

NEWS



392nd BG Memorial Association

VOLUME 11

NOVEMBER 1996

STAND-ALONE AT ORLANDO FEB. 23-24, '97

392ND'S STAND-ALONE TO BE HELD BACK-TO-BACK WITH FLORIDA CHAPTER 2AD REUNION- CRUSADERS CAN ATTEND EITHER OR BOTH

Col Gilbert has issued this "civilian general order":

This is a special edition of our newsletter, special because it's being sent not only to our regular mailing list but to every name we have found who ever served with the 392nd Group. We have some 1400 names on this list and we record number of "first-timers" as well as old timers to our "stand-alone" reunion February 23-24 in OR-L-L-A-A-NDO! The registration form enclosed herein give details, prices, etc., for this Homecoming for our veterans' wives, friends, all who share the common bond spawned more that 50 years ago at Station 118, Wendling, Norfolk, UK.

Not to infringe on the title of the excellent book on the 8th, One Last Look, this is one more chance to look for friends we remember from back in 1943-45, to see if we recognize any changes in their looks, behavior, memory, the almost unbelievable stories they tell...deniable stories that understandably didn't make it past the censor for the forthcoming anthology on the 392nd, Twentieth Century Crusaders. Every member of our Group has a bit of history in his memory bank that deserves to be shared. At some point in our program, we want to set aside a little time for favorite stories, perhaps even prizes for the best sellers.

You will note that we have no regimented schedule of activities, tours to our Orlando world of entertainment, Disneyworld, Universal Studios, Sea

World, etc. We felt that the prime focus of this reunion will be the gathering and mingling during our two days together, poring over M/Sgt Ernie Barber's unequalled photo albums and WWII scenes at Wendling; and asking whatever happened to old so-and-so.

Nevertheless, for those wanting to visit the famous attractions in the area, the Clarion Hotel guest services desk will make the necessary arrangements. Disneyworld alone will require a full day, so you may want to add additional days to your stay. Our special hotel rate is good three days before and three days after the reunion dates. A further thought: 392nd members who attended the recent SAI reunion in Orlando praised the tour of the Cape Kennedy launch facilities. These are constantly updated and even if you've been there-done that sometime in the past, the visit is very worthwhile. If enough members are interested, we'll contract our own bus for the trip. Cost will be about \$30 per person.

Do start contacting old friends, activating that piggy bank for trip expenses, oiling up that wheel chair (Jim Goar) checking canes and crutches, (Gilbert and Dye), and make this even we, and perhaps the hotel....will long remember. 392BGMA Board members please note that there will be a meeting of the Board of Directors at 2 o'clock Saturday afternoon.

If you want to also attend the 2AD:
The Florida chapter Second Air Divi-

sion Reunion will be held on Saturday, Feb. 22 at the same hotel, the Clarion. This will be the day before the 392nd stand-alone on Feb. 23-24. The accompanying registration form has an entry to accommodate those who want to join this event, for all meals or for the banquet only. Banquet seating will be by Groups. This will be the 5th Florida

2AD reunion, and it has been well received in previous years. You'll be among friendly B-24 types who speak our language- no B-17's allowed!

Call us with your questions:
Lawrence Gilbert, chm, 407-647-2623
Cliff Peterson, co-chm, 407-647-7741
Teddy Egan, treas, 407-644-5439

THE 392ND SALUTES BIRDIE SCHMIDT LARRICK, ARC DIRECTOR, AERO CLUB, WENDLING



Birdie Schmidt at Wendling, 1943-44. (No wonder the Aero Club was such a popular place)



Birdie Schmidt Larrick, 1996, still a beauty, wearing the A-2 jacket belonging to S/Sgt John Kamacho, waist gunner on the Birdie Schmidt ARC, the B-24 named after her.

392ND'S STAND-ALONE IS TO BE HELD BACK-TO-BACK WITH THE FLORIDA CHAPTER SECOND AIR DIVISION REUNION, AND CRUSADERS CAN ATTEND EITHER OR BOTH. THE 2AD REUNION IS SATURDAY, FEB. 22, 1997; AND THE 392ND IS SUNDAY AND MONDAY, FEB. 23 AND 24. BOTH ARE AT THE CLARION HOTEL IN ORLANDO.

Detailed information on both reunions is below, and reservation forms are on the back of this sheet. Send Reunion forms with check to Teddy Egan, 2619 Lafayette Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789, and communicate direct with the hotel either with the form or by phone. Be sure to identify yourself as belonging to the Second Air Division, 392nd Bomb Group. Deadline for registration is Jan. 31, 1997.

392ND BOMB GROUP STAND-ALONE REUNION

The 392nd Bomb Group Stand-Alone Reunion will be held Sunday and Monday, February 23 and 24, 1997 at the Clarion Plaza Hotel, 9700 International Drive, Orlando, Florida, 32819. Telephone is 1 800 627 8258 or 407 354 1703. Room rate is \$67.00 plus 12% tax. This rate is available three days before and three days after the reunion. Mail your check for first night's deposit, \$75.04 directly to the hotel using the hotel reservation form at the bottom of the back of this page. OR, call the hotel giving your credit card information. Be sure to identify yourself with the 2nd Air Division, 392nd Bomb Group on the form or credit card call. Checks should reach the hotel not later than the deadline, which is January 31. Mail the REGISTRATION form with your check to Teddy Egan, 2619 Lafayette Road, Winter Park, FL 32789 by the same deadline. Hospitality room/rooms will be open from Saturday PM thru Monday with open bar; Ernie Barber's voluminous photo albums, video, and memorabilia. Sit-down breakfast and dinner both Sunday and Monday is included in the registration fee as well as hospitality and administrative expense. The excellent, optional trip to Cape Kennedy will require most of Monday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

SECOND AIR DIVISION FLORIDA REUNION

The 2nd Air Division Florida Reunion will be held Saturday, February 22, 1997 at the Clarion Plaza Hotel. Hotel rates and room reservation procedures are the same as those for the 392nd. Registration desk will be open 7:00 A.M., Feb. 22. A large Hospitality room will be open all day for gathering and mingling.

Continental breakfast will be served from 7:30 to 9:30 in the Hospitality room. Buffet lunch will be served from 11:30 to 1:30 in a reserved section in the Cafe Matisse. There will be a cash bar reception at 6:00 followed by the banquet and program at 7:00 P. M.

GENERAL

For cancellations in the last 72 hours, full or partial refunds will be made if funds are available.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Lawrence Gilbert, chairman, (407) 647 2623
Cliff Peterson, co-chairman, (407) 647 7741
Teddy Egan, treasurer, (407) 644 5439

392nd BOMB GROUP REUNION '97 REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____ Sqdn/Atchd Unit _____
Street Address _____ Phone _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Is spouse attending _____ Spouse's name _____
Guests attending _____ Names _____
Staying at the Clarion Plaza? _____ Date and time of arrival _____

Registration fee \$90, times number of attending \$ _____
(Registration fee includes breakfast and dinner, Sunday and Monday, plus hospitality and administrative expenses)

FOR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS, CALL CLIFF PETERSON, 407 647 7741 OR LAWRENCE GILBERT, 407 647 2623

2ND AIR DIVISION REGISTRATION FORM

If you are joining the 2nd Air Division on Saturday, please complete the following:

Name _____ Spouse's name _____
Guests _____

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner: \$35.00 times number attending \$ _____

Dinner only, \$20.00 times number attending \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT, 392ND PLUS 2AD \$ _____

Make check payable to Teddy Egan and mail to her before January 31, 1997 at 2619 Lafayette Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789.
Telephone: (407) 644 5439.

SEND THIS DIRECT TO THE HOTEL OR CALL THEM. BE SURE TO NOTE 2AD, 392ND BG

PLEASE FILL IN ALL INFORMATION (INCLUDE COMPANY NAME IF APPLICABLE).
A CONFIRMATION WILL BE SENT TO THE ADDRESS BELOW. THANK YOU.

NAME _____
(ALL OCCUPANTS)
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____
ARRIVAL DAY _____ DATE _____ NUMBER OF NIGHTS _____
TYPE OF CREDIT CARD _____ FULL NAME ON CARD _____
CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____
HOLDER'S SIGNATURE _____

SPECIAL REQUESTS _____
(FULLY HANDICAPPED, HANDICAPPED ACC., NON-SMOKING, CONNECTING ROOMS). REQUESTS WILL BE HONORED WHENEVER POSSIBLE

CLARION PLAZA HOTEL-ORLANDO • (407) 352-9700 • Reservations Direct - (407) 354-1703
9700 INTERNATIONAL DRIVE, ORLANDO, FLORIDA 32819-8114 **1-800-627 8258**

SEQUEL TO "LIBERATORS" IS COMPLETED

VICKERS' NEW BOOK FOLLOWS "LIBERATORS FROM WENDLING"

Col Bob Vickers, 578th pilot, in 1977 published *"The Liberators From Wendling"* which is the definitive history of the 392nd.

JIM MARSTELLER, STILL RESEARCHING THE FRIEDRICHSHAFEN MISSION, RETURNS TO THE BLACK FOREST REGION OF GERMANY

The Friedrichshafen mission of March 18, 1944, was one of the 392nd costliest, with 15 a/c and crews lost.

Associate member Jim Marsteller has been intensely interested in this mission, being the nephew and namesake of Everette "Jim" Morris, a member of the Books crew lost on the mission. He has been to Germany twice, accompanied by fellow associate member and researcher Ben Jones.

In late September, 1996, they were in the Black Forest region of Germany, near the town of Hardt, an area where four of the 392nd's aircraft were shot down, victims of a concentrated Luftwaffe fighter attack. The lost crews

Now, after years of exhaustive research of government records, he has authored *"Remembrance of the Missing"*, in which he carefully documents the casualties of the 392nd, both ground and air.

Working from official Missing Air

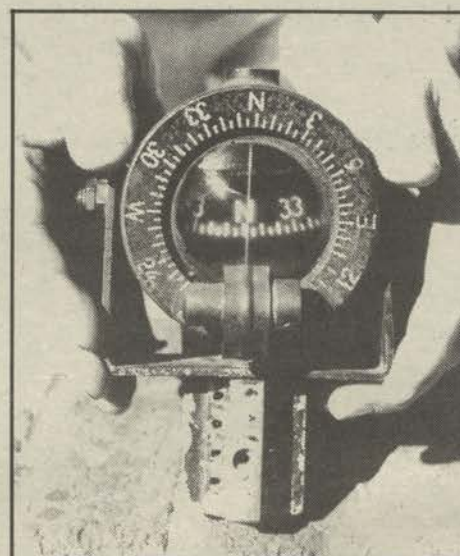
were Books, Rex Johnson, Anderson, and Raschke.

They interviewed many eyewitnesses of the aerial battle. The witnesses remembered it well: "It was a Saturday morning, and the American planes started coming over at 11:00, taking a hour to pass. Then they came back at 3:00, were attacked by nine German fighters, and one by one the bombers fell."

Marsteller reports that the witnesses were afraid of the American bombers, but they hated their Nazi overlords. They looked upon the Americans as their liberators from "the evil ones", as they characterized the Nazis.

Crew Reports, he identifies the Crusaders who were listed as KIA, MIA, and POW, mission by mission.

When available, he reports eyewitness accounts of the actions that culminated in casualties. Somberly, he also reports the burial sites of the KIA.



The compass from the Books a/c, presented by one of the German witnesses to Jim Marsteller.

Even more stark is the statistic that one of every five combat crewmen who flew from Wendling in WWII gave the supreme sacrifice.

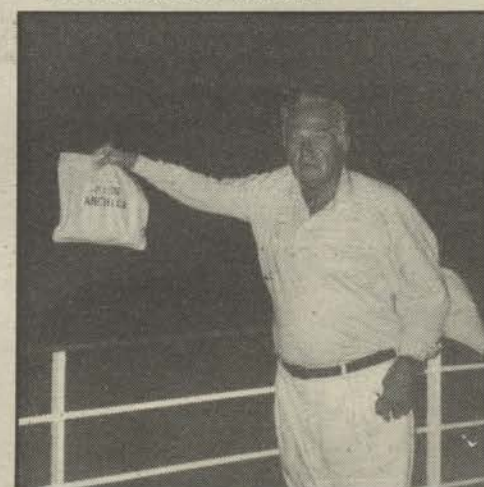
The book is now in the hands of the printer, and should be available for shipment in the very near future. It can be ordered through the 392nd PX for \$35.00, postpaid. See the PX order blank to be found elsewhere in this issue.

JOHN DELACH MAKES A PILGRIMAGE TO THE NORTH SEA

On the night of August 26, 1996, John DeLach, 577th navigator, was aboard an overnight ferry from Harwich, England, to Esbjerg, Denmark. At about 10 o'clock, he estimated that the ship was very close to the last reported position of a/c 42-7503, 577th, which ditched on the return from a mission to Bremen on Nov. 13, 1943. The entire crew perished.

He then dropped overboard a weighted remembrance pouch, containing an Air Medal, the ETO medal, and the WWII Victory Medal, as well as the 392nd prayer and a handwritten note from him and from 392BGMA associate member Phil Bogater, a nephew of the co-pilot of the crew, Nick Bondar.

The stricken a/c was piloted by Frank Marfia, and John DeLach was the navigator of the crew from Alamogordo to Wendling. John flew four missions with the crew and was then transferred to a lead crew. On the next mission, the Marfia crew was lost.



John DeLach commits a remembrance pouch to the North Sea



The remains of the Rex Johnson a/c, taken at the scene by a German witness.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

You can tell where you stand with your dues by the code right after your name on the label of the newsletter. 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 Cecil Rothrock.

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 Cecil Rothrock, 7334 26th Ave., Kenosha, WI 53143

PX ITEMS

Book, "Remembrance of The Missing", by Col Bob Vickers, 578th, \$35.00 postpaid	\$
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 DISCONTINUED	\$ X
Directory, May 1996, \$10 postpaid	\$
Jacket, white nylon, w/392BG and Crusader patches, \$26 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	\$
TOTAL	\$

Send with check to Cecil Rothrock, Treas., 7334 26th Ave., Kenosha, WI 53143

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)

PROFILE

1/Lt Lawrence C. Hildebrand was the navigator on the Raymond Johnson crew in the 576th. He joined the 392nd at Wendling June 26, 1944.

He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1949 with a degree in accounting, and worked for American Hardware (Servistar) in management positions until his retirement in 1974.

His wife's name is Rosemarie, and their address is 508 Sunrise Drive, Naples, FL 34110. They have three daughters and six grandchildren.

PROFILE

Sgt Kenneth Lintz was a turret and gunsight specialist in the 578th. He joined the Group at Alamogordo in 1943.

He served in the artillery of the 40th Infantry Division during the Korean War, mustering out as Sgt 1st Class.

He was in the furniture and antique business, and then worked for the Los Angeles school district in maintenance, retiring in 1982.

He is married to Marion, and they live at 1316 5th St., Los Osos, CA 93402.

PROFILE

2/Lt Allen V. Jones was a bombardier/navigator on the Belitz crew in the 577th. He was shot down June 21, 1944, was POW and was then liberated from Mooseburg.

He took the M.A. degree from Columbia University in 1946, and was a man-

ufacturer's agent 1949-1985.

His wife is Lynn, and they live at 3818 Leland Road, Louisville, KY 40207. They have three children and 5 grandchildren.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Lt Frank Luke shot down his first enemy balloon-1918.

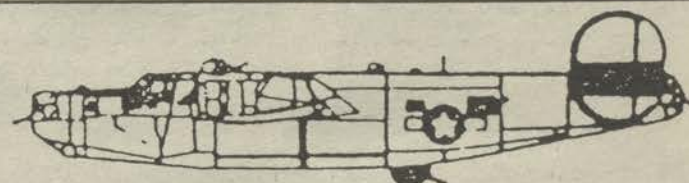
ANTHOLOGY ORDERS LAGGING- VITAL THAT CRUSADERS ORDER NOW TO INSURE PUBLICATION

The 392nd Anthology, several years in the making and with several revisions behind it, went to the printer as a finished product this summer. Bill Braddock, editor, reports that only a few orders came in from the original announcement in the August newsletter. It is now necessary that Crusaders step up and place their orders. In order for the publication to work, some 1000 copies must be sold, pre-printing.

Over 100 authors from among us produced the accounts on missions, crashes, bail-outs, and evasions, as well as the support efforts of the ground crews. "This book should be in the hands of every Crusader child and grandchild, and each Crusader needs to distribute several copies to his family", declared Col Lawrence Gilbert, CEO of the 392BGMA and former Group Commander. "We will soon be gone, and our families deserve to know first-hand from our own mouths our contributions to the long and hard-fought struggle in the ETO in 1943-45," he continued.

It is expected that the book will be ready for delivery early in 1997. They cost \$52.50 plus shipping and handling, and the order blank below is ready for you to fill out and send in.

Don't delay- Send in your order NOW 392nd Bomb Group (H) Anthology: 20th Century Crusaders



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

Many rare photographs also will be featured, as well as many maps and charts of the 392nd's areas of operation. This 9x12-inch hardbound edition is slated to feature a full-color cover of the exciting print, "Liberators from Wendling." To keep this collector's item in perfect shape, it will be printed on high-quality, glossy acid-free paper for superior photo reproduction and longevity, and will have a Smyth-sewn library-quality binding for durability.

Turner Publishing Company, "The Front Line of Military History Books" and one of the foremost publishers of military and specialty titles in the country, expects publication in the winter of 1997.



Clip this handy form and
mail your order today to:

392nd Bomb Group (H) Anthology
Turner Publishing Company
P.O. Box 3101
Paducah, KY 42002-3101

Please enter my order for _____ copies of *The 392nd Bomb Group (H) Anthology* @ \$52.50 each (Special pre-publication price)
Add \$5 shipping and handling for first book, \$3.50 for each additional.
Kentucky residents add 6 percent sales tax
Add \$2.75 for each plastic book protector.
Ship To: (Please print)

Name _____
Address _____
City State Zip _____
Please make all checks payable to Turner Publishing Company

BEESTON VILLAGERS INVITE 392BGMA FRIENDSHIPS

Mike and Carolyn Hyde live in Beeston, a stone's throw from the Ploughshare. They became acquainted with the 392BGMA in 1992 when Walt and Midge Cranston visited them.

In a recent letter to Gil Bambauer, Mike noted that would they be happy to receive visiting Crusaders or their families and would like to form friendships. Mike also wondered about house swapping with American visitors, to enable the Hydies to visit the US and likewise allow for Crusader visitors to stay in the heart of the village.

Mike is 41 and Carolyn is about the same age, and they have two children, Mary and Jonathan, aged 13 and 11.

Their address is High House Farm, The Street, Beeston, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE32 2NF, England. Their telephone number is 01328 700707.

From the 3rd SAD (Watton) Association newsletter:

"To be factual, ours is the neatest issue put out by any 8AF veteran group."

Don't get carried away, there, Wiley.

FOLDED WINGS REPORT (PLEASE REPORT ANY DEATH OF SPOUSE OR ALL 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

392nd BG Memorial Association

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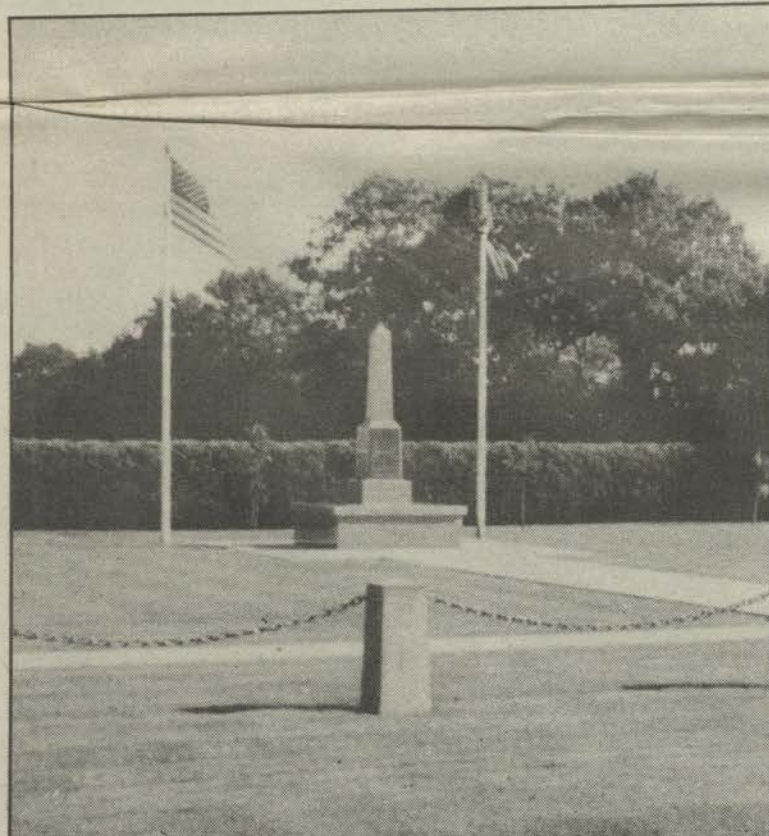
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THE 392nd MEMORIAL AT WENDLING

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

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

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By George Barger, Chaplain

The chapel at Wendling was an imposing building as I remember it, constructed of brown cement and with a low pitch roof. Its furnishings were equally simple: a table suitable for use as an altar or Holy Communion table; a lectern-type pulpit; an electronic organ of some make; and folding chairs. The chapel was usually about 2/3 full for services, and singing was quite hearty. The whole affair could serve as a reminder that simplicity and worship are close kin. The pomp and circumstance of institutional life rests upon an unadorned foundation of commitment to God and His purposes.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Two condemned naval vessels sunk by Army bombing tests-1923.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Maj J. H. Doolittle set new world speed record averaging 294 mph over a 3 kilometer course-1932.

392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n NEWS
 5 N. Columbia St.
 Frankfort, IN 46041

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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

Arthur Crafton, 578, Apr. 15, 1996
 Andrew K. Kunstler, 465 SD
 John Gabris, 578/9, Sept. 9, 1996
 David Flint, 578/9, May 6, 1996
 Robert A. Wilkens, 578, Feb. 3, 1995
 Annabelle C. Garrett, June 7, 1996
 wife of
 Howard L. Garrett, 577/9

PROFILE

S/Sgt Eugene A. Kracker was a waist gunner on the Raczko crew in the 576th. He joined the Group at Wendling in November, 1944.

He worked for Republic Steel for 40 years, retiring as a department superintendent.

His wife is Eugenie, and they live at 1917 Amherst Road, NE, Massillon, OH 44646. They have two children and two grandchildren.

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