

NEWS



392nd BG Memorial Association

VOLUME 22

November, 2007

MEMORIAL FUND CHALLENGE IS MET: NET \$23,569.25

REMEMBRANCE DAY AT THE WENDLING MEMORIAL WAS WELL ATTENDED

Mervyn Jones, through son Ben, sent us a report of the ceremonies. This year was unusual as Remembrance Sunday actually fell on the original WWI Armistice Day of the 11th. The service was very well attended with a large turnout by the locals.



The flags are at half mast during the two minute observed silence. Local girls of the Beeston Brownies also attended the service. (Brownies are the junior section of the Girl Guides.) As can be seen, the villagers of Beeston, young and old, still honor the sacrifices made by the men of the 392nd.

Mervyn in his message sent his Best Christmas message to all the Crusaders and their families.

83 DONORS RESPOND TO CARROLL CHEEK'S \$10,000 CHALLENGE GIFT

The Trustees of the Wendling Memorial Fund in England reported that the income from the fund has become inadequate for proper maintenance of the Memorial. In response, Vice-president for Memorials Carroll Cheek proposed his challenge gift, and at the Kalamazoo meeting of the Association last July a fund drive was authorized. The answer is emblazoned at the heading of this article.

Also discussed at the July meeting was the necessity of endowing our second Memorial, the 392nd web site. After due deliberation it was decided to table the web site effort in favor of the Wendling Memorial. Now that the Wendling Memorial needs have been met, no doubt the web site funding will be a topic of discussion at the next meeting of the Association at the Mighty Eighth AF Museum in Savannah next August 3-8.

Memorial Fund Donors

Carroll Cheek
pilot, 578th sqdn
Bob Vickers
578th "Dugan's Gang"
Wallace F. Blackburn
John E. Ross crew
Gilbert R. Bambauer
Ground crew
Oak Mackey
Jack Clarke crew
Stanley C. Zybort
James Beatty crew
Jim Goar

For Col Gilbert, Carroll Cheek,
Ernie Barber, and Bob Lane:
Like stricken B-24's, hit but
still fighting
Anne and David Brooks
Second Generation
Harris Albright
John E. Ross crew

George Barger
Dave Scott crew
Wesley Schafer
Schafer crew
C. Wayne Griffith
Korea War vet
Max Desonne
Donald Monroe crew
Jack Bilz
Bilz crew
John R. Becker
Becker crew
Kenneth Q. Paddock
Group Operations Staff
Manny Abrams
Neundorf crew
Samuel Poppel
Haffermehl crew
Jack Teufel
1825th Ordnance Co
David A. Greene
Wick crew

Continued on page 2

JOHN CONRAD

John Conrad, 578/9 mickey navigator and past president of 2AD Association, died at his home town of Lexington, KY., Oct. 21, 2007. John was also the 392nd's vice-president for 2ADA affairs for many years.



John Conrad

In civilian life he was an insurance company executive. He was an innovator and was at the cutting edge of company health insurance plans before he

retired in 1985.

John filled all the conditions of the complete Southern gentleman, not the least of which was a polite demeanor and the possessor of a discerning taste in whisky. Maker's Mark was the libation of his choice.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

B-17's bomb shipping near Philippines in first bombing mission of war-Dec. 9, 1941

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Mass flight of 20 bombers completed flight from Calif to Fla in 21 hours 50 minutes-Dec. 2, 1935

392BGMA ELECTRONIC DIRECTORY CHANGES

We'll print the entire Electronic Directory in the first issue of the year, and in ensuing issues we will print changes as they are reported to us. If you need an Electronic Directory now, let me know- Editor.

Buccigrossi, David
Allen McGarry Cassell
Dye, Charles
Griffith, C. Wayne
Mackelfresh, John T.
Mitchell, Donald
Rosenberg, John
Rothrock, Mary
Sassaman, Michael K.
Sooy, Bruce
Weed, Oscar and Toni

mtnwind@san.rr.com
mcassell@moc.edu
CHDye62620@comcast.net
cwgriffith@comcast.net
jtommack@embarqmail.com
mitchb24@juno.com
johnrb24@milwol.com
mrothrock@wi.rr.com
MSASSAMAN@NYCAP.RR.Com
b50plt@comcast.net
anoweed@cfl.rr.com

Continued from page 1

Herman S. Canfield
577th Operations clerk
Allen P. Holtman
M/Sgt USAF Ret, Friend

James E. Reynolds
Warren Van Pelt
Joyce crew
Weems E. Estelle
Hq., Electronic Countermeasures,
Combat Observer
Frances Nagle
Olson, Walker crews
Annell Ross Vickers
Vickers crew
Roy H. Grimm
Twining crew
Murray Milrod
392nd BG

Willard Pennington
577th Executive Officer
Janet Schoolmaster Engelmann
C. F. Schoolmaster, 578th Opns.
Officer and 577th Commander
Florence W. Rodgers
Memory of Fred V. Rodgers
Joseph M. Barnes
Bilz crew
Rudolph Nero
Henry Porter crew
Marvin Graham
Hammond crew
Betty J. LeBleu
Memory of Leon W. LeBleu,
Cliff Edwards crew
Richard J. Harer

Caldwell crew
Edward Shapley
Mechanic, ground
Florence Anundson
Memory of Philip Anundson,
pilot, "Monotonous Maggie"
Charles E. Dye
1825th Ordnance Co.
Frank A. Gillett
Louis M. Stephens
578th Sqdn
Terry Haney
Memory of T/Sgt P. W. Haney,
KIA 12-2-44
Olen F. Levell, Jr.
Levell crew
Mrs. Mickey McMillan
Spouse of Hubert L. McMillan,
McMillan crew
Lee D. Ehrlich
Gill crew
Everett F. Satterly
Sibley crew
Andy Mayer
son of Randall S. Mayer, Jr.

"Rap 'Em Pappy"
Richard Giesing
465th Sub-Depot
Richard J. Spades
Memory of: W. G. Blakely, P;
Harold Scholerman, CP; Charles
Walker, N; Frank Amodeo, E;
Edgar Talley, NG. KIA Mar 2, '45.
Leonard G. Alsford
London, Friend
Harold Buirkle

576th S-2
Franklin D. Smith
Tuchel crew
Dennis O. Harrell
nephew of S/Sgt Ora L. Harrell,
KIA March 18, 1944
William H. Richeson, Jr.
Richeson crew
Tony North
Norwich, Friend, Memory of
Denis Duffield
Harold A. Hagopian
579th, Miller crew
Robert E. Lane
578th Executive Officer
Oscar Weed
577th & 579th, Weed crew
Edward W. Hanley
Memory of Edward H. Hanley
Bette Gray Arch
Memory of husband Clyde T Gray
576th Sqdn. Commander,
KIA Jan 29, 1944
Family of L. D. Robinson, decd
576th P. R. Earle crew & others

Bill McCutcheon
Memory of father James
McCutcheon, Holliday crew
Bob Books
Memory of father Dallas Books,
KIA March 18, 1944
Jim Marsteller
Memory of uncle Jim Morris,
Books crew, KIA Mar 18, 1944
George Michel
576th, S. J. Robertson crew

Ernie Barber
578th ground crew
John P. Rumancik
Donald MacFarlane crew
Alvin R. Enlow
10th Station Complement Sqdn
Annette Tison
Memory of uncle Douglas N.
Franke, Wyatt crew, KIA
Vernon A. Baumgart
579th, Baumgart crew
Joseph H. Cronin
578th, aircraft mechanic
Tom Perry
576th weapons mechanic
John E. Griffin
576th & 578th, Griffin crew
Greg Hatton
Second generation
Marc Young
Second generation
Ben Jones
Second generation
Col Lawrence Gilbert
Commander, 392nd Bomb Group
C. Donald Scharf
579th, Scharf crew
James P. Sullivan
Donald C. Gepard
Hotchkiss crew
Rev. Frank Whitt
Memory of brother S/Sgt Clyde
G. Whitt, KIA June 23, 1944,
Larsen crew
James R. Tudor
Filkel crew, 576th

THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER LONG MAY IT WAVE

Editor's Note: Charley Dye sent us this, gleaned from a publication named NEW MEXICO SENIOR CITIZEN NEWS, with no information as to the source of the story except that it was attributed to the late science fiction author Isaac Asimov. However, we think it's accurate and it certainly carries a message to us ancient warriors.

Most of us know the first stanza of our National Anthem, but have little or no knowledge of the other three stanzas. Nor do we know in detail when and under what circumstances it was written by Francis Scott Key.

In 1812, the United States went to war with Great Britain, primarily over freedom of the seas. We were in the right. For two years, we held off the British, even though we were still a rather weak country. Great Britain was in a life and death struggle with Napoleon. In fact, just as the United States declared war, Napoleon marched off to invade Russia. If he won, as everyone expected, he would control Europe, and Great Britain would be isolated. It was no time for her to be involved in an American war.

At first, our seamen proved better than the British. After we won a battle on Lake Erie in 1813 the American commander, Oliver Hazard Perry, sent the message "We have met the enemy and they are ours." However, the weight of the British navy beat down our ships eventually. New England, hard-hit by a tightening blockade, threatened secession.

Meanwhile, Napoleon was beaten by Russia and in 1814 was forced to abdicate. Great Britain now turned its attention to the United States, launching a three-pronged attack.

The northern prong was to come down lake Champlain toward New York and seize parts of New England. The southern prong was to go up the Mississippi, take New Orleans and paralyze the West.

The central prong was to head for the mid-Atlantic states and then attack Baltimore, the greatest port south of New York. If Baltimore were taken, the nation, which still hugged the Atlantic coast, could be split in two. The fate of the United States, then, rested to a large extent on the success or failure of the central prong.

The British reached the American coast and on August 24, 1814, took Washington, D.C. Then they moved up Chesapeake Bay toward Baltimore. On Sept. 12 they arrived and found 1,000 men in Fort McHenry, whose guns controlled the harbor. If the British wished to take Baltimore, they would have to take the fort.

On one of the British ships was an aged physician, William Beanes, who had been arrested in Maryland and brought along as a prisoner. Francis Scott Key, a lawyer and friend of the physician, had come to the ship to negotiate his release. The British captain was willing, but the two Americans would have to wait. It was now the night of Sept. 13 and the bombardment of Fort McHenry was about to start.

As twilight deepened Key and Beanes saw the American flag flying over Fort McHenry. Through the night they heard bombs bursting and saw the red glare of rockets. They knew the fort was still resisting and the American flag was still flying. But toward morning the bombardment ceased and a dread silence fell. Either Fort McHenry had surrendered and the British flag flew above it, or the bombardment had failed and the American flag still flew.

As dawn began to brighten the eastern sky, Key and Beanes stared out at the fort, trying to see which flag flew over it. He and the physician must have asked each other over and over, "Can you see the flag?"

After it was all finished, Key wrote a four stanza poem telling the events of the night. Called "The Defense of Fort McHenry", it was published in

newspapers and swept the nation. Someone noted that the words fit the old English tune "To Anacreon in Heaven", a difficult melody with an uncomfortably large vocal range. For obvious reasons Key's work became known as "The Star Spangled Banner" and in 1931 Congress declared it the official anthem of the United States.

Here are the words. Presumably the old doctor is speaking. This is what he asks Key:

Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

(Ramparts are the protective walls or other elevations that surround a fort)
The first stanza asks a question; the second gives an answer:

On the shore, dimly seen thro' the mist of the deep
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream.
'Tis the star-spangled banner, Oh, long way it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

"The towering steep" is again the ramparts. The bombardment has failed and the British can do nothing more but sail away, their mission a failure. In the third stanza Key allows himself to gloat over the American triumph. In the aftermath of the bombardment Key was probably in no mood to act otherwise. During World War I when the U. S. and the British were staunch allies, this third stanza was not sung.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

The fourth stanza is a pious hope for the future.

Oh, thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation,
Blest with victory and peace, may the Heaven-rescued land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause is just,
And this be our motto, "In God is our trust"
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

The article closed with the admonition that all would look at the national anthem with new eyes and hear it with new ears.

* * * *

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Lt. "Buzz" Wagner became first American ace of WWII-Dec. 18, 1941

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Flying Tiger pilots went into action against Japanese for first time-Dec. 20, 1941

8AF FLIES LOW LEVEL SIGHT-SEEING MISSIONS OVER

By Annette Tison

Editor's note: Due to space limitations, the News could print only a highly condensed version of this article. The complete article, including the crew and passenger load lists and many photographs taken by the participants, will soon be posted in the Missions section of www.b24.net.

The 8th AF flew its last combat mission on 25 Apr 1945. Within days, planners were working on a new operation for its men and planes. Called *Trolley*, the purpose was "to provide all ground (non-rated) personnel with an opportunity of seeing the results of their contribution in the strategic air war against Germany."

Only by flying over areas that had been bombed by the 8th Air Force could the ground crews really understand what their skill and dedication had helped achieve.

The *Trolley* missions were flown in early May 1945. By the time they ended, 450 airmen from the 392nd had flown over 2,000 of their ground crew on these tours. They had also flown support personnel from the 3rd Strategic Air Depot at Watton, the 355th Fighter Group at Steeple Morden and the 491st BG. Many 392nd crews and several passengers made multiple trips.

Instructions

The rules were the same for each mission. Group commanders were told to "accord special attention to the selection of the most responsible and experienced pilots." Most of the 392nd pilots chosen were indeed veterans of many combat missions. A few, however, had arrived at the 392nd too late for combat. These included 2/Lt William E. Bledsoe, 1/Lt Paul J. Fenoglio, F/O William H. Rutherford, and 1/Lt John T. McCarthy, whose first missions over the Continent were on these sightseeing trips.

Planes would carry a minimum crew of 5 (pilot, copilot, navigator, engineer, and radio operator) and 10 passengers. Passengers would be issued chutes and Mae Wests; pilots would brief them on bail-out and ditching procedures and the interphone.

Copilots would draw candy bars and return the bags at the end of each mission. Additionally, Group messes were tasked to supply sandwiches for personnel since the trips generally took between six and seven hours.

Planes would be dispatched in elements of 3 or 6. At each Group, the first and last a/c were expected to take off within 10 minutes. Once assembled, the elements would depart in trail at one minute intervals.

8th AF planners were greatly concerned about safety. Their teletypes stressed the "responsibility of the pilot to his crew and passengers" and "the deplorability of needless loss of life to carelessness, particularly now that hostilities in Europe are at an end."

Orders were given to maintain 1,000 feet above terrain for the entire flight. No buzzing or circling was allowed. An observer plane with a command pilot no lower than field grade flew with each wing to ensure compliance. (At one 392nd BG briefing, this escort was called "the Gestapo a/c".)

If bad weather would not permit the prescribed altitude, the entire mission was to be cancelled. The code word for recall was a heartfelt "Sorry."

Despite these precautions, accidents did occur. On May 7, a 389th BG crashed into the Engers Bridge near Cologne, killing 19 men. On May 10, a B-17 was lost in a collision over England with no survivors.

Routes

For the missions on May 7, 8, 9,

and 10, the route was base to Southwold, then Ostend, Mannheim, Aschaffenberg, Frankfurt, Bingen, Koblenz, Bonn, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Brussels, Ostend, Southwold, and return to base.

On May 11 and 12, a different route was followed: Base to Great Yarmouth, then Katwijk Ann Zee, Arnheim, Munster, Osnabruck, Bremen, Hamburg, Brunswick, Hannover, Bielefeld, Hamm, Essen, The Hague, Great Yarmouth, and back to base.

Individual Missions

The first mission was flown the day before V-E Day, so some 392nd BG crews included a gunner.

For the mission on May 10, 2AD's teletypes warned that any violations of flying lower than 1,000 ft "will be subject to severe disciplinary action." In its briefing that day, the 392nd announced that five pilots were up for court martial for buzzing the previous day, but did not say to which Group these pilots belonged. And, perhaps to further ensure compliance, Gen. Johnson flew in the monitor a/c.

On May 11, 2AD added a new instruction to their briefing teletype: "All personnel are to be briefed on the danger of throwing objects from a/c during flight. Nothing is to be jettisoned during the flight." The command pilots in monitor a/c now had to submit a "brief resume of conduct of the operation" to 2AD at the end of each mission.

After May 12's mission, it was felt that all ground crew personnel had had a chance to participate if they wanted to. All future *Trolley* missions were cancelled.

Cook's Tour

On May 9, the 14th Combat Wing announced the Cooks Tour: An opportunity for outstanding crew chiefs and other maintenance personnel who had received the Legion of Merit or Bronze Star to

visit bombed areas in Germany.

The 392nd, 44th, and 491st would each provide one a/c with a minimum crew of 5 men. The ten passengers would include "1 engineering officer (to be in charge of EM) and 1 photographer." Each would carry a steel helmet, 1 carbine or rifle per EM or .45 pistol per officer, and K rations for one day.

A/c for these special tours would take off from each Group at 0700 hours on 10 May and each day following until all scheduled personnel had gone.

The a/c would fly from base to Southwold, then Ostend, Brussels, Liege, Duren, Cologne, and Frankfurt (via the Rhine River) and then land at station Y-55. This base was at Venlo, which straddled the border between southeast Holland and Germany. From Venlo, the men would be motored to Duisburg where they could walk around at their leisure and have lunch. Upon return to Y-55, they flew to Brussels, Ostend, Southwold, and back to base.

392nd BG personnel flew Cook's Tours on May 10, 11, 12, and 13.

Pilots

1/Lt Oscar Weed and a few other pilots questioned why their entire combat crews couldn't go on the missions. (The command's response was that air crew members had seen plenty already.) Weed thought that wasn't fair because there was a big difference in what could be seen from bombing altitude and the low altitudes on these missions. As it turns out, some combat airmen did fly as passengers.

Weed remembers hearing that one plane flew low and buzzed a German POW compound, rolling their tents up on the ground and blowing them across the field. That pilot might have been 1/Lt Charles J. Jackson from the 577th Sqdn.

GERMANY SHORTLY AFTER CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES

The route for his first Trolley mission took him near the Remagen Bridge. Close by was a field filled with German POWs. As they flew over, a few of the prisoners taunted the fliers with Nazi salutes. That infuriated both crew and passengers. On his next Trolley mission, some of his passengers dropped trash on the prisoners. He remembers he got a "hell of a chewing out" but thought at the time that it was worth it.

1/Lt Robert Vickers thought the minimum altitude of 1,000 ft. applied only while over England. Therefore, he flew over the Continent at between 200 and 300 feet in order to give his passengers a good look at everything possible. He says, "These were *fun* missions; the war was over and no one was shooting at us. We all were determined to enjoy the sights and scenes and *not* from our usual high altitudes. We wanted our most dedicated Ground Crew types to relish this rare opportunity—and from all accounts, they did!"

Hijinks

In his memoirs, copilot Walt Cranson wrote about his mission on May 8. He was delighted to be flying on V-E day. He "took along 3 rolls of toilet paper for my celebration... really makes confetti when unwound and thrown out in bunches.... Circled Brussels 3 times ... [with one crewman] shooting flares and me kicking off the toilet paper like mad. (Was reported Major Player saw it all and liked it! hm) Took off by ourselves ... and decided we wanted to see another big Capital celebrating. Yes, London! We found it—circled down to 400 ft. and I really dumped a lot out over Piccadilly. Man were the streets packed, flags & bonfires everywhere. So low—could see the mob waving and climbing up on the lions of Trafalgar Sq.... *Nice Day!*"

Cologne Cathedral

Everyone who saw Cologne Cathedral remembers it.

1/Lt Walter Neustadt was an S-2 (Intelligence) officer in the 576th Sqdn. Cologne Cathedral, he recalls, had "no major damage to the building while the surrounding areas were totally demolished."

Sgt Gil Bambauer was a parachute handler in the 576th Sqdn, becoming the NCO in charge of the Flying Equipment section. He boarded his plane on 8 May 1945 "with a sandwich in my pocket and a full canteen of water plus my chest type parachute." His pilot (1/Lt Robert K. Crowell) descended as they neared Cologne and then flew directly over the Cathedral. Bambauer recalls that "The walls were erect but looked completely burned out inside. A small figure of a man seemed to be shaking his fist as the plane moved on."

Other Memories

Vickers recalls, "As we flew low over the Remagen Bridge, with its spans down in the water, we noted some German youngsters on the

banks throwing rocks up at us. Of course, we were in no danger, but the irony of it all struck all of us at this moment."

Just down river from Cologne on the western banks, he saw a tall, intact smokestack made of yellow bricks. Vickers clearly saw what was painted down its side: FORD.

Weed still remembers, "When we flew over Belgium, the people looked up and waved. When we were over Germany, the people mostly looked down."

What Harvey DeVoe in the Group's Photographic Section recalls the most is devastation. "There were huge areas of rubble. The buildings were just shells—no roofs, no windows, just walls with holes."

Sgt Robert Harned was an Intelligence Clerk in the 578th Sqdn and maintained the target folders. He flew two Trolley missions, on May 7 and 12. He took for granted that "after the ground and Air War people would know there would be a world of devastation. Maybe they would not, but it was everywhere: torn-up roads, knocked out bridges,

bomb craters everywhere. The towns varied from some, to lots of damage. I cannot remember any people walking around. Maybe they were still running for cover at the sound of the planes."

When Gil Bambauer returned to Wendling about 5 p.m., the Base was celebrating the Victory in Europe. After turning in his parachute and harness, he had a beer in the EM Club. After that, he had a light dinner and joined in the festivities.

Summary

Pilot Oscar Weed flew Trolley missions on May 8, 9, and 10. He remembers three general reactions from his ground crew passengers: "1) very happy to see the destruction and that we had accomplished our mission; 2) very neutral without much reaction; and 3) horrified and sad that we had caused so much destruction and harm to people that had no responsibility for what their leaders had caused to happen."

DUES STATEMENT FOR 2008

The Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting at Kalamazoo on July 19, 2007 increased the dues from \$15 to \$20. Also, if you feel that you are in a position to help the Treasury with an extra donation, there is a provision for it below. It is possible that Life Members might feel that the Lord has been good to them and that they have lived beyond their actuarial years and an extra payment might be in order. Your dues status can be found right after your name on the mailing list. If the number is 08 or higher, you're current. LM means Life Member, and Frnd means that you are our guest.

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 2008, \$20

Hardship Waiver ☐

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Age 61-65 \$120 ☐

Age 66-70 \$96 ☐

Age 71 and over \$78 ☐

DONATION

\$ _____

Send with check to Bill McCutcheon, 20620 Milton Court, Brookfield, WI 53045

TRAINING CRASH AT TOPEKA TAKES FIVE LIVES

By Annette Tison

Author's note: On July 18, 1943 the ground echelon of the 392nd departed Alamogordo for England. The air echelon was at Topeka, picking up their new B-24's and flying training missions. I was alerted to this story by Mrs. Virginia Schwabel, whose husband T/Sgt Carl Schwabel had heard it from 1/Lt Milton Planche. Conversations with him and reference to official records led to the completion of the story.

On July 31 six 392nd planes took off from Topeka Army Air Base on a navigation training mission to Duluth, MN. First in line was #41-29052 which took off at 0631 hours. Aboard were 579th pilot 1/Lt Melvin S. Meeker, co-pilot 2/Lt Samuel Levitt, bombardier 2/Lt Mathew J. Radosevich, engineer T/Sgt James M. Parker, and radio operator T/Sgt Thomas J. Leyshon.

Planche, the navigator, was not on board because he had been grounded by Group flight surgeon Capt (later Major) Robert M. Holland due to a cold. The other gunners did not fly because they were examining new ball turrets that had just arrived at Topeka.

According to the Report of Aircraft Accident, 1/Lt Meeker was at 5,000 feet when he flew into a thunderstorm. It was thought that he lost control of the a/c in the severe turbulence. In his effort to regain control he placed excessive stress on the wing section; it broke off where the outboard wing panel and the #4 motor joined. The plane then made a short turn and at 0730 hours it crashed at a very steep angle 10 miles southwest of Boone, IA. All aboard were killed.

Lt Planche has always thought that if he'd been aboard, he would have plotted a course around the thunderstorm.

He asked to be transferred to another 392nd crew. A day or two later, when he was dining at the Officers' Club with his wife, a young officer came to his table and told him he was leaving the next day for overseas.

Planche overslept. He hurriedly dressed and hopped on a bus to the base. At the main gate he was met by a lieutenant in a jeep who told him his bags had already been packed and were on the plane.

He was taken to Base Operations, where Group navigator Capt (later Lt/Col) Kenneth Paddock had everything ready for him, including

navigator's equipment and maps already marked with the route. Taken to the runway, he climbed into a plane already in position for take-off and met his new crew for the first time.

He flew with 578th pilot 1/Lt John Reade from then on. They became a lead crew and Planche finished his combat tour on May 31, 1944.

The Other Gunners

S/Sgt John P. Scott, a tail gunner, remembers that the six Meeker enlisted men had planned to go into Topeka that evening to celebrate their imminent departure for overseas.

There were no vacancies on any 392nd crews, so he applied for pilot training. He passed the exams and physical and was waiting for assignment to a school.

Then, a crew on its way overseas stopped in Topeka. They needed a gunner and Scott was selected. He thus became a ball turret gunner in the 44th Bomb Group. He was wounded by shrapnel on his second mission, Nov. 13, 1943. On his 24th mission, to Friedrichshafen on Mar. 18, 1944, his plane was hit by flak over the target. He bailed out and was lucky enough to land in Swit-

Continued on page 7

PX ITEMS

Anthology, "20 th Century Crusaders".(Hard cover book) \$36.50 postpaid	\$
Anthology, "20 th Century Crusaders" (CD) \$15.00 postpaid.	\$
Book, "Remembrance of the Missing", by Col. Bob Vickers, \$37.00 postpaid	\$
Book, "The Liberators From Wendling", by Col. Bob Vickers, \$35.00 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.	\$
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	\$
Print, "The Flying Crusader", reduced to \$16.50 postpaid	\$
Video, 392 nd 's memorabilia photos, \$15.00 postpaid	\$
DVD, 392 nd 's memorabilia photos, \$25.00 postpaid.	\$
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 \$27.50pp	\$
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.	\$
Total (Send with check to Bill McCutcheon, 20620 Milton Court, Brookfield, WI 53045)	\$

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. \$21.95 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.

Book, "Don't Call Me A Hero", by Jim McGregor, pilot, 579th.
Order from Publisher, Willeo Publishing, 702 Foxborough Sq. W, Brentwood, TN 37027. \$19.95 postpaid.

Book, "The Stardusters", by Jim Cassity, co-pilot, 579th.
Order from Publisher, Vantage Press, Inc., 419 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016, \$23.95.

—Continued from page 6—

zerland, where he was interned for eight months.

Radio operator S/Sgt Thomas White flew as a gunner with several 392nd crews. He finished his combat tour in June 1944.

T/Sgt Charles E. Zschiesche was transferred to 1/Lt William W. Clifford's crew. They were KIA on Oct. 8, 1943.

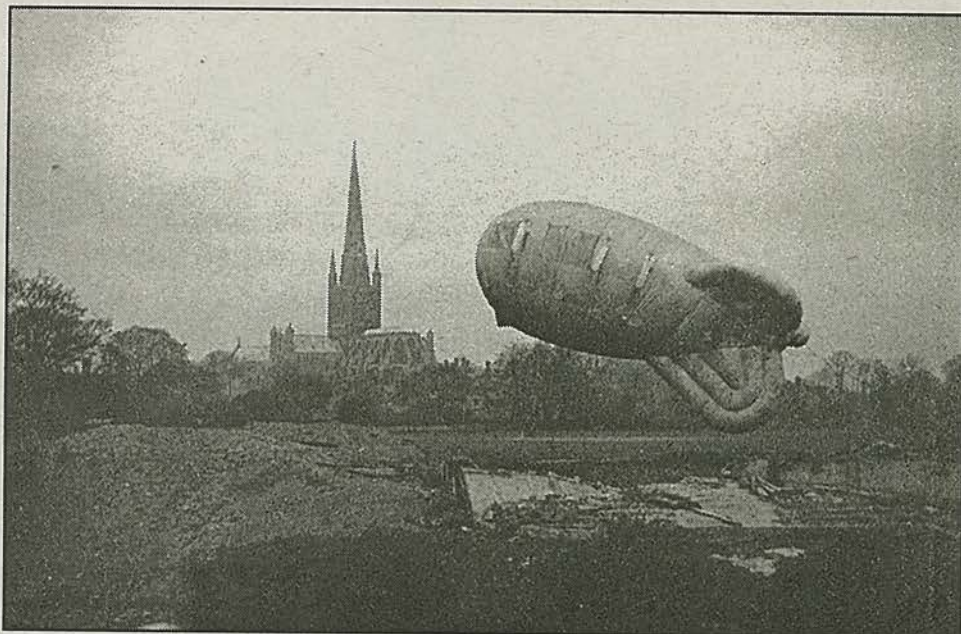
Gunner S/Sgt John E. Fagan flew five missions with 2/Lt Frank Gonseth's crew. He may have then transferred to the ground crew, as a man by that name served in the 10th Station Complement Squadron.

We now know that 37 airmen assigned to the 392nd were killed while training in the U.S.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

650 B-17's and B-24's made first major strike on German V-weapons sites-Dec 24, 1943

NORWICH IN THE WINTER OF 1943



Al Enlow photo

Here's a bit of nostalgia for you. Remember those cold, foggy winter days in Norwich, shortly after we arrived in 1943? See the weathered barrage balloon, the bomb damage in the foreground, and the magnificent cathedral in the distance.

Then think about what the Brits went through while we were gearing up to come to join the fray.

And who, after viewing Ken Burns' "The War" would say that all the casualties that we suffered and the other sacrifices that we made over there were not in vain?

CURSING IN THE WORKPLACE: IS IT PERMISSIBLE?

By Jim Goar

I saw this little morality question posed in an article recently published in the *Indianapolis (Ind) Star*. What really caught my eye was that the study about it was attributed to the University of East Anglia in Norwich. The study didn't really approve of it; it just said that it occurs. Sometimes, they said, it's ok and sometimes it isn't.

But the story went deeper for Annabelle and me. We both call Earlham College in Richmond, Ind. our alma mater, and Earlham College just happens to be named after Earlham Hall in Norwich. And the University of East Anglia just happens to have been formerly housed in Earlham Hall.

Earlham Hall is the ancestral home

of a prominent Quaker family, the Gurneys. On an evangelical journey to the U. S. the Gurneys visited a fledgling Quaker college, which chose Earlham as its name.

The Quakers are noted for their moral rectitude. In fact, a Quaker friend of mine recalls that he heard an expletive from his grandmother only once, and that was "Oh, Pshaw".

So I wonder if those scholars at the University of East Anglia realize that at Earlham Hall a previous study of the question of swearing

has been made, and it was decided in the negative.

The NEWS thanks John Gilbert and David Gurney, both of whom reinforced my knowledge of the Norwich-Earlham College connection.

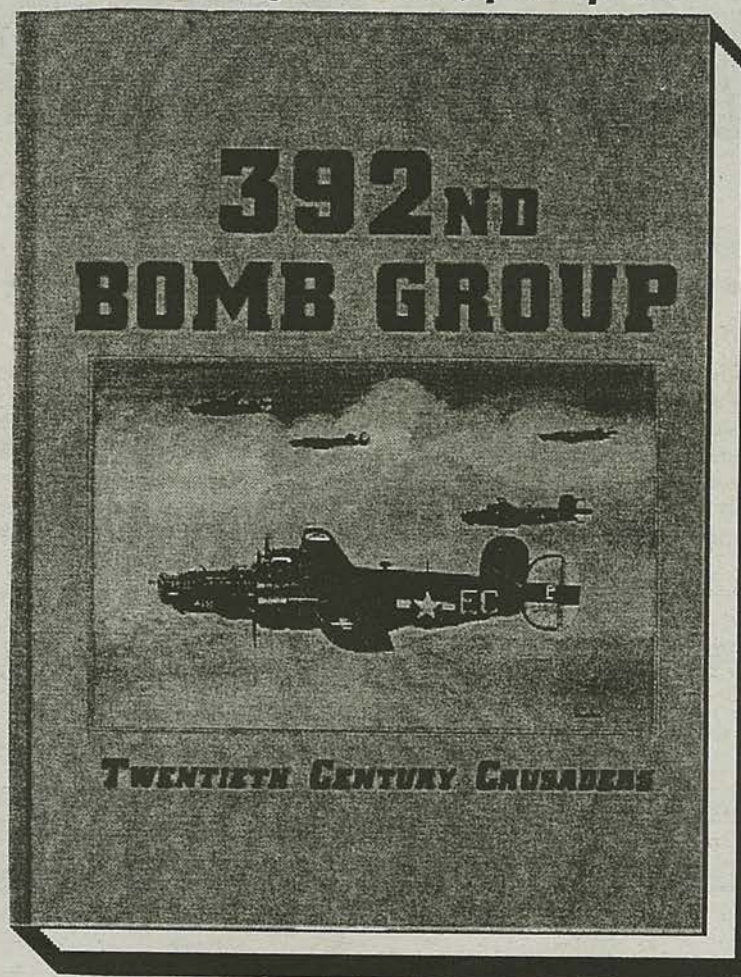
AIR ANNIVERSARY

Japanese attack Pearl Harbor- Dec. 7, 1941

AIR ANNIVERSARY

First sustained controlled flight in a powered aircraft-Dec. 17, 1903

**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.

NEWS



392nd BG Memorial Association

Chairman of the Board
Col. Lawrence G. Gilbert, USAF (Ret)

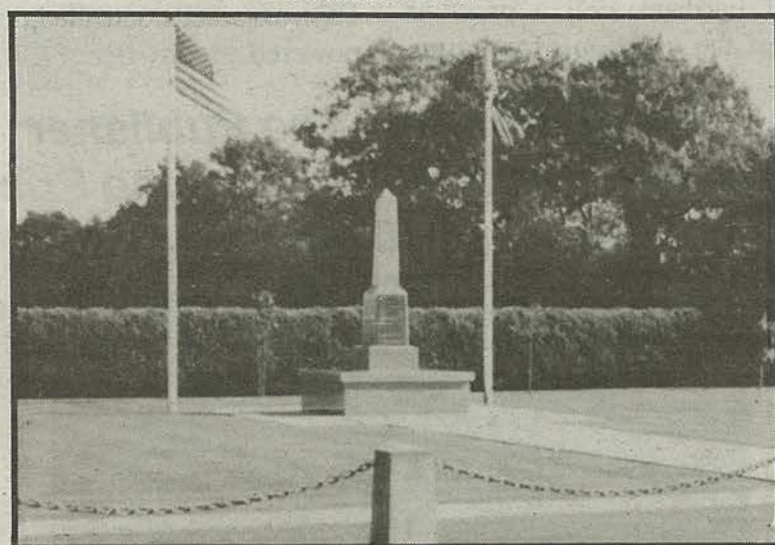
President
Charles Dye

Vice-president, Memorial
Carroll W. Check

Secretary
Annette Tison

Treasurer
Bill McCutcheon
20620 Milton Court
Brookfield WI 53045

Editors
Jim Goar
Annette Tison



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.

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, 1555 N. Main St., #106, Frankfort, IN 46041.

Folded Wings

Marvin L. Wukotich, 578, July 19, 2007
Irwin F. Thompson, March 14, 2007
Harry Vasconcellos, 578/9, Jul 26, 2007
Harvey Jackson, 579, Aug 20, 2007
William Franklin Dill, 579, Aug. 8, 2007
Robert Gorham, 578, Aug. 17, 2007
Charles A. Piper, 579, Sept. 20, 2007
Harold Marc Young, 578, Sept. 17, 2003
John Conrad, 578/9, Oct. 21, 2007
Richard E. Griffin, 578, May 13, 2007

But we..shall be remembered:

**We few,
we happy few,
we band of
brothers:**

392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n NEWS
1555 N. Main St., #106
Frankfort, IN 46041

Address Correction Requested
Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed

First Class Mail



**For he to-day
that sheds his
blood with me**

**Shall be
my brother...**

William Shakespeare
Henry V

Chaplain's Corner

By George Barger, Ph. D.
(aka Bombardier, 576/7)

Religious and patriotic feelings often are united in a single thread. Still, on occasion they become separated. It isn't easy to criticize one's nation. There are times when it seems relevant, indeed necessary, if we are to be faithful. The anti-slavery movement in the 1800's and the civil rights movement of the 1960's are cases in point. Both were fueled largely by religious rhetoric. It is part of our listening to one another that we take note of social critiques, especially when they are voiced in the name of the faith we share.
