NEWS

392nd BG Memorial Association

VOLUME 10 NOVEMBER 1995

392 STAND-ALONE AT ORLANDO IN FEB 97

At the 392BGMA membership meeting held at St. Louis Sept. 8 during the 8AF convention, it was decided that the next stand-alone reunion for the 392nd would be at Orlando the last week in February, 1997.

It is planned to be a 2-day affair, and will precede by one day the popular annual meeting of the Florida chapter of 2AD Association.

Many Crusaders have attended the Florida 2AD chapter meetings in the past. The proposed scheduling will allow Crusaders to attend the 392 stand-alone and stay over for the for 2AD chapter meeting.

The meeting will be at the Clarion Hotel, and their management has in the past allowed the meetings' special rate to extend several days before and after, so that Crusaders may extend their visit to take advantage of the many attractions in the Orlando area.

Stay tuned for further information.

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FLORIDA CHAPTER 2AD SETS MEETING DATE FOR FEB 3 AT ORLANDO

The Florida chapter of 2AD has had several well-attended winter meetings at the Clarion Hotel in Orlando, and is repeating the one-day affair on Saturday, Feb. 3, 1996.

All Crusaders are welcome, whether they are Florida residents or snowbirds. The hotel grants an attractive rate, and extends it several days before and after Feb. 3.

If interested, contact Col Gilbert at 1482 Granville Dr., Winter Park, FL 32789, phone 407 647 2623; or Cliff Peterson, 2120 Woodcrest Dr., Winter Park, FL 32792, phone 407 647 7741.

US AA GUNNERS ATTEMPT RESCUE OF B-24 CREW, CRASHED INTO AMMO DUMP AFTER WESEL MISSION

By Clark Harbach

The 131st Anti-aircraft Artillery Gun Battalion Mobile on March 24, 1945 was deployed amid thousands of men, machines, and aircraft for an airborne assault across the Rhine. On that fateful day the paths of the 131st and the 392nd Bomb Group crossed. The AAA unit was on the west bank of the Rhine, covering the crossing, and the 2AD's B-24's, the 392nd's among them, flew a low-level supply drop just across the Rhine, to Wesel.

The 131st has a memorial association such as the 392nd's. Clark Harbach is a member of that association and has researched this incident, when a crippled a/c from the 491st Bomb Group that day crashed into an ammunition dump.

The B-24's were flying low and slow to accommodate the delivery of supplies by parachute from their bomb bays. It was planned that their turn-out area was to be cleared of German troops, but it did not happen and the 2AD was subjected to murderous and accurate enemy ground fire. The 2AD lost 13 a/c, of which two were from the 392nd.

The 131st's commander, Lt/Col Arthur K. Arend, his assistant Capt James F. Flynn and their jeep driver T/5 George C. Rollo were on a hill overlooking the Rhine when they saw the stricken B-24 from the 491st go over and later saw the smoke from the crash.

Arriving at the crash scene, they realized that the B-24 had come down in the middle of an ammunition dump. The pilot had landed the plane between piles of TNT, and the piles sheared the wings off and the fuselage slid forward. Amid consuming fire and exploding 50-cal machine-gun bullets, the three men removed eight men and bodies from the plane, loading them on a passing ambulance and a 2 1/2 ton truck. They thought that two might be still alive.

Realizing then that the fire from the plane's wings was about to set off the TNT, they pushed their jeep out of the mud and then Arend and Flynn took off running. They had covered only a few yards when the dump went up, and they were tumbled head over heels for some 50 feet, unhurt except for fractured ear drums. The jeep driver was able to get his machine behind a culvert and was unhurt.

The two crewmen who were thought to be alive did not survive, so the entire crew was lost.

Arends, Flynn, and Rollo were awarded the Soldier's Medal for their heroism. Four other members of the 131st received the Soldier's Medal posthumously, because they were killed while carrying TNT away from the fire.

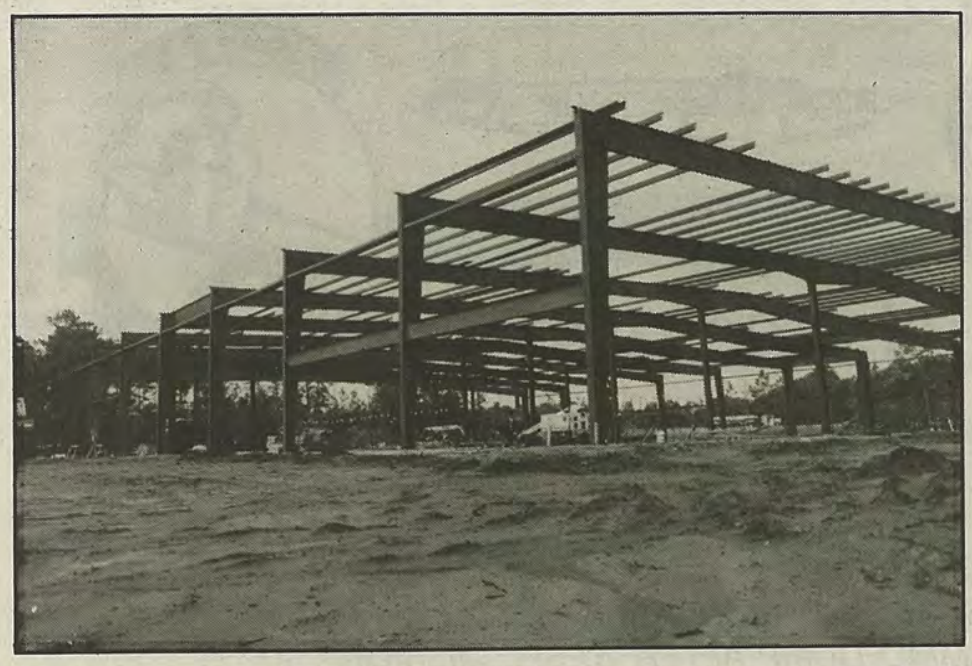
* * * *

B-24 DOWN

Photo courtesy Clark Harbach

This photo was taken by Lt/Col Arend just before he and Capt Flynn and T/5 Rollo entered the smoke and flames in an attempt to rescue the crew.

CONSTRUCTION WELL UNDERWAY FOR MIGHTY 8TH MUSEUM AT SAVANNAH- OPENING SET FOR MAY 96



Construction work on the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum has accelerated sharply with the erection of steel.

When completed, the Museum will be 271 feet long north to south, 231 feet wide east to west, and will have about 90,000 square feet of floor space. The outer building is expected to be completed by the end of 1995. That will allow the exhibits' builders a little more than four months to get the interior ready for the scheduled grand opening on May 13-14, 1996.

The Museum is located at the junction of I-95 and US 80 in Pooler, a suburb of Savannah, GA. Temporary quarters are in place and 8AF visitors are welcomed.

Mary Beth Barnard, Heritage Museum Archivist, asks that if any individuals have microfilm of any 8AF historical documents from Maxwell AF Base or any other source and have finished using them please donate them to the Museum.

MUSEUM VISITOR

Cliff Peterson, 392BGMA President and former President of 8AF Historical Society, made a visit recently to the Heritage Museum. In the background is a painting of the 392nd's "The Flying Crusader", which was one of the first Group memorabilia presented to the Museum.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

9th AF established in Middle East-1942.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

57 B-24's and 62 B-25's made heaviest raid on WWII on New Guinea-1943.

The Heritage Museum will be the permanent home for the Mighty Eighth and will help instill a sense of continuing pride in America by:

-Telling the Mighty Eighth story in an interesting and exciting way without glorifying war.

-Providing educational services to students and challenging them to excel and learn more about their nation's heritage.

-Displaying historical items and memorabilia and preserving The Eighth Air Force heritage.

-Describing day-to-day activities of The Eighth Air Force through audio-visual presentations that are entertaining and informative.

-Providing a research center for historians, students and families of Eighth Air Force veterans.

-Creating a national treasure that will attract tourists from around the world and will leave them with a feeling that Americans really do care about their country and the world.

When you contribute and join the Museum you will receive a membership card, free admission to the Museum, and quarterly newsletter "The Mighty Eighth HERITAGE", and discounts at the Museum Shop and Book Store.

The Heritage Museum needs the generous and continuing support of everybody to make it a success. So please fill out the application below and send it today with your generous contribution.

The MIGHTY EIGHTH HERITAGE MUSEUM SAVANNAH

THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM
P. O. BOX 1992, SAVANNAH, GA 31402
1-800-421-9428 (912) 748-8888
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DATE: _____

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
PHONE: _____
SPOUSE: _____

8AF UNITS & DATES: _____

SPECIAL INTERESTS (POW, GUNNER, SHOT DOWN, MECHANIC): _____

POST-SERVICE ACTIVITY: _____

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS: (Check one)

[ ]	INDIVIDUAL	$20
[ ]	FAMILY	$30
[ ]	ALLIES/ Out of USA	$35

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS:

[ ]	COMMANDER'S CLUB	$200- $999
[ ]	SUSTAINING MEMBER	$1000- $4999
[ ]	ANNIVERSARY PATRON	$5000- $9999
[ ]	MIGHTY 8TH PATRON	$10,000 & UP

Please make checks payable to: The Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. You may also use your MasterCard, Visa, or American Express to contribute and join.

Card Type: _____ Exp: _____
Card #: _____
Signature: _____

IRS APPROVED 501 (C)(3) CORPORATION

PROFILE

Capt Donald Clark was a pilot in the 579th, joining the Group at Wendling in July, 1944.

After four years as a policeman in Torrance and Los Angeles, CA., he was recalled in April 1951. He flew 75 missions in psychological warfare in 1952. He had tours of duty at Travis, Andrews, and Germany. In 1962-65 he earned an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering at Oklahoma State University. He retired from Andrews AFB in 1970, as Col.

He is presently Retiree Activities Officer at Patrick AF Base, FL.

He and wife Grace live at 520 Palm Springs Blvd., #509, Indian Harbor Beach, FL 32937. They have three children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

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PROFILE

1/Lt Paul E. Swenson was bombsight maintenance officer in the 579th. He was assigned to the 392nd in April 1943 at Tucson.

He has held several corporate positions, mostly in the steel industry. He was a district manager of Cutler-Hammer, the raw materials manager at Republic Steel, and vice-president of Keystone Resources. He retired as a consultant to U.S. Steel in 1987.

Warm breezes and heavy traffic did not appeal to him for retirement living, so he has made his home at Steamboat Springs where he enjoys small-town living and good skiing in the winter.

He is married to Lois and their address is PO Box 770386, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477. They have three children and seven grandchildren.

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392nd's "BOOK" BEING PREPARED TO SUBMIT TO PUBLISHERS

The 392nd's anthology, as yet unnamed, is a weighty tome of some 600 typewritten pages. It has now been converted to computer disc and is a much more manageable project than the hefty 600 page volume.

It has been converted after much laborious work by Bill Braddock and spouse Marge. Bill was the radio operator of the legendary Cliff Edwards crew, the 578th's first lead crew, flying Ford's Folly.

Some 60 Crusaders have contributed the memories of their war-time experiences to the project. Braddock says: "These are a wide variety of experiences, told in a straightforward manner, running almost the entire gamut of what happened to us in the 392nd and to all the people around us (American, British, Canadian, Dutch, Belgian, French, German, Spanish, and Algerian). I feel that there is a chance that our book can be become widely accepted as one which tells a really complete story of the Allied air war over Europe and of its effect on the men and women who lived through it."

The Braddocks plan to have their work ready to submit to the book committee soon, so that Board action may be taken at the first opportunity of a meeting, which probably will be at the 2AD Florida chapter meeting in Orlando Feb. 3, 1996.

The committee consists of, besides Bill Braddock, Dave Greene, chairman; Burrell Ellison; Ben Foote; Keith Roberts; and Bob Vickers.

No name for the book has emerged. If any Crusader has as good idea for a name, please contact any member of the committee or the NEWS.

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FROM THE KEILMAN WWII NOTEBOOK

Col Myron Keilman, the commander of the 579th, has compiled accounts of events in 392nd history that he has named "Lest We Forget". Following are his notes regarding the birthday of the 8th Air Force:

On 28 January 1942 the Eighth Air Force was established at Savannah, GA. Three years later it became the greatest single air power in the world. General "Hap" Arnold, the Commanding General of the U. S. Army Air Force remembered. Here is his message to members of the Eighth Air Force:

"Since its birth at Savannah three years ago the Eighth Air Force has grown to the stature of the largest single air power in the Air Force. The efforts put forth and the results obtained are an inspiration and a source of great pride to us all. Please extend to all echelons and ranks my sincerest congratulations on this anniversary and milestone of achievement."

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BOOK REVIEW

FLYING THROUGH FIRE, FIDO-THE FOG BUSTERS OF WWII, by Geoffrey Williams. To order: Littlehampton Book Services, 10-14 Eldon Way, Lineside Estate, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 7HE, England. 17.99 pounds plus 3.60 pounds shipping. Please pay in Sterling.

FIDO was one of Britain's most remarkable wartime inventions and was responsible for saving the lives of thousands of Allied aircrews. Lines of burners fueled by thousands of gallons of petrol were installed beside runways to literally burn the fog off airfields.

FIDO enabled over 1000 Allied aircraft to make safe landings despite dense fog over Britain.

(Editor's Note: If any Crusader aircrew made a landing using FIDO, the NEWS would like to hear of it.)

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ENCOUNTERS FORMER CRUSADER AT VFW POST

Sgt Art Olson, 579th S-2, lives in the small community of Oswego, IL, which is at the northwest fringe of the Chicago metropolitan area.

Some time ago, after attending a Veterans Day ceremony, he decided to join the VFW post at nearby Montgomery. When he presented his discharge papers to the Post commander, the commander turned out to be M/Sgt John Mall, 74th Service Squadron. Many Crusaders will remember M/Sgt Mall as the hanger chief at Hanger #2.

Olson soon introduced Mall to the 392BGMA.

(See accompanying Profiles, this issue.)

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ANTIQUE SEATS

Heard on the Paul Harvey show: Some find it no longer necessary to buy antique furniture in order to have something old to sit on.

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DONORS CONTINUE TO SUPPLY MEMORIALIZED BOOKS TO LITCHAM AND BEESTON LIBRARIES

Toni Robinson, coordinator of the Wendling area schools library program, has reported that she has sent two boxes of books to the libraries. Also, she has sent money to the schools to purchase books in England. All the books have a donor insertion, identifying the donor and the persons memorialized. Where possible, photographs are also supplied.

Crusaders are urged to take this opportunity to memorialize in the minds of the young English students the history of the 392nd in World War II. Simply fill out the form below and send it and your check to Gil Bambauer.

MEMORIAL GIFT TO WENDLING AREA SCHOOL LIBRARIES

I/we donate $50 to the 392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n, and I/we request that a book be purchased for the Litcham or Beeston school library, and that it be inscribed as follows:

IN MEMORY OF: (List a crew or an individual)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

A photograph of the crew or individual is enclosed, which is to be copied and and copy placed in the book. I understand that the original photo will be returned to me after copying.

Additional descriptive material, such as dates the above were at Wendling, is also enclosed.

Donor_____

Street, City _____

State, Zip_____

Telephone (in case we have any questions) Area code:_____

SEND THIS FORM WITH CHECK AND PHOTO TO GIL BAMBAUER, TREASURER, 974 FAIRWAY DRIVE, DEWEY, AZ 86327-5825

AIR ANNIVERSARY

88 B-29's made first heavy bomb strike on Tokyo-1944.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

First USAAF bombing attack made on Japanese held Thailand-1942.

DUES NOTICE - - - DUES NOTICE
CHECK THE MAILING LABEL, SEE IF YOU'VE PAID

BEN JONES WEDS AMERICAN SCHOOLTEACHER

Ben Jones, who grew up in and around the Wendling base area and a long-time Associate member of 392BGMA, was married to Barbara Aguglia in Rochester, NY on Aug. 19. Barbara is a teacher in the Rochester schools.

REVERSE LEND-LEASE

Marsteller photo

Pictured at the wedding festivities are Jim Goar, NEWS editor; Jim Marsteller; newly married Barbara and Ben; and Barbara and Mervyn Jones, Ben's parents.

Over the past few years Ben has teamed with Associate Jim Marsteller in researching 392nd history. Marsteller, Crusaders will remember, lost an uncle on the ill-fated Freidrichshafen mission.

So present at the wedding and helping fill the bridegroom's side of the aisle was nearly the entire Marsteller clan, having made the trek from southern Pennsylvania. In addition to Jim and wife Karen the Marsteller roster included: son Chad, an Army corporal with campaign credits in Desert Storm and Somalia, who was a groomsman; Jim's parents Dale and Betty; and brother Rick and his wife Louann.

Also in attendance were Jim Goar and Virginia, who were happy to renew their friendship with Ben's parents, Barbara and Mervyn Jones. The senior Jones', who live in Litcham, have been staunch friends of the 392nd and have hosted many Crusaders when they were visiting the old base.

Ben and Barbara are at home in their new house at 199 Alameda St., Rochester, NY 14613. Their phone number is 716 458 5203.

PROFILE

1/Lt Walter M. Bell, Jr., was a first pilot in the 578th, later becoming Squadron Training Officer. He arrived at Wendling in August 1944.

He graduated from Clemson with an Infantry commission, and served as a platoon officer for a year. He then transferred to the Air Corps and successfully completed pilot training.

He remained in the Air Force Reserves, retiring as Lt/Col.

His civilian career was in agriculture as a dairy farmer and later with the South Carolina Farm Bureau.

His wife is Jeanette, and they live at 1380 Una Road, Hartsville, SC 29550. They have two children and four grandchildren.

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ENGLISH LESSON: A REVIEW FOR CRUSADERS

The passage of years may have dimmed the 392nd's memory of terms used by the English. Here is a short review of some Brit terms:

Bubble and Squeak: a dish, fried, made up of vegetables left over from a previous meal.

Shandy: a drink, composed of (non-Crusaders won't believe this) lemonade and beer or lager.

Half and Half: a drink, half Mild and half Bitter beer.

Toad In A Hole: the sausage in Yorkshire pudding.

Bonnet: the hood of a car.

Boot: the trunk of a car.

Pints and Points: the practice of drinking and playing darts at pubs.

Pub: a Public House, a tavern.

Roundabout: a traffic circle, where all the incoming traffic comes in from the left and scares the hell out of you while you go round and round, looking for the exit.

And: this story, told to the NEWS as being true: An English company bought an Indiana company, and sent its auditor over to look at the books. When the audit was finished, the Brit said to his accountant counterpart, "They look all right to me. Do you have any queries?" And the American replied, "We're not really sure about Frank."

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DISSENSION MARKS 8AF ANNUAL MEET AT ST. LOUIS

By Jim Goar

The 8AF Historical Society lived up to its reputation as the Hysterical Society at its annual meeting at St. Louis Sept. 9.

A dissident contingent seemingly from the 493rd Bomb Group and the Georgia Wing filled the meeting halls in the days preceding the annual membership meeting with much inflammatory literature, alleging that the current leadership among other things was less than diligent in reporting to the IRS and was antagonistic toward the Savannah Mighty Eighth Museum. The 493rd had evidently planned their actions for some time in advance; they had 153 persons present as opposed to the next Group's 46. The 392nd had 29, which was about average for the Groups.

The nominations for Directors are made by a nominating committee, and after that slate was presented the dissidents nominated two from their group from the floor.

Great credit should go to the 392nd's Charles Dye, president, and Bob Vickers, chairman of the nominating committee. They kept the meeting in order and did not let it become the donnybrook that has sometimes plagued 8AF meetings in the past. However, in spite of this some unfortunate statements were made, one especially by Art Swanson, who is not a Director but a paid staffer.

The outcome: three directors were to be elected. Three of the nominees were incumbents and were on the regular slate originally presented by the nominating committee. Two of the incumbents were elected, Charles Dye and Harold Rutka. The other Director elected was Thomas Parsons, 44th BG, who was on the regular slate. The two nominees presented by the dissidents were defeated.

These so-called uprisings seem to occur in about 5-year cycles in the Historical Society. Differences in opinion naturally arise in the workings of any organization, but the 8th's sometimes become nasty and tend to threaten the peace and tranquility of the Society.

It is probable that dissidence will arise again in the future, because the issue of the relationship of the Society to the Savannah Museum was never debated. And there appears to exist a substantial difference of opinion on that topic among the membership.

Officers of the Society are elected by the Directors, and at their meeting the day following the membership meeting they named Jim Hower president; Hubert Childress vice-president; William Shields secretary; and Norman Grant treasurer.

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PROFILE

S/Sgt William J. Dykes was the tail gunner on the Wennerbom crew in the 577th. He arrived at Wendling Feb. 21, 1945.

He was recalled to active duty for one year during the Korean war, serving in a radar station at Fort MacArthur, CA., and also had a duty assignment as Intelligence Specialist.

After that, he was a landscape architect and then a State Police Officer.

From 1955 to 1986 he served with the Coroner's office in Riverside County, CA. The last 8 years he was the elected Coroner.

While Coroner, he directed the investigation into a mass murder case involving a male nurse, Robert Diaz. Diaz was convicted on March 30, 1984, but his case is now on appeal before the United States Supreme Court.

Dykes is writing a book on the case. It is nearly finished.

He is married to Reita and they live at 7315 Greylock Ave., Riverside CA 92504. They have one daughter.

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PROFILE

T/Sgt Roy C. Weber was a radio operator-gunner in the 579th. He flew his first mission on D-Day, and crash landed in Sweden on June 28, 1944.

In civilian life he was a manufacturing superintendent for J. I. Case Company in Racine, Wis., retiring in 1982.

He now lives at 1520 White Spar Road, Prescott, AZ, 86303. He has one son and one daughter.

* * * *

SON OF CREWMAN LOST AT FRIEDRICHSHAFEN VISITS CRASH SITE

Associate member William C. McGuire II is the son of 2/Lt William C. McGuire, navigator on the 579th's Sharpe crew which was lost on the Friedrichafen mission March 18, 1944.

He has researched the mission thoroughly, joining 578th pilot Cliff Peterson, who survived being shot down on that mission; and associate member Jim Marsteller, whose uncle S/Sgt Everette Morris was lost on the mission.

In the summer of 1995, having won a trip to Europe in an office fundraiser, he and his wife visited not only the crash site in Germany but also Norwich and Wendling. Lt McGuire is interred at the Lorraine American cemetery near St. Avold, and fittingly McGuire visited his grave on Father's Day.

He was also able to locate and speak one of the three survivors, S/Sgt Michael Cugini, the tail gunner.

McGuire said, "I have been very fortunate to get virtually the complete information, to speak to a survivor and to visit the scene. Few in my situation are so fortunate. All of that was in large part through the support I got from the men of the 8AF, and particularly from Jim Marsteller and Cliff Peterson. I'm ever grateful".

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SEARCHING FOR TOM HARDEN

The NEWS has received a letter from a Mrs. S. A. Sirrell of Attleborough, Norfolk, wanting to locate Tom Harden, with whom contact was lost when the 392nd returned to the States.

According to Mrs. Sirrell, Tom was a cook, was from Texas, and was maybe in the 10th Station Complement or the 1217th QM Company.

The Association has no record of Tom; and if we did we would respect his privacy by simply forwarding Mrs. Sirrell's letter to him for his own action.

If any Crusader can put us in touch with Tom Harden, write or call the NEWS.

* * * *

AIR ANNIVERSARY

15th AF flew its first mission of WWII-1943.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Capt Edward V. Rickenbacker awarded Medal of Honor for WWI action-1930.

NOW'S THE TIME TO GET A JUMP ON THE COMING YEAR AND SEND IN YOUR 1996 DUES. YOU'LL BE DOING US AND YOURSELF A BIG FAVOR IF YOU SEND YOUR $12 TO GIL BAMBAUER NOW.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

You can tell where you stand with your dues by the code right after your name on the label. If is LM (for Life Membership) or 96 or higher, you're paid up. If Frnd is after your name, you're our guest. If there is an error, contact Gil Bambauer.

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

Name_____ Ground [ ] Air [ ] Sqdn_____ Assoc [ ]

Street_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Dues for 1996, $12 [_____]

HARDSHIP WAIVER [____]

LIFE MEMBERSHIP:
Age 61-65 $120 [_____]
Age 66-70 $96 [_____]
Age 71 and over $78 [_____]

Send with check to Gil Bambauer, 974 Fairway Dr., Dewey, AZ 86327

PROFILE

1/Lt Harry W. Oakes was the bombardier on the Harry Downs crew in the 579th. He joined the Group at Wendling in October 1944.

He remained active in the Air Force Reserves and retired as Lt/Col in 1968.

As a civilian he was in electronics at Wright-Patterson Air Field, and is now retired.

He makes his home at 4856 NW Palmetto St., Arcadia, FL 33821. He has a daughter and a grand-daughter.

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PROFILE

Sgt Arthur W. Olson was in S-2 in the 579th. He was an early joiner, meeting up with the 392nd at Biggs Field in April 1943.

He spent his civilian career in the railroad business, retiring in 1985 as head clerical in the claims department for the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad.

He lives with wife Lee at 20 Beau Meade Road, Oswego, IL 60543. They have 5 children and 9 grandchildren.

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PROFILE

M/Sgt John Mall, 74th Service Squadron, was the hanger chief at Hanger #2. He arrived at Wendling in July 1943 and returned home with the ground echelon in July 1945.

In civilian life he has been a brick layer and cement contractor. He is a past post commander of the VFW at his home city.

His address is 25 1st Ave., Montgomery, IL 60538. He has four children and three grandchildren.

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PX ITEMS

Book, "392nd War Stories", by Col Myron Keilman, 579th, $21.50 postpaid $_____
Book, "The Liberators From Wendling", by Col Bob Vickers, 578th, $28.00 postpaid $_____
Book, "Crew Dog", by Maj John Matt, 579th, $28.95 postpaid $_____
Cap, black, 392nd Bomb Group w/gold braid, summer, $10.50 postpaid $_____
Cap, black, 392nd Bomb Group w/gold braid, winter, $10.50 postpaid $_____
Cap, blue, 392nd Bomb Group w/B-24 and Crusader logo, $10.50 postpaid $_____
Directory, Jan 1995, $10 postpaid $_____
Jacket, white nylon, w/392BG and Crusader patches, $22 postpaid (Circle size wanted) M L XL XXL $_____
Patch, 392nd Bomb Group logo, $1.50 postpaid $_____
Print, "The Flying Crusader", by Frederick T. Searle, signed, reduced to $16.50 postpaid $_____
T-shirt, 392nd Bomb Group, $18.50 postpaid (Circle size wanted) M L XL XXL $_____
TOTAL $_____

Send with check to Gil Bambauer, Treas, 974 Fairway Dr., Dewey, AZ 86327

Video, from Albuquerque Reunion Symposium, "The Early Days" $17.50 postpaid
Video, from Albuquerque Reunion Symposium, "The Ground Support Teams Prepare For A Mission" $17.50 postpaid
Video, Symposium above, "The Tough Missions, Pt 1: Bremen, Keil, Gotha, Freidrichshafen Both parts $27.50 pp
Video, Symposium above, "The Tough Missions, Pt 2: Politz, Berlin, Bernberg, Bingen, Wesel Both parts $27.50 pp
Video, from Albuquerque Reunion Symposium, general scenes from the reunion, 2 parts, $27.50 pp
(ORDER VIDEOS DIRECT FROM DAN A. McGOVERN PRODUCTIONS, 5307 CANTANTE, LAGUNA HILLS CA 92653)

576th's #42-78480 CRASH LANDS IN FRANCE ON WAY HOME FROM JAN 16 1945 MISSION TO DRESDEN

From Bob Vickers' "The Liberators From Wendling": The 392nd's a/c losses on the 16 January, 1945 mission would rank with the highest ever suffered in combat. A total of 5 Liberators would be lost on this complex mission, but fortunately with only 14 casualties, killed or MIA.

The briefed targets near Dresden were obscured by smoke and low clouds. However, other targets in the vicinity were struck with generally good results. AA fire around the Dresden area and on the bomb run from IP to target was moderate to heavy and accurate. No enemy fighters were encountered, although some were sighted.

Of the five bombers lost on this mission, three of the aircrews were forced to bail out and two to crash land, all due to enemy AA fire or fuel shortage.

Following is the story of one of the a/c that crash landed, the 576th's 42-78480, 1/Lt J. L. Meehan, pilot.

The crash landing was near a US P-51 base, near the French town of Merville. The entire crew survived the crash with only cuts and bruises. Two of the crewmen still living are former S/Sgts Robert C. Lynch, Warren, OH, nose gunner; and Donald H. Lange, Elkhorn, WI, waist gunner.

Lynch: "We had one engine out, and were on our final approach with gear down and full flaps when we got a flare to go around. As we tried to climb we lost one or two more engines and started to mush. I saw that we were headed straight for a farm house, but we missed it and sat down in a snow-covered field. The plane broke in half and radio and oxygen equipment along with ammo boxes went flying. The snow and the ground were flying into the bomb bay. It was over quickly and we walked out through the break in the airplane. We went to the nearby farmhouse where the French people took care of us and gave us some brandy."

Lange: "We had trouble at the target. so we roamed all over the Dresden area with our bomb bay doors open until the Germans sent up some fighters to find out what those dumb Americans were doing.

'We finally dropped our bombs and headed for home. We were running low on gas so when our pilot spotted that P-51 field in friendly territory we started to land. Some hot-shot P-51 pilot side slipped under us so we had to try to go around again. We were only 5-10 feet from the ground and were headed toward a farm house. The pilot missed the farm house and landed in a field. I bounced around like a rubber ball and ended up against the bomb bay bulkhead upside down. I spotted a lighted area and crawled out from under the wreck. I tried to run but would fall every time so I crawled as far away as I could. But the ship didn't explode, and I just laid there until I heard someone calling my name. My face was cut.

'The crew carried me to the farm house, where the French people were very nice to me. They bandaged my face so that I could only see the floor in front of me. The French housewife stood beside me while a series of pairs of boots came and stood in front of me. I couldn't tell what anyone was saying to me so I just kept saying "merci" to every pair of boots that came up to me.

'They sent an ambulance from the P 51 base, but to add a little more trouble the ambulance went into a ditch on our way to the hospital. I went into shock that night and they piled blankets on me. I shook all night, and I still get those same shakes to this day, over 50 years later."

Correspondence about this incident has developed over the past few months with a young French researcher by the name of Jocelyn LeClercq, who lives at 31 Route De Fromelles, 59249 Aubers, France. He has been in contact with Lynch and Lange, as well as Bob Vickers, Cliff Peterson, and the NEWS.

The crew loading for the mission was:
1/Lt J. L. Meehan, pilot
1/Lt H. V. Carey, co-pilot
2/Lt S. P. McAfee, nav
S/Sgt R. C. Lynch, nose gunner
T/Sgt H. J. Cohen, radio operator
T/Sgt C. C. Candido, engineer
S/Sgt D. H. Lange, waist gunner
S/Sgt P. P. Conner, waist gunner
S/Sgt P. J. Borracini, tail gunner
S/Sgt F. B. Bleickhardt, radar counter measures
Sgt R. Slater, German radio monitor.

Crew members have reported to the NEWS that Lt Meehan died a few years ago. The NEWS has been able to locate Lynch, Lange, Conner, and Borracini, and post-war biographical information about them follows. We have been unable to find any of the other crew members.

AND THEY ALL WALKED AWAY

Photo courtesy Robert Lynch

This photo, taken over 50 years ago with a box Brownie, shows an unnamed crewman, S/Sgt Robert C. Lynch, and T/Sgt C. C. Candido at the crash site near Merville, France.

S/Sgt Robert C. Lynch graduated from St. Vincent College at Latrobe, PA. He retired as vice-president for sales and marketing of the Brainerd Division of Sharon Steel Corporation.

He is married to Cathy, and they live at 689 Old Wagon Lane, Warren, OH 44484. They have 3 daughters and 6 granddaughters.

S/Sgt Donald H. Lange was a traveling sales representative for the Monon Railroad and later for Universal Carloading Company.

His wife is Frances, and their address is N6293 Oak Court, Elkhorn, WI 53121. They have one daughter.

S/Sgt Paul P. Conner was recalled for duty in the Korean war, and remained in the Air Force for 27 years. He saw duty in Korea and Okinawa, and was with SAC, 10 years with a missle wing. He retired as M/Sgt.

His wife is deceased. He has 2 sons, one of whom is a retired Colonel of Marines. He has one grandchild.

S/Sgt Peter J. Borracini was a fill-in on the Jan. 16 mission. Borracini's original crew, the Robertson crew, was interned in Switzerland on a mission when Borracini was not aboard.

After WWII he joined the Pennsylvania Air Guard with duty as a flight engineer, retiring as M/Sgt. In civilian life he was a technician for the Air Guard.

His spouse is Lee, and they live at 9503 Hilspach St., Philadelphia, PA 19115. They have 1 daughter and 2 grandchildren.

* * * *

PROFILE

Cpl Primo J. D'Alessandro was a driver in the Motor Pool, assigned to the 576th squadron. He was an early arriver, joining the 392nd at Alamogordo.

He retired in 1976 as part owner of the Muzio Baking Company, the largest French and Italian baking company in the greater Sacramento area.

He and spouse Lena celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary in October 1995. They live at 6375 Harmon Drive, Sacramento, CA 95831 and have one daughter.

* * * *

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Signal Corps alloted $25,000 to procure an airplane-1907.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

First jet plane aerial combat in history took place in Korea-1950.

DUES NOTICE - - - DUES NOTICE
CHECK THE MAILING LABEL, SEE IF YOU'VE PAID

8AFHS'S RETIRING PRESIDENT'S REPORT OF ST. LOUIS MEETING

(Most Crusaders know that 1/Lt Charles Dye, 1825 Ordnance Co., was Station Ammunition Officer at Wendling. He is a past Director and past Treasurer of 392BGMA, and is the retiring President of 8AF Historical Society. At the St. Louis meeting he was re-elected Director.)

By Charles Dye

The 21st 8AFHS Reunion in St. Louis was successful with another spirited election. However, the acrimony of one unhappy member detracted from the usual jovial atmosphere.

The presence of Air Force Chief of Staff General Ronald Fogleman as our Distinguished Guest Speaker was a first for our Society and a benchmark for future Reunions.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Stan Zybort photo

Gen Ronald Fogelman

We sincerely thank General Fogelman and his wife Miss Jane for taking the time to be with us.

The Commander of the Eighth Air Force, Lt/Gen Stephen B. Croker, was unable to attend but he was well represented by B/Gen Ronald Marcotte, Commander 509 Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB, Missouri. Gen Marcotte presented the Eaker awards to the recipients. These fine young men are a credit to our Air Force.

CMSgt Garland Gardner, Senior Enlisted Advisor, Air Mobility Command at Scott AFB and his wife added additional glitter to the Saturday banquet and his office was most helpful in many areas.

Col Larkin, Chaplain of the Air Mobility Command, got us off to a good start with the invocation and the "Starlifter Band" of AMC headquarters put the final touch with the 40's show and marvelous dance music.

Courtesy the late Capt Charles Taylor, 576/8 Ass't Eng O

Our 392BGMA is to commended for the welcome extended to the award recipients at the Rendezvous Dinner. These young men even enjoyed some of our war stories.

As is always the case, when one needs a job done to perfection call on the 392nd.

To those of you who attended this Reunion, I thank you for your support. For those who were unable to attend, I look forward to seeing you in Orlando in October '96.

* * * *

GI ISSUE A-2 JACKETS FACTORY AVAILABLE AT AFFORDABLE PRICES

Stan Zybort has established a relationship with the factory that makes A-2 jackets for the Air Force. If we order through him, we can get regular issue A-2 jackets at a cost well below the prices quoted in aviation periodicals.

Contact Stan up to Dec. 11 at 168 Winding Way, Little Silver, NJ 07739. From Dec. 11 to Apr. 15 his address is 314 N. W. 50th St., Pompano Beach, FL 33064.

* * * *

PROFILE

Sgt Bruce E. Bates was in the communications section of the 578th. He was an early joiner, getting on the 392nd's morning report at Biggs Field in March 1943.

His civilian career has been spent in the photography field. He graduated from the Southwest Photo Arts Institute in Dallas, TX in 1948 and received the Associate Degree in Applied Arts from Lansing Community College in 1990. He lived 26 years in Lansing, MI, where he was manager of the photo section of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

He is married to Jean and they live at 233 Carrol St., Pentwater, MI 49449. They have one daughter and two sons; and one granddaughter.

* * * *

PROFILE

1/Lt Jack B. Berkley was co-pilot of the Crowell crew in the 576th. He arrived at Wendling in October 1944.

Graduating from the University of Kansas in 1948, he entered the banking business and is still active, being chairman of the Stockton National Bank in Stockton, KS.

He is one of the handful of 392nd pilots who are still flying. He has a 1988 Mooney and recently returned from a flight to Texas.

He is married to Barbara, and their address is Box 511, Stockton, KS 67669. They have three children and six grandchildren.

* * * *

PROFILE

S/Sgt Armando Damiano was the tail gunner on the Henry Lesser crew in the 579th. He joined the Group at Wendling in May, 1944.

After the war he spent a time in the Reserves in a Postal unit. He entered the Postal Service in 1945 as a clerk and retired as a supervisor in 1974. He moved to Florida from Brooklyn after his retirement.

He and spouse Mildred live at 33 S. DeSoto St., Beverly Hills, FL 32665. They have two sons and three grandchildren.

* * * *

PROFILE

T/Sgt Hugh (army) Malcolm (civilian) Hinshaw was the flight engineer and top turret gunner on the 578th's Cliff Peterson crew. He was shot down on the infamous Friedrichshaffen mission on March 18, 1944.

In civilian life, he has been a builder of residential and commercial buildings, and also has been in the publishing business.

He and spouse Mary Rose live at 134 Honeysuckle Lane, Huntington, W VA 25701. They have three children and three grandchildren.

* * * *

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

Name of deceased_____ Sqdn._____

Address_____ City_____ State_____ Zip_____

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

Reported by_____

Address_____ City_____ State_____ Zip_____

[ ] Record a memorial contribution to 392nd BGMA in my name, check made out to 392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n., enclosed. Send this report to Jim Goar, 5 N. Columbia St., Frankfort, IN 46041.

NEWS

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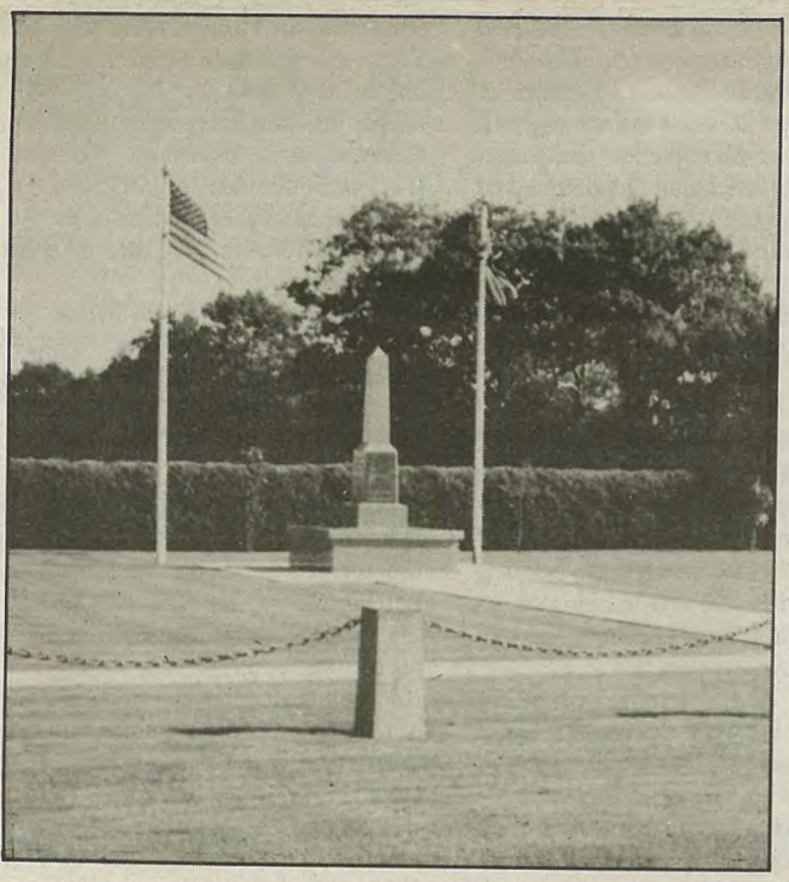

Almighty God, Who has blessed us with the will and courage to do our duty, we praise You for our comrades whose death kept freedom living. We praise You also for giving us the years we have lived since their departure. We pray that You will strengthen and sustain our devotion to truth and justice, so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

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By George Barger, Chaplain

My wife and I were able to go to England this past summer, and of course visited the former Station 118. I was a little nonplussed that my feelings were so strong as I stood in the lovely area with its bushes, green grass and memorial. There is a lot of affect which focuses on Wendling and the 392nd. It is a potpourri of experiences and friendships and undefinables which blend together. Even over 50 plus years, the bonds wind about you as you stand before the memorial. And you pray a silent thanksgiving - for the people whose lives intersected yours, for those who died then, and have died since; and that we each were able to do our duty. Amen to that!

* * * *

AIR ANNIVERSARY

American fighters appear over Phillippines for first time since 1942-1944.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

35 B-17's were based in Phillippines-1941.

392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n NEWS
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But we..shall be remembered;

We few,
we happy few,
we band of
brothers;

For he to-day
that sheds his
blood with me

Shall be
my brother...

William Shakespeare
Henry V

FOLDED WINGS

Charles R. Graham, 578, June 15, 1995
Willis H. Roddy, 576, July 22, 1995
Thomas E. Sumlin, 579, Sept. 30, 1994
John E. Sands, 579, Jan. 1995
Adolph A. Hadeka, 576, June 28, 1995
Thomas R. Fitzgerald, 578, Jul. 9, 1995
Paul Biddle, 578, May 1995
Chester Czyzewicz, 576/9, Sept. 3, 1995
Michael Cugini, 579, June 1994
Charles J. Gordon, 578, Oct. 1995
John Frank Beseda, 579, Mar. 9, 1963

PROFILE

Jim Marsteller is an Associate member, the nephew of S/Sgt E. N. (Jim) Morris, who was KIA on March 18, 1994 on the Friedrichshafen mission.

He has been an indefatigable researcher of that mission and other matters in the history of the 392nd.

He and spouse Karen, a nurse, live at 304 Carea Road, New Park, PA 17352. He operates a lawn and garden machinery store there. They have two sons and one grandson. Son Chad is a corporal in the Army and has had several overseas assignments, including Desert Storm.