

NEWS LETTER

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

March 1976

War Clashed With Christmas

by Tom Copeman

It was really a kind of love affair. We in Norfolk and Suffolk may have found our American visitors a little trying when they first descended upon us in 1942, but we ended by liking them, while they seem to have felt the same about us.

In January, 1943, I became closely involved with them when I accepted the chairmanship of a Y.W.C.A. committee which was opening an Anglo-American service club for N.C.O.s and men in part of Norwich Assembly House. Our most exciting moment was in February, 1944, when Ernest Bevin spoke at a huge non-party meeting in the Theatre Royal, where we succeeded in getting front seats for a party of American wounded.

As a journalist I was not unknown to Bevin, of whom Harry Strauss had once said that he regarded him as the only possible wartime leader should Churchill meet with an accident. Invited to visit our club next door when the platform broke up, Bevin gladly consented, and to the delight of the wounded, who had been gathered at one table, took tea with them and for nearly an hour gossiped with all and sundry.

American bases were, of course, closed to visitors during the war, although Margaret visited some of them as a member of Ralph Mottram's Brains Trust. I had two invitations, a formal one with the Lord Mayor and Town Clerk when the civic car had an American escort, and a more exciting one when a tender was sent for me to bring a member of my staff, who was a leading lady at the Maddermarket, to a party which was being given by a Bomber Group.

Barbara and I imagined that the tender was taking us to a base near Norwich but we discovered that we had to travel for two hours and that our destination was probably the other side of Bury St.

Edmunds. We also found that the party was unusual; it was being given for seventy Barnardo evacuees whose primitive billeting in the basement of a great house had aroused the democratic ire of our hosts.

Owing to fog we missed the arrival of Father Christmas by bomber, and the moment when all the boys were packed into a single Super-Fortress for a ride around the aerodrome. We were, however, in time for the reception in the American Red Cross Club, where carols were sung by the Group's glee singers.

A little later we were taken to the dining room, which had a holly cross on the wall at one end, with two model bombs decorating the other. My diary refers appreciatively to further decorations and to the fact that after a dance band had played a salon orchestra followed. The meal was enormous plates of chicken, potatoes and peas followed by mounds of ice cream.

I sat between the American Red Cross Director and one of the Barnardo boys. A nearby officer began to put me in the picture when he told me: "Everything that can fly has been put into the air," that the empty places at the tables were those which should have been occupied by the Fortress crews, and that the Commander was only absent because the Group was "in combat." The roar of the Flying Fortresses going and coming above us reinforced my knowledge that here in Suffolk was a part of the last great battle being fought in the war in Western Europe.

The party had, of course, been arranged long before Hitler had surprised the American First Army by attacking through the Ardennes and the brief Battle of the Bulge (December 16th-25th) had

already by the day of our visit (December 23rd) been nearly won.

But the Group's party had to go on for £250 had been raised for Christmas gifts for the boys who were soon gathering again in the Red Cross room, where parcels were heaped around the two huge Christmas trees, and some of the boys were staggered when they received bicycles. It was all admirably planned, for every boy was given an American foster father to play with him and to look after him. The boys were well behaved and I sometimes detected what can only be described as an ecstatic look on their faces. Their visit ended with a Hillbilly concert and a Wild West film, followed by cocoa and biscuits and our two national anthems.

It was now time for us to be getting back to Norwich, but we were not surprised when there was a considerable delay in finding us transport. For me, however, the time was not wasted for I was to take away an unforgettable picture of the tired flying crews dropping in to report. I met and talked with one young officer who had just brought down his first Messerschmitt and gave us a vivid description of the combat. "Gee," he said, "won't my Pa be proud."

At last a jeep was found to take us back to Norwich. Our driver, Mick, came in when I reached home and we had coffee and a gossip over the fire, to the delight of my children.

I made a note that I went to bed weary, wondering how the still anxious position in France would resolve itself. My mind was a mixture of impressions, carols and the roar of bombers, crews back from the front peeping in to watch the boys enjoying themselves, and above all the anxious look that sometimes came over the face of the Adjutant.

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30th Annual Reunion

DATE: 7/22/76 (Thurs.) to
7/25/76 (Sunday).

PLACE: Sheraton Valley Forge
Hotel — Valley Forge Plaza,
Route 363, King of Prussia,
Pa.

TOTAL COST PER PERSON —
Double Occupancy \$140.00 -
Single Occupancy \$170.00



INCLUDES

Registration Fee

Hotel Room for 3 nights (no extra charge for additional person in room —
if extra cot is needed \$5.00 per night extra.)

Thursday — 7/22 Registration of members 9AM to 6PM

Mini Reunions —
6PM 1 hour cocktail party
7PM Italian Festival Buffet

Friday — 7/23 Buses depart for downtown Philadelphia Historical Area.
Buses return at 4PM. At 6PM there will be an outdoor Bar-B-Que &
Swimming party.

Saturday — 7/24 Second Air Division Business Meeting 10AM to 12 noon.
Movies and slides will be shown at the conclusion of the meeting.
There will be a Fashion Show and Brunch for the Ladies (Optional at
a cost of \$5.00 each) from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM

6PM — 1 hour cocktail party
7PM — Banquet followed by dancing till 1 AM

AND QUITE A FEW SURPRISES IN ADDITION

NOTE: Many members are sending their reservations directly to the Hotel.
THIS IS A MISTAKE! Admittedly the instructions were not all that
clear, but *all* Reservations should be sent to Evelyn Cohen, 404
Atrium Apts., 2555 Welsh Road, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
19114 as she the one assigning rooms. The purpose for this is
to get as many from each Group as close as possible to each
other. That way they can keep each other awake! If you have
already sent your reservations to the Hotel write to Evelyn so
she will know and can make any necessary changes.

ABOVE ALL ELSE

If you haven't yet made your Reservation **DO IT NOW!**

If you wish start making installment payments now and you won't feel
the bite too much on the 22nd of July. But checks or no, if you plan to
go let Evelyn know.

DUES! DUES! DUES!

That time of year has come and gone again, but there are still
some who haven't yet sent in their dues. Since Evelyn does all
this work in her spare time it really helps when you get your
dues in promptly. We realize that our notice comes at the worse
time of year — holidays and income tax time — but those are
things beyond our control. So if you haven't sent in your dues
yet make a New Year Resolution to do it right after you read
this. Many many thanks.

Hethel Highlights

by Earl F. Zimmerman (389th BG)

During mid June 1943, the 389th Bomb Group arrived at Hethel, flying from Lincoln, Nebraska via different routes. All planes and crews arrived safely and after a five day orientation course the crews concentrated on formation flying. On June 25th, the Group suffered its first casualty in the ETO.

While executing a left turn in formation at low altitude, Lt. Fowble's plane slid across the top of Lt. James' plane taking off number 1 & 2 props. Fowble's plane suffered a wide gash just aft of the waist windows, the props just missing the control cables to the tail. Fowble made it back to Hethel.

Lt. James had difficulty controlling the plane as both engines immediately ran away producing clouds of black smoke. He ordered the crew to prepare for a crash landing as it was too low for a bailout. James lined up on a runway (Seething) and noticed that it was under construction so he pulled to the left and made a wheels up landing in plowed ground just short of some trees. The collision and landing happened so fast that the two men in the nose did not have time to get up on the flight deck. Lt. Charles B. Quantrell was killed and Lt. Cecil D. Stout severely injured, spending many months in the hospital. The radio man was trapped beneath the top turret as the engineer T/Sgt. Thompson, grabbed a fire extinguisher and put out a fire in No. 4 engine. Thompson was killed in another mid-air collision on Nov. 21, 1944 over Hethel.

On July 1st, 1943, the 389th departed for North Africa, taking some ground crews from the 44th and 93rd. The ground echelon of the 389th departed New York harbor on the Queen Elizabeth that same day.



"The Oklahoman"
Original plane of 389th

After stopping at Portreath, Cornwall overnight the planes headed for La Senis, Oran, Algeria. While flying in loose formation through the Straits of Gibraltar, British gunboats lying offshore threw a barrage of flak into the formation until someone fired off the colors of the day.



Capt. Kenneth Caldwell and crew, 565th Sqdn., 389th BG. The name Sky Scorpions was most likely taken from his plane — although I have not verified this — most of the old timers concur.

No damage was done but the 389th had its first taste of what was to become a familiar sight and sound. Lt. Wilhite and crew landed in Lisbon and were interned for a short while.

A short refueling stop at Oran and then, Area C., Site 10, Bengasi, Libya, which was to be home for the 389th for their first eleven missions. Do you remember: Sleeping on a cot, inside a mattress cover, two blankets, and still freeze your can off at night. The mess tent, all ranks lining up for the same fare. Powdered eggs, spam, dehydrated potatoes, powdered lemonade that could eat the lining out of your stomach, etc. And the grasshoppers, millions of them. They would hang on the underside of the mess tent and drop into your mess kit when some jerk would accidentally on purpose kick a tent stake. Favorite passtime after supper, bashing grasshoppers with a paddle, splat 146, splat 147, ad infinitum; if you had a weak stomach, forget it. For the more aggressive types there was usually a kangaroo rat chase in the cool of the evening. Attire, one pair of combat boots and a stick, that's all. You could lay on your cot and watch the clowns chase a poor little kangaroo rat all over the desert trying to corner it in a slit trench and dispatch it with a stick. I leave it to your imagination some of the nicknames bestowed upon the great white hunters.

Uniform of the day: Khaki shorts, fatigue hat and combat boots. Formal attire, and a necktie.

Amusing sight: Major Exnicios, Group S-2 Officer, a tall imposing figure complete with large handlebar mustache, properly dressed in low quarter shoes, knee length socks, shorts, shirt and cap, standing in the breakfast chow line with the troops, shivering from the pre-dawn cold. You could hear his mess kit rattling for half a mile.

And of course there was the ever present sand, in your food, drink, hair, shoes, aircraft engines etc. Ever had a nice refreshing drink of water from a chemically treated Lister bag that has hung in the African sun all day.

(to be continued)

Fall In!

George L. Higgins, Jr. (458th BG)

It was the first time since 1944 that the four officers of the B-24 crew had been together.



(l to r) George Higgins, Elmer Lanini, C. Senter Shaw, William Kramer.

The reunion was held in Gorham, Maine, on November 2nd and 3rd, at the home of Pilot C. Senter Shaw and his wife, Dorothy. Bombardier Elmer Lanini and Rene flew east from Salinas, California, and Co-pilot William Kramer and Shirley drove up from Groton, Connecticut. Navigator George Higgins and Kaye came from Southwest Harbor, Maine, for the long-awaited occasion.



(l to r) George Higgins, Nav.; William Kramer, Co-pilot; Elmer Lanini, Bomb.; Peter Durlinger, W. Gunner. In front of original plane No. 721 enroute to England, Jan. 1943.

The two days were spent reminiscing and comparing notes and pictures. This crew was one of the originals of the 458th Bomb Group, 753rd Squadron, which conducted the Azon bombings in June, 1944.

Elmer and Rene Lanini had revisited Norwich in 1974 and shared with the others their snapshots and experiences. It is hoped that July, 1976, will be the occasion for a second reunion of these officers and their wives in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

How to be an Ace — The Unaccepted Way!!

by Ian McLachlan

Wednesday, 11 August, 1943, was one of those gems in an English summer but, for 28-year-old farmer, Donald Hadingham, the previous day's rain meant irritating delay and greater harvest effort now the sun was out. Four miles south east of Chesnut Farm the scene was far from rural as members of the 56th Fighter Group tended P-47 Thunderbolts. Dampness-induced minor malfunctions now required remedy.

Outside the 63rd Fighter Squadron Operations Building — impressive title for a Nissen hut — pilots ranged chairs and relaxed until their machines were ready for air testing. Captain Walker M. Mahurin found Tuesday's inactivity caused further frustration and despondency. His performance to date was that of a tyro, not a Flight Leader with Zemke's 'Wolf Pack'. Today, however, would see him destroy his first aircraft and result in one confirmed, one damaged: both American!!!!

It was mid-morning when crew chief, T/Sgt. Barnes, gave his P-47C clearance and he sauntered out anticipating a routine, local hop. 41-6334, UN-M, had been his personal plane since March but Bud and Republic's portly product were about to part dramatically. The 2,000 hp of Pratt and Whitney lifted the Thunderbolt sweetly away despite an ungainly 200 gallon 'bath tub' tank hugging its belly — he did not like the adverse flying affect it caused but increased range was paramount for bomber escort.

Heat haze hovered over the countryside, covering agricultural activity below. Don Hadingham, oblivious of the P-47, or other aircraft, sweated stacking hay. Both bombers and fighters were in the area as the Eighth geared for combat. One of these, a Liberator, attracted Bud's attention: its course would take it directly over Halesworth, he decided on a closer look.

As a fighter pilot, he reasoned, it was advantageous to fraternize with bomber crews. Firstly, for the recognition problem, (P-47's often returned with "friendly" bullet holes) and, secondly, it was advertised that a damaged fighter could move slowly into bomber formations and the bombers would protect their "little friend".

FUN

Closing with the B-24, Bud dropped 15 degrees of flap, preventing an overshoot, and slid in on its starboard side to the delight of gunners leaning out. It was great fun: they waved, he waved back:

they laughed, he laughed back. They motioned him in and the P-47 snuggled closer, slightly lower but level with their position — he nestled the wing of his fighter beneath the bomber's fuselage, chick to mother. His propeller arc was now no more than three feet away and, having passed the airfield, Bud decided enough of frivolity, time for chow.

Increasing speed he edged ahead of the bomber's waist, fifteen feet below and clear of the two whirling Hamiltons, he was now in view of the cockpit crew peering out. Once again they waved, he responded and, as a parting gesture, decided on a demonstration of the Thunderbolt's speed — a full-power break away. The empennage of his fighter was slightly ahead of and between the blade arcs of the Liberator's No. 3 and 4 engines. He applied forward pressure to the column and a peculiar thing began to happen, a phenomenon of aerodynamics little understood by contemporary experts let alone a comparative fledgling.

Instead of diving, the tail of his P-47 raised higher, towards the bomber. Bud had neither instruction nor experience to cope with the situation — a venturi effect of negative air pressure created in front of each propeller was sucking his plane in. At the same time, the B-24 pilot allowed his starboard wing to drop for a better view of the Thunderbolt. In those final moments Bud did not realize that retracting his flaps would drop him out of danger, he gingerly kept forward pressure on the stick, wincing as the inevitable occurred.



Bud comes in for a closer look.

A loud, metallic tear needed no questions, the controls slapped uselessly and the fighter's nose dropped to the vertical. In an instant Bud undid his harness and released the canopy, hauling it back was easy but it took both hands on the windshield to heave his body into the airstream. Kicking and struggling he fought free, certain he was below the 500 feet required for jumping — the 'chute's response was horrifyingly slow compared to the approaching earth. The burgeoning folds arrested his descent moments before the P-47 exploded on impact, the resultant fire-ball roared up as he landed, stunned but unscathed.

COLLISION

Don Hadingham stood, transfixed, for the brief time in which it happened. The low flying aircraft, perilously close together, interrupted his stacking and he paused, shielding his eyes from the sun with his arm, to watch them. Ducking under the bomber's wing, the fighter came up, seemed to hesitate in front and

pieces flew off as the bomber chewed into it. Stone-like it fell earthwards, but just before it hit the pilot jumped, his parachute opening as the plane blew up and he landed heavily nearby. Before Don could react, the airman was on his feet, released his 'chute, and ran off towards the farmhouse. Don looked up at the limping Liberator, one wing dropped, two engines stopped, it slewed across the sky for Flixton airfield.

IGNOMINIOUS RETURN

Bud reached the farm and phoned Halesworth to be told a crash crew had already been dispatched. From the base, the demise of Captain Mahurin was witnessed, trees obscured any sight of his escape and the smoke pall apparently indicated the need for a replacement.

Returning to the smouldering crater Bud found the team probing for his body and, despite protestations, he was duly incarcerated in the "meatwagon" and driven to hospital at Metfield for examination before a jeep took him, arms full of parachute, ignominiously back to Halesworth. Major Tukey tore off the initial strip before passing him to Colonel Zemke and, as Bud later understated, "the conversation was more or less one-sided." A bar on promotion for twelve months and fine under the 104th Article of War left a chastened young airman. Luckily the Liberator crew bore no grudge, even sympathizing with the hapless fighter pilot. Bud cannot recall any names but believes they were later forced down on the Anzio beach-head, if any Newsletter readers can comment, the author would appreciate hearing from them.

SUCCESS

Mahurin's unhappy start premised an auspicious flying career — his score of victories opened on 16 August, 1943, with two confirmed (German this time) ultimately reaching 24 including one Japanese "Dinah" and three Korean Migs. Still active in aviation, Bud now lives in California.

LADIES ONLY

For those of you coming to Valley Forge in July, please advise Evelyn Cohen if you plan to attend the fashion show and luncheon at a cost of \$5.00 per person. If possible she would appreciate prepayment and it is important to know how many will attend.

Editor:

Lt. Col. John H. Woolnough

7752 Harbour Blvd.
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How to Get to Europe — The Hard Way

by Col. John W. Brown (708P)

This is a story of the crew of "Polaris" and our overseas deployment more than 30 years ago. It is a story that has never been told, because my crew had to break the rules to get to combat.

We arrived at Herrington, Kansas, around the end of January 1944. Here we were issued our "combat gear", including new parachutes, binoculars and .45 cal. automatics. I still have the original shipping ticket from the depot for 1 ea. B-24H Aircraft, 41-29384 and 4 ea. Pratt & Whitney engines, etc., dated 2 Feb. 1944.

After a short shake down flight around the pattern, we took off for West Palm Beach, Florida on a snowy day, 5 Feb 44. After a couple of days at WPB during which bombay carriers were installed and filled with mail bags, we were briefed for a pre-dawn takeoff carrying secret orders giving our destination — but not to be opened until one hour after take-off.

We flew to Trinidad, then on to Belim, Brazil, dodging thunderstorms and marveling at the size of the mouth of the Amazon with its hundreds of islands mostly covered with cattle. Then on to Fortaleza, a dusty airstrip with thousands of tents to accommodate the crews jumping off from here for Africa.

On arriving at our plane on the morning of 13 Feb 44, we found "Polaris" sitting in a pool of gasoline. The fuel tank behind No. 2 engine had ruptured and gas was everywhere. It had drained down the wing into the bombay, soaking some of our mail and luggage. We unloaded the mail, opened all the hatches and windows and started mopping up.

It did not take long to determine that there were no spare gas tanks at Fortaleza and no way to repair the damage to ours. When the local maintenance officer found that our bird was crippled, he promptly sent a crew to start dismantling it. He thought the spare parts he needed had arrived. This meant that we would lose our beautiful new plane and in all probability, we would be stuck in South America for a long time or the crew broken up as we would have to hitch-hike out. While we studied our predicament, we mounted an armed guard on the plane and slept under the wing to prevent a takeover. As the tempers rose and tension mounted, we heard that there might be a gas tank in Natal, only a few hours farther south.

We held a series of crew councils to discuss our alternatives — to give up our plane or try somehow to fly it out. No one wanted to give up our plane, but how do you fly a plane out without one of its gas tanks? There was no use asking for permission as it would be denied.

There were more questions, "Could the plane be safely flown?" "Had we eliminated all the pockets of fuel that might produce explosive fumes? None of us had more than 100 hours in B-24's, but we pooled our knowledge of gas systems and decided to run some taxi tests to check out our theories of feeding two engines from one tank. At the same time we would air out the leaked fuel. If she was going to blow



up, let it be on the taxi strip. I was confident that I could take off with only three engines but we were able to use all four on the ground. We needed to have all four turning to convince the tower that we had repaired the aircraft.

After the ground tests, the crew voted to risk the trip to Natal. The next morning at dawn we all got aboard, taxied out with No. 2 engine feeding from No. 1 tank and joined with the traffic entering the active runway. After a brief notification to the control tower and a check with the crew, we advanced the throttles on three good engines and lifted off the runway. Once airborne, we feathered No. 2 engine and shut down all electrical gear and set course for Natal.

February was half gone when we got to Natal. We were overjoyed to find they had a new gas tank for us. Our joy was dampened a bit when we learned there were no maintenance people to install it. The base was full of transiting B-24, C-46 and C-47 groups crossing the South Atlantic and there was not a man to spare.

Yankee ingenuity took over and with the whole crew pitching in we borrowed and scrounged tools and went to work in 100 degree weather. Standing on empty gas drums, we removed the wing panels, collapsed the old tank and somehow got it out. Then we reversed the procedure and installed the new tank. This took about a week because we were not used to the tropical sun and because we found a local beach where we could cool off from time to time. We were pleased with ourselves — we had saved our ship. Since the next leg was a long one we would need all the gas the ship could carry and all the tanks had to function.

After a test hop, we inspected our work again and re-sniffed for gas leaks before loading up with bananas, oranges, lemons and a few blistering sunburns for the trip to Africa. After almost 12 hours of flying and a line of mid-ocean thunderstorms that really rattled our teeth, we floated down on the final approach to Dakar with about 45 minutes of fuel remaining.

Our pleasure at being safely in Africa didn't last long for when we reached Marrakech, a sandstorm blew down our tents and filled us and our plane with a thick layer of fine sand. Italian POW's served us heated "C" Rations in one of the hangars and the blue enamel plates slowly changed color as we proceeded down the chow line.

Finally, about the first of March, we set our compass for Valley, Wales. Enroute we spotted flares in the pre-dawn ocean off Portugal and descended to find life-rafts in the sea. We circled while Karl Oesterle (708N) pin-pointed the position. Then we broke radio silence and notified British Air-Sea Rescue. Later, we heard that it was an RAF crew that had been shot down by the Germans the day before.

A few hundred miles farther we picked up the South coast of Ireland and then Land's End and then on to Valley Wales. Here they sent us on our way, warning us about straying over English cities and AA sites but they failed to tell us much about Attlebridge and recognition points. Needless to say, we checked out several fields full of B-24's before we finally found our field.

We may not have been the last crew to arrive, but we were mighty late. I can recall one orientation flight and maybe a practice forming session before we were alerted for the Group's first mission to Berlin on 22 March. That flight with dogfights, dense flak and that terrible mid-air collision over the target answered most of my questions about what it was going to be like the rest of the way.

By way of contrast, consider that our crew left WPB in the same flight with John Brown and made the trip to Attlebridge in ten days (10,000 miles, yet). We were the first crew to arrive (18 Feb 44). The airfield was empty — everyone came out to see the airplane. Ed.

Nose Art

We have a collection of 120 nose art photos made from copies of pictures sent in by 466ers. There are some names for which we have no photos. If you have one of the following please send me the print. I will copy and return it posthaste. Audrey, Berlin Bound, Bombshackle Annie, Calais Clipper, The Fan Dancer, Fifty More, Homeward Angel, Hubba Hubba, The Lady, Lady Peace, Lovely Lady, Mamie Yokum, Ma's "Lil" Angel, Mouse Head Express, My achin Back, The Nearsighted Robin, Nobody's Baby II, Old Tom Cat, Peck's Bad Boys, Peggy Ann, Peg-O-My-Heart, Piccadilly Lilly, Pluto Crate, Polaris II, Predominant Yankee, Silent Yokum, Sky Pirates, Sugar, Virgin Sturgeon, Winged Fury, Worry Bird I & II.

Also does anyone know the color scheme on the Falcon. Chris Gotts wants to know. Chris also wants to get in touch with anyone who bailed out or crashed in Norfolk.

J. B. Dobbs of the Fouts crew (618G), shot down on the 8 Apr 44 mission, is looking for help from any other POW who remembers his injured neck, chest and hip on that shoot-down.

Next Stop Sweden

by Torbjorn Olausson

41-2411, Piccadilly Filley, down at Hogsby 9/10/1943.



Crew: Pilot: Thomas Atkinson
Co-Pilot: James Ware
Bombardier: Rollo Rudgers
Navigator: Sheaffer
Engineer: Richard ("Vic")
Waist Gunner: William Culin (address 1972: Rt MSGT, 1 Shannon Cr. Rd., New Florence, Pa. 15944)
Belly Gunner: Junior Hunter
Tail Gunner: Nick Caruso
Waist Gunner: Scyzepanski ("Skinny")

On Saturday the 9th of October around 15:30 hours the plane came circling around the small village of Hogsby. After around ten minutes the machine landed in the field close to the river Eman. Nine men left the plane. One member of the crew had left the machine earlier somewhere over the big island Oland. He jumped into the water and what happened to him was unknown.

The crew left the plane immediately and put it on fire and started to walk towards some Swedes which were coming from the brick-factory (Teg br. on the map). The crew warned the Swedes not to go too close to the plane because of the ammunition exploding. On the other side of the river some bird-hunters were trying to catch a boat and wanted to cross the river in order to try to put out the fire. But they waited until the explosions were gone and then they went up to the plane. They found a small parachute made of paper

the militarys arrived and put out guard at the plane and the crew were taken for questioning. They didn't want to say anything about the reason for landing. (This is the story the way it was published in the paper 1943).

27 years later Thomas Atkinson returned to the spot where he had landed many years ago. I enclose a clipping from the 1970 paper. Two maps go with this story. One covering southern Sweden and one of the actual landing site as it looked back in 1943.

42-40128, War Baby, down at Orebro 18/11/1943.

Crew:

1st Lt. Robert Atwell Hill
1st Lt. Frank Kilcheski Jr.
2nd Lt. Walter Harvey Sills
2nd Lt. Abraham Himmy Schonier
Sgt. Edward Joseph Donelly

Private Donald Cairns
Sgt. Gen. Alfred Corn
Private James Edoard Nichols
Sgt. Bertil Leonard Carlsson
Sgt. Robert Dunsmore Bryce
There were three planes which landed in Sweden this very day and all three of them had been on a mission over Kjellers airfield in Norway. Obviously they had run out of gas and had to f/1 in Sweden. Some of the machines had let their bombs in the sea outside the Swedish west-coast and some fishermen had nearly got killed. War Baby arrived over the town Orebro around 1500 and she arrived together with a B-24H. She was the second plane to land and the Swedish authorities stopped the crew from putting the plane on fire. Lt. Kilcheski tried to throw a molotof-cocktail but was stopped by the Swedes. Later Lt. Hill picked up a lighting pistol and also tried to put the plane on fire. Neither did he have any success. The crew was taken to the police headquarters and they were allowed to take a shower and were given dinner and some beds. An English speaking policeman was put in charge and the next day the crew was taken away by military personnel.



The crew had thrown out ammunition of the plane because a lot of machinegun ammunition was found in Orebro and its surroundings. There is still some ammunition at the police Hq. They keep it as a souvenir.

Some members of the crew were hurt by coldness in their cheeks and feet. A doctor arrived and took care of them.

Later, on the 16th December 1943, the plane was flown to Hasslo airfield by Lt. Hill, escorted by Swedish fighters. Later scrapped and was never to leave Sweden. When the machine was flown to Hasslo it was, for security reasons, only filled with a small amount of gas. Just enough to let it fly there. A Swedish air officer joined that flight also, just in case. . .

42-40610, Death Dealer, down at Rinkaby 9th October 1943.

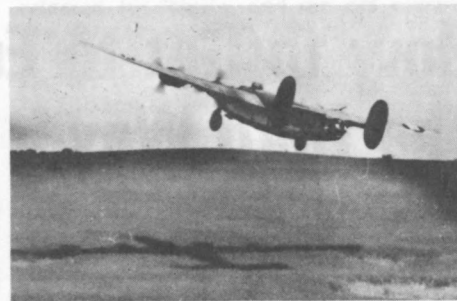


This was the first Liberator to land in

Sweden and was probably together with Piccadilly Filley.

The only thing I know at this stage is that the plane was put on fire by her crew and the scrap which could be used was "sold".

42-95030, downed at Bulltofta Airfield near Malmo on the 20th June 1944.



6 men were killed, 4 survived. When the plane was to land one wing touched a small hill just ahead of the airfield. The machine ditched with her nose right into the ground, turned over and was on fire at once. Two fire brigades arrived but the distance was too big and the plane was still on fire in the afternoon. It landed around 10.00 hours. The arrival was a real tragedy in flames. It looked like pouring water on heated stones. It was like steam in a sauna. The right wing had been torn off when the machine touched the small hill and one of the motors was thrown away. Two men of the crew had gone to the end of the fuselage in order to keep the balance of the plane and they left immediately after landing and the plane was in flames. The first man the Swedes dragged out of the wreckage had got big wounds in his head and in his left arm and one of his legs was broken. The Swedes tried furiously to save the pilot who was trapped in his seat. He was kicking in order to get out but suddenly waves of burning petrol washed over him. The Swedes managed to get four people out but the other four were killed. Two of them were killed when the plane hit the ground. One of those two had gotten his head cut off.

42-51523, downed at Bulltofta Airfield on the 17th January 1945.



This machine was repaired and put into order again on the 5th March 1945, and brought back to England 24th June 1945. At the moment I just know that the Swedes took the maps and the bomb photos.

42-109816, downed at Bulltofta Airfield 21st June 1944.

The Last Mission

by Charles W. Getz (491 BG)

In May of this year, our crew had its first reunion in San Francisco. Some of us had not seen nor been in contact for 31 years! I was the host and it took six months to account for 9 of the 10 crew members. I found that two members had died, the Radio Operator and Navigator. I located one crew member through his son, but he had recently lost his wife and had taken off on a trip and the son did not know how to reach him. We received a beautiful letter from him, however, the day the reunion began. The 10th member of the crew was not located until a few weeks after the reunion, but now we have accounted for 10 out of 10.

There were six of us at the reunion. The theme was "The Last Mission." I told everybody to bring their A-2 jackets if they had them. Members of the crew for the last mission were:

Johnny Crowe, Co-pilot, Sacramento, CA
 Chuck Voyles, Bombardier, Indianapolis, IN

Marion Turnipseed, Engineer, Des Moines, IA

Harry Picariello, Tail Gunner, Denver, CO
 Pat Carr, Nose Gunner, MA

Bill Getz, Pilot, San Francisco, CA

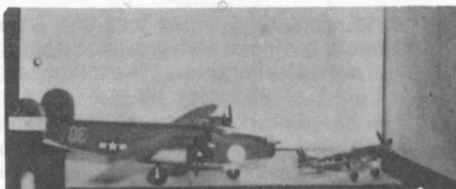
After a leisurely breakfast at my home, we toured a nearby Redwood Forest. Voyles, Crowe and Picariello brought their wives, which added to the crew's strength during the crucial period of the "last mission." After dinner the first day, the "last mission" began.



(Back row l to r) Marion Turnipseed, Bill Getz, Johnnie Crowe, Chuck Voyles. (Front row) Pat Carr, Harry Picariello.

First, we got into uniform (A-2's). Four out of six is not bad! Only two out of uniform. As skipper, I briefed the crew on changes that have occurred since we flew together 31 years before. Rank differences mean less and for the last mission we would all be the same rank. I made everyone a general and posted silver stars on their shoulders.

Second, we needed a B-24 to fly the mission. For this last mission I said that each would have their own B-24, and I gave them each an exact scale model of our B-24 complete with our own colors and personal insignia. The wingspan is 12".



Our plane with a P-51 along side (I flew a 2nd tour with the 2nd AD Weather Scouts.

Now that we were ready to go, I set up a movie projector and showed a super 8MM black and white film of a complete B-24 mission from start to finish. It is actual film of a mission by the 44th Bomb Group and there were some familiar faces, like Leon Johnson's. The crew was intact at the end of the mission.

After the film, we were ready for "debriefing." You will recall that during debriefings, we were always given a shot of booze, something we looked forward to. I can tell you here and now, we had the longest debriefing session on record after this mission! I was more worried about casualties from debriefing than I was from the mission itself, but all survived. In fact, age had caught up with all of us, and everyone was "pooped" by midnight. But it was a great mission.

The next day was more sight-seeing in San Francisco. The crew began departing and eventually the last mission became another memory to tuck away along with those of years ago when we were all so young, depending upon each other to bring us through exciting, dangerous times. This last mission was certainly more enjoyable.

Cruise Anyone?

Tevelin Travel Agency has been asked to look into a cruise as an additional activity for the Second Air Division, apart from our yearly reunion. Preliminary contact has been made with the Holland-American Lines concerning a seven day cruise from New York to Bermuda on the S.S. Stantendam some time in the fall of 1977. We are attempting to have the Holland-American Lines make a presentation at our reunion this July at Valley Forge.

Besides the good fellowship of our group travelling together, the great advantage would be a group rate that makes the price more attractive than the published fares.



Hank and Edie Tevelin have taken this same cruise within the last few months and have visited Bermuda by various tours and cruises at least four times over the past six or seven years and they feel that this Stantendam cruise would meet the challenge of the discriminating taste of the hearty souls that make up our organization. Those people who wish additional information prior to Valley Forge should contact Tevelin Travel Agency, 308 Bustleton Pike, Feasterville, Pa. 19047.



Lt. Sam HAGGARD, Denver City, Texas
 Oberleutnant Hans RICHT, Hulm, Germany

"Rude Comments"

by Walter M. Rude (448th BG)

Rather than continue with my own story telling' I am submitting the following letter I received from Mr. R. A. Gorham, Chief Executive Officer of Loddon — our favorite watering stop — in the belief that others from the 448th would be interested in the present day Loddon.

"Dear Mr. Rude,

"I am sorry to have been so long in replying to your letter of September, which eventually found its way to me. Although some people call Loddon a town (pop. 2300), it is officially classified as a parish, and does not have a mayor. It is one of 119 parishes and small towns in this local government District, which is south of Norwich and contains a number of disused airfields which were mostly occupied by your countrymen during the war — Hardwick, Tibenham, Hethel, Rushall and Fersfield, in addition to Seething. Hethel has been re-developed and the Lotus racing and sports cars are now manufactured there. The runways etc. have been realigned and now form a test circuit.

"Unfortunately, no-one seems to have written a history of Seething airfield from the 'locals' viewpoint, and I am afraid I cannot help from any personal reminiscence as I did not arrive back in the area until March 1946, upon my discharge. However, many people in Seething and this area can remember well how they were 'overrun' by Yanks. Obviously, for so many young men to appear in the middle of a very scattered rural community, most of whom had never seen an American before, caused quite a stir, and the place has never been the same since! All these years after, the older inhabitants still comment upon the way they drove their trucks around the narrow roads, how they consumed their beer, how they loved the girls, and their general exuberance. You must remember East Anglians are by nature introvert, and it took a time for these invaders to be accepted. However, these recollections are all kindly made, and as time passed an obvious respect developed which toward the end of the war, and in the knowledge that many of your comrades lost their lives, became an appreciative and sentimental attachment.

"The village of Seething is almost exactly the same now as it was in your time, with its very old thatched church and nearby village school, which is also thatched. Nowadays only the 5-11 year-olds attend it, the older children coming into the Secondary School at Loddon. The one pub, the 'Cherry Tree', has been closed, and is now a private dwelling. The airfield itself is still distinguishable in outline, although only the shell of the control tower remains. Most of the runways and perimeter track have been cleared and the land is back to agriculture. One section of the old runway is, however, used by the local flying club. Hedenham has changed very little and the

'Mermaid' not at all — in fact it is still doing good business and proud to retain its 'old world' character. The 'Tumble-Down Dick' at Woodton is also closed, but the 'Garden House' at Mundham is still open and very much as you would remember it.

"Adjoining the 'White Horse' at Loddon the local Ladies ran a canteen, much used by airmen from Seething. This also is just the same, and the large room used then is still called 'the canteen'.

"It is perhaps strange that so much emphasis is placed upon the pubs and not upon the businesses. The fact, is, I think, that the pubs actually did do good trade because of the airbase, whereas the other businesses were affected little by it. I suppose this is because most other commodities were on ration in the stores, and anyway they would be purchased in bulk by the Service and distributed via official sources. My own memory as a quartermaster seems to tell me my only civilian need was a tailor — and beer!

"Loddon itself has recently been bypassed by a new road, and to the west many new houses have been built since the war, but in the main street few alterations have been made, and I'm sure you would remember it. The whole area remains predominantly agricultural, although mechanisation has meant many people in the villages now work in Norwich and in other local towns. Loddon is on the southern fringe of the Norfolk Broads, which is a mixture of broads (small lakes) all linked by rivers, and a unique (in Britain) holiday area. Post-war, boatyards have developed on our River Chet, and cruisers are hired out by the week or longer. Several thousand holiday-makers visit Loddon by river every year, including several from the continent and a few from the U.S.A.

Yours sincerely,
R. A. GORHAM
Chief Executive Officer"

News of the 458th

by Clinton E. Wallace

The growth of the 458th membership in the last eight months has been quite gratifying. As of 1 June 1975 the 458th had 87 members. As of today we have at least 125.

I opened my big mouth at the reunion in Norwich last June and said that by the time of the reunion in Valley Forge this year I would double the membership of the 458th. We still have five months to go and I have not given up yet. This would be an impossible task without the GRAND support that I have been receiving from you. Keep the help up.

I received a very nice letter from Gen. (Col) Isbell. He is happily retired and living in Alaska. As you all know you can not keep an old Eagle out of the blue so he has his own command again. Civilian type that is. He says that he has some fifty people and twenty aircraft. They are mostly rotary wing and that is a bit of a change from the B-24.

I would like to locate the crew chief of "Old Doc's Yacht". Our crew named the aircraft and if anybody could help me out I would appreciate it. When I returned to the Z1 in March 1945 "Old Doc's Yacht" had completed 69 missions. I know that the aircraft returned to the U.S. and was bulldozed into scrap metal at Altus, Okla. How about somebody from the crew that flew her back to the States?

I have been informed that we will have a separate room for the 458th mini-reunion the entire evening of the 22nd. I would appreciate a post card from all 458th members who plan on attending telling me how many there will be in their party. I am going to arrive a day early and this will help me make some plans after I get there. The Officers of the 2nd ADA are going to have their hands full with the Main reunion and will not be able to give me this information until the reunion has started. I am hoping for a real good turn out of the 458th. I know of two former crews that may make it intact. I hope so.

Keep sending me information on former members and asking me questions and I will keep right on plugging along.

News of the Eightballs

(44th Bomb Group)

by Joe Warth

The membership of the 44th continues to grow with the addition of over 60 new members in the last year, but I need help as I am running out of addresses to contact for new members. How about you sending me some? Dig down in that old address book or Christmas card list and send me any you have. Who knows, they may join too.

We have reserved the biggest room at Valley Forge for our mini-reunion and are looking forward to having you there, plus your family of course. No formal pro-

gram that night, just a buffet with drinks and lots of talk about the days of War and Glory. However, the night won't be complete without YOU being there, so plan now to attend. Send your reservations in early to Evelyn so she can let me know who's coming from the 44th.

We are going to have Eightball name tags for all to wear to show the rest of the 2nd ADA that the 44th is still able to turn out enmasse with the most and the best.

See you at Valley Forge in July 1976.

Re-Union of Crew 64

715 Sqd., 448th Group (20-22 June '75)

by Col. Alvin D. Skaggs (Ret.)

Crew 64, the original lead crew of the 715th Bomb Squadron, reassembled at Mena in the foothills of western Arkansas for its first re-union since the Great War. All members were "present or accounted for". William E. Jackson Jr. (Tail Gunner) made the supreme sacrifice by giving his life during combat and two other members, Benjamin Baer (Co-Pilot) and Stanley Filipowicz (Radio Operator), have since deceased. The only able bodied man who could not attend, due to illness in the family, was the original Bombardier, Andrew Hau.



(Standing l to r) Lt. A. H. Hau, Lt. Elbert F. Lozes, Lt. A. D. Skaggs, Lt. Don C. Todt, Lt. B. F. Baer (Dec.)
(Kneeling l to r) M/Sgt. George Glevanik, T/Sgt. R. K. Lee, S/Sgt. F. X. Sheehan, T/Sgt. Stanley C. Filipowicz, S/Sgt. Gene Gaskins, S/Sgt. William E. Jackson (KIA).

Our crew was the only one of the original cadre to complete a tour of combat as a crew. In fact, I believe it also was the only original lead crew to complete a tour. Thus we were a very close knit unit, each member highly competent in his specialty, and each one ready to give his life for each and every other member. Just one example will demonstrate this closeness.

Many will remember the raid of 22 April 44 on the marshalling yards of Hamm, Germany when the Nazi fighters followed the attack force home at night and destroyed many bombers in the air and on the ground. Our plane was badly shot up near the base, immediately erupting into flames in the bombay and for-

NOTICE

We requested in our last Newsletter that somebody volunteer to take on the 445th BG as VP in order to get it moving. So many have responded we have decided that the best and only way to handle this is to let all you 445th types decide this at your mini-reunion banquet. Just tell us who after the festivities.

ward tail sections. Frank Sheehan (Waist Gunner) was shot through the leg so Gene Gaskins (Ball Turret Gunner) and Bill Jackson helped him bail out, following closely themselves, thinking we were about to crash. Gaskins landed close to Sheehan and carried him to a nearby farmhouse obtaining first aid and transportation back to the base. While in the air, but all too near terra firma, the engines had stopped running, the fuel fed fire was blazing out of control, and we were too low to bail out from the cockpit section. George Glevanik (Engineer) however could have safely bailed out but instead he dashed into the bombay, quickly spotted fuel lines which were shot in two and amid the flames held his hands over the breaks to feed sufficient fuel to two engines for us to avoid a night crash and to reach the base safely. The plane completely burned up after landing but all of us emerged with only minor injuries.



(Standing l to r) Elbert F. Lozes, Col. A. D. Skaggs (Ret.), Col. Don C. Todt (Ret.)
(Kneeling l to r) George Glevanik, M/Sgt. R. K. Lee (Ret.), Francis X. Sheehan, and Gene Gaskins.

During our June re-union we relived many other harrowing experiences as well as our more pleasant memories while viewing slides and movies of our escapades. Our longsuffering wives were quite forgiving and they were very congenial even though most had never met before. All the ladies were able to attend except George Glevanik's lovely little wife, Ann, who had terminal cancer to which she succumbed on September 14th. Our program included much good food and fellowship at our country club (appropriately decorated with WWII murals by a local budding artist Ms. Sherry Parker rivaling Bob Harper of dear ole Seething), we had many displays of WWII mementos including an especially good grouping by Ray Lee (Assistant Engineer), we visited our Queen Wilhelmina State Park and Lodge to include a scenic tour along the skyline drive (Highest point between the Rockies and the Alleghenys) conducted by renowned naturalist Ms. Aileen McWilliam, and we allowed time for golfing, swimming, and visiting other points of interest. The most notable contribution as a lasting memory of the re-union will probably be the 85 page booklet prepared for each member by Gene and Louise Gaskins (with a bit of help from some of the rest of us) which contains WWII photographs,

copies of original orders, accounts of some of the missions, and accounts of other interesting events of our WWII days.

Plans for this re-union were germinated by Gene Gaskins, Frank Sheehan, and Doug Skaggs (Pilot) during the 2nd AD Re-union in 1974 at Wilmington, N.C. We enjoyed meeting old friends there and determined to have a re-union of our entire crew the following year at the Skaggs' home in centrally located Arkansas as members would be coming from across the nation: California, Utah, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Florida and Louisiana.

Now it is on to Valley Forge.

491st BOMB GROUP

by Ted Parker

Your Vice-President needs help. Does anyone out there have any names and addresses for me to contact of men from our group who are not now in the 2ADA? I have just about exhausted my list and there are still a couple thousand men unaccounted for. Would like to see all the former 491st in the 2ADA. Please send me any leads or information you may have.

May I urge all present members to attend this years reunion of the Second Air Division Association and particularly, the 491st Bomb Group mini-reunion. We need to hold an election for V-P as I was a volunteer to this position three years ago. Although I have been pleased and honored to serve as the first V-P of the group; I think a formal election should take place, as someone else might like to take over the duties.

I would like also to discuss with our members the idea of establishing a fund for the purpose of placing a memorial plaque at both our former homes in England, Metfield and North Pickenham. On the later, the 492nd Bomb Group would be included, as they occupied the base before us. Would like to hear from our members on this subject for ideas and the feasibility of such a project. See you all at Valley Forge in July.

NOTICE

Regarding the Runion.

There has been some confusion concerning the status of extra persons in a party. The 'No Charge' for a extra person in a room is hotel policy. The \$85.00 charge for all the events applies to everyone — each person in the party. We do have to pay expenses and the only way we can accomplish this is to have everyone pay their share. We wish you all could come for free.

LETTERS

Dear Bill:

Are there any members who were with Pathfinder attached to the 392nd? I was on Maj. Joseph A. Higgins crew, shot down April 29, 1944 — POW Stalag 17.

Charlie A. Piper

(ed. If there are I'm sure you'll hear from them Charlie.)

Dear Evelyn:

Several weeks ago I saw a notice in the ROA Magazine about a reunion of the 453rd Bomb Group. I wrote to Donald Olds.

Just this hour I received a reply from Don. He enclosed the June 1975 News Letter, now I am enclosing my check to you for my dues. Had I heard about the Second Air Division Association I would have joined sooner.

I was a pilot with the 735th Sq. of the 453rd Bomb Group. I am sure many of the Group remember our crew as we all wore red leather jockey caps as our crew insignia.

Sincerely,

Glen (Snuffy) M. Smith

Major AFRes. Ret.

Dear Evelyn,

I read about the Second Air Division Association, Eighth Air Force reunion of the 453rd Bomb Grp (H) in the Retired Officers magazine and wrote to Donald L. Olds for information. He sent me the details and a copy of the June 75 News Letter, which brought about a great deal of pleasant and a few sad memories.

I was a member of the 733rd Bomb. Sqd. and after completing my tour remained with the Hq. Group until the Group was inactivated. Although I remained in the service until I retired, you loose touch over the years and it was a pleasant surprise to learn of the association. I am enclosing a check for membership and hope to join the members at the reunion. Please inform me if it is possible to purchase any of the prior copies of the Newsletter?

Leonard Apter

Maj. USA (Ret.)

Dear Bill:

I refuse to delay any longer the writing of this note to tell you what a fine job you're doing with the 2nd AD News Letter. The publication is a valuable contribution to the historic role of the Liberator airplane. We appreciate the hard work and the good job you're doing.

We're always happy to include the exploits of 2nd AD Libs in our journal, Briefing. The last issue contained two features: 458BG Crashes in the U.K. and part 2 of Diary of a 44th BG Engineer.

Your readers are cordially invited to write to us for membership information. There are no reunions or meetings so we do not conflict with squadron and group activities.

Cordially,

Bob McGuire,

Managing Director

International B-24 Liberator Club

P.O. Box 841

San Diego, CA. 92112

Dear Evelyn:

Thanks for the list of former 93rd members and applications. I hope to contact some of them on my travels this winter.

I just noticed in the last News Letter a letter from William S. Sullivan, asking for a copy of "The Mighty Eighth". I have a new extra copy that I will sell for \$13.95. I also have an extra copy of "Log of the Liberator" for \$10.95. I bought these at those prices for someone that asked for them at Wilmington, but I lost the name and address, so I have extras if anyone is interested. I would be very grateful to you if you would send me Mr. Sullivan's address or put this note in the News Letter.

Best wishes to you for a Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Floyd H. Mabee

28 Hillside Ave.

Dover, N.J. 07801

28 Nov. 1975

Dear Jordan Uttal:

Thank you for your letter and I am delighted that I was able to get up and see the Second Division Memorial in Norwich. It is one of the finest things of this kind I have ever seen and a great credit to all those who helped in completing it.

In regard to the Reunion in Valley Forge next July, I regret that I will be unable to be there because of commitments I have out here in the picture business.

Best regards,

James Stewart

Evelyn:

Have had good intentions, since our return from England to express our thanks to you for all you did and have done for us personally as well as the group. Had it not been for all you fellas, Roberties, Warth, and Griffins, it sure would have been a big mess (and we include Tom Eaton). Hope we did not make to big a nuisance (ass) of ourselves. Read in the Newsletter all the letters from the men about how they enjoyed themselves, if the other ladies in the group share my feelings, it was a wonderful trip, not only seeing England and meeting so many nice people, but to be able to share some of the memories that the fellows have reminisced over the years and us gals couldn't fully appreciate. This was only our second reunion and we feel like they are family to us, some a little closer than others. We were very sorry to hear about Bill Brooks. He and Dotie and Vicky did a terrific job and we were real proud of them.

Hope to see all in Pa. next year.

Albert and Emma Franklin

Dear Ms. Cohen:

After 30 years of wondering what, if anything, was going on with the 2nd Division and especially my old outfit the 453rd Bomb Group, I find out that the 2nd as well as the 453rd are having a reunion at Valley Forge in July 1976.

I want you to know that I already have my reservations and can hardly wait to see and visit with some of the old bunch.

I have lost track of all but 3 of my crew members and wish that I could somehow get a message to the rest. They all live a lot nearer to Valley Forge than I do.

We were a Lead Crew and had 38th Air Force leads to our credit when we finished our missions.

Enclosed please find my check for \$10.00 for membership and if there is any left over you can put it in the reunion fund. Please send me the necessary forms for attending the reunion.

Sincerely,

(Ex. Capt.) Philip H. Parsons

Box 672

Hugoton, Kansas 67951

453rd Bomb Group (Old Buck)

Dear Ms. Cohen:

During the course of a conversation with my new accountant, we discovered that we both were former members of the Second Air Division. He is presently a member of the Association. I never knew such an organization existed. But Mr. Cortland Brovitz briefed me in its history. I am enclosing a check for my membership — and believe me, I will become a life-time member.

I joined the 67th Squadron of the 44th in April, 1943. I was interned in Portugal in August, 1943 on the way to Ploesti for the first low level raid. After being disguised as Med Students at the University of Lisbon for a month or so, we were flown out by the British to North Africa — and from there back to England. I rejoined the 44th in October, went down on the Solingen mission of Dec. 1, 1943. Bailed out near Antwerp and was captured in about two hours. After the usual Dulag Luft, etc., on to Stalag 17B for 18 months.

I would appreciate hearing from any members of my original crew, Lt. Stamos, from St. Lake City. I understand he was killed after I was a P.O.W. I was flying as a sub on a new crew piloted by a Lt. Taylor the day we went down.

I would appreciate hearing from any POW, especially barracks 18 A&B.

Sincerely,

William (Bill) Morris

Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed \$5.00 for membership in 2nd Air Div. Assn. Learned of the organization from Donald Olds, Group Chairman, 453rd Bmb. Gp. I was on Lt. Jack Spear's crew, 734th Bmb. Sq. Completed our 35 missions during period from July 1944 to Feb. 1945. We flew our 1st mission in "Paper Doll", seemed like all new crews did. Most of our missions were flown in "Iron Pants".

Other ships I recall we flew in were "Sky Chief", "Hollywood & Vine". There were others. Looking forward to meeting the gang at Valley Forge.

With Best Wishes,

LeRoy A. Barnett

Dear Evelyn:

It took "Echols Evaders", 30 yrs. to fly again, but high we did at the Best Western in Zanesville, Ohio. We only had a skeleton crew but probably was a good thing. If we would have had to bump glasses with the rest of the crew we may not have made it.

We went on to visit Don Laher, another crewman and 2nd Div. Member, at his beautiful home at Bedford, Pa. All I can say is that the trip was just great, and hope we can "maybe" be at a 2nd Div. convention.

Keep up the good work, the newsletters are worthy of "First Prize" and are keepsakes along with our memories.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Cromer

Dear Bill:

Just a note to say thanks for a great newsletter. Every time I get one I say this has to be the best yet. There's no way you can top the last issue. The stories of the reunion were great, as were the pictures. I run a lot of pictures in my newspaper because they do the job, even better than a story.

Sure hated to miss the reunion but we had other plans for last summer. Like moving into a new and much larger building. We are planning on attending the reunion next summer, and would appreciate it very much if you could let me know the dates, if they are picked yet. With our small staff we have to plan in advance to be gone as long as we will have to be gone when we come. We have a number of friends on the East Coast and we plan to visit as many of them as possible while there.

Looking forward to seeing you and the rest of the gang next summer.

Leo R. McBrien

Dear Bill:

I can't thank you enough for your efforts on my behalf to locate Lt. Clarey and for the very newsy "Newsletter" enclosed with your latest letter.

I am sure it will have some results and I have written to St. Louis again now that I have the serial number. I'm sure something will come of it all.

It has now become a real challenge and I will certainly keep you posted of any results and should I be successful will forward all details in order to update your records.

Should I get the man in England and Lt. Clarey together I will also send you the details on that as it might be a great human interest story for your newsletter.

Bill, once again, thanks for all your help. I wish you a Happy Holiday season and a Healthful New Year.

Sincerely,

Al Blanco

4915 Tyrone Ave., No. 205

Sherman Oaks, Calif. 91423

Dear Bill:

The whereabouts of John Gandy, a crew chief of a B-24, "J" for "Jeannie" at a base near Beeston is being sought by a gentleman who was a ten year old admirer of we Americans in general and John Gandy in particular.

If anyone is in touch with John, who used to live in Bryan, Texas, please tell him to get in touch with

Mr. David R. K. Ward
17 Merley Drive
Highcliffe, Christchurch
Dorset, BH 23 5 BN
England

Jordan Uttal

Dear Bill:

Just a word or two regarding your end of this great organization. Being involved with a magazine, writing monthly columns and an occasional article or two, I have a small insight into what the Newsletter and new Roster costs. No need to mention the increase in postal rates. What amazes me is that all the service you're able to provide with the low \$5.00 annual dues.

The printing and mailing cost of the Roster alone is very nearly \$1,800.00. This is no small amount and it would appear that an increase in dues will be necessary in order that the organization stays solvent. Most of us are aware of the financial problems that are gripping New York City. I'm sure that the membership would rather have a dues increase than have a lesser service. Certainly it would seem that the increased costs would be a matter brought forth in our 30th Reunion at Valley Forge. An increase in dues is the only obvious solution. It would appear that \$7.50 to \$10.00 annually is not too great a price to pay for the many services provided.

Sincerely,
Rick Rokicki
458th BG

Dear Ms. Cohen,

Thanks so much for a delightful 1975 in the Second Air Division Association. The word was spread at the reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Society about the 2ADA, and my scrapbook of the trip was gone over so much I may have to buy a new album to house everything! Long live the Second! & 8th A.F.!!

Please use the enclosed stamps for whatever you wish. I apologize for sending cash for the memorial fund, but I made out the dues check before remembering to add some for the library. The money is from the family here.

I have met and chatted several times with the other Troy, Alabama, member, Mr. Chapman. I loan him my back newsletters and he in turn tells me stories about his escapades in the Second. Most enjoyable exchange.

Must scoot. See you, Lord willing, at the '76 reunion in Valley Forge!

Air-mindedly,
Linda Walter

Dear Mrs. Cohen,

On two previous occasions, I had written to another address that was related to the 2nd Air Division, but never received a reply to my inquiry.

I was with the 466th Bomb Group located at Attlebridge, England. My attempt to locate the addresses of my crew members was unsuccessful, except one member who I see and also have correspondence.

Any information regarding James Roger McKinley and Diane Harper McGogy would be appreciated.

My home address is: 3220 Midfield Rd., Baltimore, Md. 212038

Very truly yours,
David D. Golub, M.D.

Dear Mr. Robertie,

As a new member of the 2nd Air Div. Assn., I would like to say how proud I am to belong to such an organization, even though 30 years late.

I had no idea there was an Assn. until the press publicity about the re-union in Norwich.

However, my husband and I did manage to get to the re-union on the very last evening, and thoroughly enjoyed it.

I worked with the A.R.C. at Rackheath-Norfolk (467th) 1944-1945.

We live in a small village, miles from anywhere, but send an invitation to anyone of the Assn. who happens to be in the area to look us up. They will be most welcome.

Yours Sincerely,
Phyllis P. & Wilfred Smales

Dear Evelyn:

Happy Thanksgiving — belatedly of course — and happy holiday season ahead.

We wish to "thank you" for a very wonderful reunion. In spite of B.J.'s broken ankle the whole trip was most enjoyable, especially our superb welcome in Norwich, thanks in large part to your efforts. We look forward to a repeat visit and to seeing you, and all the rest, next year at Valley Forge.

Sincerely,
Jim & B.J. Kotapish

P.S. The ankle has mended quite well, although it still bothers B.J. at times.

Dear Evelyn:

The enclosed is self explanatory. I just had to pen a few lines relative to the trip to Norwich this past May. One of the most gratifying experiences my wife and I had in many a year. Not only the nostalgia of going back to the old air bases, making new acquaintances etc. but being able to see our grandson, who is over there with the Air Force, whom we hadn't seen in a few years. He was able to spend 3 days with us. Also we were able to visit our daughter-in-law's parents, who are Czechoslovakian refugees who came from behind the Iron Curtain in the mid-50's. And hear of their experiences under Communist rule. Also to meet again our daughter-in-law and granddaughter once again. Our son is in the service and they were in England for this past year. They are now back here and a family is once again together. So all in all time well spent.

If it is in order I would like to at this time place through you our reservations for the 1976 reunion at Valley Forge. My wife is quite enthusiastic on going.

Hoping to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

In Comradship
Ralph E. Fowler

Dear Evelyn,

My wife and I saw the B-24 at Duxford, in May 1974, we had 15 days of near perfect weather there, which is really something to brag about, when you're talking about English weather!!

Lucky for us, we made the trip at that time, because a few months later (Aug. 1974) I had to have my gall bladder removed, then in November, under my doctors advice, I was advised to take an early retirement, or suffer the consequences, so I chose early retirement. I have no regrets, I don't find retirement boring, my main complaint is that my health, is not as good as it should be, considering the fact that I gave up my job and the "pressures" that went with it, etc.

Hope to attend the '76 re-union.

Sincerely,
Walt Laughlin

Memorial Books for Branches

(from *Eastern Daily Press*, 3rd Feb., 1976)

Books from the American Memorial Library in Norwich are to be sent out to other libraries on the fringe of the city.

The American Memorial Trust governors decided on this measure yesterday as a way of using the books which have to be put in store because of the shortage of space in the room at Norwich Library.

The governors run the memorial library for the U.S.A.F. Second Air Division Association, which established the library as a tribute to the men of the division who died in the second world war.

FRESH BATCH

Miss Joan Benns, principal assistant librarian at Norwich, told the governors at their annual meeting that the shelves at the memorial room in the central library could hold 1800 books.

About 200 books were held in reserve, and this situation could be remedied by sending out batches of 25 or 50 books to libraries at Hellesdon, Costessey and Sprowston.

Books would be recalled every six months, and a fresh batch issued to the fringe libraries. Miss Benns said there would be no question of depleting the stock of books available from the memorial library itself.

"No librarian likes to see books not being used," said Miss Benns, "and I would much rather see these books on branch library shelves than out of sight of potential readers."

Although the Second Air Division Association has the ultimate say on these matters, the chairman of the governors, Mr. Tom Eaton, said he had been assured there would be no objection to this from the Americans.

The governors also agreed to launch a scheme to give visiting Americans the chance to meet Norwich people, particularly those connected with the American Memorial Trust.

An East Anglian Tourist Board representative, Mrs. Pam Petersen, told the governors the board welcomed the chance to try the scheme. If it worked, it could be extended to cover more local organizations.

SOARED

The past year was a particularly successful one for the memorial trust, Miss Benns told the governors.

Over 500 books were added to the stock and book issues soared. Last year 1854 books were issued from the memorial library, compared with 1419 the-year before.

Miss Benns said the air division association meeting in Norwich last summer probably had something to do with the rise in book issues.

The governors paid tribute to Mr. Philip Hepworth, who as city, and later divisional, librarian has been closely involved with the development of the memorial library.



Mr. Philip Hepworth with the book presented to him. Miss Joan Benns is in the picture.

Mr. Hepworth is to retire shortly as divisional librarian, and yesterday's meeting was the last he would attend as an adviser to the governors.

He was presented by Mr. Eaton with a copy of Alstair Cooke's book, "America." Mr. Eaton said Mr. Hepworth's enthusiasm and interest over the 25 years he had been associated with the trust had undoubtedly played a part in its success.

Claims Adjuster, Please

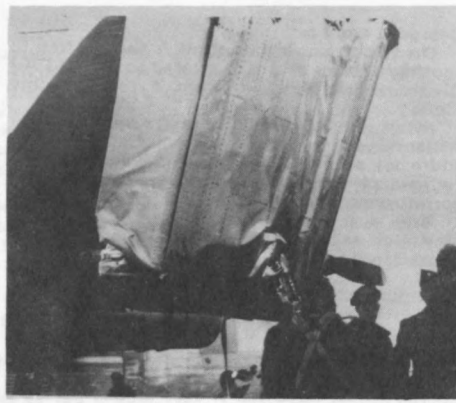
by George A. Reynolds
(458th Bomb Group)

Six combat boxes of Libs were cruising at 21,000 feet on course for Woippy, France, across the Moselle at Metz, 18 August 1944. It was VFR and just a nice day for malice by the 458th on their objective — an enemy aircraft factory. Each of the 24 ships carried three block-busters.

A few rounds of flak burst far below the formation, approaching the target area, and a moment later others popped above it. Then black puffs thumped amid the planes. The element leader, 755th Sq., ordered a spread-out, preparing to take evasive action. His deputy leader, 754th Sq., started to comply just as a heavy barrage arrived. All of the B-24s were wallowing and pitching in turbulence with their heavy loads. Somehow, the wings of the two leaders overlapped and WHAM! The lead ship immediately yawed out of formation, then dropped like a brick. Deputy lead continued at altitude, and the flak ended as abruptly as it began.

All eyes were following lead plummeting earthward. A ten-foot section of its right wing hung down grotesquely, and the pilots were battling a spin with every skill at their command. Its bombs were salvoed, and the ship leveled off several thousand feet below the departing formation, then turned homeward. Deputy lead assumed command and continued toward Metz.

Once its bombs were out, the lead plane became controllable with increased airspeed. The crew was "shook" and wanted to bail out but hesitated because of the speed. Headquarters was radioed and they ordered the pilot to land in France rather than try for home. The most suitable place available was a long, wide emergency fighter strip recently built. Such a field, near their position, was recommended, and the stricken Lib sailed for it full speed.



"Briney Marlin," another 755th B-24 involved in a less severe jolt in July, 1944.

In the traffic pattern, the pilots learned their B-24 was totally uncontrollable under 165 mph, so a landing had to be attempted at twice its normal speed. No one would venture a guess for a favorable outcome, but other choices were almost as risky. The downwind leg was extended, a flat, rudder-only turn was made to base leg and they gingerly rolled out on a very long final approach maintaining 170 per to touch down. The wing section dragged from the moment of contact, but miraculously none of the tires blew and the crew walked away safely from their "fenderbender" a few minutes later. Thus, another of the few mid-air collisions to end on a happy note.

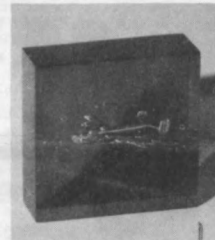
NOTICE

Mike Bailey, the Artist who painted the B-24 hanging in our Memorial Library in Norwich, needs photos for his upcoming book. He needs photos of all models — in flight, on the ground, landing, taking off, being bombed up, crashed, in England and North Africa and, if possible, photos of crews of their flight stations. Send to Mike at 91 Waterworks Road, Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NOTICE

It has been brought to our attention that some of our members never did receive the December issue of the Newsletter. We all know that the Postal Service has gone from a 'poor' to a low of 'abysmal', but that is no excuse for your not having received mail that was sent to you. If there are any others who never received their December Newsletter please write to me and I'll see that you get a copy. Send to William G. Robertie, P.O. Drawer B, Ipswich, Mass. 01938.

PAPER WEIGHT OR DESK ORNAMENT



Leroy J. Engdahl is offering a B-24 Model which can be used as a paper weight, desk ornament or shelf piece. This is a pewter model depicted 'in flight' and is embedded in lucite. A beautiful piece and a work of art. Price for this is \$10.50 and you can obtain one by writing to Leroy at 1785 Wexford Dr., Vidor, Texas 77662.



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSN.
P.O. Drawer B
Ipswich, Mass. 01938

Address Correction Requested.

Mr. Aaron C. Schultz - 389
P.O. Box 667
High Point, N.C. 27261



FIRST CLASS