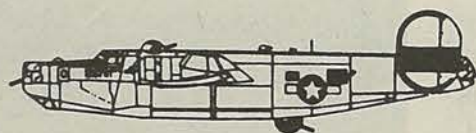


NEWS

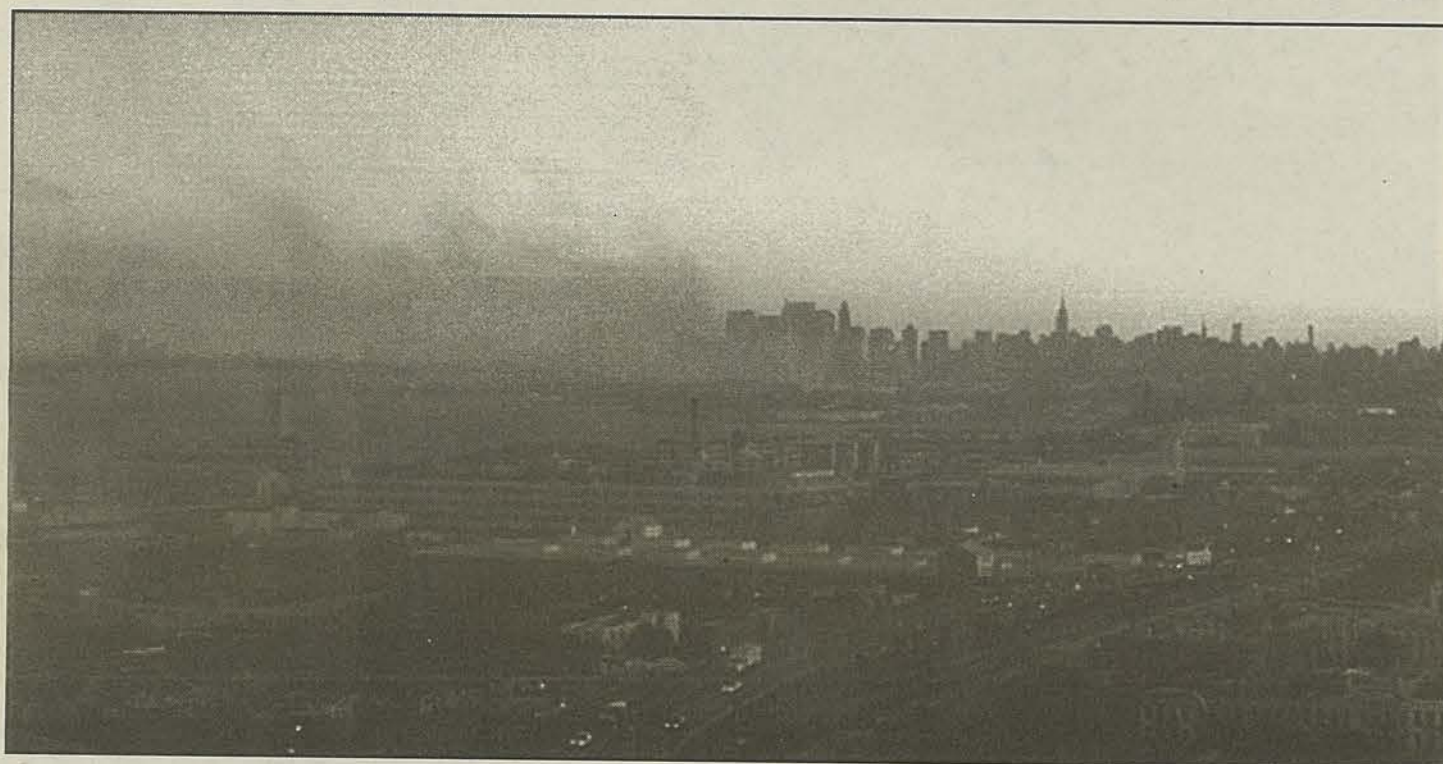


392nd BG Memorial Association

VOLUME 16

NOVEMBER 2001

SEPT. 11, 2001: DEJA VU FOR CRUSADERS



The 392nd had an eyewitness to the terrorist attack on New York City. This picture was taken at 0610 on Sept. 12 by Greg Hatton, from his porch. Greg is a second generation Crusader, son of Sgt. Hyman Hatton, 5'6", who was shot down on the raid on Berlin April 29, 1944. He became POW.

EARNs PURPLE HEART; AWARDED IT 57 YEARS LATER

AF B/G Ben T. Robinson pinned a Purple Heart on S/Sgt Merle J. Hasenfratz in Merle's home town of Perry, OK on Aug. 1, 2001.

He earned it on April 24, 1944 when the 579th's Ellinger crew was shot down by flak over Brussels en route home from a mission to Leipheim. Merle was the tail gunner, and the sole survivor.

In a telephone interview with the NEWS, he told an incredible story: "We took a direct hit in the middle of the a/c, which killed the two waist gunners. The ship broke apart in the middle, and the rear section, with the two dead gunners and me in it, floated down like a falling leaf. I was uninjured except



Merle Hasenfratz
photo Perry (OK) Daily Journal

for a shrapnel wound in my leg."

The Germans were waiting for him and he became POW.

(See Merle's PROFILE elsewhere in this issue.)

PROFILE

S/Sgt Merle J. Hasenfratz was the tail gunner on the Ellinger crew in the 579th. The crew arrived at Wendling in February, 1944.

Hasenfratz was the sole survivor when the Ellinger crew was shot down on April 24, 1944. (See story, this issue, "Earns Purple Heart".

He was liberated from Moosburg POW camp on April 29, 1945; arrived home in Oklahoma in June, and married his childhood sweetheart in August.

He has spent all his post-war years in the Perry, OK area, retiring after 36 years as a machinist for an automotive supply and repair company.

Elenora is the childhood sweetheart, and their address is PO Box 282, Perry, OK 73077. They have two daughters, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

IT'S THE SAME, ONLY DIFFERENT

To us, it was like Dec. 7, 1941, the same shock at the ruthlessness of our attackers against our unpreparedness. It was different because we saw it all, a moving picture on the walls of our living rooms or offices.

Thankfully, the U. S. military was not unprepared as it was in 1941. An effective counterstrike was mounted within days.

We can be thankful for those among us who remained in the Service post WWII, who helped set the tone of the preparedness of the present military.

Following are messages received by the NEWS:

From Bill Braddock, radio operator on the 578th's crew #1, quoting from our Anthology:

"Let not a world wide generation of men and women in their 20's be relegated to killing each other because of the greed, fear, and hate of the world's bullies, and because of the failure of the leaders of the free world to act promptly to isolate these bullies until they are ready to become a part of the free world."

From Mrs. Ari Martin, head teacher of the Beeston Primary School:

"....The whole nation has shared America's grief at the bombing outrage perpetrated on New York and Washington.

My staff joins me in offering our condolences at such a sad time. For those of you who have already dedicated so much of your energy

Continued on Page 2

"OLD SOLDIERS NEVER DIE, THEY JUST FADE AWAY"

These poetic words, coined by Gen Douglas MacArthur, relate especially to the 392nd's original 36 crews. These are the crews that trained in Alamogordo, flew their new B-24H's into Wendling, and joined battle with the Luftwaffe in September of 1943.

Capt Don McCammond, the 392nd's PR Officer, called them in a press release "the old crews". The newer crews held them in great respect for a lot of reasons, not the least of which was that they were blooded. Casualties were high in those early months, with the winter weather, the lack of deep penetration fighter cover, and the relatively low numerical strength of the 8th, which was just beginning to grow.

They were early in the combat crew training pipe-line, and as a consequence are from one to more than five years older than the later crews. Those that are still alive are now almost all past 80 years of age.

Following are stories from two of those Crusaders:

Capt William Cetin

Cetin was the bombardier on the Harrison Cassell crew, which soon became a lead crew, and Cetin, being the 579th's Squadron Bombardier, was the lead bombardier on many missions. Here's his story of the Bremen mission of Nov. 13, 1943:

"Took off at 0715, hit Bremen at 1127. Fighters attacked at 1110 and followed us all the way through the target and out to the coast. Attacking from the rear, the JU88's fired rocket guns and the ME109's would pick on the stragglers.

'A piece of flak, one cubic inch in size, just grazed Lt Colvin's glove and dented the fuselage. Another piece put a hole in the left wing. The tail gunner, Billy Yarborough, claims he shot down a FW 190. The navigator, Lt. Bevan, saw it spin out of control and hit the ground.

'I called Rocky (S/Sgt Cecil T. Rothrock, now deceased) that an ME 109 was at 12 o'clock ahead. I expected to hear the turret guns fire, but there was complete silence. I opened the turret gun door and saw Rocky slumped over his

AUG.11, 1944: ARMANCON, BOMBS ON THE TARGET



Photo courtesy T/Sgt Paul Wright, Group Photo Interpreter

This description of the mission is copied directly from Bob Vickers' 'Liberators From Wendling'. The NEWS thanks Bob.

The target was a German Air Force fuel supply depot, small but vital, that a 3rd Bomb Division force of B-17's had missed the day prior. The mission was first called, then scrubbed, and once more reinstated. Briefing was held at 0430 and 0500 hours for 36 crews, many of whom had to go without breakfast due to the hurry nature of the mission and a 0630 take-off time deadline for the mission from higher headquarters. Take-offs began precisely at 0630 for all crews with the first squadron over the target missing the aiming point due to a malfunctioning bomb-sight. The next squadrons hit the MPI with precision, completely destroying it. A total of 828 250 lb. GP bombs struck the target area. No fighters were seen and flak was very light. Aircraft returned at 1340 hours with no battle damage and an excellent mission in their record.

Editor's note: we have loading records for only the 578th and 579th squadrons, and below are the crews from those squadrons who were on this mission. We regret that we have no record of 576th and 577th's loading lists.

578th: McClennan, Miller, Quinn, Johnson, Jones, Stephens, Sturm, Shelley, Eggleston.

579th: Caldwell, PFF, Dep Grp Lead; Pardue, Sqdn Lead; Sewell, McMillen, Neundorf, Koza, Porter, Wick, Bell, Meehan.

guns, with his oxygen mask off his face. The oxygen line had been cut by flak. We put a bail-out bottle on Rocky's face and he came to. That was not the last of the oxygen troubles; Bevan was on the verge of passing out, and then things turned rosy and I was passing out. We made it by using bail-out bottles and hooking onto the flight deck's line, which was still intact.

Sure was a madhouse up in the nose for about an hour.

"The temperature was minus 45 degrees. The Group lost 6 a/c on this mission. Major Grey landed his plane with only one engine, quite a feat."

S/Sgt (later Lt/Col) Richard H. Hoffman

Hoffman was the ball turret gunner on the Nicholson crew in the

579th.

"We were crew #9-1, which means that we were the first crew in the 579th. We attended AFFSAT at Orlando (*editor's note: Army Air Forces School of Applied Tactics. He knows this horrific acronym because he was once there in the base complement*)

The crew was shot down on their

Continued on Page 7

392BGMA ELECTRONIC DIRECTORY

The Electronic Directory is a regular feature in the NEWS; if you want to be listed please contact the editor by mail at 2201 Redbud Blvd., Frankfort, IN 46041, or at the E-mail or Fax addresses listed below.

E-MAIL

8AF Museum, Savannah
Anstey, Milton P.
Barger, George
Barber, Ernie **NEW CHANGE**
Barnard, Mary Beth
Barnes, Joe
Barry, Bill
Bartsch, Arlo
Books, Bob
Braddock, Bill
Canonne, Philippe
Case, Bill
Damerst, William A.
Dewez, Luc
DuBois, Phyllis
Ebersole, Howard ("Ebe")
Ehrlich, Lee D.
Eller, Melvin
Elston, Robert C.
Garrett, Howard
Gilbert, John
Gilbert, Lawrence
Goar, Jim
Greene, David
Grimm, Roy
Gross, Earl
Hart, Wildrick
Hawkins, Ian
Hyde, Mike
Jones, Ben
Jones, Mervyn
Long, William
Lory, Bob
McGuire, Bill, Jr.
Marcelli, Anthony F.
Matelski, Lorn W.
Marsteller, Jim
Michel, George
Micksch, Joe
Peterson, Cliff and Mary (**Change**)
Popek, Ed
Odierno, Frank
Onstot, Perry
Polking, Dette
Roberts, Keith
Rothrock, Mary
Russell, Carroll E.
Sabourin, Roland
Satterly, Everett F.
Stockman, Harry
Szenegeto, Joe **CORRECTION**
Thomas, J. Fred
Thomason, Henriette
Tuchel, Robert H.
Tyler, Bob
Vassey, Emuel
Weed, Oscar and Toni
Westbrook, Joe
Zyborst, Stanley

Mighty8cur@aol.com
mikeanstey@earthlink.net
GWBARGER@email.msn.com
ebarber392bg@nu-z.net
blackjag@gateway.net
jabarnes@netconx.net
purchart@earthlink.net
Albas@aol.com
bob@b24.net
wabrad33@juno.com
p.cannone@wanadoo.fr
Wease22@aol.com
Waring248@Juno.com
Luc.Dewez@skynet.BE
Dubois@netmatters.co.uk
hebersole@webtv.net
RKSN600@aol.com
hmc5@psu.edu
Rewhelston@aol.com
havepick@email.msn.com
adrian@gilberta.freemove.co.uk
lg392@msn.com
goar@netusa1.net
dg392@aol.com
rgrimm@attglobal.net
EGB880@aol.com
bandsaw@penn.com
ian@hawkins13ebw.fsnet.co.uk
B24MJH@aol.com
limeybj@frontiernet.net
MervynJones@btinternet.com
longtimelong@email.msn.com
Rboblory@Gateway.Net
A43fool@aol.com
t_uomo@juno.com
lorn-n-duste@elknet.net
jimbo@cyberia.com
gmichel@milwpc.com
Joe@micksch.com
marcliff@cfl.rr.com
empopek@att.net
Tjd03@usadatanet.net
ponstot@aol.com
WarrenDett@aol.com
k.e.robby@juno.com
m.rothrock@worldnet.att.net
crew@mounet.com
dpoobah@accessbee.com
EISATT@AOL.COM
harry1922@msn.com
baksheesh@onecom.com
Bomberb24@aol.com
Henriette@pronet.net
rhtuchel@soltec.net
Bobalice2@Prodigy.net
evassey@acadia.net
anoweed@bellsouth.net
JWESTBR432@aol.com
104614.626@compuserve.com

WEBSITE

392 BGMA
8AF Museum, Savannah

www.b24.net
www.mighty8thmuseum.com

392BGMA ELECTRONIC DIRECTORY (CONT)

FAX

8AF Museum, Savannah	912 748 0209
Gilbert, Lawrence	407 647 7402
Goar, Jim	765 654 4457 or 765 654 4253
Greene, David	631 205 1301
Gross, Earl	310 652 9307
Jones, Mervyn	+44 (0) 1328 701 262
Eller, Mel	717 238 9202
Ehrlich, Lee D.	773 774 4311
Onstot, Perry	816 363 7054
Thomas, J. Fred	714 536 2184

THE GREAT WENDLING BICYCLE RACE



ONE MAN'S SHINING HOUR

By Lawrence G. Gilbert

The momentous occasion was the 200th mission celebration when our Group was stood down from combat operations to mark the event. Among the various activities scheduled for the day was a bicycle race around the perimeter/taxiway surrounding the flying field, a distance of about three miles.

This person, risking ridicule from all quarters, decided the night before to join the field of racers hoping to last perhaps half way around the course. To insure I would make it even that far, I enlisted the help of Harold Bandelier, the CO's driver, in a scheme that probably wouldn't fly with the umpire's board of review in any event. Bandelier would obtain a 6x6 truck, loiter at the far side of the field, then when the cyclists came by, pull out and join the column. I would fall in behind the truck and draft in the quieter air, Daytona style.

When Bandy appeared on schedule at the rendezvous point, I had advanced from tail-end Charlie of the group of twenty or so, to fifth or sixth place. I started suffering delusions that maybe I had a faint chance to win, place, or show. I waved Bandy off to avoid any possible protests being filed with the grievance committee. End of story, almost...I finally overtook the leader, a young, lean, lithe Lieutenant, the armament officer of the 578th or 579th squadron and won by several meters. First prize was two choice bottles of Scotch which I shared with my cheering section at the club that evening.

The final result of the race could be verified by our Wing Commander Maj Gen Leon Johnson, and our Group Commander Col Lorin Johnson who followed the group of bicyclists around the course in their staff car. Sadly both officers are no longer with us. Harold Bandelier is still very much alive and well, enjoying the good life of Florida and shuffleboard in the winter, summers in Indiana with the children and grandchildren.

TERRORIST ATTACK: CONTINUED FROM P.1

to the procurement of peace, it is doubly tragic to see world stability to devastatingly undermined.

"Please know that you are in our thoughts."

From Ted Inman, Director of the American Air Museum at Duxford:

"On behalf of all of us at the American Air Museum in Britain and the Imperial Air Museum at Duxford, I write to offer you our deepest sympathy and support following the terrible attacks on your country on Tuesday, September 11.

"Our thoughts are with the injured and the families of those killed, and with all the American people."

From Doug and Celia Willies, Sheringham, Norfolk:

"We have been appalled by the outrageous attack in the U.S. and we just want to express our sincere sadness and let you know that our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

"Together we must again defend our freedom and destroy terrorism which is threatening to destroy the civilised world."

From Luc Dewez, Belgium:

"Our thoughts are with you, your families and relatives.

"Sophie and I feel deeply concerned for the safety of all our friends in the USA.

"We know when it started. Who knows where the world is going now. Marie will be three years old tomorrow and it's depressing to see that the beast was sleeping somewhere, trying the set the world on fire again."

From Andrew Sullivan in the London Times, forwarded to the NEWS by Roland Sabourin, 578th pilot:

A BRITISH VIEW OF THE US/BIN LADEN AFFAIR.

No eloquence can match the impact of their evil. Americans' critical weakness in the past decades has been their reluctance to shed blood for their goals. They believed they could construct a huge military and never have it fight real wars and suffer real casualties. They thought they could alter history and advance their

interests from the air alone.

With the exception of the Gulf War, which they hesitated to finish, they have shrunk from the fight. When the current enemy struck again and again throughout the 90's, they responded without real credibility, struck back without real endurance, enraged the terrorists without truly hurting them. We are now living with the consequences of that appeasement, and the refusal to challenge Americans beyond what the polls said they already wanted to do. Now America has been bloodied as it has never been bloodied before. I would be a fool to predict what happens next, but it will not be a surgical strike. It will not be a gesture.

It is clear that there is no way that the United States can achieve its goals without the cooperation of many other states - an alliance as deep and as broad as that which won the Gulf War. It is also clear that this cannot be done with air power alone. As in 1941, the neglect of the military and the parsimony of its financing must now not merely be ended but reversed. We may see the biggest defense build-up since the early 1880's - and not just in weaponry, but in manpower.

It is also quite clear that the U. S. military presence in the Middle East must be ramped up, its intelligence overhauled, its vigilance heightened. In some ways, Bush has already assembled the ideal team for such a task: Powell for the diplomatic dance, Rumsfeld for the deep reforms he will now have the opportunity to enact, Cheney as his most trusted aide in what has become to all intents and purposes a war cabinet. The terrorists have done the rest. The middle part of the country - the great red zone that voted for Bush - is clearly ready for war. The decadent Left in its enclaves on the coasts is not dead - and may well mount what amounts to a fifth column. But by striking at the heart of New York City the terrorists ensured that at least one deep segment of the country ill-disposed toward the new president is now the most

passionate in his defense. Anyone who has ever tried to get one over on a New Yorker knows what I mean. The demons who started this have no idea about the kind of people they have taken on.

But what the terrorists are counting on is that Americans will not have the stomach for the long haul. They clearly know that the coming retaliation will not be the end but the beginning. And when terrorists strike back again, they have let us know that the results could make the assault on the World Trade Center look puny. They are banking that the Americans will then cave. They have seen a great country quarrel to the edge of constitutional crisis over a razor-close presidential election. They have seen it respond to real threats in the last few years with squeamish restraint or surgical strikes. They have seen that, as Israel has been pounded by the same murderous thugs, the United States has responded with equanimity. They have seen a great nation at the height of its power obsessed for a whole summer over a missing intern and a randy Congressman.

They have good reason to believe that this country is soft, that it has no appetite for the war that has now begun. They have gambled that in response to unprecedented terror, the Americans will abandon Israel to the barbarians who would annihilate every Jew on the planet, and trade away their freedom for a respite from terror in their own land.

We cannot foresee the future. But we know the past. And that past tells us that these people who destroyed the heart of New York City have made a terrible mistake. This country is at its heart a peaceful one. It has done more to help the world than any other actor in world history. It saved the world from the two greatest evils of the last century: Nazism and Soviet Communism. It responded to its victories in the last war by pouring aid into Europe and Japan. In the Middle East, America has ensured that the last hope of the Jewish people is not extinguished and has

given more aid to Egypt than to any other country. It risked its own people to save the Middle East from the pseudo-Hitler in Baghdad. America need not have done any of this. Its world hegemony has been less violent and less imperial than any other comparable power in history. In the depths of its soul, it wants its dream to itself, to be left alone, to prosper among others, and to welcome them to the freedom that America has helped secure.

But whenever Americans have been challenged, they have risen to the task. In some awful way, these evil thugs may have done us a favor. America may have woken up forever. The rage that will follow from this grief and shock may be deeper and greater than anyone can now imagine. Think of what the United States did to the enemy that bombed Pearl Harbor. Now recall that American power in the world is all but unchallenged by any other state. Recall that America has never been wealthier, and is at the end of one of the biggest booms in its history.

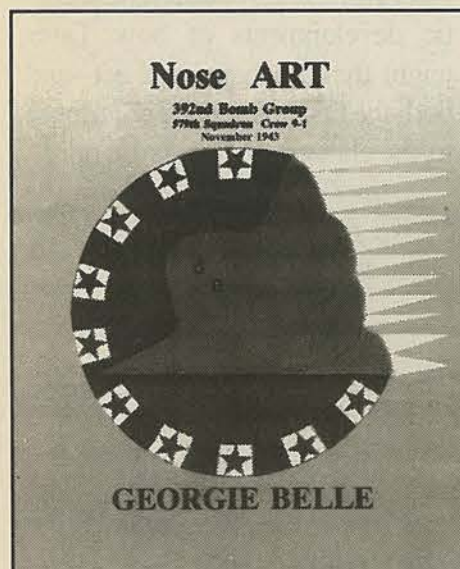
Now consider the extent of this wound - the greatest civilian casualties since the Civil War, an assault not just on Americans but on the meaning of America itself. When you take a step back, it is hard not to believe that we are now in the quiet moment before the whirlwind. Americans will recover their dead, and they will mourn them, and then they will get down to business.

Their sadness will be mingled with an anger that will make the hatred of these evil fanatics seem mild. I am reminded of a great American poem written by Herman Melville after the death of Abraham Lincoln, the second founder of the country:

"There is sobbing of the strong,
And a pall upon the land;
But the People in their weeping
Bare the iron hand:
Beware the People weeping
When they bare the iron hand."

second mission, over Munster on November 5, 1943.

Their ship had distinctive nose art, shown below.



It was designed by the pilot, 1/Lt William P. Nicholson, who wanted to create something more original than the standard pin-up girl. The name Georgie Belle was in honor of a lady from Georgia.

Hoffman said, "The German anti-aircraft gunners must have thought the emblem was a bull's eye, because that's where the AA shell hit. It blew off the emblem along with the entire nose wheel assembly. The blast cut most of the electrical and hydraulic systems, and the control pedals disappeared from under the pilot and co-pilot's feet. Throttle and supercharger control handles were cut off inside the console.

"The crew bailed out and survived the war as POWs. The officers were held in Stalag Luft III and the enlisted men were placed in the

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infamous Stalag 17 of movie fame."

(See *PX ITEMS*, this issue, for information on how to obtain Dick's book)

PROFILE

S/Sgt (later Major) Ernest G. Wiener was in Headquarters, S-2. He joined at Alamogordo in early 1943. A native of Czechoslovakia, he obtained his U. S. citizenship at Alamogordo before we left for overseas.

He joined the U. S. Army Reserves in 1946 as Captain, was promoted to Major in 1957 and was retired in December 1963.

Post-war: 1946-1949, Dept. of Defense, civilian employee in Berlin (Gen Lucius D. Clay's Hq). 1949-1953, U. S. Information Agency in Washington, Bonn, Germany, and Vienna, Austria; U. S. Embassy, Moscow; U. S. Embassy, Brasilia, Brazil. 1970-1980, Director of Public Relations, International Telephone and Telegraph Co. in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

After retiring, he joined the Institute for Retired Professionals at the University of Miami and has been with them ever since.

He is married to Margaret, and they live at 251 Crandon Blvd, Apt. 634, Key Biscayne,

FL 33149-1576. They have four children and seven grandchildren.

(See story, "How the 392nd Changed My Life", November 2001 392BGMA NEWS.)

PROFILE

Harry Stockman was an early joiner, at Biggs Field in April 1943. He was in the 578th armament section.

His civilian career was in the oil business. He started with the obligatory stint as a "roughneck" and later was a driller and drilling foreman and consultant. He worked in the oil fields of Oklahoma, Kansas,

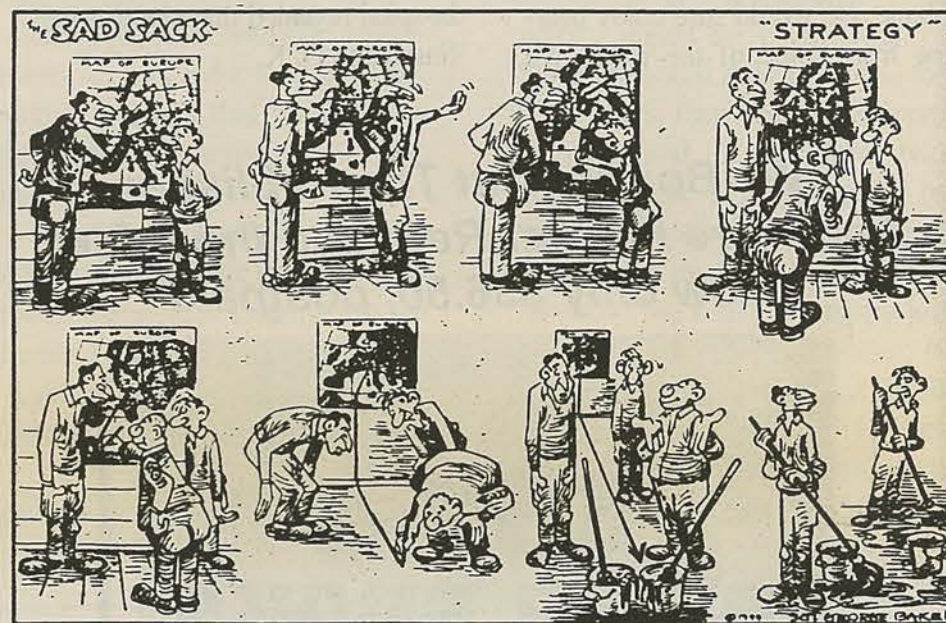
Wyoming, Texas, Michigan, Alaska, and offshore Louisiana.

Harry says oil field workers are still called "roughnecks". "The older generation was composed of hard drinkers and brawlers, but people in my generation are good respectable people", he explained.

His wife is Tillie, and they live at 108 Basin Street, Chickasa, OK 73018. They have two daughters and one son, and two grandchildren.

Logo seen on the back of a motorcyclist: IF YOU CAN SEE THIS, THE WIFE FELL OFF.

THE SERVICES ARE AGAIN LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD STRATEGISTS



Courtesy the late Capt Charles Taylor, 576/8 Ass't Engineering Officer

PX ITEMS

Anthology, "20 th Century Crusaders, \$36.50 postpaid.	\$
Book, "Remembrance of the Missing", by Col. Bob Vickers, \$35.00 postpaid.	\$
Book, "392 nd War Stories", by Col. Myron Keilman, \$21.50 postpaid.	\$
Book, "The Liberators From Wendling", by Col. Bob Vickers, \$28.00 postpaid.	\$
Book, "Crew Dog", by Maj. John Matt, 579 th , \$28.95 postpaid.	\$
Book, "Country Boy Combat Bomber Pilot", by Col. Bob Tays, \$13.50 postpaid.	\$
Book, "My Combat Diary", by Walt Cranson, \$13.50 postpaid.	\$
Cap. black, 392 nd Bomb Group w/gold braid, summer, \$10.50 postpaid.	\$
Cap. black, 392 nd Bomb Group w/gold braid, winter, \$10.50 postpaid.	\$
Directory, \$10.00 postpaid (ALL DIRECTORIES ARE NOW WITH CURRENT DATA)	\$
Jacket, white nylon, w/ 392 Bomb Group and Crusader patches, \$29.00 postpaid	\$
(Circle size wanted) M L XL XXL	\$
Patch, 392 nd Bomb Group logo, \$1.50 postpaid.	\$
Print, "The Flying Crusader", reduced to \$16.50 postpaid.	\$
Video, 392 nd 's memorabilia photos, \$17.50 postpaid.	\$
Total (Send with check to Charles Dye, 4949 San Pedro NE, #87, Albuquerque, NM 87109).	\$

Book, "After The Liberators, A Father's Last Mission, A Son's Lifelong Journey", by Bill McGuire, son of 579th navigator Bill McGuire Sr., KIA Friedrichshafen mission.
Order direct from publisher, Parkway Publishers: PO Box 3678, Boone, NC 28607, \$20.95 postpaid (Mention 392BGMA newsletter in your letter and you can take 10% off the total bill)

Book, "Joey, Joe, and Joseph" by William A. Damerst, 576th navigator.
Order direct from publisher, Publish America: PO Box 151, Frederick, MD 21705-0151, \$19.95 postpaid

Book, "Stalag 17B, Prisoner of War", by L/C (USAF, Ret) Richard H. Hoffman, ball turret gunner, 579th.
Order from publisher, Xlibris Corp. phone 888 795 4274, or on line at www.xlibris.com/html/bookstores. Also at Amazon.com. No cost figures furnished.

Video, from Albuquerque Reunion Symposium, "The Early Days", \$17.50 postpaid
Video, Symposium above, "The Ground Support Teams Prepare For A Mission", \$17.50 postpaid
Video, Symposium above, "The Tough Missions, Pt. 1: Bremen, Keil, Gotha, Friedrichshafen both parts \$27.50 pp
Video, Symposium above, "Tough Missions, Pt. 2: Politz, Berlin, Bernberg, Bingen, Wesel, both parts \$27.50 pp
Video, Symposium above, general scenes from the reunion, 2 parts, \$27.50 postpaid
Order videos direct from Dan McGovern productions, 5307 Cantante, Laguna Hills, CA 92653

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR DUES STATUS IT'S TIME TO SEND IN YOUR 2002 MEMBERSHIP DUES

We don't send out dues notices, so you can help the news editor and the Treasurer if you will sit down right now and send in your 2002 dues. If you are paid ahead, you can check it by the code right after your name on the label of the newsletter. If it is LM (for Life Membership) or 02 or higher, you're paid up. If Frnd is after your name, you're our guest. If there is an error, contact Charles Dye.

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 and send it now!

Name _____ Ground ☐ Air ☐ Sqdn _____ Assoc ☐

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Dues for 2002, \$12

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Age 61-65 \$120 ☐

Age 66-70 \$96 ☐

Age 71 and over \$78 ☐

Hardship Waiver ☐

Send with check to Charles Dye, 4949 San Pedro NE, #87, Albuquerque, NM 87109

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PERSONALS

From Burrell Ellison, 576th pilot:
 "My Colt pistol was stolen and I would like to replace it. I carried this pistol on thirty-three missions over enemy territory. It was in almost new condition, having been fired a few times only. I will gladly pay the going price for another."

Contact Burrell at 601 Marion Sims Drive, Lancaster, SC 29720, phone 803 283 3043.

From Erma Popek:

"Ed (577th pilot) is in the nursing center here. His Parkinson's has gotten to the place that he cannot transfer himself and my back finally gave out. He reads but his voice will not allow him to talk on the phone. He would sure enjoy hearing from some of the guys. We

both miss seeing everyone at the meetings but he has been in a wheelchair for over two years."

505 Scott Drive, Raymore, MO 64083-9112, phone 816 331 2308, e-mail empopek@att.net.

From Don Larrick on Oct. 8:

"My mother, Birdie Schmidt Larrick, had a stroke. She's out of intensive care, and will be transferred to therapy soon. Unfortunately she will miss the reunion in Irving. Cards or notes sent to her home address will get to her."

243 Deer Cross Lane, Powell, OH 43065-8650.

Phone calls later from Jim Goar and Col Gilbert to Birdie in the hospital revealed that she was getting along O. K.

**We Bought Out The Publisher
 And Have Further Reduced the Price:
 Now only \$36.50, postpaid**



All copies will be autographed by Col. Lawrence G. Gilbert, our final Commander.

Order from the PX order blank contained in this newsletter.

Over 100 authors, including Ian Hawkins and Ernie Barber, have contributed to this anthology, edited by Bill and Marge Braddock. 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.

BOOK REVIEW

Bill Damerst, navigator of the Tennie Peterson crew in the 576th and Professor Emeritus of English at Penn State University, has published a novel, "Joey, Joe, and Joseph".

Although there is little about the 392nd in the book, Crusaders will relate to it.

The book is about a nightmare-haunted WW II flyer, J. S. Tate ("Tater"), who, back home on the eve of V-E Day after being honorably discharged, is upset and bitter because he believes that while he was in combat overseas those he had been close to had betrayed

him. Bill calls his unique book a "novel(s)" because it is actually three stories--three different, realistic developments of how Tater might think, behave, and act--and both the first and second contribute to the climatic ending in the third.

See the PX ITEMS feature in the NEWS for information on how to order the book.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

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

AIR ANNIVERSARY

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

392nd Bomb Group Leather Patches



Ben Jones has undertaken the task of supplying the 392BGMA with the leather Crusader patches that started appearing on the Group's A-2 jackets in 1944.

Ben says: These patches are handpainted on genuine fine leather to meet the specifications of WWII. As the war progressed, various hand painted Group patches started appearing on A-2 jackets. As there was no standard size among the various Groups, Hq. USAAF authorized the use of a 5" circular leather patch on which the unit logo could be painted.

The Crusader is drawn on a USAAF-approved 5" circular leather patch. Each patch is unique with no two being identical, as with mass-produced copies. You can choose between a distressed look or a freshly painted look.

The logo is painted on the leather, then coated with a sealant that protects it. Like any leather, it is suggested that it not get wet.

The cost is \$20 plus shipping and handling.

Ben says also that there will soon be available polo shirts with the Crusader emblem.

So if you're interested, contact Ben Jones at 1000F Circle Drive, Dover, DE 19901, or e-mail him at limeybj@frontiernet.net.

Let him know if you want the "distressed" or "freshly painted" look.

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

HOW THE 392ND BOMB GROUP CHANGED MY LIFE

By Ernest G. Wiener

(Editor's note: Most of us joined the Service from U.S. schools, factories, farms, or offices. After the war, some of us stayed in the Service, but most of returned to those same U.S. locales and picked up where we left off. Read the story of a Crusader who after the war traveled to many places, was a part of many important things, and spoke many languages. Two very important things happened to me while I was a member of the 392nd: I became a U. S. citizen and I got married. I am still in touch with two of my buddies from those days: Paul Wright and Bill Wall.

I came to the U. S. in March 1940 on a college scholarship from my native Czechoslovakia. A week after I left, the Nazis stopped all travel abroad by Czech citizens.

I attended a small Methodist school in Baldwin City, Kansas, graduating in the summer of 1942. I enlisted in the Army and went through the usual round-peg-in-a-square hole assignment procedure, with way stations at Camp Lee,

VA, and Miami Beach, FL. I finally ended up in Alamogordo, assigned to the 392nd.

Seeing from my record that I spoke several languages, Major Fritsche, the Group adjutant, sent me to S-2 to work for Major Percy Caley.

Shortly before we left for overseas, Major Fritsche discovered that I was not an American citizen. Some government red tape was circumnavigated, and I was sworn in as a U. S. citizen by a judge in Alamogordo. It turned out that the judge was a friend of our Group Commander, Col Rendle.

After we arrived at Wendling, on my first pass I visited a cousin of mine who had come to England on a similar basis as I had come to the States. A year later I married her best friend, an English girl. Today we are still happily married.

After V-E Day I learned that the Group was returning to the U. S. for re-deployment to the Pacific Theater. With my new English bride and no news of my family in Czechoslovakia, I needed to find a

way not to leave Europe. I was in great luck! Major Fritsche had just received an inquiry from 8AF Hq asking for multi-lingual personnel and I was transferred to High Wycombe, 8AF Hq.

My new duty was to be interpreter for Col Harry G. Armstrong on a visit to Germany to interview former Luftwaffe personnel and visit technical locations. This was only three months after the war with Germany ended.

My assignment with then B/G Armstrong ended in late 1945, and I did not realize until the eighties that our mission was to obtain the services of German rocket scientists for the U. S.

During this time with side assignments such as a visit to Czechoslovakia I learned that most of my family did not survive the German occupation.

General Armstrong helped me obtain my discharge and a job with the Department of Defense on Gen Lucius D. Clay's staff in Berlin.

I stayed in that and similar jobs in Germany for the next several years.



Ernest Wiener and wife Margaret in Berlin in 1947

I was joined by my wife and son who was born in England. We stayed on in Europe until 1950 when I joined the U. S. Dept. of State. I worked in Washington for three years, then back in Western Germany and Austria. After two years with the U. S. delegation to the United Nations in New York, I served with the U. S. Embassy in Moscow. My final government job was with the U. S. Embassy in Brasilia. After Moscow, Brasil seemed to us a great place to live! Since I was eligible for retirement from the U. S. government, I accepted a job as public relations director for the International Telephone and Telegraph Company in Rio De Janeiro, where we stayed for the next ten years, and I added Brazilian to my other foreign languages.

In 1980 I retired completely and moved to Key Biscayne, FL, not far from the area where I took my basic training in 1943.

(See also PROFILE, this issue)

AIR ANNIVERSARY

9th AF established in Middle East-1942.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

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

AIR ANNIVERSARY

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

PROPOSED EXHIBIT ON QUEEN MARY



Most Crusaders know that the liner Queen Mary, the ship that carried the ground echelon to and from England in WWII, is moored at Long Beach, CA, and is a tourist attraction. Her managers are revamping her exhibits, and J. Fred Thomas in California and Greg Hatton in New York City have collaborated with their design people. The photos in the montage shown above all came from the 392BGMA's extensive archives. In front center is a scene from Glenn Miller's visit to Wendling, showing Miller with then Lt Col Lawrence Gilbert, Air Executive; Col Lorin Johnson, Commander, and Capt Emmett Fore, Special-Services Officer.

NEWS

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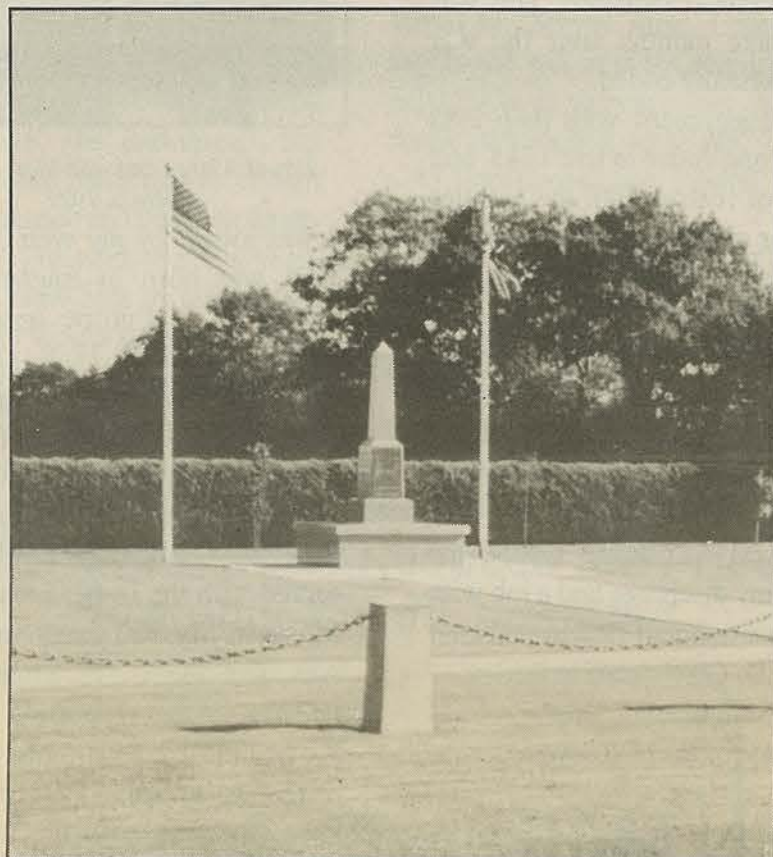
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THE 392nd MEMORIAL AT WENDLING

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, Ph. D

Some of the comment that the world is forever changed since Sept. 11th seems to miss the point. The world is no different than it ever was; it is our apprehension of it that has changed. During the past several decades much of the world has been torn by struggle, strife, and danger. That's the normal state of things. We have been able to ignore much of this in our favored land. Now it has become a part of our world, too. But, need evokes greatness. That isn't panache; it is the center of our humanity.

Folded Wings

Alan B. Clarke, 576, Aug. 19, 2001
Frank Hostetter, 579, Aug. 31, 2001
James J. McNicholas, March, 2001

AIR ANNIVERSARY
USAF retired last B-29 Superfortress from service-1964.

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

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

AIR ANNIVERSARY
Last patrol flown by American Air Service over enemy lines-1918.

"I'm a little uneasy about being up the creek without a paddle", said one Crusader to another. Replied the other, "Don't worry, it's when you're down the creek without a paddle that you're in trouble."

392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n NEWS
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Frankfort, IN 46041

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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, 2201 Redbud Blvd., Frankfort, IN 46041.

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