold Star Family Member \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE or PERSON attending: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL GUESTS: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

DAYTIME PH #: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_ PH #: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE INDICATE ANY PHYSICAL OR DIETARY RESTRICTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD:

CARD #: \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ *Your contact information will only be shared with*

*attendees.*

## IDEAS AND INSPIRATION

by Char Heim

daughter of Charles E. Dye, 1825th Ordnance Co.

"America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, on imagination and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand."— Harry S. Truman

Our World War II veterans fought fearlessly to provide us, the "2nd gens" and our children, the gift of a strong, determined nation.

Let us not allow their sacrifice to go unnoticed in America's current battle with racism, political incorrectness and terrorism.

We must honor our veterans by remaining the courageous, honorable and determined nation that has been gifted to us.

Be not just apathetic but rather intolerant to the injustice, hatred and apathy that is invading our country. These may not be the visible enemies our valiant veterans fought against but they are just as destructive to our freedom.

Stay courageous, imaginative and determined. God bless America.



### An Act of Remembrance

This prayer was given by the Reverend Martin Joyce, former Vicar at Beeston and Litcham, during the November 2015 service at the 392nd Memorial:

O God, by whose grace your people gain courage in the way of the heroes of faith, we lift our hearts in gratitude for all who have lived valiantly and for all who have died bravely for truth, and liberty and righteousness. Especially do we thank you for the heroes of the common good, who suffered and made trial of bitter sacrifice in achieving the freedom of religious worship and the measure of social and political and economic liberty we enjoy in this good land. God of our Fathers, help us to prize very highly, and to guard very carefully, the gifts which their loyalty and devotion have passed on to us. Grant unto us the gift of a living and vigorous faith, that we may be like the heroes: that we may be as true as they were true, that we may be as loyal as they were loyal, and that we may serve our country and the cause of pure religion all the days of our lives; and grant that we with all those that depart hence in the faith of your holy Name, may wear the victor's crown.

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∞

John E. Rosenberg, 576, December 24, 2015

Robert A. Hebert, Associate, January 3, 2016

Karl E. Stupski, Associate, August 3, 2015

Edna H. Nagle, widow of Francis J., 578, December 5, 2015

Martha Bambauer, widow of Gil, 10th Station Complement  
Squadron / 576, February 16, 2016

Tony North, Friend, December 18, 2015

Rita E. Giesing, spouse of Dick, 465th Sub Depot,  
March 4, 2016

Olen F. Levell Jr., 576, February 26, 2016

Robert G. Harned, 578, March 11, 2016