



THE 200TH MISSION

The 392nd BG's 100th and 200th missions occurred on historic days in 1944—D-Day and Armistice Day. However, there were great differences between the two sets.

It took ten months to fly the first 100 but only five to fly the second 100. Of the 15 worst missions in terms of casualties and planes lost, ten occurred during the first 100, four during the second 100, and only one during the remaining 85 missions.

Mission #200

Between 8:30 and 8:41am on 11 Nov 1944, 18 planes (six each from the 577th, 578th, and 579th Sqdns) took off. Their target: the synthetic oil refinery at Bottrop, Germany.

They dropped 396 bombs (300-pounders) through the clouds; results were unobserved. No enemy fighters were seen and friendly fighter support was deemed "good."

As 578th nose gunner S/Sgt Bert M. Beals Jr summed it up, "Quite a bit of flak over the target [but] all in all it was a milk run."

The B-24s landed, to much jubilation, between 1:27 and 1:46pm.

Photo reconnaissance by 2BD later determined that its 124 Liberators had put "the plant ... completely out of action. The entire target area is thickly carpeted with craters. Almost every important building has been hit and most are seriously damaged or destroyed."

200th Mission Party

The 392nd's history notes that the second 100 missions were flown in just "five months and five days, thus averaging

two missions every three days." Naturally, the Group celebrated this milestone. Festivities for enlisted men were held on December 2 and for officers on December 8.

The 200 Mission Party flyer announced there would be "Dancing, Sports, Burlesque, Beer, Free Chow." Activities would begin at 1pm with a "Leg show from London, for men only" in the base theater.

All enlisted men were advised:

● "Bring your canteen cups for beer—9 [British pennies] a pint.

● Free chips and ice cream.

● Tech Site will be off limits to the ladies except during the bicycle races.

● Transportation will be provided to the following towns: Norwich, King's Lynn, Wisbech, Downham Market, Fakenham, Dereham, Swaffham, Necton Hall. Watch bulletin boards for the



Enlisted men are briefed for the 392nd's 200th mission by Group Intelligence Officer Maj Percy B. Caley.

schedule.

● The Enlisted Men's Club will be the control point for transportation. Guests will be brought to the Club and picked up there.

● Don't forget the limited number of reservations available at the Hospital for guests. They are for those residing in areas to which transportation will not be furnished. See Miss [Birdie Schmidt, Red Cross Aero Club Program Director] between 10am and noon, or 8-10pm, Friday or Saturday, 24 and 25 November.

● The Aero Club will be closed all day until 3pm.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Many Thanks! Most of the photos that augment articles in the *News* come from 392nd BG archives. Others, though, have been provided by veterans or their relatives. They all help illustrate my words. For example, these photos were shared by the son of 578th Ordnance Crew Chief S/Sgt Woodrow R. Adkins. His caption for the top photo says it shows the first 392nd plane to land from the 200th mission. A review of the official records says it was probably # 42-51150, I'll Walk Alone, with the 579th's Capt Robert V. Pardue crew aboard. The fact that this photo was taken—and preserved—reveals what a momentous event that mission was.



The middle is captioned "bombs and more bombs" and shows S/Sgt Adkins at the bomb dump. It also reveals the work done by the 1825th Ordnance Co., which unloaded, stacked, stored and maintained every bomb delivered to the 392nd. The bottom photo shows S/Sgt Adkins (on left) and a man identified only as "Chet" taking a break while loading bombs on #42-52548, Jaw-Ja Boy. The plane, maintained by M/Sgt Ernie Barber and his crew, was hit by flak on 9 Sep 1944 on its 38th mission. Nine of the crew were killed while two were captured.



Many thanks to all who have shared photos, memories, letters, and anecdotes with me. They all help the 392nd BGMA perpetuate the legacy of those who served our country so well.



Reunion. We expect quite a few 392nd BG members and family in New Orleans. Please note that members who attend our annual membership meeting at the reunion can deduct the reasonable cost of food and travel from their taxes. Members cannot deduct the cost of tours or lodging/food costs outside the official days of the reunion (27 Sept to 1 Oct 2017). Please consult your tax advisor for details.

Crusaders in the News. On 30 May 2017, 577/579th pilot **Robert H. Tuchel**, 96, was recently presented the Knight of the Legion of Honor medal by French Deputy Consul General Frederic Chole. It recognizes the many missions he flew during WWII that directly aided in the liberation of France. In the photo at left, Bob displays his citation and new medal. He wore his 1942 Army Air Corps-issued blouse for the ceremony.



Vincent Floreani, French Consul General in Chicago, wrote Bob that "Through this award, the French government pays tribute to the soldiers who did so much for France and Western Europe. 72 years ago, you gave your youth to France and the French people. Many of your soldiers did not return but they remain in our hearts.

"Thanks to your courage and to our American friends and allies, France and Europe have been living in peace for the past seven decades. You saved us. We will never forget. For us, the French people, you are a hero. Gratitude and remembrance are forever in our souls.

"To show our eternal gratitude, the President of the French Republic has decided to award you the Legion of Honor. Created by Napoleon in 1802, it is the highest honor that France can bestow upon those who have achieved remarkable deeds for France.

"Thanks for what you did and congratulations."

Bob flew missions between July and December 1944, including many to France. In fact, while on a sortie to Corbie, France, on **See CRUSADERS on page 3**

Vice President's Thoughts



While doing research and building our website's section on the Wendling Memorial's history, I came across an interesting fact: Our 392nd BG Memorial at Wendling, England, was the first memorial placed in England of all the 8th AAF bomb and fighter groups.

As I was thinking about that, I came to realize the 392nd BGMA has always been a leader in setting the pace for honoring and preserving the history of the 8th AAF.

I'm not only referring to the 392nd BGMA efforts and the publications of historical articles and books by many of our veterans, but referring to the 392nd BGMA's leadership in the 2nd Air Division Association, the 8th Air Force Historical Society, the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, England, and the Museum Memorial Foundation.

392nd members have been the movers and shakers of these organizations since their inception. I'm thinking about Bob Vickers, Charlie Dye, Jim Goar, Gil Bambauer, Cliff Peterson, Larry Gilbert, Oak Mackey, Carroll Cheek and others who have all had leadership positions with these groups. Several served as presidents and vice-presidents. And currently our own Ben Jones sits on the board of directors and is an executive officer of the 8th AFHS.

Since 1999 our website has set the pace and been a leader in presenting group history with resources for other researchers. It is currently the only 8th AAF website that is on the cutting edge of technology with responsive coding for tablets and cell phones.

At the New Orleans reunion in a few weeks, we will once again be one of the largest groups, with over 40 attendees. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone there. We all can hold our head high as a Group with a long history of leadership to preserve the memories of the 8th AAF and the 392nd BG.

Bob

CRUSADERS from page 2

2 Aug 1944, he recalls, "We received heavy damage from flak over the target. Our hydraulics were shot out, and Richard O'Rourke, the nose gunner, had face injuries from the shattered plexiglass in the nose. With the hydraulics gone we had no ailerons, so we flew back to Wendling on the autopilot. Over Wendling we radioed in to describe our condition and were instructed not to land at Wendling but to fly south to Woodbridge instead. I didn't know for sure where Woodbridge was and night was setting in quickly.

"Somewhere en route more of the nose turret came loose with a noise like a flak burst. I thought we were being shot at again. By that time it was completely dark. We were flying at 500 feet and spotted a B-17 base below us. We asked for directions to Woodbridge and just as we got there the lights came on. We cranked down the landing gear by hand and lined up for a landing. We approached at 120 MPH and upon touchdown we cut the power to all four

engines and the landing was successful until the crew used parachutes to slow us down. One broke loose and the other started to pull us off the runway. To steer us back on path, we started number 3 and 4 engines. It took all 10,000 feet of the runway and the grass berm at the end to bring the a/c to a stop."

Oliver R. "Bud" Guillot

On 21 June 2017, 576th waist gunner **Oliver R. "Bud" Guillot** was declared "California Soldier of the Year 2017" by the Honorable Matthew Harper, Assembly Member for the 74th District in California.

The citation says, in part, "Whereas, Throughout the course of American history, courageous men and women have taken up arms to secure, defend, and maintain the core principles upon which our nation's freedoms depend, and Oliver 'Bud' Guillot is one such stellar individual..."

It points out that on 29 Apr 1944, Bud's crew "set out on an extremely dangerous flight mission into Germany that would end in the loss of life of three of the flight's crew members and a harrowing one-year and five-day imprisonment for Bud in ... Stalag 17B, until he was liberated by General Patton and his tremendous rescuing troops on 5 May 1945."



At left, the Honorable Matthew Harper; at right, Oliver R. "Bud" Guillot.

The citation ends with Mr. Harper expressing "his sincere appreciation to [Bud] for his dedication to duty and country and his honorable and faithful service to the United States of America and the State of California..."

Bud says, "Being in the Air Force, I have always stated life or death, victory or defeat, are team efforts. There are few single heroes in the Air Force. Some will argue, 'What about the fighter pilot?' and I reply, 'What about the ground mechanic who worked all night on the pilot's airplane?'"

"I have fired many rounds at attacking German fighter aircraft. I've seen my bullets tearing holes in the German fighter plane—but there were other American gunners firing at that same German fighter plane. Team work."

Incidentally, Bud is known world-wide as a grower and cultivator of plumeria. Several varieties have been named for him, including the *Sergeant Guillot* and *Guillot's Sunset*. The black-and-white format of this newsletter will not do justice to their beauty, so please visit <http://www.southcoastplumeriasociety.com/gallery/> and be amazed.

New Material Has Been Added to our Website

We continue to add aircrew and ground crew photos to the website. We have also added three new links on the **main** page of www.b24.net:

- Anatomy of a Mission
- Wendling History
- Wendling Memorial with a 1989 video of the re-dedication ceremony after the Memorial and grounds were refurbished

First-hand accounts have been added to the following **mission** pages:

- 4 October 1943 - First Casualties
- 5 November 1943 - Munster
- 18 November 1943 - Kjeller, Norway
- 4 January 1944 - Kiel
- 20 February 1944 - Helmstedt
- 24 February 1944 - Gotha
- 5 March 1944 - Bordeaux-Cognac
- 18 March 1944 - Friedrichshafen (two new stories)
- 29 April 1944 - Berlin
- 29 May 1944 - Politz
- 2 June 1944 - St. Avord A/F
- 6 June 1944 - D-Day
- 23 June 1944 - Laon/Athies, France
- 7 July 1944 - Bernburg
- 21 July 1944 - Oberpfaffenhofen
- 24-25 July 1944 - St. Lo-Periers
- 11 September 1944 - Hannover

- 18 September 1944 - Eindhoven
- 25 February 1945 - Aschaffenburg
- 24 March 1945 - DZ-Wesel & Stormede
- 25 March 1945 - Hitzocker

These accounts have been added to the **Wendling Stories** section:

- Flying the Northern Route to England
- Flying the Southern Route to England
- Oak Mackey's Crunch Landing at Seething
- London Farmer Living and Working at Wendling
- John Gilbert - Living on the Air Base
- James Maris - The Small Square of Steel
- Malcolm Hinshaw - Capture After Friedrichshafen
- Jim Blanco - Tondelayo's Last Mission - Politz
- Milton Henderson - Half A Mission Gets You
- Manny Abrams - Goose Bay, Labrador, Direct to Ireland
- Margaret Meen-Parker - When They Arrived, I Was Nine
- E.G. "Ted" Parsons - The Royal Air Force at Wendling
- A Liberator Named "Alfred"
- Charles Dye - Loading the Bombs
- Birdie Schmidt - The American Red Cross Aeroclub
- Robert Tays - Ferry Crew
- Victor Ferrari - What Happened to Ferrari And Roberts After Their Bomber Crashed

These accounts have been added to the **POW Stories** section:

- Clifford Peterson - POW Prison after Friedrichshafen
- Stephens & Riddleberger - Only 2 Lived to Be Prisoners
- Delmar Johnson - Captured After Friedrichshafen
- Edward Appel - A Textbook on Escaping

392nd BGMA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please look at the mailing label where your membership status is shown directly after your name. **"17" or higher means your membership is current.** LM means Life Member and FRIEND means that you receive the *News* with compliments of the 392nd BGMA. Send this form and your check (payable to 392nd BGMA) to Annette Tison, 9107 Wood Pointe Way, Fairfax Station, VA 22039. You may also join or renew on-line at <http://www.b24.net/392nd/join.htm>.

The Board of Directors has ruled that no Crusader will be denied membership because of financial difficulty, so if you're in straitened circumstances, check the Hardship Waiver box. If you feel that you can help the 392nd BGMA treasury with a donation, there is a provision for it below.

Name _____ Ground [] Air [] Sqdn/Unit _____

Mailing address _____

Email address _____ Telephone number _____

If a spouse, friend, or relative served in the 392nd, please give us his name and unit: _____

Dues: [] \$25/year if you want to receive the *News* by postal mail OR [] \$20/year for receipt by email
Please feel free to renew for multiple years! Just let us know what your wishes are.

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

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●For additional information or assistance contact your unit party committeeman."

Birdie later recalled, "The Aeroclub had thrown open its doors early for an afternoon tea dance. It was crowded. However, the evening formal dance was really jammed.



This photo is captioned, "Getting ready for a dance." Whether it shows preparations for the 200th mission dance is not known, but it certainly reveals the ambiance a draped parachute creates!

"The club was decorated with banners, greenery and flowers. We had inverted a parachute in the Snack Bar by hanging it from the ceiling and draping the shroud lines with chaff. The Card Room was a popular eating place lighted by candles on each table. The food was free. Our kitchen staff had baked a large cake with the words 'Here's to the 200th Mission' decorating it. It disappeared as soon as it was put out. The officers served the men on this occasion. Working like beavers, they dished out ice cream, opened

cokes, checked coats, etc...

"We helped in hostessing lady overnight guests for the enlisted men's party on the 2nd and the officers' party on the 8th. Guests were housed in one wing of the hospital. Our matron for the occasions checked reservations and showed girls their accommodations."

Per the 465th Sub Depot history, the dances included "a sufficient amount of beer and the appearance of many girls on the station to add charm or excitement to many a G.I. From the indications the next day, it was far from over on the scheduled time."

The dances were preceded by a bicycle race around the perimeter track. The first place winner got five pounds sterling and one quart of whiskey; second place got three pounds and third place two pounds.

The names of the winners are not known, but the 577th Sqdn history states, "The squadron had their money on M/Sgt Vergil Pierce to win the race but he had a flat tire about half way around the field. Sabotage is strongly suspected."

Bingen, 2 Dec 1944

The 200th Mission Party for enlisted men began shortly before the combat airmen began landing from their mission to the marshalling yards at Bingen, Germany. This target was just 15 miles from US lines, so destroying these rail facilities would aid the Allied effort by hindering the resupply and replacement of German troops.

The 392nd put up 18 ships, 9 each from the 577th and 578th Sqdns. Just before the target, the low left unit (all 577th a/c) went through dense clouds up to 23,000 feet.

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Above: the hotly contested enlisted men's bicycle race; at bottom right are its unnamed winners. The left photo shows officers during their race, perhaps without the skill or determination displayed by the enlisted men!



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When they emerged, the planes were widely scattered. It was then that the vulnerable squadron was attacked by 40-50 enemy a/c. In about 15 minutes, six B-24s were lost with 36 men killed and 18 captured.

On this day of celebration, the 392nd suffered its fifth highest casualties of the war. But, it would never again have this many losses on a single mission.

Officers Celebration

The officers' party was on December 8. It also included a dance—plus a bicycle race around the perimeter/taxiway surrounding the flying field, about three miles. LtCol Lawrence G. Gilbert, Group Deputy Commander at the time, later wrote, "Risking ridicule from all quarters, I 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."

Press Releases

392nd Public Affairs Officer Capt Donald McCammond wrote several press releases when the Group completed its 200th mission. He noted that the 392nd was "one of the older units in the division" and "the first outfit to reach the European Theater of Operations with the newly-modified B-24 Liberator." The 392nd, the fourth Lib organization in England, flew the new "H" model, which had hydraulically-operated nose turrets with flexible twin machine guns.

Their 200th mission was "led by **Major James A. McGregor**, Group Training Officer, who flew in the group's first and 100th mission.

"Three other combat men on today's mission participated in the 392nd's first mission. They are **Maj Joseph B. Whittaker**, bombing officer of the Second Bombardment Division and former group bombardier; **1/Lt John A. Colvin**, copilot of the Liberator "Sally Ann," making his 30th mission; and **S/Sgt Charles Harrod**, gunner. Another gunner, **S/Sgt Otto E. Holder**, made the D-Day mission, as did Maj Whittaker and Lt. Colvin."

"Since those first days," McCammond noted, "the group's aircraft have unloaded 13,000 tons of explosives and incendiaries on targets in Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Norway and Poland. Nearly 5,000 sorties—each bomber completing a mission receives credit for a sortie—have been chalked up. About 300 enemy fighters have been

destroyed or damaged by the group's gunners. Members of the 392nd and its attached units have received almost 7,500 medals and decorations from the Distinguished Service Cross down, during the course of 200 missions."

Foremost among its awards was a citation for "distinguished and outstanding performance of duty" from MajGen James P. Hodges, then Division commander. Per the honor, during its first 100 missions the 392nd bombed targets "with a degree of accuracy consistently greater than that achieved by any other unit of this command."

[The Group had not yet been awarded the Distinguished Unit Commendation for its actions on the 24 Feb 1944 mission to Gotha, Germany.]

"There are still a few flying and staff personnel on the base who can recall without effort the dreary days of diversionary feints up and down the North Sea, the first awful attack by Herman Goering's famed yellow-nosed fighters, the penetration of Germany with little or no fighter escort, the changing targets...airfields, docks and shipyards, flying bomb sites, aircraft engine factories, synthetic oil plants, fuel depots, marshalling yards, and finally the long-awaited support to the ground forces invading the continent."

Life at Station 118

McCammond also wrote about what it was like at the air base:

"Settled into the East Anglian landscape, the 392nd leads the life of an all-American, all masculine community. From the staff in front of Headquarters, the red, white and blue of the national colors dominates the allotment of British soil. As the missions were checked off, procedure assumed a pattern familiar to all soldiers overseas. Morale rose and fell with the fluctuation of the mail deliveries.

"**Cpl Manuel L. Chapa** of Corpus Christi, Texas, truck driver, worried until he received word of the birth of his baby daughter. **Sergeant Arthur D. Arce** of Los Angeles, Calif., was married to a Scottish girl, **Mary Low** of Red House, Mintlaw. **Chaplain Don Clark** of Washington, D.C. was given an assistant, **Captain Paul A. McDonough**, of Manchester, N.H., to help punch the griper's mythical ticket—one punch for every trip to the chaplain's office. **1/Lt Joseph A. Micksch** of Cleveland, Ohio, was awarded the unit's first Bronze Star Medal for devising panels to detect damage or failures in the new, unfamiliar equipment brought overseas by the 392nd. **Master Sergeant Stephen A. Dergo** of Bridgeport, Conn., choirmaster turned mechanic, began the long series of consecutive missions on the aircraft he services without a mechanical failure. He now has nearly 125 straight missions without a failure.

"**Sergeant Joseph Distefano** of Medford, Mass., draftsman, became an ambassador, visiting British towns with names familiar to New England cars. The Group became acquainted with the "clark" of the works, a British civilian who supervised Air Ministry property. Public houses, the pubs that serve the British villages as community clubs, enriched many a G.I. memory and received honorable mention in many a G.I. letter. Mess Sergeants like **Technical Sergeant John Lutz** of Studerton, Penna., found that gratitude was as nebulous overseas as it was at home. **Captain Joseph R. Coppola** of Buffalo, N.Y., mess officer, found a British

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factory that had a license to make ice cream if it could get the ingredients. He converted the point.

"Life was not all sweetness and light. An anonymous friend wrote an airplane mechanic a long list of infidelities at home. Punishment was absorbed in telegrams... 'Son dying, wants to see you.' A year, two years became too long to expect a girl to wait. Operational personnel changed in 20 months. All the faces that meant 'Old Crew,' the teams that trained with the unit in the States, disappeared. Some were missing in action, turning up later as prisoners of war. Others were never heard from. Others were retired from combat in the European theater.

"Commanding officers who came overseas with the group's four squadrons under the leadership of Col Irvine A. Rendle underwent the same change. Now the four squadrons are commanded by **Major Leonard J. Barnes, Major Harley Sather, Major George C. Player Jr, and Major Myron H. Keilman.** Major Barnes was one of his squadron's original pilots. Major Keilman served his unit at one time as assistant operations officer. The other two squadron commanders joined the 392nd after it came overseas."

Hundred Missions Comparison

"Inasmuch as 11 November 1944 marked the completion of the Group's 200th mission," the 1825th Ordnance Supply & Maintenance Co. history says, "a chart [bottom left] showing the number of bombs by tonnage and type, dropped 'on target' from the 1st to the 100th mission, the 100th to the 200th, and the total, was prepared by the Supply Section



1825th Ordnance Co. personnel loading bombs in January 1944.

of this unit. These figures were compiled from records and reports based upon intelligence interrogations after each mission. Totals for chemical bombs were included to make

the picture complete.

"The 100th mission is more than an arbitrary dividing line because this mission was completed on D-Day. Consequently, any comparisons between totals, tonnages, and types of bombs dropped in the two periods are pointed up by this fact. For instance, the increase of tactical bombing in support of ground operations, particularly during the early part of the invasion, is clearly in evidence from a comparison of the tonnages of 100-pound demolition bombs, and 120-pound and 260-pound fragmentation bombs. Similar interesting and informative comparisons and analyses may be made on the basis of this chart.

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HUNDRED MISSIONS COMPARISON

	Type Bomb	<u>0 to 100</u> <u>Missions</u>		<u>101 - 200</u> <u>Missions</u>		<u>1 to 200</u> <u>Missions</u>	
		No. of Bombs	Tons	No. of Bombs	Tons	No. of Bombs	Tons
Ordnance	2000 lb	331	331.000	518	518.000	849	849.000
	1000 lb	998	499.000	1,874	937.000	2,872	1,436.000
	500 lb	10,057	2,514.250	11,138	2,784.500	21,195	5,298.750
	300 lb	751	112.650	738	110.700	1,489	223.350
	230 lb	261	32.625	6,243	780.375	6,504	813.000
	100 lb	7,406	370.300	12,058	602.900	19,464	973.200
	260 lb frag	0	0.000	762	75.250	762	75.250
	120 lb frag	<u>1,904</u>	<u>112.000</u>	<u>3,603</u>	<u>211.941</u>	<u>5,507</u>	<u>323.941</u>
	TOTAL	21,708	3,971.825	36,934	6,020.666	58,642	9,992.491
Chemical	M50	656	164.000	0	0.000	656	164.000
	M17	503	125.750	3,214	803.500	3,717	929.250
	M47A2	<u>17,021</u>	<u>586.931</u>	<u>3,807</u>	<u>131.276</u>	<u>20,828</u>	<u>718.207</u>
	TOTAL	18,180	876.681	7,021	934.776	25,201	1,811.457
GRAND TOTALS		39,888	4,848.506	43,955	6,955.442	83,843	11,803.948

This chart compares numbers and tons of bombs dropped during the first one hundred and second one hundred missions. In the Ordnance section, "frag" means fragmentation bombs while "Chemical" bombs are incendiaries (IBs) of varying weights and composition. The M50 was a 4-pound magnesium bomb, the M17 was a 500-pound cluster of M50s, and the M47A2 was a 100-pound IB filled with petroleum gel.

COMPARISON from page 7

"A representative of Station Ordnance was present at the interrogations to coordinate with S-2 [Intelligence] the exact number of bombs loaded as per verbal reports received from the squadron Ordnance Sections prior to interrogations, also the exact disposition of all bombs used per verbal reports received from the bombardiers participating in the mission at the interrogations. The interrogations have also proved to be an excellent opportunity to gain first-hand and immediate information on any malfunctions of bombs or ammunition, and on bombs accidentally dropped or jettisoned in England."



8AF Casualty Analysis Reports

At various times throughout the war, 8AF Headquarters researched and published a report titled *Probabilities of Combat Crews & Fighter Pilots Completing an Operational Tour*. It analyzed past losses (from death, capture, etc) to discern the mathematical likelihood that a combat airman would be able to finish his tour.

As the 392nd BG's own numbers confirm, the chance of finishing a combat tour got better throughout the war despite the additional missions required. Said another way, the number of missions required in a combat tour was undoubtedly raised because more men were surviving those missions.

6 June 1944 Report

When the 392nd BG flew its first combat sortie in September 1943, air crews had to complete 25 missions and fighter pilots 200 operational flying hours before they could be retired from combat. As probabilities of survival improved, tour requirements were raised.

The 6 June 1944 report compared loss rates for October 1943-January 1944 (25 missions or 200 hours), February-May 1944 (30 missions or 200 hours) and May 1944 only (30 missions or 300 hours).

In compiling these statistics, analysts assumed that "casualties will occur evenly through all levels of experience. In other words, it is assumed that the same proportion of remaining crews will be lost on the 20-25 missions as between the 1-6. The number actually completing the tour (30 sorties) will agree with actual experience, but the number remaining after 5, 10, or 15 sorties may vary from the mathematical expectancy."

Furthermore, "It must be borne in mind that this study is designed primarily to reflect the number of men who will complete a tour and it is not to be assumed that all of the men who are not expected to complete a tour are casualties."

Heavy Bomber vs. Fighter Odds

The data showed "heavy bomber crews have a 32%

better chance of completing 30 sorties than they had at 25 sorties prior to February." Additionally, "Bomber crews on the average require four months to complete 30 sorties compared with six months to complete 25 sorties formerly."

On the other hand, "fighter pilots have 17% less chance of completing 300 hours than they had at 200 hours." This is despite the fact that "Fighter pilots on the average require seven months to complete 300 hours compared with over a year to complete 200 hours formerly."

In the Oct-Jan period, the average fighter sortie was about 3 hours and the loss rate was 1% (so 509 of 1,000 pilots should complete a tour of 200 hours). From Feb-May, a sortie was 3.8 hours at a 1.2% loss rate (so 489 of 1,000 pilots should survive 200 hours). Using the May rate alone (4 hours per sortie with a 1.2% loss rate), just 404 of 1,000 pilots could be expected to complete their combat tour.

19 June 1944 Report

A follow-on report analyzed the fates of 13,394 men removed from the combat crew inventory between Feb-May 1944 for reasons other than completing their tour. It found 88.64% were Missing in Action, 4.74% were known to be Killed in Action or Died of Wounds, and 2.24% had been Seriously Wounded. Of the remainder, 3.62% were Relieved—Medical and Administrative and .76% were Non-Combat Killed or Died of Wounds.

Likely Status of Airmen Missing in Action

This report also delved into the "probabilities of survival" of those who were MIA. Analysts made "a detailed study of the German and Neutral Government reports as given to the Red Cross on men originally reported missing between 17 August 1942 and 30 November 1943."

Their findings, from a memorandum dated 25 May 1944, concluded that "the fate of 85% of all the men originally reported MIA will be ultimately known. Of these, 60% are likely to be survivors, and 25% KIA. For every 1,000 crew men missing, it would appear that—

555 will be reported POWs, or Interned

45 will escape or evade

250 will be reported dead

150 will be unreported after an elapsed time of 14 months; and presumed killed and unidentified, or lost at sea."

27 Mar 1945 Report

In its 27 Mar 1945 report, 8AF, for the first time (according to the reports held at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland), included a Risk Factor table that addressed casualty projections based on the type of plane flown. The table, shown at the top of page 9, assumes a normal tour length of 35 credit sorties for heavy bomber crew men and 270 operational flying hours for fighter pilots.

In both periods examined:

"(a) B-17 and B-24 crew men had practically an equal chance of completing the tour.

"(b) Bomber crew men had a significantly better chance than fighter pilots.

"(c) P-51 pilots had somewhat less probability than P-47 pilots."

The report also included a table (shown at the bottom of page 9) that provided more details on survival chances through April 1945.

See CASUALTY ANALYSIS on page 9

CASUALTY ANALYSIS from page 8

For example, Feb-May 1944 data showed that "of every 1,000 men who start a combat tour in this theater (after an elapsed time sufficient for the last man to have completed a tour)"—

●763 will be alive.

a. 419 will be retired after completing the tour and another 21 are relieved for medical or administrative reasons.

b. 284 will be POWs or Internees.

c. 23 will escape or evade.

d. 16 seriously wounded men will be removed from combat prior to completing a tour.

●237 will be dead or presumed dead.

a. 205 will be originally MIA, of which 128 will subsequently be reported dead and 77 presumed killed and unidentified or lost at sea.

b. 28 will be KIA or subsequently die of wounds.

c. 4 will be non-combat fatalities.

Summary

What do these Chance of Survival statistics really mean? They might have provided a reason for optimism, but all airmen knew that one could become a casualty on the last mission as easily as on the first. When flak was bursting all around, sometimes only luck kept a plane from

RISK FACTOR

	Credit Sorties	Total Casualties (KIA, MIA, Seriously Wounded & Non-Combat Casualties)	Casualty Loss Rate	Probability of the Number of Each 1,000 Men Participating to Complete Their Tour at Casualty Rates Experienced During:
<u>B-17</u>				
Nov-Dec 1944	22,884	2,312	1.01	701 men = 70% likelihood
Jan-Feb 1945	<u>26,071</u>	<u>1,772</u>	<u>0.68</u>	787 men = 79% likelihood
Nov 1944-Feb 1945	48,955	4,084	0.83	747 men = 75% likelihood
<u>B-24</u>				
Nov-Dec 1944	9,286	795	0.86	739 men = 74% likelihood
Jan-Feb 1945	<u>10,010</u>	<u>688</u>	<u>0.69</u>	782 men = 78% likelihood
Nov 1944-Feb 1945	19,296	1,483	0.77	764 men = 76% likelihood
<u>P-51</u>				
Nov-Dec 1944	23,107	192	0.83	587 men = 59% likelihood
Jan-Feb 1945	<u>21,827</u>	<u>285</u>	<u>1.31</u>	450 men = 45% likelihood
Nov 1944-Feb 1945	44,934	477	1.06	520 men = 52% likelihood
<u>P-47</u>				
Nov-Dec 1944	3,416	28	0.82	605 men = 61% likelihood
Jan-Feb 1945	<u>1,120</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>1.07</u>	540 men = 54% likelihood
Nov 1944-Feb 1945	4,536	40	0.88	598 men = 60% likelihood

being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

And, for relatives at home, these statistics would not reflect their joy or anguish, depending on which number represented their loved one's fate.

CHANCE OF SURVIVAL—1,000 BOMBER CREWMEN

Period	Total Living	Retired & Relieved	E & Es	Seriously Wounded	POWs or Interned	Total Dead	KIA or Died of Wounds	Reported or Presumed Dead	Non-Combat Deaths
Feb - May 1944	763	440	23	16	284	237	28	205	4
May - Jul 1944	853	653	15	14	171	147	21	123	3
Aug - Sep 1944	866	669	12	35	150	134	17	109	8
Oct - Nov 1944	879	712	11	29	127	121	19	93	9
Dec - Jan 1945	876	733	9	29	105	124	39	75#	10
Feb - Apr 1945	909	818	6	8	77	91	25	57*	9

Retired = completed a combat tour or was otherwise relieved from combat duty

E & E = Escaped or Evaded captivity

75 # = 47 reported dead and 28 presumed dead

57 * = 36 reported dead and 21 presumed dead

8th AF VICTORY SQUADRON WAR BOND DRIVE

July-September 1944

Not long after D-Day, the 8th Air Force announced an ambitious plan to increase the amount of money its personnel were saving—and help fund the war. Called the Victory Squadron War Bond Drive, the goal was to have its airmen divert \$6 million into savings through the purchase of war bonds. The drive would run 29 July-2 Sep 1944.

To encourage participation, three grand prizes were offered. First prize was a five-minute telephone call to anyone in the U.S. Second prize was an appearance on the Eagle Radio Program so the winner could say “hello to the folks.” Third prize was a ticket to a dinner theater party in London as the guest of Bebe Daniels, an American actress living in London and starring in a popular radio program.



Capt Jack Teufel, 1825th Commander, will soon sell the first prize 8AF Victory Squadron War Bond Drive raffle ticket to M/Sgt Howard F. Sinzinger.

The 392nd wholeheartedly jumped on the bandwagon. The 208th Finance Co. history says that “Cooperation is being established among all commands to achieve maximum results.” During the campaign, bonds could be purchased not only through the Special Services Office and the Finance Office but also at the Post Office, the Red

Cross Club, and the Squadron Orderly Rooms. In fact, “No officer or enlisted man should be able to move half a dozen feet without being reminded in some fashion that he should be spending his money on War Bonds.”

Quotas were assigned to all station units, which 465th Sub Depot historian 1/Lt George Griffith wrote were “computed on the ability to buy bonds in amount of actual cash received on the pay roll for each unit.” A War Bond Thermometer was created to show the amount of daily sales and how close Station 118 was to its quota of \$89,783.81.



The 576th Sqdn's raffle during the Bond drive. L-R: propeller specialist S/Sgt Richard L. Manley, 1/Sgt Theodore Zeman, and Sqdn CO Maj Charles L. Lowell.

To encourage participation, several units announced supplemental prizes. The 465th Sub Depot offered: “First prize, three-day pass; second, a quart of scotch whiskey, plus one day off to consume same so as to recover from the effects; third, a two-day pass.”

Winners were machinist Cpl Aubrey Burke (first), supply technician M/Sgt John Murray (second), and admin & tech clerk Sgt Custer Vincent (third).

Aubrey no longer remembers where he went for his prize. “That could have been a trip to Glasgow (I think) via a C-64 Norseman that we’d just done a wing repair on. Seven passengers on a bench seat. A hell of a time to get

See BOND DRIVE on page 11

FOLDED WINGS REPORT

Please report the death of a member or spouse and provide a copy of the newspaper obituary if possible.

Name of deceased _____ Unit/Sqdn _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of death _____ Survivors _____

Reported by _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

The 392nd BGMA is engaged in a fund-raising effort to financially support our website, www.b24.net. It contains the history of the 392nd Bomb Group. You could make no greater tribute to your loved one than a donation for this living and ongoing memorial to the 392nd. Please send this report, hopefully with your check payable to the 392nd BGMA-Website, but send it with or without it, to: Annette Tison, 9107 Wood Pointe Way, Fairfax Station, VA 22039

BOND DRIVE from page 10

airsick. Don't remember how I washed my cap. Or, it may have been a trip to London via rail. Remember having to go to an air raid shelter during a V-2 attack."

The 10th Station Complement Sqdn history tells of their early struggle to reach their quota but how "The officers and enlisted men of the 10th really cooperated during this drive. Some of the enlisted men giving till it hurt and digging into their pockets even deeper to pay for their bonds. On pay day the 1,000 kisser bond drawing was held and for a one pound chance (or 4 bucks to the Yankee reader) Private First Class Harry A. Baur of Base Utilities won the big bond. He was a happy boy and at first wouldn't believe that his was the lucky number to come out of the hat. In any fashion the 10th retired from the bond drive with a very good showing considering the rank and pay that this outfit has not got and which the Bomb Squadrons do have with their Air echelon and all."

A \$1,000 bond, raffled off during Maj Glenn Miller's concert on 25 Aug 1944, was won by 579th waist gunner S/Sgt Robert A. White. The front page of the program encouraged attendees to "Buy Your Share."

Station 118 Results

When the drive ended, the 392nd had bought nearly \$80,000 more in bonds than their quota. The 2101st Engineer Fire Fighting Platoon achieved 446 percent of its quota, the highest overage on base. The 577th Sqdn saved the most money, \$47,500.

On 6 Sep 1944, Commanding Officer Col Lorin L. Johnson sent a



The program for Maj Glenn Miller's show on 25 Aug 1944.

memo to all personnel. It quoted a message from Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morganthau Jr to Gen Doolittle: "I have just seen the record on your Eighth Air Force War Bond Campaign, and I want to congratulate you and your men on the enthusiastic way in which this campaign has been received."

"It is a great inspiration to find your men, who are doing so much to win the war on the actual fighting fronts, also so willingly lending their money to help pay for their fighting equipment."

"The people back home have done an excellent job of supporting the Bond drives, but what you are doing, in my estimation, sets a new high record."

Col Johnson added, "It is indeed a great pleasure to learn that Station 118 has gone over the top in the Eighth Air Force Victory Bond Drive. Each unit has exceeded the quota assigned and this resulted in our exceeding the very high quota of \$89,783.81. In fact, this Station was the third highest in the Second Division, reaching the mark of 189 percent."

"You are to be commended for a job well done."

"This is another example of the spirit of cooperation and teamwork which is ever-present on this Post. My

congratulations on this fine showing."

8AF Bond Drive First Prize Winner

A clipping from an unnamed newspaper announced, "With hundreds of GIs listening in, M/Sgt Howard F. Sinzinger, Liberator base ordnance worker [from the 1825th] who won first prize in a contest sponsored by the Eighth Air Force in connection with its "Victory Squadron" War Bond campaign, spoke to his parents in a five-minute Transatlantic telephone call to Westlake, Ohio."

" 'This may be a little premature,' he concluded the conversation with his mother, 'but I want to wish you and dad a merry Christmas and Happy New Year.' "

War Bond Drives in the U.S.

According to <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1682.html>, "The last time the United States issued war bonds was during World War II, when full employment collided with rationing, and war bonds were seen as a way to remove money from circulation as well as reduce inflation."

"Issued by the U.S. Government, they were first called Defense Bonds. The name was changed to War Bonds after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. Known as debt securities for the purpose of financing military operations during war time, the bonds yielded a mere 2.9 percent return after a 10-year maturity."

"At the end of World War II, January 3, 1946, the last proceeds from the Victory War Bond campaign were deposited into the U.S. Treasury. More than 85 million Americans—half the population — purchased bonds totaling \$185.7 billion" despite the fact that the U.S. annual median income was just \$2,000."

392nd WAR BOND DRIVE RESULTS

Organization	Quota	Sales	% of Quota
2101st Fire Fighting Platoon	305.26	1,360.00	446
1825th Ordnance Co.	1,113.30	3,750.00	337
1217th Quartermaster Co.	817.02	2,400.00	294
577th Squadron	17,354.86	47,500.00	274
806th Chemical Co.	843.95	2,100.00	249
Group Headquarters	2,576.74	6,125.00	238
576th Squadron	17,884.57	38,150.00	213
2974th Finance Department	134.67	380.00	208
10th Sta. Complement Sqdn.	4,275.62	8,650.00	202
586th Postal Unit	206.50	395.00	191
1287th Military Police Co.	1,158.00	2,000.00	173
465th Sub Depot	5,261.23	8,060.00	153
578th Squadron	18,118.01	25,090.00	138
579th Squadron	<u>19,734.08</u>	<u>23,905.00</u>	<u>121</u>
TOTAL	\$89,783.81	\$169,765.00	189

The *Daily Bulletin* for 7 Sep 1944 announced the results of the Victory Squadron War Bond Drive. They are arranged by percent of quota achieved; the quota assigned each unit represented the amount of cash its members had available on pay day.

IDEAS AND INSPIRATION

by Char Heim

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

I had the opportunity recently to watch a 2013 movie (*Walking with the Enemy*) about the German occupation of Hungary during World War II. It was very graphic and moving. I have been fortunate to hear so many reflective stories from veterans of this war and my admiration of their accomplishments cannot be put into words. God bless them all for the freedom we appreciate now.

This particular experience, however, gave me new insight into not only the courage of our U.S. and allied soldiers, but also of the fear and persecution of innocent civilians only attempting to maintain their way of life and their faith in God.

Let us all remember that COURAGE does not always roar but is often just a soft voice at the end of the day that says, "I will do better tomorrow." May this be a goal for all of us who try and fail, only to try again and be successful.

Be courageous and know that there is always that soft voice to lead you.

392nd Bomb Group Memorial Association
9107 Wood Pointe Way
Fairfax Station, VA 22039
USA

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

First Class Mail



**But we...shall be remember'd;
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

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

∞FOLDED WINGS∞

Joseph J. Faulkner, 577, July 14, 2017
Joseph C. Ortiz, 576, July 2, 2017
Jack A. Teufel, 1825th Ordnance Co., March 5, 2017
Paul E. Keagle, 576, date not known
Ann Garoffolo-Goar, widow of James V. Goar Jr, Group
Headquarters, August 25, 2017
Harvey B. DeVoe Jr, 578, August 22, 2017
John W. "Jack" Newton, Associate, August 21, 2017
Edward C. Shapley, 577, August 27, 2017