

NEWS LETTER

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

December 1975

THE DAY SUMMER BEGAN

by Jonathan Mardle

(Printed by permission of the Eastern Daily Press, Norwich, England)

All of a sudden it was summer, with May, chestnuts and roses all in bloom at the same time, and Nature seemingly determined to forget that only four days ago it had been snowing. At least Providence had rewarded us for voting "yes" to the European Economic Community by giving us, the day afterwards, a sample of a continental summer. I nevertheless sympathised with the shoppers who maintained that continental lettuces at 15p (which would have been three shillings in old-fashioned, undecimalised money) were sheer robbery. I looked forward to the warm weather at last putting some heart into the struggling lettuces in my own garden. I went to the allotment, and told the potatoes, peas and onions that England expected every vegetable to do its duty. For, earnestly as I confide that Europe will be a good thing for the coming generation, I still feel the best hope for my own, elderly generation is to play the French at their own game, and convert ourselves into an English peasantry — independent, as far as we can make ourselves, of the juggernauts and the supermarkets.

* * *

Contradictorily, while the newspapers and television were full of Europe and referendum, some of us locally had felt our hearts warm towards America. This was on account of the visit of old comrades of the 2nd U.S. Air Division, and their wives, to their war memorial which is in Norwich. We renewed friendships made at the time when they were our allies against a common enemy. England lived then, and for five years afterwards, in a siege economy. Is it only through the haze of memory that we seem to have been happier then, when we were trying to share the hardships equally, than we have ever been since in "the affluent society," "the permissive society" or this yet unchristened society of the mid-1970's, when we seem powerless to disentangle ourselves from political and industrial strife in order to defeat an economic enemy called inflation?

Most of us live in a state which thirty years ago we should have thought superabundant, accepting as necessities things that down to the 1950s we should have deemed almost unattainable luxuries. Yet we squabble and fight for more, even while we apprehend that the squabbling may reduce us to the same predicament as Germany in the 1920s — the predicament from which the Germans sought salvation in Hitler. We envy both the nations we defeated and the nations we liberated in 1945. We are fond — much too fond — of calling Britain the sick man of Europe. There is none of our domestic ills that entry into the European Community, of itself, will cure. But it could be of the most powerful assistance if we would but stop feeling sorry for ourselves, and accept, in order to win an economic battle, something of the self-discipline whereby we survived the war.

* * *

In these circumstances, it was both surprising and reassuring to be told by our American friends ten days ago that we looked happy. It is said that the British are never happy unless they are grumbling. Perhaps these Americans understood this. Moreover, they are people who — in spite of their reputation for telling tall stories about themselves and their country when they are abroad — are given to self-deprecation when they are at home. What with Watergate, Vietnam and the race-riots, they have been through a worse ordeal of national doubt and self-questioning, these past few years, than ourselves.

Not that we spent much time discussing these grave matters. We were wallowing, as were the veterans of the 2nd Air Division, in nostalgia. And we were more inclined, as the English always are, to apologise for the weather than anything else. I met the veterans' president, Colonel Griffin. He was wearing a gorgeous blue and white striped suit that spoke of hotter sunshine than we ever experience, and he told me that nowadays he alternates between Florida and Hawaii for his residence. I made due apologies for a wind that was blowing straight out of the Arctic.

He said, "You don't have to apologise to me. I spent three winters at Shipdham. Oh, those Februaries — and the cattle standing with their tails to the wind and rain!"

It was the same when on the following Monday, June 2nd, the county of Norfolk gave what ought to have been a gorgeous reception for the Americans at Blickling Hall, with a marquee on the lawn by the lake. The ladies faced it with coats and shawls over their long frocks, and the Americans were stoical in raincoats. Girls in Jacobean costume danced heroically, in rain that was only just short of being snow, to the music of a damp but cheerful consort of viols. But what fetched everybody out into the open was a fly-past of a Lancaster bomber, a Hurricane and a Spitfire — the Americans could hardly have been more moved if we had managed to produce a flight of their own Liberators.

Neither was it necessary to explain that, as far as the weather was concerned, the reception had but met the fate commonly reserved for any open-air entertainment in England, from pageants to Test matches for school sports days. The Americans were prepared to accept anything as normal English weather. All they would talk about was the emotion of the fly-past, the beauty of Blickling, and the wonderful greenness of the countryside. It was a pity that by the time summer began, on Friday, most of them had gone home, but I do not think they had any regrets.

Perhaps, even in such a minor matter as a wintry beginning of June, we had been encouraged to think better of ourselves and of England.

(Ed. note: I think there is a message here for everybody.)

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JAMES STEWART ON QUIET VISIT

(Eastern Evening News)

Only a handful of people were around when a magnificent 1920 maroon Rolls-Royce pulled up outside Norwich Central Library yesterday morning.

There just had to be somebody in the car to justify such a regal arrival. There was — American actor and film star James Stewart.



James Stewart in the Second Air Div. U.S.A.A.F. memorial in Norwich.

Norfolk holds many memories for Stewart, who flew up from London where he is appearing in "Harvey" in the West End.

During the war he was stationed at Tibenham, where he was commanding officer of the 703rd Bombardment Squadron, and yesterday he travelled up to open the Norfolk Gliding Club's air show there, visit an old friend and view the American memorial section of Norwich library.

Accompanied by his agent, Mr. Laurie Bellew, he left Leavesden, near Watford, at 10:40 a.m. in an Air Anglia Aztec.

According to Mr. Bellew the flight was "bumpy" to begin with but otherwise smooth. He said that Mr. Stewart was most interested to see once-familiar landmarks over Tibenham and Hethel, as the plane made a slight detour for his benefit.

After arriving at Norwich Airport they

were taken to the library. The familiar stately figure emerged, greyer than many may remember him, to be greeted by Mr. Tom Eaton, chairman of the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division, United States Air Force, and Mr. Desmond Mortlock, county librarian.

Although a private visit, a handful of fans surrounded him and he readily signed autographs before being taken into the library courtyard to inspect the fountain outside the memorial.

Inside, he was introduced to Mrs. F. M. Roualle, vice-chairman of the county libraries association, and her husband, a senior, executive of Anglia Television.

Showing him round the section was Miss Joan Benns, principal assistant librarian, Norwich division. He was told of the moneyraising efforts to provide funds for the memorial by the trustees of the 2nd Air Division of which he was a contributor.



He was left to browse round and spent a few private minutes studying the roll of honour.

"Very, very impressive," was his comment and with handshakes all round and genuine thanks he returned to the Rolls, where he stopped for a few moments to talk to admirers, and left with a gentle wave and headed off in the direction of Poringland to visit an old friend.

SORRY ABOUT THAT!



by
George A. Reynolds
(458th BG)

9 October 1944:

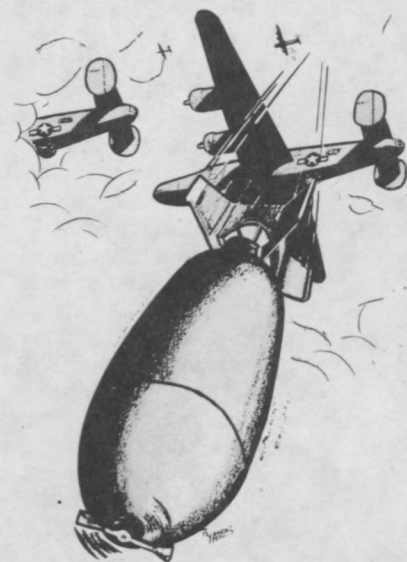
The Group was airborne over Belgium en route to Osna-bruck at 26,000 feet in variable weather when suddenly a much higher wall of clouds stood ahead. Bomb loads and a vast number of aircraft prevented the bomber force from climbing over the towering vapor. So, with little choice, the armada plowed into the soup hoping that clear air lay just beyond.

The lead crew of the 755th Sq. was a little edgy because this was their 13th

mission, and after what seemed like hours on the gauges, the AC ordered his formation of 20 Libs to start climbing for safety — he thought. Momentarily, the B-24s began breaking out, and remarks filtered out on the airwaves about how nice it was to be a part of the world again. At this moment, a higher element of bombers began releasing its bombs from 200 feet above.

Firecrackers sailed in front of, beside and in back of the 458th ships without so much as scratching one. But millions of jagged nerve endings poured out into the birds and bounced over the flight decks. Surely no one breathed for five minutes.

Nine crews bombed by PFF and hit the objective, a marshaling yard. The other 11 carried their cargo back to Horsham. Thirteen is unlucky — but it ain't necessarily so!



ALBATROSS TO EAGLE – Col. D. A. Van Epps

by Garry L. Fry

(An account of a memorable show flown by Col. David A. Van Epps, USAF ret., with the 4th F.G. from Debden, Essex on Jan. 29, 1944).



G. L. Fry

Then Capt. Van Epps, Williams Bay Wis., had joined the 334FS of the 4th FG on Sept. 26, 44, after transferring from the British R.N.'s Fleet Air Arm. He had been possibly the only American to command a FAA fighter squadron in WWII. During his FAA service, David flew from the carriers HMS Victorious, HMS Butler, and HMS Argus, as well as from many shore stations. Types he flew in the FAA included, Seafires, Hurricanes, Gladiators, Martlets, Fulmars, Swordfish, Rocs, Skuas, and Fairey Battles. Just after being commissioned a RN Commander, he transferred to the USAAF and went to the 8th AF P-47 sqd. at Atcham a/b, Shropshire.

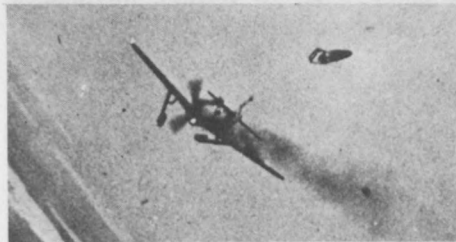


Upon meeting the giant 7-ton Jug for the first time, all he could think was the normal exclamation made by former Spitfire pilots at this moment; "Lord, does it actually fly". However, he soon came to appreciate the warm roomy cockpit and the kite's fine turn of speed. The closest call in training, came when he fainted in flight from loss of oxygen, because his British mask didn't fit the American connection in the a/c. Only quick recovery saved him from a crash. A couple of weeks later he was on his way to the home of the famous RAF Eagle Sqds., now known as the 4th FG at Debden, AAF Station F-356.

His relatively high FAA rank and experience did not relieve him from starting at the bottom as a lowly wing-

man to Lts. At 0915 hrs. on Jan. 29, 44, Capt. Van Epps found himself taking off down Debden's macadam runway alongside 334FS' C.O., Capt. Henry "Hank" Mills, as his wingman. He was flying P-47 no. 42-8641 coded QP-I on F.O. 226, a penetration support escort to the 1st. Air Task Forces' B-17s on their way to hit Frankfurt, Ger. L/Col. Selden Edner was leading the Grp. and Capt. Mills led 334FS as White section in QP-Q. Later top ace, Lt. Duane Beeson was element lead in QP-B with Lt. Archie Chatterley off his wing in QP-G.

None in White section aborted and they crossed the enemy coast at Blankenberghe, Belg. at 1000 hrs. Rendezvous with the 3rd. Bomb Div. was made at 1027 hrs. at 24,000 ft. No enemy action developed during time of escort, which was broken off at 1046 hrs. NE of Malmedy, Belg. At 1105 hrs. near Hasselt, Mills spotted 16-plus mixed ME109s & FW190s converging on a leading box of inbound bombers and led the sqd. into an attack. Mills selected a section of 4-ME109s and got in good strikes on their no. 4 man, who began smoking. The e/a dove for the clouds below followed by Mills and Van Epps, who chased him in and out of cloud. Finally Mills got another burst into the 109 before Van Epps began firing. The Jerry pilot bailed out after Van Epps fired at him. As they were climbing back to altitude, four more of the scattered 109s bounced them and Van Epps became separated from Mills in the fast break into the Jerries.



FW-190 taking hits and canopy flying off as pilot prepares to vacate dommed bird.

Capt. Van Epps now relates the rest of the mission first-hand: "I verified for Hank that the Jerry pilot bailed out. Four more 109s came after us and I lost Hank in a quick turn into their 4-o'clock attack. All four came after me and I was too high to make it to the cloud below. We got into a turning "Bee" and they boxed me in. No matter which way I turned, one was always slicing in on me. This kept on for some minutes as we dropped lower and lower, until I got hit in the right wing with a burst of their 20mm cannon. With a hell of an explosion, a hole big enough to stick a man's head and shoulders thru opened in the wing. I also got one engine cylinder shot

out and went spinning down into the clouds below, towards which we had been losing height in the turning.

While I was dropping thru the clouds, my hydraulic fluid caught fire and burned until it ran out. At the same time I was trying to level out on needle-ball-air-speed. I broke out of cloud bottom at about 10,000 ft. fairly level and congratulated myself on a great instrument job, and very thankful the fire had burned itself out.

I was just barely holding altitude with the shot-out cylinder and crossing the coast when I began getting heavy Flak due to being so low. I started yelling as loud as I could for "Apples", that day's controller. He came on the R/T with a smooth proper British accent saying, "you're alright now ole' boy", and soon had me plotted and on course for the English coast. In the meantime I was trying to maintain 5,000 ft. with the engine banging away, but keeping her up.

Crossing the beautiful coast, "Apples" got me onto the runway base-leg at Lashenden. But right then the poor engine quit cold, out of gas. Luckily I was close enough to glide into the field without flaps and stopped after a long roll. I got down and fervently kissed the ground in the approved manner. The field was an abandoned RAF grass satellite and while I was standing with my torso thru the wing hole checking it, one of the locals approached and asked in their inimitable speech, "I say ole' chap, are you alright?" Later the Group sent it's Miles Master to ferry me back to base. Hank Mills had reported the kill and his first words upon seeing me walk in, was not a question of my well-being, but rather, "Hey, did that guy bail out?"

Capt. Van Epps went on and took part in the sqd's. big battles of WWII, winning a DFC in March, 44. On Easter Sunday, April 9, 44, he was forced to bail out of his burning P-51B Mustang QP-T, when it lost it's coolant at 1,000 ft. He was returning on the deck with several others from a escort show, when they spotted parked e/a at Tutrow a/d S. of Osna-bruck, Ger. The alerted gunners hit him on an unwise second pass and he bailed low, just managing to drop between two houses at 1325 hrs. The rest of the war was spent at Stalag Luft 1 POW camp, where he won a Bronze Star for destroying the camp's POW records. A guard laid them down for a moment and Van Epps quickly snatched them and ran around the camp distributing them to the prisoners, who swiftly destroyed them. Needless to say, the guard was condemned to the Russian Front. After the war, David stayed in the new USAF and retired after a distinguished career as a full Colonel.

HOWLING BANSHEE — the TWO-IN-ONE LIBERATOR

by H. W. Drinkut (3rd SAD)

During 1944 an 8th Air Force Liberator was returning to its base in England from a mission to Germany. Its hydraulic system had been damaged by flak, and it was forced to land without use of its brakes. The aircraft crashed off the end of the runway and into a high bank. Lt. A. R. "Dick" Ayers of Bement, Illinois, Engineering Officer from 3D Strategic Air Depot, AAF 505, Watton, examined the plane and found that the entire nose section was so badly crushed and torn that the aircraft would have to be salvaged.

On following day another Liberator became involved in a taxiing accident which twisted and sprung the rear fuselage back of the bomb bay, beyond repair. Lt. John H. Blake, III, of West Orange, New Jersey, another Engineering Officer from 3d SAD, was sent to examine the damage, and his findings also resulted in placing this aircraft in the salvage category.

That evening Lt. Ayers and Lt. Blake were comparing notes when the same thought occurred to them almost simultaneously. "Why not join the undamaged front section with the undamaged rear section of the second aircraft?" This would make one complete heavy bomber from the two wrecks. As far as they knew, it had been done once before in Italy but never in the ETO, and never under field conditions by a Mobile Repair Unit as would be the case here, since both sections of the aircraft were too large to be transported to the 3D Strategic Air Depot for assembly. Assembly was made



at Horsham St Faith, home of 458th Bomb Group.

A Mobile Repair unit, with M/Sgt. William E. McIver, of Greensboro, North Carolina, as the Crew Chief, was sent to the scene and went to work immediately. They built their own scaffolding, jigs and cribbing as they went along. The two damaged planes were separated at the center of the bomb bay, and the undamaged halves joined together using specially designed stress plates.

Despite the magnitude of the job, the removal and replacing of thousands of rivets, a maze of control cables and hundreds of electrical, hydraulic and oxygen connections, the twelve men on M/Sgt. McIver's crew completed the job in twenty-nine days. So well were the sections lined up and joined together that when the inspector made his final check, he found that less than one fourth of the variations allowed at the factory had been used. Mathematically the splicing figured considerably stronger than the original design. Capt. Henry R. Miller, Jr., of Mt. Kisco, New York, the Test Pilot who flew the aircraft after completion, reported that it handled perfectly and cruised at about ten miles per hour faster than the average plane of its type.

This "TWO-IN-ONE" Liberator — HOWLING BANSHEE — whose front half had 30 missions and whose rear half had 26 missions, was returned to operational status at Horsham St Faith. This is another typical example of the excellent work performed by personnel of the 3D Strategic Air Depot, Watton, England, for the B-24 bombardment groups of the 2d Air Division!

NECROLOGY

Harvey C. Elliott Headquarters
Norman H. Jacobi . . . 389th BG
William L. Brooks . . . 466th BG
Michael E. Zobel . . . 466th BG
Eddie B. Katz 466th BG

NOTICE

Steve Birdsall is looking for new material for his next book, which will tell stories of the American bombers of World War II. Naturally there is a large section on the Liberator, and he is looking for unusual stories and photos, as well as "afterthoughts" on material in his *Log of the Liberators*. He needs first-hand stories of the memorable missions, and photos and details on the most memorable B-24s . . . the hard-luck ships, those that flew one hundred missions, those that survived against the odds, and unusual aircraft such as the formation assembly leaders. The book will take the subjective approach, and try to truly capture the spirit of the events of thirty years ago . . . and the only people who can tell that story for future generations are you, the people who were there. All photographs and other material will be returned to you of course. Write to Steve at 20 Royal Street, Chatswood 2067, Sydney, Australia.

467th & THE REUNION

by Doris Betcher

The 467th B.G. was represented by 45 persons at the reunion in Norwich in May. Among those attending were Col. and Mrs. Albert Shower, Col. and Mrs. Allen Herzberg (Air Executive), Col. Capers Holmes (Group Navigator), and Tom Goodyear (Group Historian).



(L to R) Ray Betcher, Roy Rainwater, George Dong, Joe Abernathy and Myron Henshaw.

Everyone especially enjoyed the visit to Rackheath where the tour bus managed to drive us down a few narrow roads after we converged on the Green Man Pub for lunch. One woman resident in the area was very annoyed that we disturbed the "pigs" on her farm near the former fuel dump, but Col. Shower assured her that we only come once every 30 years! Someone from the fiberglass boat company that operates on part of the old base took us around that area to see the former briefing room and other 467th B.G. buildings in use in 1944 and 1945, now being used for boat building. The control tower still stands (with an auto scrap yard next to it). There are occasional Nissen huts on the old base and some of the roads and walkways are still as they were.

We wish to thank everyone who has helped in locating former 467th members. Garry Fry, a W.W. II history buff from Elgin, Illinois, offered to try and find persons in his area, and has had very good results in adding to our membership in the 2 A.D. Association. He is now working on the rest of the state of Illinois, using a list of 140 1947 addresses. Virgil Reinders located seven men in the Peoria area, and one attended the 1974 reunion in N. Carolina. George Church has worked on a list of names and addresses in Massachusetts, and Robert Edwards has lists of North and South Carolina people. Many others have furnished current addresses, and every bit of information is greatly appreciated.

Hope to see all of you in Valley Forge in July 1976.

Attlebridge Notes

13

(466th BOMB GROUP)

Editor:

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THE MECONIS VIEW

Many of you know that much of the 466th History (to be called "Attlebridge Diaries") will be built around the 72 page diary written by Claude V. (Mac) Meconis. His diary covers much of the early months of the 466th war. Mac was the co-Pilot on the "Snark" crew. They flew the a/c with the tiger teeth on the nose (see page 132 of "The Mighty Eighth", by Roger Freeman for a picture of the crew and the plane).

Recently Meconis sent in copies of letters he wrote to his crew members in 1965 and 1968. They included excellent descriptions of his post-war visits to Attlebridge. I think you will enjoy these excerpts.

"We drove to Attlebridge and found the old 466th base...almost every road near Attlebridge leads somewhere near the old field, so we couldn't miss it. Got right to the edge of the east-west runway, and had one of the turkey farm employees lead us to the control tower...Boy, I never thought I'd ever enjoy coming back to this hunk of ground again, especially on that day in July 1944 when we left it - but it was really like coming back to an old friend, that darn control tower. I climbed up to the top, looked northeast, and sure enough - there behind a clump of trees was the Attlebridge flint-faced church tower, as we used to see it from our revetment. And the old runway from which we took off on D-Day. And the old bomb-dump area, and the hedge at the end of the runway, and the area where our briefing room once was, and the little road that led away from the field to our cold barracks. I was like a little kid, running from pillar to post, shooting movie film and still film and recounting for the turkey farm managers what had happened and where. I could see old Lt. Furnace sliding his crate in on two engines (p135, 'The Mighty Eighth') and Laubrich doing a lazy eight over the field, and 'Jamaica', Booth's old crate turning down the runway. And a bunch of sad sacks sitting out on the cold wet grass waiting for Shorty to finish putting in those damn guns. It was a moment full of nostalgia, I tell you."

"Before we drove off, I ran the little car right down the full length of the runway, and could hear Dike calling 'wheels up' before we left the ground, 21 years ago..."

"Then Mary and I toured Norwich again, through the Castle, and down London Street, and over to the Eales home in Thorpe area, and past the Norwich Cathedral, over the River Wensum, and to our hotel, the Maids Head."

After a trip in 1968, Mac wrote this to his crew: "Mr. Leonard Temple, who manages the farm, took us for a tour of the old 466th perimeter, and while we were passing a revetment area, he said, right out of the blue, with no prompting, 'Over there's where they used to have a B-24 that we haven't forgotten because it had a great big shark's mouth on the front of it, big teeth and all, and I believe they called it Snark.' How about that? Twenty-four years and he hadn't forgotten our old Snark. He was also flabbergasted that it was the Snark co-pilot he was telling this to."

"Then, at Cambridge, I found Lt. Mogford's grave. He was the only one I knew still buried there. He died in a collision... There are lots of other 466th graves there, but the names were unknown to me. It's a nice place, up a rolling hill, overlooking Cambridge. I walked around in a drizzle and cold wind late in the day."

"We did the pubs in Norwich, had 'arf and 'arfs, black and tans, and all those plain British drinks."

"On the Continent, we visited the Normandy beaches, drove through Port en Bessin, the town we bombed on June 6, 1944, and walked down into the old German bunkers, saw bomb craters still around them, and visited various beach museums where they tell the story of that morning. It's a sad place to visit. The French still remember the Americans who liberated them."



This is one of the photos taken by Oakes on Blois mission. Note that this records a direct hit on bridge approaches (top of photo). In view of the fact that this photo was taken from the 12th 466th plane over the target and they bombed in three ship elements, the bursts pictured must be 466 bombs.

THE BLOIS BRIDGE

You may remember that we reported a low level raid that took place 11 June 1944 in the March 1975 issue (Attlebridge Notes #10). On that date 19 a/c of the 466th bombed the Blois Bridge from altitudes ranging from 4,900 to 6,350 feet. The Narrative History reported that the briefing, "ordered destruction of the vital



Capt. Ollum, Lt. J. C. McCullough, Capt. J. Smith, and Capt. I. Burton (l to r) of the 458th BG look at strike photos that won them the new DFC's they are wearing. B/Gen. Walter R. Peck, CG 96th CBW made the presentation (anyone know of Gen. Peck's whereabouts?).

span 'at all costs.' Second, third and fourth runs, if necessary, were ordered. The Group was to descend to an altitude (any altitude) from which accurate, visual bombing could and would be performed. To do the job the Group did come down to 6500 feet and from that height the bridge was completely wrecked. It was the first low-altitude bombing ever performed by heavy bombers based in Britain."

In response to my request for more information on this mission, Harlan Oakes (787th S-2) reported that he managed to sneak on Warren Burt's a/c for that mission. "We were briefed to rendezvous at 18,000 feet, and to bomb the bridge at Blois - no matter what the circumstances, we were to visually drop on the bridge. It was one of the keys to the German supply for the Normandy area. Remember this was right after D-Day. Everyone was pinned down to the Normandy hedge rows and beaches."

"We faked a run towards Paris and then turned south. Our run on the bridge started at about 6,000 feet and we bombed at about 5,000 feet."

"Since I had my chute strapped on, and was already snapping pictures, Pop Julian (Burt's waist gunner) and I opened the escape hatch and decided to take pictures of the run with the K-20. Pop held on to my chute straps and I leaned out as far as was prudent and shot the series as fast as I could."

The bombing was done in three ship elements, so nearly everyone had a crack at it.

In the same mail that brought me the Oakes account (with photos) I received a letter from Waldo Butler (photo interpreter and public relations for the 458th BG). He reported, "The low level mission was led by the 458th's special 'Azon' squadron which attacked numerous tactical targets using radio directed bombs which could be steered into the target by the bombardier after he released them." Waldo sent photos of DFC's being awarded to the mission leaders. One photo (printed here) shows several airmen looking at a strike photo that looks much like the shot that our Oakes said he took during the 466th run.

I don't know that this adds much to the picture, but I hope it will trigger others to come forward with their evidence - opinions don't count.



KIELMAN

WE REMEMBER: THE GREAT DIVERSION MISSION

by Myron H. Kielman and Harrison S. Cassell, Jr.

(392nd BG)



CASELL

On 4 October 1943, the 392nd Bombardment Group had been operational for just a month. We had flown two bombing missions and five North Sea diversion type missions — to draw German fighters from the B-17 groups bombing efforts. All were flown without a loss. For our mission of 23 September the commander, Colonel Edward Timberlake, of the newly formed 2nd Bombardment Division commended Colonel "Bull" Rendle as follows:

"It gave me great satisfaction to note the way your group executed the ordered flight plan —. The timing indicated good air discipline and navigation, two of the prime requisites of a successful mission."

The 14th Combat Wing commander, Colonel Leon Johnson added his endorsement:

"I have been quite impressed by the willing and military manner which your group proceeds with its assigned tasks."

With a full thirty-six airplane complement of the newest model B-24s, "H" models with nose turrets, we felt proud and invincible.

The 8th Air Force operations order of 4 October called for the 392nd to lead two formations of eighteen airplanes each across the North Sea with feigning attacks toward Wilhelmshaven and toward Emden. The purpose was to draw German fighters from the B-17 formations on their big attack on the factory complexes of Frankfurt, Germany. If we sighted a shipping convoy we were to bomb it.

The 392nd would be alone on this effort, except for one flight (three airplanes) each from the 44th and 93rd Bomb Groups. The 44th, 93rd and 389th were recovering and re-equipping from their long combat tour in North Africa, including the famous Ploesti raid.

I remember that it was a pretty October morning as we inspected our airplane and prepared for the mission. Lancaster and Halifax bombers of the RAF were "coasting" home from their night bombing missions of German cities.

It was my squadrons turn to lead the group and furnished the lead crew and nine airplanes. Our deputy group commander, Loran Johnson, flew as command pilot of the lead formation and I flew as his deputy on his right wing. My squadron commander, Don Appert, led the high squadron of the second eighteen ship formation.

Take-off began at 0730 and the assembly went as scheduled. Our climb to 20,000 feet eastward over the North Sea was on time. The gunners test fired their guns and we were ready for action. I could watch our second formation flying



Lead crew pilot, Lt. Cassell checking "start engine" time. His airplane named "Sally Ann" was named for his wife.

at 1,000 feet above and to our right about 500 yards. They looked real pretty — and formidable. I thought to myself — "Man, am I glad I'm not a German fighter pilot assigned to attack that formation."

Each B-24H had four turrets of twin 50 caliber guns plus a flexible "50" at each waist window. Thus, a formation of eighteen airplanes in good formation could fire as many as seventy-two guns at an intruder from nearly every angle of attack.

Flying eastward in the clear sky we passed to the north of the Frisian Islands and on toward "Flak Island" of Helgoland. Remember? From there we made about a 15minute run toward Wilhelmshaven; had turned "outbound" and was in the process of making our feint toward Emden when our nose gunner alerted the crew of enemy fighters ahead of us. The rate of closure was so fast, I remember, that I hardly had a chance to spot them before I saw their guns blinking fire. They dove below our formation and circled for another pass. Then there was a second wave of five or six of them, and another — and another. I lost track of how many. I am sure that they were surprised at having our new nose turrets returning their fire, but it didn't seem to deter them.

Sitting there, I was dismayed for something useful to do. After the third attack or so I couldn't sit there any longer so I slapped the airplane commander on the arm and hastily took over flying the airplane. That lasted only a relatively few minutes because he couldn't stand watching those fighters attacking either; he slapped my arm and took back control of the airplane. This exchange continued for the duration of the battle.

For at least thirty minutes some of our guns were firing. Each turret or waist gun vibrated the airplane in a different tempo by which I could tell which was firing and where the attacks were coming. Of

course, the gunners were calling out the attacks in their sectors too.

Beside the 13mm and 20mm guns of the Messerschmitt 109s and Folke Wulf 190s there were occasional large single flashes of fire from some of them. I didn't know at that moment but they turned out to be the Germans newly perfected 210mm (8 and 3/8 inches in diameter) rocket. Each packed the wallop of a large anti-aircraft artillery shell and could readily blow up a B-24. Their exploding fragments of steel could be very destructive to men and airplanes as they ripped through the thin skin of an airplane. We were lucky though. Being time-fused, the time and distance of launching the rockets was very critical for them to explode among the airplanes of our formation. With closing speeds of 700 miles an hour or more — this wasn't easy. The use of them on head-on attacks was relatively ineffective, but it was real scary at the moment.

The thirty minute attack seemed like hours. Other than being "holed" with some crewmen being wounded my formation sustained no losses; however, it was a different story for our high formation. Harrison Cassell leading the second element of the lead squadron remembers this:

"I remember this diversion mission from several aspects. First, it was our indoctrination into combat with fighter aircraft. Second, I recall that our formations were tight and almost perfect for the entire mission. Third, the weather was good — which was unusual in the ETO. Fourth, I was leading the second element of the lead squadron and flying another crew for their indoctrination. And fifth, our group experienced its first losses in combat.

As I recall, the take-off and climb were routine and everyone was flying a good tight formation. In the lead of the second element there was not a great deal of visibility but when the formation made a turn we could catch glimpses of the formation. It began to look like we had another milk-run until the gunners called out "fighters at twelve o'clock".



We Remember (Continued)

I remember 109s heading straight at the lead squadron and the cone of tracer bullets from our formation's nose turrets ripping off pieces of the German fighters. They passed below our formation and we were waiting for the next pass. I recall looking out the right window and saw a string of 109s flying at our airspeed off to the side of our formation. They increased their speed and went out ahead of us for another nose attack. In they came — one after the other. Again our cone of fire zeroed in on each of them as they closed in on us. After the first three had gone through our cone of fire and disappeared below, the rest pulled up toward the high squadron. The first one pulling up passed us on the right, the pilot was slumped over as he went by. Then the tail gunner called out that a German fighter had rammed into one of the lead planes in the high squadron and that plane in turn collided with another B-24 and all three, "went down".

Through all of this, I was concentrating on keeping the plane in a good tight formation position — just under the tail of the lead plane. As I recall, the fighters then concentrated on the high squadron keeping their distance from us and lobbed their rockets into the formation. I don't remember how long the fight lasted but it seemed like a long time to me. Our low squadron was made up of both the 44th and the 93rd Groups. I recall the fighters worked them over good because they didn't have nose turrets.

We relaxed on the letdown of the return trip. I remember thinking that this mission must have been a success since we got what we were after — the fighters. I also felt the crew performed admirably and were well trained for combat which I complimented them on after we landed.

At interrogation I remember that 19 fighters were declared destroyed and three of our planes lost. I felt rather helpless and empty at the loss of our three crews and the squadron commander who we had been training with since Alamogordo.

This is how I remember the Great Diversion Mission that gave us our first encounter with fighter combat."

Our battle weary group returned to its Wendling Air Station at 1300 hours. Dispondency reigned at the loss of a fine squadron commander and three highly trained and skilled combat crews — the first of 184 losses in twenty months of operations.

Was the effort worth the loss? Was it successful? We took heart from what the Stars and Stripes reported:

"The Eighth Air Force announced yesterday that the Forts blow at Frankfurt — aimed principally at the Germans largest metal aircraft propeller plant, in a suburb of the city — had been carried out with the lowest loss ratio to date, on a deep penetration of Germany.

Fifteen heavy bombers were lost in the days operations, which included Fortress blows at other targets in the city and in western Germany and a diversionary feint

of Liberators over the North Sea to lure Nazi fighters away from the Frankfurt raiders.

The Libs were successful, headquarters said, in raising a swarm of enemy fighters, a number of which were destroyed in "repeated and reckless" attacks on the Libs. So furious were the battles over the North Sea that one Me109 rammed a Liberator, both planes going down.

In the day's operations, the heavies shot down 56 Nazi fighters and escorting Thunderbolts got 19."

THE ROYAL BLUE & GOLD COOKBOOK

by Muriel Sandiforth

It was a lucky day for me and my Organization (The Royal British Legion Women's Section) when I made contact with you last autumn. You very kindly put an advertisement for me in the December issue of the Newsletter and since then things have gone from strength to strength. It was a wonderful suggestion on your part that during the reunion in Norwich, a buffet lunch should be organized for the ladies of your party in order that they should have the opportunity of seeing the Royal Blue and Gold Cookbook, and of meeting it's author, The Marchioness of Cambridge.

As you know the royalties from the Royal Blue and Gold cookbook are to be devoted to the welfare work of this Organization which again, as you know, looks after the welfare of the ex-Service man and woman and their dependants in this Country.

I must confess when I returned to the dining room of the Post House Hotel a few days ago it seemed very, very quiet, although I still think it is somewhat haunted by the voices which livened up the whole place on that memorable afternoon!

Bill, I do want to extend to you, Evelyn Cohen, Mrs. Brooks and Hazel and everyone who did so much to make that day a happy one, our very sincere thanks and we all want to send to you our best wishes and the hope that we will meet again in the not too distant future.

Lady Cambridge has asked me to say that if any of your members and their wives want copies of the book she would be delighted to ensure that any that are sent through you are autographed.

A signed copy of the Royal Blue and Gold Cookbook can be had by sending your check in the amount of \$6.50 to W. G. Robertie, P.O. Drawer B., Ipswich, Mass. 01938.

'RUDE COMMENTS'

'A life saving cup of coffee'

by
Walter M. Rude
(448th)



It was a quiet night and most of the members of the night-flight were just sitting around the 715th engineering shack discussing the usual topics. Local Belles, the warm beer and 'shop'. M/Sgt. James W. Woodal was one of those present. Glancing at his watch he got up, stretched and said: "Hell, fellows, it's midnight and I'm going to hit the sack". When I informed him that a jug of coffee was on the way he relented and decided to stick around.

A short while later the 'Red' alert sounded followed by the noise of a Kraut aircraft which was then followed by a burst of 20mm gunfire. Needless to say we all hauled tail for the nearest bomb shelter.

When the 'all clear' sounded we headed for a multiple hardstand where some refueling had been going on. The sound of the 20mm hitting had come from that direction and what made that area a most logical target was the fact that we used the refueling truck's spotlight as an aid in seeing what we were doing. Not after that night however!

Fortunately there was a grove of trees immediately in the path of the incoming Kraut and the refueling aircraft. This forced him to come in a little too high and his shells passed harmlessly over the truck and aircraft.

Naturally we all started searching the area just beyond the hardstand to see if we could find where the missiles had hit. We came to Jim Woodal's flight-line quarters — a 12' pyramidal tent and don't ask me where he got it — which sported a very large hole. The shell had passed right through the middle of Jim's bunk penetrating the bed clothes, mattress and finally lodging part way into Jim's B-4 bag which was under the bunk.

When Jim saw what had happened, or what might have happened, he turned to me and said: "Thanks Walt for that cup of coffee."

NOTICE

Copies of the following are still available. Send check or money order to William G. Robertie, P.O. Drawer B, Ipswich, Mass. 01938.

2nd Air Division Memorial Library Booklet — \$3.00.

Aces & Wingmen by Danny Morris. Signed Copy. — \$14.50.

CHRISTMAS 1944



by Don Olds
(453rd BG)

Plans had been underway since early November of 1944 to throw a Christmas party for 1250 British children ranging in age from four to fourteen who lived adjacent to the base and including many orphans from the London blitz. Also, someone had conceived the idea of making toys for the children of Paris who had not experienced the joys and thrills of Christmas since the war began. The British children heard about this and they also began collecting rag dolls and wooden toys to donate to the Paris project.

The next problem was how to deliver the toys to Paris. The men presented their problem to Col. Larry Thomas, the 453rd BG CO, who immediately came up with the solution by agreeing to supply a sleigh and reindeer in the form of a B-24 with 74 missions named 'Liberty Run'.

Wheels began to turn. The American Red Cross selected more than 300 French children to receive the gifts on Christmas Day at the Red Cross center (Rainbow Corner) in Paris. A special order was cut and signed by General Francis Griswold giving permission to fly the gifts to Paris. An all French speaking crew was chosen to fly the plane on this mission.

The aircraft was piloted by Major Thomas O'Dwyer with Robert W. Van Harlingen as Co-Pilot. Other members of the crew were Lt. Marcus Maldawer, Lt. Francis Thomas, Jr., Sgt. Robert Nicholson, Sgt. Ruben Brockway and Sgt. Edgar Dominique. Arnold Falk, the American Red Cross Field Director, and a couple of war correspondents also made the flight. Sgt. Brockway was given the honor of playing Santa Claus but minus the paunch. Personnel of the base contributed their PX rations to help fill Santa's bag.

Christmas Eve arrived complete with a cover of snow and the kids for their long awaited party. The children were divided into age groups. Those under 8 years old were taken to the Aero Club where they were entertained. Here they received their stocking filled with candy and toys from Santa himself and were then served ice cream and cake to their heart's content.

Before receiving their gifts those over 8 years old were taken to the hard stands and given a conducted tour through the big planes. Then came the major attraction. A platform had been built along the side of 'Liberty Run' which now sported a large nose section painting of Old Santa. Here the children put their toys into a bag to be delivered to their friends in Paris. One 11 year old London girl christened the plane with a jug of coffee and it was off on its 75th, and most important, mission. But alas, while revving up the engines for takeoff she slipped off the runway. It was the first abort for 'Liberty Run'. Fortunately the damage was slight but the takeoff had to

be held over until the following morning.

The next day in Paris the precious boxes were unloaded by Red Cross workers and passed out to the children. Eyes were wide as the children marveled at their unexpected visit from Santa. Without a doubt 'Liberty Runs' 75th mission was a grand success.

Back at 'Old Buck' the Group was stood down. Needless to say the Officer's Club and Non Com Club did a bang up business as practically everyone took advantage of the situation. Fortunately for many who had taken their celebrating a bit too seriously Dec. 26th was also an 'off' day.

As with all good things Christmas of 1944 came to an end. But like most Christmases there were some memories which would last a lifetime.

THE WAR WAS OVER — ALMOST!



by
Everett R. Jones, Jr.
(466th & 458th BG)

After V-E day the Groups were 'stood down' with the personnel doing very little other than playing softball or the pilots getting in some flying time.

The 466th had two war weary P-47s and on the evening of June 4, 1945 Herman Laubrich and I took out (with permission and being qualified of course) the two P-47s for a little 'fun in the sky'. I was flying 'Sally' but the name of his aircraft I don't remember.

On these flights we did not deviate from the immediate area other than to fly out over the channel a short distance. I was in the area of Greensgate flying at 8'000 feet when the engine failed momentarily giving the effect of backing up after moving along in arm-chair comfort. It recovered immediately for about a half a minute when two rapid interruptions of power was experienced, then a short recovery followed by a complete shut down of power.

When I looked out front I noted that the prop was not wind-milling and I could read the Curtis-Electric name plate on one blade. I knew the engine was frozen and nothing further could be done to start the little jewel. In the meantime I had made a previous decision that I would start a bail out when the altimeter had reached an indicated altitude of 4,000 feet, and this didn't take long as the P-47 had the glide angle of a brick when the prop was not windmilling.

While running the checks of the cockpit and getting down to 4,000 feet I had maneuvered into a position to line up on Runway 22 at Attlebridge, but it was becoming evident real fast that I would not be able to stretch the glide and I started to execute a bail-out procedure accordingly. I had little difficulty sliding the canopy back which was the old

sectioned window type and not the newer bubble type.

With trim set for a good glide I stepped out on the port wing and took another short step into space. This being accomplished I recall thinking "this is the first time that I have jumped and by choice and desire it will be my last, so let's see what a little free fall is like." This almost resulted in a bad election as those playing softball at Attlebridge said that I went behind the trees and horizon without their seeing my chute open. I believe this must be true as I do not remember too much about my contact with the ground. I must have been in that moment of black-out resulting from the chute opening followed promptly by impact upon mother earth. I was probably unconscious at the moment of impact or I might have been seriously injured. Luckily, I was not hurt in any way other than being sore all over my body for the next few days.



Poor Sally!

I came down in what must have been the middle of an oat field not over 300 yards from a very nice English home. When I got up I noted that I was within 100 yards or so of a large hole in the ground with a trail of smoke and dust rising up, and my first thought was that someone else had crashed also. I was wrong on this assumption because what I was viewing were the remains of 'Sally', the old girl I had just left somewhere below 4000 feet up.

At this moment an Englishman was running toward me calling out "Are you all right Mate?" Within minutes Doc Elliott's ambulance pulled up with the Protestant Chaplain alighting therefrom. I regret that I don't remember his name as he and I were good friends, but I believe this was Chaplain Walker. This happened on Monday and Elliott, Fader and Hoff made me stay in the hospital over night, drenching me with spirits which could only be had from their stores. All was well the next few days! I was due to fly a B-24 back to the States on the following Saturday. Earl Beitler was to be my co-pilot, but as the result of my not feeling too well I put him in the left seat and I took the right one.

As for the cause of the crash the oil screens were filled with broken bits of steel indicating an internal failure of the engine. I learned one other thing. Sky diving is for the birds!

BUT WILL ENGLAND TAKE US?

The Bicentennial celebration in Philadelphia might be something altogether different than we are anticipating if a couple of Richmond, Va., men have their way. John Ambrose and David Gambill have organized the Committee for Reunion with England and its purpose is exactly what it sounds like.

Ambrose and Gambill feel it's time that we admit our mistake and petition the Queen for reunion. "Mother England is just and kind," they point out in a pamphlet. "If we apologize now and promise not to rebel any more she will go easy on us. Amnesty will be offered to the rebel leaders and the present officials of this rebel government."

The men claim that "every corruption, every brutal and violent act, every injustice could have been prevented if only those radical and hot-headed men (Jefferson, Washington, Franklin et al) had been patient enough to work through the system."

Denis E. Richards, the British consul in Philadelphia, says he is familiar with the reunification movement, and after adjusting his tongue properly in cheek he said, "We are a very sympathetic nation and we would give it (reunification) every consideration."

Rule Britannia.

HELP WANTED

We need somebody from the 445th Bomb Group who will volunteer (dirty word we know, but necessary) to head up the Group as Vice President. This person should be willing to spend the time necessary in contacting potential members and thus build up the membership of the Group in the Association. Is there such a person in the 445th? If there is please step forward.

NOTICE

Please, Please and please. Send us a 'change of address' form when you move. Our experience has been that most people forget. When that happens we've lost contact. Don't depend on the Post Office to send us your new address. Sometimes they do, but more often than not they don't. So stay with us and send us your new address as soon as you know it.



COME FLY WITH ME!

IN A QUIET CHURCH YARD

by Earl Zimmerman
(389th)



During the reunion in England John Archer was kind enough to take me to a small village church near Hethel called Carleton Rode which contains a memorial to 17 men of the 289th BG.

I was told that a service was held every year to pay tribute to these men, and a Chaplain from Lakenheath Air Force Base conducts the service. At the end of the service he hangs a new wreath beneath the Memorial plaque.



I knew one of the men killed in the collision and found his name engraved on the wall at Cambridge cemetery during our visit there. I attended the funeral of all 17 men back in 1944.

It's nice to know that our boys are still being remembered by our friends in England. Our Memorial in Norwich is a continual reminder of the relationship between the 2nd AD and East Anglia.

AFTER 30 YEARS WALTER DROPS IN AGAIN

(Printed by permission of Eastern Daily Press)

He looked like a distinguished English gentleman as he stood at the door of the house in Buxton Road, Norwich.

Then, as he said, "Don't you know me?" Mrs. Gertrude Perry recognised a heartwarming sound of America that she had not heard for 30 years.

He was Walter Edgeworth, now of Denver, Colorado, who during the war years was stationed in Norfolk with the U.S. Air Force and was a frequent guest at the home of Mrs. Perry and her late husband, Albert, then works manager at Heatrae Ltd. She had not heard from him since the war.

In those days the family lived in Eversley Road. Not many people who know Mrs. Perry live there now and it took Walter Edgeworth time and trouble to find her in Buxton Road.

Walter, now 59 and a grandfather - he has two married daughters - produced photographs from the forties of Mr. and Mrs. Perry and their son, John then a boy, now the father of two girls and a boy) and Thelma (then in her teens, now the mother of three sons). He had kept the pictures in perfect condition.

WELCOME

Having found Mrs. Perry, he made an

arrangement to spend more time with her the following day. This time he brought his wife, who had heard so much about his English friends, and there to meet them was Thelma, her husband, Alfred Harden, and Mrs. Perry's friend, Mrs. Gladys Pratt

"Walter was among three Americans my husband and I used to entertain regularly," Mrs. Perry told me. "He used to pop in any time. He knew he was welcome. He was with us for at least two Christmases."

They had met after the Perry's offered hospitality through the American Red Cross office. It was due to the difficulties of the war that they lost contact but Walter had always wanted to come back and re-establish that friendship. The meeting in Norwich of the Second Air Division Association of the U.S.A.F. gave him the opportunity.

"It was very moving to meet him again," said Mrs. Perry. "So much had happened... He did not know that my husband had died in 1953... Walter took so much trouble to find me. It is so good to be remembered and to feel that our friendship means so much to him."

They have promised to keep in touch.

LETTERS

Dear Bill:

We received our Newsletter yesterday and both Dick and I had read it from cover to cover before retiring last night. We have been looking forward to the report on the reunion. We were terribly disappointed that we were unable to go along with you folks and the more I read the sadder I felt because I know we missed a great time. What made us feel even worse was the fact that Steve Gotts of "Friends of the Eighth" wrote to us and wanted to meet us and in turn tour Dick's base (Bottisham) as he has been doing some research there. We still hope we may be able to go over and meet with him someday.

Please notify us as soon as you have the definite dates for the Valley Forge reunion as I will put in for my vacation right after January 1 so I can be first in line for the necessary time off.

Thanks for an excellent Newsletter. You certainly do a tremendous job.

Sincerely,
Barbara Shults

Dear Evelyn,

Just learned of Second Air Division Association a few weeks ago from Jack Faye, Mayor of Ojai. I'm most happy to know such an organization has been established.

Had an opportunity to visit the 93rds base at Hardwicke in 1973. Not much left of the buildings but was able to trace it out fairly well. There is a feeling of the presence of all those comrades who were there with you 30 years ago that I'm sure others have experienced.

I've often wondered what happened to many of those who were in the 93rd. I hope the association will open the opportunity for some renewed contacts.

For those who decide to visit Norfolk County, you'll find the people who lived around your base most friendly and hospitable. You'll really feel like you're returning home after a long absence.

I'm hoping to be at the next reunion in Valley Forge.

Sincerely,
Allison (Al) Mayfield

Dear Evelyn,

I write this letter hastily. We stayed in Britain five weeks and then as soon as we got back we had to get ready to help entertain all the VIPs for the ASTP launch. It was fun and just as exciting as the others but now I must settle down. One thing I did today was write a three page letter about the reunion and John will get it copied for all of our friends who couldn't go. As I did it I thought of all the work and planning that must have gone into it to make it one of the most unique experiences a lot of us will ever have. Everything was great and I suspect that you are one of those deserving our thanks.

It might interest you to know that John spoke to two groups at the University of about 400 each. They were very interested audiences and he has had many letters in response. Also, I wrote a letter to the editor of the paper expressing appreciation for the welcome given us by the whole city and have had a lot of letters in return.

I hope you enjoyed the trip in spite of your responsibilities and I hope you got your flock together for the return trip. Many thanks for all you did and I hope you will convey same to others.

Sincerely,
Mary C. Leeds

Dear Bill & Hazel:

Just because I'm late writing doesn't mean we didn't have a wonderful trip. Seems like a dream now. It was like a "Fairy Tale" trip for both of us. We both want to thank everyone for making us feel welcome. Norwich seemed like we had been there before as brother had talked about it so much.

Love to both
Dorothy Norman

Dear Evelyn:

Here are my dues for another year. Use what is left over for whatever is needed. Can't make the reunion this year but am planning on coming in '76.

Sincerely,
Dennis L. Beavers

Dear Miss Cohen,

Thank you for your reply to my letter which Mrs. Barne kindly forwarded to you. I was employed by the A.R.C. from Jan. 17th, 1944 to June 1946, the first eighteen months spent at Rackheath air base (467th) and then in the South of England which was an Infantry Div.

The C.O. at Rackheath was Col. Shower, (I'm not sure if this is the correct way to spell his name) and I had great pleasure at meeting him again at the Norwich Re-union a few weeks ago. Much to my delight he remembered me as one of my duties was to take his coffee in when he visited the Club.

My friend who worked there with me is now living in the States. (Mrs. Thelma Lucy Smith, 123 NW 22nd St., Winter Haven, Florida 33880), and we are now in touch again after thirty years, the result of press cuttings concerning the Re-union.

A gentleman from Norwich (Mr. Martin Bowman) hopes to have his book published soon, called "Fields of Little America" and I was able to give him a good deal of information about Rackheath and of my time spent there. I stayed until the Club closed. At that time, my name was Phyllis King.

I'm afraid my "Pass Book" has long since been lost so I have no official documents of proof, but relatives and friends could verify this.

After the war was over in Europe and I moved South, I lost touch with local news, and didn't know an Association had been formed.

How thrilling it was a few weeks ago to chat with the men, (who I remember as young lads) about the excitement of preparing for take offs and of the hundreds of sandwiches and coffee I helped to prepare for when the missions returned. When the 100th mission was celebrated at Rackheath Club, the head cook, the late Mrs. Gwen Kenton, made the cake, and I iced it. At the re-union in Norwich, a crew member informed me he later sat on that cake!

My husband and I hope we can make it next year to Valley Forge, but I'm afraid we're not up to date with arrangements ie. the date fixed for the re-union and whether we make our bookings this end.

Thank you for your valuable time.

Yours Sincerely,
Mrs. P. P. G. Smales

Dear Evelyn:

I am very interested in finding out what news there is of the original 467th and also of my squadron, the 788th, which left the 467th and went to Harrington to fly night missions dropping ammunition, clothing and resistance fighters into occupied France. I was with the unit from its beginning at Wendover Field until the end of the war in Leghorn, Italy.

Sincerely,
Thomas W. Blackburn, Sr.
829 Mercer St.
Gloucester City
New Jersey

Dear Evelyn:

Please excuse my tardiness with dues. I just goofed. Enclosed please find check for two years.

Sue would like to see more in the Newsletter about the 389th. Either we had a lot of guys who write like me, or we didn't do much in the '40s.

Sincerely,
John A. Pardy

(ed. note: We would like to see more about the 389th John because that Group did plenty in the '40s, but how do you get them to put pen to paper? How about you leading the way?)

Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed is a check for \$5.00 for membership in the 2nd Air Div. Association. I was in the 453rd BG, 735th squadron. I will probably be better remembered as the magician in special services. Some will probably remember me as being the one who ran the 'one arm bandits' for a time in various parts of the base.

I wonder what happened to Capt. Ben Hale, also Tom Swafford and if he still does magic. I have a scrap book of items and in it is a show we did for 200 evacuee children at the George White School in Norwich. Among the cast of 10 were Cpl. Bill Elder and Ed Gebhart. Another article was about a wild west show we put on. Waist gunner Sgt. Lonnie Harvard, a freckle faced cowpuncher from Houston was one of the star attractions at the show. I would like to hear from any of these guys or others who remember me.

Best wishes,
Frederick E. Sissenstein

Dear Evelyn:

Many thanks for the application and Newsletter. I had not heard of the Association before. What wonderful memories it brought back. Please keep me informed about all its activities. After 30 years I can't believe it. Again many thanks.

Sincerely,
Ed Skuba

Dear Evelyn:

I was visiting with the E. Marinos the other evening right after their return from England and the 2nd ADA reunion.

I was in the 392nd BG at Wendling. I am very much interested in becoming a member in your fabulous organization. Please send me all the information regarding membership, dues etc.

Hoping to hear from you REAL soon,
Grant W. Oasheim

Hi:

A few years back I was a member of the 733rd Squadron 453rd BG. Recently Don Olds wrote to me and said we were having a reunion next year. You can bet I will make it as I haven't heard from anyone from the 453rd in years.

Sorry I couldn't make the trip back to "Old Buck" this year but maybe next time.

All the best,
Don Nell

Dear Bill:

Just before departing London my wife June lost her purse, both Passports, credit cards, a wad of bills which she tried to give to you on two occasions for the 2nd AD pins and various other items.

We missed our connecting flight out of Chicago and upon arriving home we found our hound dog had the mange, the grape arbor had fallen over and my No. 1 son let all the flowers die from lack of water.

Yet - we are ready to go again. Never had a better time.

As Ever
Earl & June Zimmerman
(ed. note: You've got to be kidding!!!!)

Dear Bill:

I'm sure that, without exception, we all feel the British hospitality was absolutely wonderful and much more than we could have ever expected. I even found this so on my visits after Norwich. I shall never forget it.

I would like to say that I still have 86 of the B-24 tie tacks that many wore during the receptions etc. I will mail them immediately to anyone who didn't locate me or anyone else who wants one. They are \$5.00 each and are a wonderful conversation piece.

Thanks,

Leroy Engdahl
1785 Waxford Drive
Vidor, Texas 77662

Dear Bill:

I don't know whether you can help me or not but I'm going to give it a try.

I am trying to either locate or learn the fate of a pilot in World War Two and I will give you his last known address.

If I can either phone or write anyone who was in his squadron I would be very happy.

His name is Elmer W. Clarey - 2nd LT. (1944), 859th Squadron, 492 Group and last A.P.O. number was A.P.O. 558.

I wrote to the personnel center in St. Louis and they had no record. I would appreciate any answer and will try an item in the Air Force Association Magazine. I am retired A.F. and desire very much to locate or learn the fate of this man. This group was in England early in 1944.

Thank you for any help you can give me.

Al Blanco, Lt. Col. Ret.
4915 Tyrone Ave. No. 205
Sherman Oaks, Ca. 91423

Dear Evelyn,

Edie and I want you to know that the recent trip to Norwich with the 2nd Air Division was one of the finest experiences in travel that we have ever had and the comments we have been receiving indicate that our fellow travellers are very much in agreement with us.

We appreciated the opportunity to work with you in handling the flights and also were pleased that we were able to accommodate those members who asked us to handle supplemental travel arrangements for them. It's most gratifying to work with such fine people. We're now looking forward to 1976 at Valley Forge and our office has already begun working with the hotel and planning additional bicentennial activities.

It's also our pleasure to enclose a check for \$250.00 from Tevelin Travel Agency as a contribution to the Memorial Library in Norwich.

Kindest Regards,
Hank Tevelin

(ed. note: Bless you Hank and Edie for the donation. With a few more like this we'll hit our goal of \$50,000 in no time at all. Also many thanks to both of you for your participation in the trip to Norwich.)

Dear Evelyn:

Sorry about being so late with this, but I belong to about five different organizations, and it's hard to keep track of when they all fall due. *Of all of these I enjoy the Second Air Division the most.*

I hope five dollars is the correct amount for the dues, but if it isn't let me know.

Sincerely,
Thomas V. Shaughnessy
(1st Lt. (Ret.))

Dear Ms. Cohen:

What a surprise! For the past 30 years I have been looking for an organization that would have something that would be coincidental with my experience.

I do not know how you got my address, however, whoever the individual was that nominated me, let me pay his next year's dues. If this is not possible, please use it for the library fund.

I will be looking forward to the reunion at Valley Forge as mentioned in December Newsletter. Is this firm? Please send me particulars, and any back issues of the newsletter you have available. Thanking you in advance.

Respectfully,
James W. Blanco

Dear Evelyn:

Through an 'after the war' acquaintance of a former member of the 2nd AD I first learned of the reunions. I was happy and excited to hear this good news and surprised to learn it is now 28 years in existence. Sorry I missed this years meeting in England but I hope to be in Valley Forge next year.

I noticed a letter in the Sept. '74 issue from Francis X. Sheehan who must be from the crew that shared a nissen hut with my crew. Glad to hear of you Frank. Hope to see you in Valley Forge.

Sincerely,
Edwin R. Hoover
22 Ethel Ave.
Leola, Pa. 17540

A GIFT FROM THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF NORWICH



Mr. Tom Eaton, Chairman of the American Memorial Trust receiving from Mr. Cyril Leveton (President of the Norwich Hebrew Congregation) works commemorating the supreme sacrifice made by some six hundred Americans of Jewish origin flying from East Anglian airfields. Mr. Leveton is accompanied by the Rev. Harry Levine (Minister of the Norwich Hebrew Congregation). The books were *The image of the Jew in American Literature, The Jews of the United States, Autobiographies of American Jews and the History of Anti-Semitism*. The presentation was made on Monday, 3rd November 1975.



MERRY CHRISTMAS
HAPPY HANUKKAH
HAPPY NEW YEAR

Over the past few years our membership has increased tremendously and with this increase we have found ourselves with many, many new friends. This has delighted us and we cherish them all, but it has created a problem in our ability to send seasons greetings to everybody.

We are taking this opportunity to wish all our friends - old, new and those yet to be made - a very Merry Christmas, a happy Hanukkah and a prosperous New Year.

Evelyn Cohen
Hazel & Bill Robertie

TRY AND TOP THIS

When John (Jake) Krause, 458th, wrote a letter to his girl friend Gayle Butcher (now Gayle Krause) while he was in England he always drew a scene on the front of the envelope depicting what he had been doing that particular day and also expressing his 'mood of the moment'. Jake lays no claim to being an artist but we think he is selling himself short. Would that I had been as bright and talented! Below is a small sampling of his vast collection and with any luck he will have his entire collection with him at Valley Forge.

