



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

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MEMORIAL TO LEARN FROM

(From Eastern Daily Press 12/5/82)

One of my two most treasured memories of the last war was the summer of 1942 I spent in the United States. The other was a fortnight's stay in the Holy Land on my way to the Persian Gulf two years later.

These were not meant to be pleasure trips, but journeys to take up Naval appointments.

The one to America was by way of Liverpool in a comfortable Danish ship to Montreal, thence by train in the company of fellow officers, ex-fishing skippers — who did not touch a drink until we landed — and ratings all bound for New York.

For a month I studied the mysteries of the Sperry Gyrocompass by day at Brooklyn and then enjoyed the friendship and hospitality of new-found families until I was sent on to Norfolk, Virginia, to join as first lieutenant BYMS 29, the first of many wooden hull electric minesweepers of American design that were being built for service wherever mines could be expected.

Whereas in New York my friends came through the English Speaking Union and Service clubs, now we got to know officers of the United States Navy. They welcomed us as comrades in arms, humored our eccentricities and seemed surprised that after two years or more our uniforms were unadorned.

The 1939-45 Star and campaign ribbons were to come later, and the medals themselves arrived in a little cardboard box when it was all over and we had finally come home, in my case from the peaceful waters of South India and Ceylon.

By that time many of our Americans had also returned to their own land but not 6057 of them who had flown on daylight bombing missions to centers of German war industry. Their names are inscribed in the Roll of Honor of the 2nd Air Division, 8th USAAF in the American Room of Norwich Central Library.

It was all a long while ago, but it is on record that when at full strength 2000 bombers and fighters would be sent on a day's operation. Two of the three divisions

flew Boeing B17 Fortress heavy bombers, and the other the Consolidated B24 Liberator.

The 2nd Air Division operated from 14 combat airfields and an air depot in Norfolk and North-East Suffolk and from October, 1942 to May, 1945 they lost 1458 Liberators and 263 fighters.

It was in the winter of 1944-45 that three officers at the 2nd Division headquarters at Ketteringham Hall discussed the idea of a memorial. Following a letter of appeal sent from Major-General William Kepner, the Division commander, to all group commanders £20,916 had been subscribed within a month.

A popular suggestion to restore one of the city's bombed churches was rejected because of the wish that the memorial represent men of all creeds — or none.

After an initially lukewarm reaction, the city council suggested that the memorial might be embodied in the library which was to replace the old and outgrown building at the top of Duke Street. This was accepted as fulfilling General Kepner's wish that it must be a "spiritually living thing."

Higher priorities delayed the opening of the Central Library until November 1962, and the American Room modified from the original plan for two reading rooms and an entrance hall, was dedicated on June 13th, 1963. In the years between the £20,916 had grown to £34,640, and there remained £19,566 as an endowment.

It stands unique among America's many war memorials, and through it there has grown an ever-widening bond of Anglo-American goodwill which is most evident at the great reunions held in Norwich, when up to 400 Association members fly in by chartered jet.

They are expected again in 1983. Mr. Paul R. King, the vice-chairman and a champion of good causes and Mr. David Hastings, of Salhouse, who still has a silver dollar given him in 1943 when the first Liberators landed at St. Faiths, are already making the arrangements at this end.

The one American governor, Mr. Jordan Uttal, flies from his home in Dallas to attend meetings in Norwich, which he and his English wife Joyce knew during the war. They were living in Thorpe St. Andrew, where a friendly neighbor supplied them with ice cubes.

As the library has grown, so have its needs. On both sides of the Atlantic appeals are being made to extend its scope while meeting rising costs.

To make it better known there the Association chairman, Mr. Tom Eaton, has paid six visits to America and lately has written to every State archivist — all 50 of them — enclosing a color brochure and a Norwich Guide and pointing out the importance of the Library providing up-to-date material about every State, with other American literature. This is the first time an official approach has been made to every State in the Union.

Mr. Christopher Snow, cultural attache at the American Embassy and a governor of the trust, provides a link with his government, and Dr. Roy Baker, of the UEA School of Education at Keswick Hall, is anxious to encourage schools to give a wider understanding of America and its ways.

Even if they had all the money that is needed — which they have not — the governors feel there is much more to the trust than "just buying books and putting them in the American Room," and that this aspect has not been fully appreciated. They are anxious that people in Norwich, Norfolk and Suffolk should learn from the memorial everything they can about America.

In the words of the chairman, they believe that the long-term future of the trust depends largely on the ability and willingness of succeeding generations of governors to be active and move with the times.

If the library is to remain a "living memorial," it must seek to meet the needs of the community it serves.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As we enter the New Year, 1983, we send best wishes to the total membership for a most happy and prosperous happening. This will be our year for return to East Anglia to revisit the scenes of our massive contribution to winning World War II in Europe. All can take pride in this acknowledged effort. We met the vaunted enemy head-on and helped drive him from the skies. We reduced his war-sustaining capacity to ruins.

We return to Norwich for camaraderie and good times with our comrades-in-arms, both American and British. It will be a fun time.

However, we must not forget we said we would band together as an Association with one objective, memorialize those who can-

not be with us. They gave their lives in the savage assault on "Festung Europa". We will pause to remember them. We can not break faith with them.

There are many veterans eligible for membership who are not members of our Association. We should extend a warm welcome whenever we can find them. "Each one — Reach one" remains our rallying cry. Be sure to tell them of our American Memorial Room, Central Library, Norwich. This is a living center for our remembering.

Our Committee and British Associates have planned an impressive program of events. Help by making reservations early. See you there.

ANDY LOW

Introducing Our most recent addition to Board of Governors 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust

by Jordan R. Uttal

Last fall the American Ambassador to the United Kingdom, who, by the original charter of the Trust is entitled to nominate two members of the Board of Governors appointed Frank Gadbois to the Board. We welcome him most cordially to his new assignment.

Frank has been the Base Librarian at R.A.F. Mildenhall, a name familiar to many of you as a major center of U.S.A.F. life and operations in England. He was born in Boston in 1941, attended High School in Quincy, Mass., graduated from Franklin and Marshall (Lancaster, Pa.) with a Bachelor of Arts, and received his Master of Science degree from Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida in 1969.

His interest and experience in Library Management and Operations adds considerable depth to the Board's insight and expertise in this field. Our other Ambassador appointed Governor, Christopher Snow, cultural attache at the American



Embassy in London, and Frank Gadbois, are in position to be of assistance to our friends and associates at the Norwich Central Library, and the other 11 members of the Board of Governors in maintaining our 2nd Air Division (USAAF) Memorial Room, as one of the outstanding reference collections of Americana outside our continental limits.

Frank Gadbois has asked me to tell you that he is looking forward to meeting us in person in Norwich at the time of the Convention, and at any time in the future for those of us who do not get there this year.

Folded Wings

Edgar F. Townsend Jr.	453rd, 492nd	Edward McCafferty	453rd
John A. Dee	Hdq.	Richard Alberti	453rd
Jack P. McDevitt	44th, 392nd	Armond DiFiore	458th
Robert W. McGahan	44th	Dale R. Nelson	458th
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James F. Healey	392nd	Lee M. Thomas	445th
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LTC Edward A. Sutherland	446th	William H. Whitsitt	44th & 492nd
Col. Lawrence M. Thomas	453rd		

489th NOTES

Frederick A. Meyer (489th)

It was just about a year ago that I learned about 2nd Air Division Association. I am a relatively new member — but a very enthusiastic one! I have hunted long and hard over the years to find what happened to the 489th — what was its origin and where it went after its tour in England? Now I have time on my hands and am trying to put things which happened many years ago into their proper perspective. Why did I want to find where the 489th began? Well, our crew was a replacement crew to the 489th! Let me introduce the crew: Lt. Mark T. Osborne, pilot; Lt. John R. Kennedy, co-pilot; Lt. Bruno D. Bocolucci, navigator; Lt. Giovanni Tirone, bombardier; Sgt. Thomas J. McGory, engineer; Sgt. Arthur G. Cressler, radio operator; Sgt. Robert R. Nicholas, waist gunner; Sgt. Henry A. Napolny, ball turret; Sgt. William C. Wooten, tail gunner; and your truly Sgt. Frederick A. Meyer, radio operator/waist gunner.



"Cover Girl" at Wendover

We arrived at Halesworth via the usual training centers in Ireland, Scotland and England — the same as many other crews. We reported on June 5th 1944 and were assigned to the 846th squadron. We knew something was up because of the volume of activity that was taking place on the base.

Without ever flying with the group or squadron there was talk of our going along with the group on their "D day" mission. But that was not to be. We did get in a few days of flying with the group and then flew our first combat mission on the 14th to Eindhoven, Holland — always of course, a very eventful occasion — to go and return! Thereafter, our life at Halesworth was very full. Between the 14th and the 25th of June we flew 11 missions. At one time, flying two a day. We put in 7 missions in 5 days. Sack time, writing home and doing mundane things left little time to socialize or get in close with the groups or squadron crews. With great regret, I don't remember the names of any ground crew members who serviced our ships. I don't know our crew number. We never had an official crew picture made. We didn't always fly our own aircraft. We didn't fly our own aircraft till our 7th mission which was our second for the day June 20th. That flight was to Viensviller, France. My diary shows that was the day Capt. Madison's crew was shot down. I don't know how many of that crew were able to bail out, but I did see one

member of the crew sail right past the tail of our ship. We were a crew trained to fly G's and we did fly a radar ship on this mission to Viensviller.

We had difficulty getting in our 13th mission — one was scrubbed and then we aborted; but the odd ball number was finally accomplished after a three day pass to London. We flew to Enreux Airport, north of Paris. Missions 14, 15, 16, 17, and then on July 24th and 25th we went to St. Lo at fairly low altitude, 11,000 feet, for 24's on our 18th and 19th missions.

Now to London to celebrate my 23rd birthday on the 28th of July where I met a fellow newspaper man from Philadelphia, Major Franklin Pierce Yeutter, an aide to Gen. Mark Clark — that's right, Franklin Pierce same as the guy from MASH. We returned from London and flew three more missions with the 846th squadron. On August 2nd we were transferred to the 847th Squadron. On Sunday, August 6th, our second mission with the 847th, we flew a mission to Hamburg (Schulau) Germany. It was our 24th mission and we flew as deputy lead in the lead squadron. We met our DOOMSDAY at high noon. I would like to acknowledge the most recent information sent to be by Chester Weaks of St. Louis, Mo. about the happenings of this day. We were hit with a direct burst of flack in engine #2 and the fire spread to engine #1. Lt. Osborne set the plane on A-5 autopilot and it almost struck Weaks aircraft as it plummeted from the sky after a flight of a few minutes and then blew up. Chester counted nine chutes, but I am happy to tell him, maybe for the first time, that we all got out. We suffered some severe and rough treatment at the hands of the German populace until we reached the military. I was shot through the left side by a uniformed civilian and pitch-forked by the others as I was required to run through a gauntlet of town folk from the area of Stade where I had landed.

Since then I had never heard another word about the 489th until I found Col. Charles Freudenthal's name in this very publication sent to me by someone I met at a cocktail party. After attending the meeting in Nashville, where I was reunited with my pilot Mark Osborne for the first time since August 6th 1944, I have learned a lot about the group and would appreciate any information from anyone reading this.

NOTES . . . On the 6th of August we were flying "Cover Girl" her last mission. Lt. John R. Kennedy, co-pilot was the youngest commissioned officer in the Air Corp. He was 18 when he joined us in Charlestown, S.C. where our crew was formed . . . One hell of a flyer . . . We were a good crew who got along famously and that is why we all got out of the aircraft safely. We all survived prison camp. Tom McGory, Art Cressler and I were in the same compound at Stalag Luft #4, Grosstychow, now part of Poland.

392nd BG Report

J. Fred Thomas (392nd)

Jan. 12 — Damn, I was set to write a book; now I'm limited to one typewritten page. But, after reviewing the December issue, we can appreciate Bill's problem. It's a healthy problem, but I'm glad I'm not the Editor. We were pleased to see contributions from the 65th FW; we have been concerned all along about the lack of input from that important segment of our Division.

First, the 392nd can walk tall; we have completed another successful mission. About a quarter of our members have given \$915.00 to the 392nd memorial fund. At least two others gave \$45.00 directly to Evelyn without marking it for the 392nd. We hope to be credited with it, but if not, the general library fund is a worthwhile cause, also. We weren't the first, nor did we collect the most, and we were concerned at a couple of points when we stalled, but once we got the message across we went over the top by a good margin. Our donations came from Hong Kong, all across the States, and Britain. Space doesn't allow us to list the names of those who gave, but we have written notes of thanks to all who gave, except those at Nashville, and we thanked them in person. Needless to say, we are proud of all of you.

Now, from where we sit, we have a problem that should be addressed, and I need your help. Andy Low, are you listening? We promise, especially our new members, that we will try to reunite them with their WWII crews and friends. We checked our tattered rosters, and in some cases we are able to help, but in too many cases we are unable. For instance, we have John W. Smith looking for his Pilot, Howard D. Olsen, who lived in Sioux Falls, SD; Ross DeFrates is seeking his crew, and Joe F. Darnell has sent a list of his crew. Is there anyone out there who can help with this problem? Surely, those of you who have walked the Pentagon must have some ideas. We are sending letters and pictures to Bill; we hope he has space in the "Letters" section for them.

It has been suggested, and we are receptive to giving some of our space to a portion of our report entitled "LEST WE FORGET." It will consist of photos, letters, messages, etc. Articles that can be reduced in size, reproduced, and published. The contributor's name will be cited, but do not send originals unless you wish to part with them. However, a clear reproduction is necessary. We can't promise to get every article printed because of space limitations, but we are sure that Bill will do his best for us.

Please, guys, if you have forgotten to pay your dues, do so quickly; Evelyn will be on me. To close, can anyone use a nine foot stack of unread magazines?

467th POOP FROM GROUP

by Phillip G. Day (467th)

The magnificent painting of Witchcraft, by Mike Bailey of Norwich, England, was presented to the San Diego Aero-Space Museum by the 467th Bombardment Group on October 22, 1982. Presenting the painting for the 467th was Colonel Albert J. Shower. Accepting it for the museum were President Bill Immenschuch and Executive Director Ed McKetter.

On hand to make sure all was in order with the Witch were her Crew Chief Joe Ramirez and Assistant Crew Chief George Dong. These two were principally responsible for Witchcraft's record of 130 combat missions without once returning early from or failing to bomb an assigned target.

Also present from the 467th were Eugene Cerveney, Bill Williams, Carl Severson, Lloyd Davis, Fred Jansen, Bernie Kirschner and Dick Ford. Mrs. Shower, Williams, Kirschner, Swenson, McEwen and Mrs. John Stevens also attended.

The 467th should be pleased that the Witchcraft painting will be prominently displayed in this museum. The B-24 Liberator design was by Consolidated Aircraft Corp. of San Diego and a large section of the Aero-Space Museum will be devoted to the Liberator because of its special place in the aviation history of San Diego.

Contributors to the Witchcraft Painting Fund, chaired by George Dong, were: Steve F. Barilich, Philip G. Day, George Dong, Carl Epting, Richard Ford, Fred E. Holdridge, Arthur S. Jacobson,

Marshall J. Loftus, Lee M. Lundermuth, Roy L. Rainwater, Joe Rameriz, John E. Stevens, Allen Walters.

Contributors to the Poop mailing fund (does not include those who contributed at Nashville): Charles O. Ball, Wesley J. Bartelt, Robert L. Becker, Ray & Doris Betcher, J. Eugene Brook, Arch & Helen Broiselle, Willis Cobb, James A. Collins, Alexander K. Duncan, Ralph & Yvonne Elliott, Fred E. Holdridge, G.J. Johnston, Jr., James Johnston, Jasper Robinson, Elliott Smith, James Spence, Howard S. Steffey, John E. Stevens, Allen Walters, A.A. Wicks.

The 2ADA will convention in Norwich, England on May 26 through 31, 1983. Get your advance reservations to E. Cohen. Make your own way there or call-write Evelyn Cohen about group departures from several cities. The QE II is out, schedule difficulties. As of this writing, twelve veterans, twenty-two total will be going from 467th and I don't count maybe or see later or responders by telephone, several. Miss Cille and I would like to leave from DFW or ATL with a group, 05-25, and return two weeks later, five days for the convention, ten, eleven days to knock about, bed and breakfast type thing, East Anglia, Scotland, back to London and depart. Anyone, travel agent inclined, let me know, anyone going can use me as a clearing house.

The 467th will reunion in Cincinnati, Ohio on Oct. 7 through Oct. 9, 1983. The

majority returning poll information decided on this site and time. Mark your calendars, begin making plans now. The agenda, though not fixed, would be cocktails and hors d'oeuvres on Friday night, buffet breakfast Saturday and Sunday morning, bus trip to Wright Patterson Museum Saturday morning to afternoon, banquet Saturday night. Not a single arrangement has been made. Now, here is a list of Cincinnati and vicinities, I want to hear from each of them to help, do, arrange, for a fine, smooth running, enjoyable reunion. Each of you write, call, come see me, George F. Eyeran, Donald G. Fogleson, John Korte, Gino Trotta. Call, see each other. Get together, get it started. Anyone living near Cincinnati call the above. Anyone living near Dayton-Wright-Patterson, call the above or me. We need a liaison with the museum director at W.P. Anybody who wants to help, call me. It seems like a long time away but the date will be here before you know it. Anyone who was at 8th AFHS meeting in Cincinnati in Oct. 82, call-write me with details, motels, etc.

One of the good ole boys of the 467th wrote me a rather strong letter recently. He said I did not write of enlisted personnel, air or ground. And he was talking about Poop and the 2nd Air Division Association *Journal*. If you want to see it in Poop or the 2ADA *Journal*, write of it. If you don't think you write well enough, send it to me or Bill Robertie of the *Journal*. If you don't write it, who will? Lay it on us.

389th BOMB GROUP MEMORABILIA

by Bud Koorndyk (389th)

It has often been said that one of the greatest joys we have in life, as individuals, is to share with others what we have been blessed with in material, as well as spiritual, gifts.

At no time has that statement been more evident to me, than during this holiday season of the year 1982, when we as the 389th Bomb Group reached our goal of \$750, which climaxes our drive to complete our obligation toward the 389th Norwich Library Memorial. In fact, as of Dec. 31, we have submitted to Dean Moyer the sum of \$795. I'm sure that more checks will be forthcoming during the next few weeks.

As your Group V.P., I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to all members who so generously contributed to this fund. I had hoped to thank you individually but there is always that fear of overlooking someone in this manner—so collectively "Thank You".

I must share one name in particular with you however, as I received notice of his passing away this past month. Reuben Hollenbach and his wife were at their first reunion this year in Nashville and I had a number of chats with them. We kidded each other that we were the only two Hollanders in the 389th. Our sincere and heartfelt condolences go out to the family. May our God surround the family with his ten-

der love in their time of sorrow. Reuben and his wife were one of our first contributors to the Norwich Memorial of the 389th.

One more item on the Memorial fund contributions. In the spirit of sharing, I like to recommend that any overage we receive be used to help other units who may not have attained their goal of \$750. I would make this a motion to be acted on at our 389th business meeting in Norwich this coming May.

Some have asked of my wife's and my plans for Norwich this coming May. We plan on leaving Chicago on Wed. the 25th and returning via the same route three weeks later. We hope to rent a car and travel through Scotland and into France, via D Day landing sites and on into Austria, Switzerland and back to London for our departure home.

Of interest to our group is an article sent to me by John Whittaker of the 564th Sqd. This was found in the Wall Street Journal of Dec. 15, 1982 and, in part, reads as follows: "Group Lotus P.L.C., the maker of luxury sports cars, is willing to explain its financial problems to its shareholders, but only if they travel to a place as bleak as some think the company's prospects are. This year's annual meeting is being held Dec. 30, in an aircraft hangar, about 60 miles northeast of London. Tales of witchcraft are told at least as often as corporate

success in this remote area."

I reprint this article because the hangar mentioned was one of the original 389th Bomb Group hangars.

Secondly, to refute the claim that it is a bleak part of England. We all would concur that the people of the area have been our most cherished and life long friends. There is no spot on this planet that can be called bleak with the companionship we've experienced down through the years with the Norwich citizenry.

Dick Peterson asked if we would be staying as a Group in Norwich and I might answer that in the affirmative. Evelyn will have us bedded and boarded down in the same hotel.

Oscar Otto also wrote and would like to know if anyone could inform him of the whereabouts of the crew of the B-24 called "Liberty". If anyone can enlighten him, drop me a line and I will pass it on to Oscar.

Bob Stone, from California way, would like to hear from persons interned in Switzerland during the war. He was forced to land at Basel-Birsfelden during a mission to Munich and would like to correspond with other Swiss yodelers.

This will be my last report before our mission to Norwich in May. We hope to see as many of you as can possibly make this trip, which should be a fitting climax to our years of fellowship together.

8-BALL-Y-HOO

by Pete Henry (44th)

The official 1983 reunion of the 44th Bomb Group World War II Veterans will be held in Norwich, England May 26-31, 1983 with the Second Air Division Association. If you haven't made your reservations by now, it may be too late, but give Evelyn Cohen a call (215) 632-3992. If you can't make this reunion, Joe Warth reports that the 44th BG/BW/SMW will hold a reunion at Ellsworth AFB, S.D., again this year May 26-29, 1983.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The New Jersey "Chapter" of the 44th B.G. held a mini-mini reunion October 30 at McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey and 23 people attended. Twenty-one were 44thers and Evelyn (headquarters) and Lilian Cohen came up from Philadelphia to brief everyone on the 1983 reunion in Norwich.



Mary Henry, Evelyn and Lillian Cohen lead the "Troops" to Welcome Center at McGuire AFB

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Miles McCue (see December 1982 *Journal*) reports that the plane his crew flew to Oslo, Norway November 18, 1943 was "Poop Deck Pappy" and there is a picture of it in "Jaws Over Europe" by the late Lt. Col. (Ret.) Ussel P. Harvell. Miles said, if you look closely, you will note that the leg on the caricature of Popeye is painted a little different than the rest of him. As they dropped their load on Wilhelmshaven in October 1943, one of those sharp-eyed Germans blew a hole in the nose taking "Pappy's" leg, along with the hydraulic system, right through the roof. It just missed Lt. Louis Siegal, Bombardier, by about four inches. They couldn't close the bomb bay doors, fell out of formation and were the last to land. After the body shop patched the hole, they didn't have the correct paint so the new leg came out a shade whiter.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

My request for photo proof of Squadron call letters brought a quick response. Leo Bielinski from the 506th Squadron sent me a photo of his plane with markings GJ and bar K. Wally Balla from the 68th Squadron provided his Squadron's markings of WQ and a plain letter "H" on the tail. See the following photos. Thanks guys. We'll return the pictures after printing.



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Included in the 8th Air Force Historical Society reunion in Cincinnati October 7-10, 1982 was a dedication ceremony of the Eighth Air Force Memorial (WW II) at the Dayton (Ohio) Air Force Museum.



General Leon Johnson is seen standing beside the 44th B.G. Memorial that was dedicated November 11, 1981. (See this column in March 1982 *Journal*.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I have just learned that a book store in England has a few copies of the 44th Bomb Group History — The 8 Balls. I am writing to the owner to inquire how many he has and if this is actually the 'History of 44th Bomb Group — "Flying Eight Balls" — Liberators over Europe' written and compiled by Ussel P. Harvell. This book is no longer in print and I have had numerous requests for information about it. Regrettably, I did not keep a record of those who inquired. If anyone is interested, please write to me again and I'll make a list to supply what is available on a first-come first-served basis. The 44th B.G. History is a true copy of the original and there are about 400 copies available. Price \$22.50 includes postage and handling.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Our Editor, Bill Robertie, has asked each Group V.P. to limit the size of his column for the next couple of issues so I hope this one meets with his approval. Maybe he'll let me add one more line. Happy New Year and I hope to see many of you in Norwich in May 1983.

K.B. Nelson Tail-Gunner

*This is to a fellow
known just as plain K.B.
He flew on combat missions
least bit afraid was he.*

*His missions only numbered
I believed the count was twelve,
But he'd been on rough ones
been through a lot of hell.*

*They say he went down fighting
on a lib we all called "T"
"Swamp Angle" was her nickname
a hellion in the sky.*

*He was the best tail-gunner
a ship could ever have,
Two fighters to his credit
air medal he also had.*

*Now that he has left us
we'll take to the air each day,
Avenge his fighting spirit
we'll make the Nazis pay.*

(Note: MIA Feb. 20, 1944 on mission to Brunswick, Germany)

Written by William C. Nelson
389th Bombardment Group (H)
Hethel, England
Feb. 23, 1944

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
Vere A. McCarty



I am proud of the 446th Bomb Group in the way the gang has supported the Memorial Project. At year end, \$1,005 has been contributed, bringing the Memorial Library portion to 100% with an additional \$255 toward the Bungay plaque. As a half dozen more \$25 checks is all we will need to cover the cost, I have given the word to the committee to proceed with the order after they carefully select the proper wording. The presentation committee includes; William F. Davenport (Chairman), Robert T. Moore (Vice Chairman) and Gordon D. Bishop, all of whom are contributors and all of whom will attend the May reunion in Norwich. If more contributors will be attending the reunion, please let me know, as I would like to add your names to the committee.

I received word from Harold Jansen, of The Hague, that he and John Archer, of Bungay, with support from 446th Bomb Group members, will write and publish a 446th Group History in a completely different format from the original book. They need everything anyone will send in the way of photos, documents, personal stories, diaries, ect. You may send such material to me. I will catalogue everything before sending it on, to assure that all originals are returned to contributors. I think we would all like to see the 446th BG come up with a first class Group History. Both John and Harold have a good head start by having much material in their personal libraries. Now they only need the support of the troops to get going and they say they are ready.

Following are some contacts I have had from former Bungay-ites: Thomas Newton of Grand Rapids, Mich., has been trying to get a 2nd ADA radio net going...asks hams to call WA8DGN. Paul Pifer sent a four-column story of his trip to England which was most interesting, but I was a bit disappointed that our own Memorial Library was not among his visitations. Lou Dubnow, who flew the Bungay tower, still has a copy of the station telephone directory. George Shanks explained how it took three crews to get him through his tour. And, John Archer reported that the gates of the churchyard at the little Flixton Parish, which were presented as a "going away" gift by 446th BG personnel, are beginning to show the affects of the time, although they have had excellent care and have been

treated with special varnishes...but good for a few more years, he said.

Some new members: Arthur H. Aull, E. Clyde Breitigan, James L. Campbell, Louis Dubnow, James G. Forrest, Harold H. Hasselbacher, Milton L. Klein, Cyril Kopecky, William D. Maisenhelder, Edwin A. McAslan, Neil F. McManamon, Gaza J. Matyus, William Scheuerman, Joseph Shaffer, James D. Shannon, and George L. Sutton. Also, Alfons E. Brinkhuis, Associate. Reinstatements: Tom Coakley, Cooper Hawthorne, Wellons Homuth and Richard Mackendon.

It is with deep regret that I report the deaths of Edward A. Sutherland and Thomas L. Moore. Both were at our San Antonio reunion and Ed was at Nashville. We all offer our deepest sympathy to Lois and Dee and their families.

Hurshell Cordell was a 707th Squadron pilot. He once wrote me about his airplane and his crew: "Blackjack" was an unforgettable airplane. I cut my teeth on the B-17 and was convinced that the B-24 was not here to stay. I flew many B-24s and failed to achieve a liking for them ... and, then I inherited "Blackjack". From my first flight, until I delivered it to Bradley Field, Conn., in June, 1945, I dearly loved that airplane. I never willingly would have returned to B-17s. I felt badly about delivering "Blackjack", expecting it to go to the Kingman, AZ, boneyard. I was elated when told that it was to continue flying. Among my pleasant memories was the comradeship formed between my crew and several other crews. We called ourselves "Little Bear Green", the main formation being BIG BEAR GREEN. One day we counted our membership and it added up to 57. Just for the helluvit we wrote to the Heinze Pickle Company, noting that our 57 members reminded us of them. We asked them to help us get appropriate shoulder patches. They did just that ... showing a pickle with wings on the Heinz 57 emblem. We got them only days before leaving England, but you can imagine the questions (and the resulting stories) when we put them on to wear around the Sioux Falls replacement depot. "Little Bear Green" was among the original "good old boys". We haven't kept in touch, but if you can jog a few memories, I would certainly like to make a reunion with that gang! Don't wait any longer, Hursh! Some of them have been to

MISSIVES FROM THE 492 BG

By Bill Clarey (492nd)

Since the last issue of the *Journal*. It seems as though I've been on more or less of a merry-go-round trying to keep up with 2nd AD correspondence, spending some time in Hawaii, then Christmas, then back to Dunstable, Mass. to work on my daughter's new home and now back home again trying to get caught up here.

I wish to thank those people that contributed money to the memorial fund for the squadron markings in the American section of the Norwich, England library. It's a worthwhile cause and should be very impressive. Is anyone out there interested in miniature medals of WWII? It is my understanding that miniature size service medals may be ordered from the National Personnel Record Center, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132. Be sure to include branch of service, service record, dates and units.

The December, 1982 issue of the Air Force magazine had a fine article in it, with good pictures etc., about The Still Mighty Eighth. The article was written by Capt. M.B. Perini, U.S.A.F., contributing editor. It makes for quite interesting reading. I have a few copies made up if any one would like same.

There is a new book available called Aviation In Northhamptonshire, an Illustrated History. I'm told that the book has an abundance of detail and anecdotes on the arrival and growth of the U.S.A.A.F., missions flown by date and type of target, aircraft lost etc. The price is \$20.00 per copy. Please contact me if you are interested and I'll give you further information as to where you may buy it.

Since this may be our last sojourn to England, wouldn't it be great if our group had a 100% showing at this convention. Hopefully, I'll see all of you there. Cheerio and all the best to everyone.

reunions, looking for you. Norman C. Ellis and George Shanks, just to name two.

I received a phone call from O.W. "Pappy" Henderson. He was toasting in the New Year with an old friend, "Buddy" Aull. Arthur Aull took the 706th Squadron to Bungay as its Operations Officer. He then transferred to the 93rd Bomb Group where he was assigned a crew.

HAPPENINGS 'ROUND HEADQUARTERS

Jim Reeves, Vice President

Since the last *Journal* was published it has been my good fortune to communicate with many 2AD personnel via letter as well as telephone. It is always a thrill and a great pleasure to communicate with Second Division People. The big news of the hour is the 36th reunion of 2AD to be held in Norwich May 26th through May 31st. This week I received a letter from Paul King, Vice Chairman, Board of Governors of Memorial Trust . . . and I share one of Paul's statements with you. "I look forward to seeing each of you in Norwich in May. We have organized a packed convention with much to do and see. It should be fun!" Paul is also the owner of the Hotel Nelson and Hotel Norwich. So I am sure many of us will be seeing Paul in May. Start making your plans to be on board as we leave from different departures on 25 May. Edna and I are looking forward to being in Norwich again. We have been talking with Charlie & Madeline Mills and making plans to tour England via auto after the reunion.



I asked Mrs. Delos Elder (she used the name Mary Frances Williams or "Willie" during her days at Ketteringhall) to write an article for the next *Journal*. Willie graciously consented and wrote a very interesting and lengthy account of the WAC's journey to England their arrival and early days at Old Catton. Due to limited space allotted we will share excerpts from her letter . . .

So here goes from the diary of "Willie". Pack that in the "A" bag . . . pack that in the "B" bag . . . be sure you know your name and middle initial and serial number. Be sure you can carry that "A" bag over your shoulder . . . What decisions!

Haven't been sea sick but once . . . and that was because I missed breakfast one morning. Started in the mess hall and took one look at English sausage that bulged out at each end and immediately left the room.

I was met at the door by a rather elderly British sailor who took one look at my rather green face and told me . . . Now Missy, you go back in there and eat some bread and orange marmalade. I obeyed and haven't been sick since. One of the girls I'm bunking with, the one in the lower half of the double deckers was sick the first day out . . . her name is Evelyn Cohen . . . And Oh, was she sick!! She has fully recovered now, in fact . . . one day later she is playing skip rope on the deck.

We were not allowed on the men's deck and they were not allowed on ours . . . (how cruel . . . Willie!)

A controversy arose whether or not the WAC's would be allowed to wear their green and white seersucker dresses . . . with matching bloomers, and I literally mean bloomers that came down to our knees. When we got into the Azores and the weather turned hot the order finally came down that we could indeed change into these lovely costumes from the green fa-

tigues we had been wearing. It must have been a lovely sight . . . and we actually did skip rope on deck . . . got pretty good at it too . . .

A British sergeant, one of the toughest breed of men alive, watched our topkick of the First Female AEF in Britain at work and pronounced her okay . . . "she has the army lingo all right, but I can't get used to a topkick with curls" . . . he said as he eyed First Sgt. Virginia Rosenkranz, tall and slim, the first WAAC to set foot in Britain.

In the dating room a sign which said . . . with underlining . . . "Bid your date good-night at the door . . . do not see him to the gate . . . He's a big boy now and can find his way home alone."

At the end of one year the WAC's had an anniversary party. The invitation and poem was from the typewriter of Val Brinegar . . . (Mrs. Tom Conroy) . . .

A Year in The Eto

*We've shared your Spam
And your corned beef "ham"
And coddled your powdered eggs.
We've had the jitters
From Mild and Bitters
By helping you empty kegs.*

*We've shared your gripe
For another stripe
And cursed the bloody blackout.
Found a G.I. Joe
For whom we could "go"
And blessed the lovely blackout.*

*In our first alert,
We nearly lost a shirt
And rushed to an Air Raid shelter.
Now, just like you —
We turn over, too,
And Jerry can go to Hell, sir.*

*By now, we know
Every G.I. Joe
And Jane ('tis sad to relate)
Will declare any day
A National Holiday
For a chance to celebrate.*

*We've been here a year —
Shed a tear in your beer
On the date that is given below.
This is OUR Holiday —
Will you share it that day
With the WACs of the ETO?*

Saturday, 15 July 1944
1930 hours

THE 448TH SAGA

by George Depont (448th)

Capt. Gaither, 712 engineering officer, would ride a bicycle around the perimeter of the field and check on how the mechanics were doing to gain insight on their problems.

M/Sgt. Alexander, a crew chief, had a daily ritual of making coffee at a fire next to his hardstand and Capt. Gaither would stop by for a cup of brew.

One day Alexander said, "I'm going to break Capt. Gaither of drinking my good coffee." "How", I asked. "Simple", he said. Searching around the edge of the hardstand he found two sixteen penny nails that were used to crate 1000 lb. bombs. One of these was shiny new and the other rusty. When Gaither made his appearance and asked how the coffee was coming, Alex said he thought it was about ready. Picking up the rusty nail he dropped it into the pot and using a pair of pliers, he dipped into the coffee and pulled out a shiny nail. Seeing this, Gaither looked stunned at the cleaning power of the coffee and said he didn't think he wanted any today, got on his bicycle and drove off.

AMERICAN RED CROSS 466th BOMB GROUP

By Mary Carroll Leeds

The great G.I.'s War Correspondent of WW II Ernie Pyle once wrote that "there are lots of things besides shooting and dying that go along with a war."

So I will write of some of "those other things" that are memories of one Red Cross Girl.

I arrived at the 466th BG shortly after D-Day and my first few days seemed fairly uneventful. Margaret Ayers (Host) as the Club Director, showed me around. I marvelled that she seemed to know all the boys' names and their gallantry made me feel like a combination Eleanor Roosevelt-Marilyn Monroe raising my ego to a height it has never attained since.

I passed out ping pong balls and admired photos of wives, girl friends, and babies. In mid-afternoons we piled the spam and marmalade sandwiches into the truck and headed for the line. With the others we watched the skies and then later handed out cups of coffee with my best Red Cross smile.

I didn't know then that the first distant hum of a 466th bomber and the first glint of silver in the grey English skies were to become the most welcome sounds and sights in my world at war. I hadn't learned to look for flares — red and yellow — feathered props, and sometimes a plane limping far behind the rest. And I didn't know how to count yet, to know when a plane didn't come back at all.

The 466th was about to celebrate, however, so big plans were being made for the 200th Mission Party, a combination 4th of July, Junior Prom, and World Series. There would be games, contests, plenty of beer, baseball, speeches, and Glenn Miller to play for a Ball in the hangar.

My part would be getting the GIRLS! Several hundred!

Blithely I set out in a jeep with a driver and a map. We would go to Wren, WAF, WAC, ATS, and Land Army bases.

My first stop was at a Wren base where a grim Wren officer looked at me suspiciously over her steel-rimmed glasses. After my speel she stated firmly, "Miss Carrol I don't think any of my girls will be going to your party this year."

Nonplussed and thinking of Glenn Miller I asked why. Didn't the girls have a good time last year? Didn't she remember?

Indeed she did. I was to learn later that it had been several days before all her little wrens had been returned to their nest. Privately I decided the girls had had a great time but forewarned I proceeded with caution.

Bruised and battered by the springless jeep and the bumpy roads I went from base to base. I promised every C.O. that I would personally chaperone every girl and see to it they were all returned promptly and in good condition. May The Lord forgive me.

The day of the party duly arrived and I remember little except counting girls. I counted them as they got off the trucks and again as they started home. I think I came out even.

GIRLS would continue to be a problem.

Margaret ran the Aero club with a firm grip. She handled unruly boys and an English staff with diplomacy. She could wheedle transportation from a stingy motor corps officer, fresh eggs and powdered ice cream from a tough mess sergeant, and a smile from a worried commander. She did our marketing with shillings in a way that would bring smiles to a Red Cross fundraiser back home.

But we had to have girls for our Saturday night dances. Refreshments were tasteless cakes made with rationed sugar, music was a noisy G.I. orchestra, and men we had plenty of.

"We get plenty of girls for our dances," one of the officers told me and when I showed some interest he went on "when the O Club first opened we sent a sound truck through the towns and villages to tell them about it and then the night of the first dance trucks went around and picked up whatever was on the corners." As far as I could tell some of those 'ladies' were still going to the O Club dances.

We got our girls from civic groups and women's clubs. The 'approved' girls were checked off a list as they got on the trucks and then again as they went in the club. No girl was allowed to leave until the dance was over and then they were all checked out and on. I never did decide whether we were protecting the girls from the boys or vice versa. Maybe both.

I also had "program". We tried bingo (fresh eggs were a top prize), classical music night (sparsely attended), jazz night (better), ping pong contests (good), and talent night (no talent?).

We had a fine advisory council headed by Master Sgt. Hank Bamman, right hand man to Col. West our base commander. After some photo contests — prettiest girl, wife, and baby (all entered into with great enthusiasm and the results awaited with much suspense) and ventures in light entertainment the council decided we needed educational and cultural programs!

With some doubts they announced the first Sunday forum with an English guest speaker. Even officers were invited to swell the crowd. And when the crowd came, overflowing the library so that some of the audience was perched on window sills and looking in from the outside, the speaker must have thought there had been a mistake and he was pinch-hitting for General Eisenhower.

One of our own G-2 officers was our next speaker and he related the history and glories of the 466th from back to Almagordo. After it was over everyone adjourned to the snack bar glowing with pride and we did a thriving business in coffee and spam sandwiches.

There are so many things that we remember —

The cold winter days when boys huddled around the fireplaces and crew chiefs came in from working long hours patching up planes and warmed their hands on a cup of coffee.

The orphans' party and big and little boys pinning tails on the donkey and little

boys being urged to eat more candy and ice cream than was good for them — the little ones who hardly knew what ice cream was.

The Christmas tree decorated with chaff and on Christmas eve the crowd singing carols until the candles burned low and the food ran out.

The Jewish boys coming in to clean up and get ready to feed several hundred mid-night Mass Catholics and still up to their elbows in dishwater at 2 a.m.

There was TEA at Great Witchingham Hall, Lady Grace inviting a small group of G.I.s at a time to share her rations and tour the grand house. I remember giggling at the sight of our G.I.'s all but curling a pinkie over their tea cups.

I remember falling in love on a beach at Cromer.

I will always hear that lonesome sound of planes droning overhead before dawn, getting into formation to go where? Hamburg, Frankfurt, BERLIN?

The cumbersome B-24's with their heavy loads lumbering out and down the runway. Just as you felt it would never get airborne the plane would skim the hedge.

And of course I remember the day I was married. Gentle Col. West gave me away in a little church in Costessy and he and his wife Grace became our good friends back home. We learned of his passing with sadness.

Margaret and I remember many things but most of all we remember the men of the 466th, the young Americans who had been called on to do the most amazing things — often the impossible.

In our memories we will always see the exhausted fliers coming in after a long mission, gratefully reaching for their coffee. The tall and short, fat and thin, were all disguised by the clumsy flying suits and the grey faces became anonymous under the dark streaks of the oxygen masks.

Sometimes things were so bad we didn't know whether to smile or not, but not knowing what else to do, we did. And almost never did a boy fail to respond however faint his smile.

At the risk of having it appear that our heroes of the 466th Bomb Group were lesser men than the lusty heroes in war novels, I will say that they were gentlemen.

The walls of our nessen hut quarters were pretty thin and some of the conversations we heard from the G.I.s walking by revealed some strong language — not meant for our ears. However never did I hear a four-letter word uttered by anyone on the base if he knew I was within hearing.

All so long ago, as we get ready to go to yet another 2nd AD reunion. What will the others be thinking about as they look back? Perhaps it would be of more interest to future historians if, instead of logs of flights and targets and bomb loads, we all set down our thoughts about those times — what our daily lives were like, how we coped with the dreariness of our lives, the friends we made, and some of the fun times. Because there were those, and history is made up of many things.

445th Reporting

by Frank DiMola (445th)

Before getting on with my quarterly report, Elizabeth and I would like to thank all of you for thoughtful holiday cards and greetings. A Happy and Healthy New Year to all.

In continuing my drive for membership, I located some more fellows who never knew about the 2nd AD. Recently I called Frank Sacco, NY, and the way he answered me he thought this was all a joke. Why? You see after 35 years, I was the second call he received on the same day. Frank's first call was from Glen E. Jorgenson, his pilot, and then he received mine right after that. They were original members of the group that started in May '43. As I have often mentioned in my report, I have the original crew list that first made up this group.

Robert Braid, Texas has copies of the original Stars and Stripes and he sent me a photo of the surrender of 1945. Bob has many souvenirs of his Army career and he and I will get together, via U.S. mail and write some articles on some of them. Their seems to be a very interesting controversy going on in the P. Henry '44th group. Think I'll join in. I show in my records different call letters than the one's you have, Pete. I show the 66th with WQ, 67th NB, 68th GJ and the 506 (how did that count get in there) with QK. Let's challenge some of the crews and find out who is right.

Received a very nice letter from James Flynn, Pa. telling me about some of his 30 missions that he completed. Jim claims that after flying the first mission he thought he

would never survive 29 more. I had a "Dear Editor" letter published in the Long Island, NY area and even though I did not find any 445ers, I was happy to recruit 6 new members belonging to various other groups. Great feeling it gives me to bring some of them together again.

I had a few members asking me if I had any idea where the Chaplain of our group was located. Well — with the help of Buddy Cross, Texas, and the assistance of a Presbyterian Minister, they found the Catholic Chaplain Rev. Joseph Quinlan. His address is, Veterans Hospital, Chillicothe, Ohio, 45601. Buddy and I conversed with Rev. Joe and he was just astounded on how he was located after having so many assignments in the States. All I say is, there is great unity among us all. John Quinn of the 390th BG in the other Air Division was asking for the location of Irving Rindle. If anyone knows, please let me know.

I heard from William Williams, Fla. and he told me about his conversation with General Bob Terrill, Fla. The highlight of the year for Bob was his attendance at his 50th class reunion at West Point. Congratulations Bob and we are planning to attend your 100th — God Bless. Keep up the good work "BILLY".

I received some wonderful news on the reunion of Avery Baldwin, Pa. and his combat crew of the 701st. They all met (13 of them) in the back yard of Orland Hasselback's home in Ohio. After 15 missions with the 445th the entire crew was transferred to the 389th, 564 Sqd. with pathfinders. They flew 5 missions and experienced some thrilling ones. Various stories

were told and they had the fighters coming in the front and the rear. While flying deputy lead to Zeitz on May 12, '44, they were shot down. As Baldwin puts it "It's unbelievable to hear that they were shot down so many different ways. It was more unbelievable that all 13 of us got out of a burning a/c — just before it exploded." They met with all their wives after 38 years.

Robert Springer, NY, was going thru his WWII file and came across many snap shots of various crews taken while at Topeka Air Base in 1943. The only identity we have are the names of the aircrafts. Such as, Peep Sight, Pistol Packing Mamma, Gregory, The Great Omnibus. The other a/c had MK call letters and No. 440294. Anyone knowing any of these, please drop me a line.

I am in need of the squadron insignias as soon as possible so as to place our markings in the Memorial Library. So, please look around your records and files and let me have them. Regarding the Memorial Fund Drive, how can I say thanks to all of you. I take great pride and pleasure in announcing that at this time I have received \$2000.00 from the most generous and kind members of the 445th. We have hit the target once again. Bless you all.

Delegates to the Nashville Reunion in 1982 are allowed tax deduction for money spent at the Convention. Please use the Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(19) ID No. 25-1327743. So sign up your spouses now.

Till we meet in Norwich, England, in May '83, keep in touch with some in the group and talk things over.

HETHEL HIGHLIGHTS

by Earl Zimmerman (389th)

It was bound to happen, I received a threatening letter from a "ground pounder" who wanted equal time in the *Journal*. While the fly boys were off in the wild blue yonder they did pick up a few medals and trophies of their own. The 566th Sqdn. softball team made it to the 8th AF finals; the 389th boxing team; made up of members of the 389th, 44th, and 93rd, met on July 8, 1944, at Cambridge and came in

second in the 8th AF: later that summer the Div. track team participated in a meet with the British Navy and Army units at the Royal Naval Base at Lowestoft.

Do you recall the boxing match with the 93rd on February 29, 1944, at the base gym. Col. Fiegle, 93rd C.O.; Col. Arnold, 389th C.O. and Gen. Timberlake were present and awarded the prizes to the winners, all from the 389th. Col. Fiegle promised a return match, but somehow we never saw the 93rd boxers at Hethel again.



The 389th boxing team. You mean to tell me that motley crew beat the 93rd. Its in the records that way. Stay tuned for more news of the ground pounders. Would you believe we had a debating team that shook the foundations at Cambridge University.



Jimmy Cagney at Hethel, March 30, 1944. From left to right, Frank Rutledge, Lt. Edmonds, Jimmy Cagney, Lt. Col. Phil Ardery and Lt. Col. Robert B. Miller, 389th Commander.



Ground troops hosting Billy Conn on August 14, 1944 at the mess hall. To Conn's left is our gourmet chef, Tiny Adcock; on the right side seated is Major Winters and over his shoulder is Capt. Rutledge.

ROSTER

For those of you who have been clamoring for a new Roster take heart. An up to date Roster will be printed later this year. When they are available it will be announced in the *Journal*.

SCOUTS OUT

A Story of the 2nd Air Division Scouting Force, 8th U.S. Air Force, 1944-45

By
C.W. "Bill"
Getz
(491st)



By late 1943, it was apparent to the U.S. Bomber Command that the greatest deterrent to bomber operations in Europe was not German fighters and flak, but the unpredictable and miserable European weather, particularly during the winter months. Not that the Jerries were not taking their toll, but that the number of aborts and poor target results were attributable to the extremely limited visibility afforded from the confined cockpit of a bomber flying at over 20,000 feet, in tight formation and in generally poor weather. The target conditions were usually a surprise to the leader of the bomber formation. Nor did weather reconnaissance aircraft bring significant relief, although they were an improvement. The recon aircraft provided the general area weather situation, and not specific target conditions. Something more was needed.

It is said that everyone talks about the weather, but no one does anything about it. There was one 8th Air Force bomber pilot, however, who thought differently — Colonel Bud J. Peaslee, a B-17 wing commander from Salinas, California. Peaslee decided that what they needed was up-to-the-minute weather reports about the bomber's specific route to the target, the target itself and the route home, which was often different from the approach route. A fast aircraft with long-range capabilities would be needed, since the bomber strikes were often eight hours in length. He supposedly got the idea when leading his bomb wing against a target in Norway. There was an undercast of clouds all the way to Norway along the route that Peaslee's wing had been briefed to follow. He noted that if they had come in from another direction, they would have found openings in the clouds that would have permitted them to make a run on the target instead of aborting the mission. There were many other times that bomber leader Peaslee had wished that he had "eyes" over the target so that decisions on method of bombing or diversion to secondary targets could be made before reaching the IP, the point at which the bombers commit to their steady, relentless and dangerous run to the target.

Why not scouts for the bomber force? Think what it would mean to the bomb division leader to have "eyes" scouting the bomber route to the target, minutes ahead of the bombers and at the same altitude; sending weather, visibility and enemy action information to the bombers. Thirty minutes before the bombers reached the IP,

the scouts could advise the leader as to whether the bomber force could make a visual bomb run and drop, or a radar run or combination. In some cases, the scouts could recommend secondary targets, or even select secondary targets. Once the bombers reached the IP, the scouts could observe the formation from above and help straggling groups close up, and also relay commands from the leader when bomber communications were weak.

After "bombs away", the bomb leader normally could only pray that all groups could reform for the trip home. Through all the confusion of flak, fighters, clouds and disabled aircraft, it was nothing less than the skill of the crews — and luck — that bomb groups were able to reform in any semblance of order for the dangerous trip home. There was safety in numbers. Scouts could help groups rally. From a position above the bombers, it would be possible to see a panorama of the activity, and advise group leaders on reforming, call in fighters to protect the cripples, and also take a look at the bombing results.

Of course, the trip home was filled with the same wonder of what lies ahead. Scouts would go out ahead of the bomber force to keep the leader advised of what to expect. Over England, the Scouts could observe whether all bases were open, or when alternate landing points should be used.

The idea appeared sound, and Peaslee received permission from bomber command headquarters to try it. But who would be the scouts and what kind of aircraft would they fly? After an aborted effort to use regular fighter escort pilots for the task — and that was in June of 1944 — Peaslee decided that former bomber pilots who had completed their tours, would provide the "know-how" and understanding of the bomber commander's problems. Since the Scout's recommendations would weigh heavily with the leader, the Scout would have to exercise the judgement as if he himself were leading the bombers. This pointed to the need for the Scouts to be ex-lead crew bomber pilots.

The next question was what kind of aircraft should the Scouts fly? If the Scouts were to be in front of the bombers on the way in and out, and practically until the bombers landed, it meant they would be in the air as long as the bombers, and some missions were eight hours long — they would have to be able to defend themselves. Peaslee first thought of the "Mosquito" twin engine bomber, but discarded that idea for the P-51D. The first of the "bubble" canopy 51's, it had unusual range when equipped with large 110 gallon wing tanks. The planes finally delivered to the Scouts were also equipped with the first K-14 computing gunsights in the European Theater. The new gunsights even made former bomber pilots expert gunners —

well, almost.

Fighter pilots would be attached to this special unit to give protection to the ex-bomber pilots should they tangle with the Luftwaffe.

After the "Scouts", as they were soon officially called, were organized in the 1st Bomb Division, another bomber commander, Colonel John A. Brooks, formed a similar Scouting Force in the 2nd Air Division. The 2nd flew the B-24 "Liberator", the "crate the B-17 came in", according to certain B-17 sources. Colonel Brooks had completed a tour in B-24s with the 389th Bomb Group, stationed at Hethel in East Anglia. Like Peaslee, Brooks knew first hand the uncertainty of target conditions faced by the leader of the bombers. West Pointer Brooks, like his father before him, remembered his infantry training. "Scouts out" was as familiar to the infantry company on the march in World War II as it was to the Cavalry fighting Indians in true Western movie action.

Brooks looked for volunteers from 2nd Air Division groups; lead crew pilots that had completed their bomber tours of duty, and were willing to stick their necks out for a second tour of combat. He had no problem. Those accepted were sent to the P-51 transition school at Goxhill, England, north of The Wash. There they received six to ten hours flying instruction in the rear seat of an American AT-6 trainer, because from the rear seat, the visual impression during landing is similar to that of the P-51. This was followed by ten hours solo in a P-51B, the earlier model with the "greenhouse" canopy.

The 2nd Air Division Scouts were located on the airbase of the 355th Fighter Group, a regular 8th Air Force P-51 fighter group, stationed at Steeple Morden, a few miles from Cambridge, England. The Scouts were there for logistic and maintenance support, but were officially the 2nd Air Division Scouting Force, assigned to the Division's headquarters. However, the former bomber pilots assigned to the Scouts were on detached service from their parent bomb groups. In other words, they were officially still bomber pilots flying P-51 aircraft! The ex-bomber jocks took advantage of that situation. On their days "off", they would often fly "home" to their bomber bases in their shiny P-51s, gather a crew, and fly a B-24 locally in order to keep current in four-engine aircraft. Of course, the bomber pilots at the bases would "drool" when they saw a sleek, silver P-51 parked on their apron. Just about every bomber pilot wanted to fly a fighter, but few fighter pilots were interested in trying their hand with a four-engine monster.

A very important part of the Scouting Force was the 12 to 15 fighter pilots that were attached from various 8th Air Force fighter groups. Their thankless lot was to

fly the wing position to the ex-bomber pilots for the purpose of keeping them out of trouble — and they did that on more than one occasion. Nevertheless, the job was the proverbial “always the bridesmaid, never the bride”. Those fellows, God bless ‘em, qualify as some of the unsung heroes of the 8th Air Force — although not unsung among the Scouts who appreciated their value.

Few Scout missions were routine (when was combat flying ever routine?) Take the time Johnny Brooks was leading four Scouts to a major target to be bombed by the 8th's bombers. This was near the end of the European war when the Luftwaffe preferred to stay on the ground. The leader and deputy were usually experienced combat veterans, but the remainder of the German pilots were kids with little more than 112 hours of total flying time, according to intelligence reports. Germany was desperate — not because of a lack of aircraft, but a lack of pilots. There were no specified number of missions for German combat pilots — they flew combat until they were killed.

Johnny was about thirty minutes in front of the bombers. Over Germany, he spotted approximately 100 plus ME 109's, the famous German fighter that looked much like a P-51, forming below to attack the approaching bombers. They were gathering into their favorite large “V” formation, not unlike that flown by wild geese. With odds of over 25 to 1, there was only one thing for the outnumbered Scouts to do — run, and run fast — alert the bombers and fighter escorts. Instead, in typical Scout fashion, Johnny elected to attack! In the anxiety of the moment, at least as he reported it when he returned, he slightly misjudged the speed and distance of the German formation, and found himself with his four Scouts flying straight up the “V” of the formation. The Scouts opened fire with their six .50 caliber machine guns, and eight ME 109's went down, including the leader and his deputy. Any German pilot in the formation could have knocked out a Scout just by pressing his trigger, but the young Jerries were so surprised and bewildered with their leaders gone, they broke formation and went home. No bombers were touched. Of the eight Germans shot down, Johnny got two, including the leader, and his wingman, “Wild Willie” Whalen of Hamilton, New York, got three. Colonel Brooks received the Distinguished Service Cross, the Nation's second highest award, for his daring in stopping the raid against the bombers. Although the young German fighter pilot was no match against the American fighter pilot at that time, they were still very deadly against the bombers.

On another occasion, in the winter of 1944, the ground forces in the Trier area of Southern France were hard pressed, and needed air support in the worst way. All bases in England were zero-zero in fog, and so were most of the bases in France. There was one exception in England; the 2nd Combat Wing in East Anglia had a 200 feet ceiling and 1/2 mile visibility. They decided

to go to the help of the foot soldiers. Johnny Brooks' policy was, “When the bombers fly, the Scouts fly”.

Brooks asked for volunteers, since they would have to make a blind takeoff, fly through terrible weather, and possibly bail-out upon return. Every Scout volunteered. Johnny selected Bob Whitlow, ex-All American tackle from West Point, as the leader, this writer as deputy, and two fighter pilots for the wing position. Bill Hornickel from Elizabeth, Indiana flew on Bob's wing, and “Wild Willie” Whalen, previously mentioned, and the Scout's leading scorer, flew on my wing.

With no 38-years-after-the-war exaggeration, it was necessary to tow the P-51s to the end of the iced runway, because it was impossible to see beyond the nose of the aircraft in the dense ice fog that prevailed that bleak December 19, 1944. Whitlow sank all 230 pounds and his 6'4" frame into his cockpit. We never did figure out how he could get into a P-51 in the first place!

Bob Whitlow set his directional gyro to zero. Hornickel tucked his wing inside of Bob's wing, with his wingtip just a few feet from Bob's fuselage. Whitlow started down the runway, completely on instruments, while Bill glued his eyes on Bob. The theory was that the bomber pilots had more instrument experience than the fighter pilots. Wild Willie and I took off the same way. This is very scary flying.

At three thousand feet we were out of the soup into a broken cloud condition, which remained until we reached the target area. We could see the target. We told the bomb wing leader the good news, but, at his lower altitude he was flying formation in and out of clouds, and was not a very happy fellow. He was about ready to abort the mission since it was impossible to fly formation in the heavily clouded skys.

Whitlow told the bomber commander he could get through and that he could make a radar run and a visual drop. A visual drop was essential, since the target was close to American troops. The leader of the bombers was not certain from his poor vantage point as to whether it was feasible to continue. Bob told him he would send his deputy back to steer him around the clouds to the target. That was me.

Although it was utterly ridiculous to consider finding a “needle” that was the small bomber formation, in the “hay-stack” of the obscured skies of Europe, luck and the Good Lord decreed the impossible — we found the group, valiantly flying in the distance through cloud and haze — gallantly risking their lives for their ground force buddies on a mission that no one made them fly. What heroes.

The bombers' contrails, normally a scourge, since they revealed the path of the bombers to enemy antiaircraft gunners, proved that day to be a Godsend, since that is what revealed the bombers to me and my wingman. Carefully sliding up to the bombers, rocking our wings so they could see our insignia, we identified ourselves and told the leader he could make it to the target by altering his course further west.

From his small cockpit, he could not see the way past all the clouds around him, and he could not climb to a high enough altitude to get above the clouds. So, with my wingman flying high cover, I lowered my gear and partial flaps to slow down to the B-24's speed, and placed myself in front of the bombers and led them to the general area of the target. Bob Whitlow and Wild Willie Whalen kept relaying vital information.

Whitlow reported excellent bombing results, and Colonel Milton W. Arnold, leader of the bombers and Commander of the 2nd Combat Wing, said in a commendation;

On 19 December when extremely inclement weather pinned the great majority of heavy bombers and their fighter escort to the ground, the 2AD Scouting Force, realizing that their normal important functions were even more necessary . . . successfully dispatched four P-51s.

This handful of aircraft gave invaluable assistance to bomber commanders in the formation of a cohesive fighting force, and provided close cover fighter protection in the absence of fighter escorts.

We desire to commend the pilots of the 2AD Scouting Force, particularly in that operation, for their outstanding performance of duty. Their actions were a singular expression of American skill and courage.

This mission was classic proof of Bud Peaslee's idea for creation of the Scouts — that he could have reached his Norway target by another route if he had known about the weather and the alternate route.

Our return to England and landing was spectacular, unusual, and to some extent, downright foolish. But that is another story for another time.

There were many fabulous stories that could be told about the Scouts and their exploits, especially about Wild Willie, who was an American Ace, and almost a German one, too (from crashing American planes)! What a glorious pilot and loveable fool. It is unfortunate that he has made his last flight “into the wild blue yonder.”

The Scouts were little known and little praised in those days, yet their contributions increased bomber target coverage by 10% during the crucial 1944-45 winter. They did not fly for gain nor glory. In fact, the organization's existence was a well-kept secret from the Germans, and besides, the ex-bomber pilots had their fill of “excitement and glory” during their first tour. But the former lead crew bomber pilots knew the value of their sacrifice and their efforts; and the bomb division leaders knew the value of having the Scouts — and just plain 8th Air Force bomber pilots who are alive today, will testify to the relief they felt when they knew there were “Scouts Out”.

AUTHORS NOTE: The original version of this article appeared in the November, 1965 issue of the Second Air Division Association Newsletter. Minor changes have been made to the original article. The facts in this article are substantiated in official papers in the possession of the author.

"THAT'LL BE \$50.00 YOU OWE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, SERGEANT"

by Edward J. Barton (44th)

Wednesday, September 13, 1944 started out like any other mission from the 44th Bomb Group field at Shipdham. Our squadron, the 68th, had as its target the German Jet Propulsion aerodrome at Schwabish/Hall, Germany.

This was to be our 22nd mission. Our pilot, Ray Mondloh, and co-pilot, Paul Holmes, would be pulling their 23rd.

At 6:00 A.M. we took off and formed up over England and Scotland with the rest of the group. We then crossed the Channel and headed for Germany. As it turned out, our group was flying low left in the box formation. Our squadron was low left and I was the Assistant Engineer-Gunner in the left waist window position.

Just as we approached the Ruhr Valley, the Kaiser Wilhelm graduate school for 88 flak battery gunners was holding their graduation exercises. The instructors were showing the "new boys" how to pick off bombers by firing just to the left side of the formation — at us! When we first picked up the flak, we thought everyone was getting it, and when we called the lead ship, they didn't know what we were talking about! This went on for a few minutes and, since we couldn't take evasive action without disturbing the box formation, the 88 gunners were preparing to pick up their Kewpie dolls for 10 out of 10 shots.

Our bomb load was 12 each 500 lb. M17 incendiaries and, when we were hit in #2 engine (feathered) and #2 gas tank, and that vapor trail from the gas went out by my nose, a quick poll among the crew said, "let's get the hell out of here." We made a long left turn back toward friendly territory to avoid the commencement address speakers below us and called for fighter protection (friendly, that is).

Within a few minutes those "twin tail devils", two P-38s, showed up and advised us they were running low on fuel but would call in a friendly P-51 they knew was on the deck below, shooting up targets of opportunity. We then salvoed the incendiaries and looked for the P-51 and M-109's. The P-51 came up from behind cautiously and tucked himself under our right wing. The name of his ship was "Bean City Charlie" and he had black and white checkerboard markings underneath the canopy, with a few swastikas to lend a little color. He told us he would vector us in to a P-47 base that had just been taken over from the Germans the week before, outside of Paris about 30 miles, a town called "Coulumiers". He did, and we landed without incident. There we transferred the gas from the "self-

sealing" gas tank, borrowed some more from the fighter base and looked over the cracked carburetor on #2 engine, plus other damage. We decided to go into the nearby town while some other crew members, who shall be nameless, headed for the fleshpots of Paris.

Having 4000 francs in our escape kit, we sampled the local vino, bought some par-fum for our wives and girlfriends, and spent about all of the francs. We must have looked strange walking the street in our electric-heated flying suits with the cord dangling.

After a breakfast of "C" rations we borrowed from the 9th A.F. locals, we decided to see if Orville was Wright; although some on the crew wanted to stay — to go into the woods nearby, with our 45's, and help the Maquis eliminate some more Germans, however, wiser heads prevailed.

Our takeoff next day had a low overcast, so when we took off we stayed under, and flew at about 300' over the city of Paris. What a sight! Crossing the Channel, it was "May Day, May Day" to the English ladies manning the flak battery along the coast. Ray Mondloh's Minnesota accent helped.

Made a nice soft touchdown at Shipdham and surprised our crew chief, Calvin, that we had brought back our \$250,000 ship. He did get out of sorts when we brought it back with holes that Consolidated Aircraft never intended to be there! Calvin was a good crew chief.

Naturally, all of our clothes, shoes, radios, pictures, etc. were gone when we walked into the hut. We had been reported M.I.A. because other crew members had finally noticed there was blue sky where formerly a B-24 was and, seeing the gas vapor pouring out of the tank, they thought we were on fire and going down.

We walked down to the flight line the next day and turned in our escape kits for new ones. A few days later we all got a message to report to the Finance Office. It seems we were all short about 4000 francs or \$50.00 American that we had spent in France. The U.S. Army Air Corps wanted its money — no ifs, ands or buts. If we had been killed, it would have been O.K. The fact that we came back with a quarter million dollar plane almost intact cut no ice with the Lt. in Finance. We had to pay up! Now I'm looking for that Finance Officer from the 44th. If I find him, I think he owes me a drink! But how can I drink up \$50.00 worth? Anyone care to join me? The drinks may be on the Finance Dept. of the 8th A.F. back at Norwich.

THE TALE OF "TAILWIND"

by Charles C. Russell (467th BG)

In January and February of 1944, the 467th Bomb Group was finishing up operational training at Wendover, Utah, and began receiving new aircraft that were to be flown overseas for use in combat. We did not know where we were heading overseas, at least the flying crews did not know, some one did I'm sure. As the new planes arrived, it was a pleasure to be scheduled to fly our training missions in them rather than the old, worn out, war weary planes we had been flying all winter; planes that only part of the systems worked, engines that liked to catch on fire, turbos that ran away and props that would not stay in sync. My crew was scheduled to fly aircraft 41-29368 one day in January. We were to fly a local mission of dropping practice bombs, I am not sure that it was not a single aircraft mission.

We took off from the field and were into our mission over the salt flats when a call come from the Wendover tower to warn us that the weather was closing in and we were advised to head east to Salt Lake City or to Casper, Wyoming.

We flew on to Salt Lake City and the ground was covered with fog or smog, but you could see straight down. We made a pass at the runway but there was no radio aid in locating the runway so we had to line up visually. We missed the runway on the first pass, but could see the end as we were abreast of it. We went around and were sure we would line up with the runway on the second try. Sure enough we missed it but were close enough that I made a couple of quick turns and got the plane down in the first third of the runway, however, when I applied the brakes I discovered a very disturbing fact, the runway was covered with patches of ice. When we reached the end of the runway we were still moving at a pretty good pace. The overrun was covered with about 12" of snow and fortunately the ground was frozen. The snow really slowed us down and before the plane stopped I gave it full power on the two right engines and we turned right around and came back to the end of the runway. We taxied to the ramp at about one mile per hour.

We stayed the night at the Salt Lake Army Air Base while the storm moved past us to the east. The next morning when we went to the flight line we found the airplane covered with ice. The whole crew started chipping away at the ice but it was stuck awfully tight. One of the ground crew members gave me a crow bar and I started

(continued on next page)

THE MEMORIAL

by Jordan R. Uttal

"TAILWIND" (cont.)

jabbing away and punched two holes through the skin of the wing. About then I decided it was better to stop chipping away and have the line crew tow the airplane into the hangar and let the ice melt. This we did and the following day flew back to Wendover.

On the ground at Wendover, it only took about two milliseconds for the ground crew to discover the holes in the brand new combat airplane and report it to the Group Commander. He was all over the Squadron Commander and faster than it takes to tell it, I was before the Squadron Operations Officer. He gave me holy hell until he gave out and then when he couldn't think of anything else to say, he said, "And just for that I'm going to give you that airplane and you are going to fly it wherever we are going."

Our crew had not been scheduled for an airplane before this and later used to kid me about the way we were assigned one. Capt. Robert W. Doenges was not all bad even if he did make off with all our fly away K-rations as soon as we landed at Rackheath.

Our crew was proud of our patched up airplane and at Herrington, Kansas we paid some kid to paint a picture on the nose, as most every crew did. We chose a picture from a calendar of a girl behind an airplane. She was running up, trying to hold her hat on with one hand and her skirt down with the other. We named our plane, "Tailwind".

It performed perfectly for us over the southern ATC route to Valley, Wales and on to Rackheath where our crew flew 18 missions in her. She was lost on June 21, 1944 with Lt. E.M. Helton's crew on a mission to Berlin.

My crew, an original crew of the 789th Bomb Squadron, completed their missions on August 11, 1944. The crew members were: Charles C. Russell, Pilot; Harold Cheever, Co-Pilot (killed with another crew); Michael Woloszyn, Navigator; Ralph Anderson, Bombardier; Houston Carlisle, Engineer; Raymond Barnes, Radio; Richard Barton, Gunner; Albert Gross, Gunner; Calvin Jensen, Gunner; William Donnelly, Gunner.

As I prepare this message to meet Bill Robertie's deadline of 15 January for the March 1983 issue of our great *Journal*, I realize that by the time you receive this information it will be over 60 days old. By the same token, the report that I wrote for the December issue was about that same age when the *Journal* reached you. At the time I wrote it I could only name four Groups which had met or surpassed the \$750.00 goal for the Individual Group Memorial Project which was so enthusiastically approved and put into motion in Nashville.

Now, however, I am pleased indeed to add to the first four Groups, (44th, 445th, 467th, and Hdqs.) five more units which have also gone over the top in this worthy endeavor. Congratulations and thanks — 389th, 392nd, 446th, 458th and 453rd!!! We are grateful to all of you who have contributed and even more so to the Group Representatives who have solicited the funds, collected them, and forwarded them to Dean for banking until all the 15 units have succeeded.

In the course of these six months since Nashville, I have been in regular touch with Dean Moyer, and we both have been a rooting section as we have watched the figures grow each month, all the while enjoying the notes from the Group Representatives accompanying the checks, expressing their own feelings of satisfaction and achievement. We know that by the time this issue reaches you the other six Groups will be over the top. Two of them, as of January 10 are already at 70% of goal, and we encourage all these Groups to keep at it. May we ask, at this time, those of you who have not as yet sent in your contribution for your Individual Group Memorial to please get them in, to your Group Representative?

Just as a reminder, the Individual Group Memorial will consist of your Group Colored Tail Fin, followed by a plaque containing your Group Number and Station Name, followed by four individual plaques with the squadron numbers. On the top shelf of the book case immediately below this will be your individual Group Roll of Honor. Above all of this will be a

giant mural showing flights of B-24s. What a beautiful addition to an already inspiring Living Memorial!!

We believe that after each Group meets its goal we will have enough money left over from actual cost to provide one panel dedicated to the 5 units of "Little Friends", the Fighter Groups which were such an important part of the achievements of 2nd Air Division.

2nd AIR DIVISION PERSONAL HISTORY PROGRAM: Have all of you sent in your recorded cassette to Hathy Veynar? Please re-read her article in the December issue, and regardless of what your job was, send her a cassette, and be even more a part of the History you helped make than you are now. The library wants as many as they can have, and I remind you of BBC's interest. When I spoke with Hathy last night she reported that a trickle has started to arrive. Let's make it a flood. If you cannot make a recording, how about writing an article, and mail it to her or to me. (with \$2.00 for the cost of the blank cassette) and we'll do them in your name.

POSSIBLE SCHOOL TALKS PROGRAM: Will any of you who will be in Norwich by the 24th of May please drop me a line. At this moment there is only a possibility that six of us will be asked to make a speech at six different schools in Norwich about 'Life in England during WW2'. If that does come to pass we will have to have the names of those on whom we might call.

Finally, I want to share with all of you, a poem I was privileged to read at the conclusion of the Banquet in Nashville with the candles still glowing brightly. It was written by one of our associate members and I feel, captures the essence of what we are all about in supporting the Memorial:

In Memoriam

*Comrades of the long ago
Who sacrificed to keep us free
We gather as the candles glow
In honor of your memory
In recognition of your names
In token of all Mankind's debt
And pledge besides these candles flames —
We shan't forget!*

OPEN LETTER TO 93RD BG

by Charles Weiss (93rd)

I am pleased to report that we are finally off the runway with our donations to the Memorial Mural fund. We are about two thirds there so we still can't relax. I know there's a bunch of you out there who have good intentions and want to contribute but just keep putting it off. Let's do our part.

When you read this letter, the time for our reunion will be just around the corner! I'm not at this late date going to suggest that you consider showing up as all available space has probably been taken, but it's

worth a call to Evelyn should you want to go. Her telephone number is 215-632-3992. Please don't show up in Norwich unless you have made advance reservations with Evelyn.

How many of you remember the following: The visit of King George to the old 93rd base at Alconbury: the line shack that burned down because too much hydraulic fluid was dripped into it; the famous old potbelly stoves that gave off more cold than heat; how zippo lighters were refueled by lowering them into the aircraft's 100 octane

fuel tanks, etc. etc. etc.

I just received a letter from John Archer saying that dear Daisy Elmar passed away on December 30 at her home "The Three Nags". Many of you will remember Daisy as a very pleasant, cheerful lady and thought her boys "the Yanks" were the greatest. She was 83. John further advised that "The Old Nags" will now close for good. Daisy and the Nags will remain in our memory forever.

Well that's about 'it' until we meet in Norwich for the reunion.

I REMEMBER: The No-Ball Missions

by Myron Keilman (392nd)

Two days before Christmas, 1943, was a stand-down for the 392nd. Aircraft maintenance crews were working hard changing engines, patching flak damage, and performing required maintenance on the group's thirty B-24 bombers. The combat crews were resting up from the tough missions the past ten days to Emden, Kiel, twice to Bremen and Munster. At 1000 hours, the squadron commanders and the officers of eight lead crews were notified to report to the group briefing room.

Peddling their bikes there, the appointed pilots, bombardiers, and navigators, along with the group commander, his deputy and squadron COs gathered at the big Nissen hut briefing room.

The group intelligence officer began the briefing with a special 8th Air Force Headquarters intelligence estimate of the German V-1 missile (buzz-bomb) capability. He pointed out the general location on the big wall map of Europe where some 100 odd launching sites were either known to be or were suspected to be — all in the Pas de Calais peninsula area of Normandy. He showed diagrams of what the missile was believed to look like with its 500-pound war head and pulse jet engine. His briefing went on to show the vulnerability of London and surrounding strategic targets within the missile range. He gave the intelligence estimate of the delays these missiles could evoke on the projected allied invasion of the continent and lengthening the war. Forty years have not deadened the briefing officer's final impact statement: "If these missile launch sites are not destroyed within the next three months, the city of London will be totally destroyed."

The group operations officer then briefed the 2nd Air Division's Field Order: Maximum effort, 4 six-ship squadron formations, Airborne spare airplanes to go all the way, 12,000 feet bombing altitude, 578th Squadron group leader, Route in, Initial Point (IP) aiming point, Rendezvous maneuver, Route out.

Final briefing and take-off would be predicated on weather in the target area. Visual bombing was a must.

After the briefing, these lead crews adjourned to the target study room where a special sand table mock-up of a typical V-1 launch site was viewed. It had the assembly building, launch ramp, communications center, and personnel facilities all neatly camouflaged in wooded surroundings. Then there were the bombardiers target folders to study with maps and aerial photographs for each assigned target.

There was more than the usual degree of excitement over this mission. It was different. The degree of urgency was more closely felt. Six-ship formations were easy to assemble and maneuver.

Each individual squadron had a chance to compete for bombing accuracy honors.

The altitude was especially favorable for accuracy, and the crews wouldn't even need oxygen. The length of the missions would only be four to five hours. Friendly fighters could cover the whole route. Little or no flak was expected. A "milk run"!

The "frag" order that night did call for a max effort, and the group was able to ready twenty-eight airplanes with twelve 500-pound bombs each. The weather was good. The take-off was at the reasonable hour of 1100. Assembly of the four squadron formations was easy, and the group joined the wing and division bomber stream on time.

At the initial point (IP) the four six-ship squadrons turned toward their respective target headings. The scattered clouds below did not impair the bombardiers from picking up their check points and identifying the target area. With the precision of clockwork, they took control of steering their airplanes. Peering through bombsight optics, they smoothly placed the cross-hairs on the missile launch sites. While synchronizing the bombsight controls for the bombs' ballistic range, the airspeed and altitude, "killing" the airplanes drift, and checking bomb release switches to the "on" position, they gave running commentaries to their anxious pilots, command pilots, and crews. When indices crossed, they called "Bombs away!" Bomb release lights flickered; the airplanes bounced; the pilots steered to the rendezvous heading; and the bomb-bay doors closed.

It was a dream mission. These crews had led their group through heavy flak-defended targets of Bremen, Kiel, Emden, Vegasack, and more with clouds and smoke too often obscuring their aiming points. This mission was ideal for demonstrating their trained skills. From photograph evaluation, the bombing accuracy of bombardiers Capt. "Doc" Weiland, Lt. "Big Joe" Joachem, Lt. "Pud" Good, and Lt. Amos were rated excellent.

So ended the first "No-Ball" mission, the code word for the destruction of Hitler's taunting secret weapon.

By 8 February 1944, the Germans had moved in railroad-mounted heavy anti-aircraft weapons. That day, the 392nd's seventh "No-Ball" mission, all hell broke loose on the bomb run. Unexpected and accurate heavy flak was very damaging, and the bombing results were poor. The "milk-run" days were over. Bombing altitude went up to 20,000 feet, and heavy, accurate flak became common.

Considering the combined effort of the entire 2nd Air Division and Eighth Air Force, the destruction of the V-1 missile launch capability must have been nearly complete. Only seven more "No-Ball" missions were flown by the 392nd. The last one was on 27 April 1944; however, the menace did not go away.

The Germans devised a simplified and

exceedingly well camouflaged mobile launching system. Between June and September they "beat up" London and vicinity with hundreds of "buzz bombs". When the Allies captured the Pas de Calais area of France, the launching was moved to Holland. They even launched them from airplanes.

Britain developed a good defense for them, but a lot of them got through and their 500-pound war-heads caused considerable damage. A number of our combat crews went to London on flak leave (R&R) in hopes of seeing and hearing them. Some were rewarded with close calls and good "scares".

Then there were the V-2 long-range rockets. They, too, were launched from mobile launching systems and were difficult to locate and destroy. We were never called on to bomb them. During the winter of 1945 I remember seeing their vapor trails streaking toward the zenith as I led the 392nd Bomb Group across the English Channel en route to bomb the Third Reich. Hundreds of them with their 1,000-pound war heads exploded in London and vicinity. It wasn't until near V-E Day (Victory in Europe), when the allied armies overran all of Germany and the Low Countries that the menace was stilled.

Appel de Mort

*You can take your choice of chances
Amid the scourge of man made ills
Where foul Satan's hand enhances
The bloody thirst for lethal thrills.
There's no end to hell and horror:
There's no dearth of dreadful dying
Along Thor's gruesome corridor
Where the darts of death are flying.*

*Each hero harks the hellish heed
Of his talent's course to coffin,
And mystic motives spurn the speed
To the end that comes so often.
But each man mocks the mirthless Mars;
Ignores ignoble fear within,
And stronger strives through sod or stars
To nurture more his nation's sin.*

*An easy access to the grave
Yawns yearning e'er to foe or friend
To call the cowards or the brave
For only God can guess the end.
But to that catastrophic call,
If e'er my efforts lose the light,
I beg but one thing for my all —
To find my own fort for the fight.*

*There let me strike my strongest blow:
Far from fertile fields that fed me:
Up where the creamy cloud streams flow:
Where the call of duty led me.
When the fatal stroke shall find me:
Then let no mortal man's eye see.
As my ashes fall behind me,
Let my sad soul soar clean and free.*

Keith C. Schuyler (Copyright)

Escape Kit in Library Gifts from Ex-Airman

(from Eastern Daily Press)

Thirty-seven years after he was stationed at Hardwick with the American Air Force, Clement Bertolino, now a 60-year-old attorney, returned to the Norwich area at the weekend with a collection of memorabilia for our American library.

Among the items he handed over was one of the escape kits, in original condition, which the airmen were given before each mission. It included such things as a silk map, chocolate, soup powder, aspirin, ointment and water purification tablet.

Mr. Bertolino also brought his personal diary of that time, navigators' logs and charts of missions, the May 8th, 1945 edition of the "Stars and Stripes" with the headline "Germany Quits" and the Victory issue of "Yank" magazine.

From Dr. Ben Zobrist, director of the Truman Library he also brought a replica of the plaque Harry S. Truman kept on his desk when he was President of the USA — a plaque with the comment, "The buck stops here" and photographs of Harry Truman with General Spatz who was commander of the 8th Air Force during the war.

He had personal memories of Harry Truman. While working in general services administration, "a sort of government



Showing some of the gifts Mr. Clement Bertolino, of Missouri, brought to the American library at Norwich are left to right: Mr. Paul King, vice-chairman of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust, which runs the library, Mr. Bertolino and Mr. Colin Sleath, deputy divisional librarian who has responsibility for running the library.

housekeeping," in Independence, Missouri, he used to take trainees for managerial jobs for a session which included a personal interview with Truman — "very direct individual," he said.

Mr. Bertolino, from Belton, Missouri, was here with his wife, Mary, whose parents were from the Leeds area.

He told me that he was stationed at

Hardwick from January to April 1945 and flew 16 missions in 2½ months.

"We were almost totally isolated and our contact with Norwich was terribly coincidental," he said.

Mr. Bertolino had written to the Norwich Tourist Office explaining that he had some items that might be suitable for a "museum facility" in the area.

453rd BG NEWS

by Don Olds (453rd)

First of all I'm pleased to report that our goal of \$25,000 for the 453rd BG Memorial at Old Buck has been reached and the money sent to the village fathers at Old Buckenham. The committee that was formed in Boston in 1980 wants to thank all of you that gave so generously to insure this projects completion. Dedication will be held during our trip to Norwich in late May, probably on the 30th. Charles Parker and Bob Harper produced some art works from which donations went directly to the memorial fund, and they both report there are some prints still available. A photo of Bob's paintings appears in the June issue of the *Journal*. Charlie did an 11x14 etching of the Attleborough Train Station. You can send your \$100 donation to Frank Thomas for your numbered etching. Our own Gen. James Stewart obtained one and wrote to Charlie saying he thought it was beautiful. Contact Bob Harper about his paintings.



Note the photo of the BENESH BOMB. Dale "Benny" Benesh of Loveland, Colorado bought the bomb at a Jerry Lewis MDA auction, took it home and he and his friend Danny Stoups, a member of the 2nd ADA and former engine repairman at Watton, went to work on it. They had to weld the nose back on, straighten it and paint it O.D. Danny's daughter painted the 8th AF emblem from one of the old shoulder patches. It will soon be a permanent fixture in Benny's back yard as soon as he gets it cemented in the ground.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Richard Albertie of Fresno, Calif. who passed away last fall. He was on the Charles Allen Crew of the 735th SQ, coming as a replacement in May of '45.

I've had some requests for copies of the 453rd BG History that we put together about 1977 from the microfilm at Maxwell AFB Library. Problem is, they are all gone. If the people that are interested will let me know, I'll see if it is enough to warrant additional copies being printed. When we were in Dayton in Oct. '82 for the 8th AF Memorial dedication, I discovered the AF Museum didn't have a copy so I mailed them the last extra copy I had.

Frank Kyle sent me several slides showing the group in training at Pocatello and March Field before leaving for overseas assignment. Most of them are new to me, and Mike Benarcik will surely want to include some of them in the pictorial his-

tory he is working on. Frank also sent along a cassette recording explaining each slide which was an extra blessing. He is now working on a similar set of slides and narration from the time the group arrived in England till it rotated back to the States in April '45.

We have a book somewhere out there and we're hoping everyone that receives it will write some of the things that stand out in their minds about the time they spent with the 453rd BG and then forward it on to someone else for them to do likewise. This is a hard cover blank page book and we're hoping to fill every page and then possibly donate it to the Old Buckenham 453rd BG Memorial Room, or the 2nd ADA Library in Norwich. So, if the book comes to you, write down your thoughts and mail it on to someone else. You can write about work on the airbase or, if you dare, tell about your times in London. But let's try and keep the book moving.

The \$750 the group donated to have its tail colors on a plaque on the wall at the Norwich Library has been forwarded to England. Thanks to all of you who helped make that become possible. The tail plaques should all be in place for the reunion in May.

So, there are plenty of reasons for you to get your reservations in to Evelyn and make the trip back to Old Buckenham, Attleborough and Norwich one more time. We're hoping to see you there.

448th Bomb Group Profiles

by George DuPont



Staff/Sergeant Bloom was a radio operator on a 712th squadron crew. One of the lesser known duties was to assist in the release of bombs hung up on their racks due to faulty switches, frozen latches, etc. This bit of "derring-do" consisted of removal of normal oxygen mask and replacing it with a small "three minute" bottle and mask. The bottle was about the size of a grapefruit directly attached to the mask. Needless to say a little cumbersome.

One day it fell upon Sgt. Bloom, the task of releasing a stuck 500 pound bomb attached to the upper bomb shackle. The anticipation of this chore was considered less than joyful. Armed for the task with a trusty common screwdriver and after disconnecting his electrically heated suit, he opened the door to the bomb bay, raised the cockpit floor panel to step down into the bomb bay. With the roar of the four mighty Pratt and Whitney's assaulting his

ears, the bomb bay doors open and a 175 mile per hour wind tearing by the fuselage, the land below didn't look all that ominous except for 40,000,000 mad Germans living there.

The catwalk was about twenty feet long and twelve inches wide and the supports for the bomb shackles tapered outward so that a fully clothed airman could, by shoving, pushing, pulling and twisting, force his way thru. But the space between the shackles and the bomb bay walls looked as big as the Grand Canyon from this altitude.

Besides all the other things to bother you, the temperature was about 50° below zero.

Somewhere in the design of air aircraft and clothing a few moments should have been spent on the relationship between rubber soled shoes and hydraulic fluid.

On this particular day a small leak had saturated the catwalk, and as Sgt. Bloom lumbered to lower himself onto the cat-

walk, his shoes contacted the slippery fluid, the aircraft lurched, and for a brief moment he found himself suspended in space viewing the natural wonders of Nazi Germany. Madly he reached out and found the middle bomb shackles with his hands. His legs, suspended in the 175 MPH slipstream, wanted to tear him away and with thoughts of home and childhood racing thru his mind he clung on.

Imagine the feeling at this moment looking up at a 500# bomb and knowing the bombardier is triggering the "salvo" switch hoping to release it.

Up on the flight deck they were awaiting his "Bomb Away" call so they could close the bomb bay doors and get on.

Natural curiosity took over and the Engineer, noticing his plight, used the bomb door handle to slowly bring the doors to where they contacted the back of Blooms knees and slowly helped him back inside.

Needless to say in spite of "All's well that ends well", Sergeant Bloom never had mixed emotions about flying. He became the "Flying CQ" (Charge of Quarters) and if you needed an early morning wake up for any reason, just tie your towel onto the bar at the foot of your bed and he would awaken you.

P.S. No one ever found out what happened to the screwdriver and of course no one asked.

458th Comments

by George A. Reynolds (458th)

I have an inquiry from a historian, who is documenting all combat squadron commanders for the 8th, asking for a 458th list from Feb. '44 - Apr. '45. As a start: 752nd - John J. LaRoche. 753rd - Frederick M. O'Neal and Charles N. Breeding. 754th - Estle P. Henson and Maj. ?? Hensler. 755th - Donald C. Jamieson. Corrections and/or additions will be much appreciated. Thanks to Colonels Bob Vincent, John LaRoche. "Jake" Weber and "Woody" Woodward, also Charles Breeding and Don Jamieson for their helpful response.

Good to hear from Chuck and Skeet Pool, Bob Armbruster, George Ferrell, Dick Gibson, Charles Melton, Glenn Matson and Thomas Brown. Most everyone is talking Norwich '83 with anxiety and expectations, including Don Jamieson who hadn't heard of the 2nd ADA until recently. He is a high school principal in Calif., and sends best wishes to all the troops, especially ex-755th types.

Lee Bryant, a combat "incomplete" quadriplegic, from Fla. wrote that he and Art Fish are hot on the trail of members from three crews they flew with — for membership. Also, Bob Armbruster said he has two from his crew ready to sign on — I'm sure Rick will get the paper work done up in short order.

Received a print made from one of Fred Slocum's latest paintings, and it's one of the most life-like B-24s I've seen. The nose and cockpit sections are featured with some very original nose art, 12 "Horsham haunts" — The Castle, The Cathedral, Sampson & Hercules, The Firs, other infamous pubs, a dart board, a pint, fish and chips and, oh, a blonde. Plus all 2nd ADA units are represented by miniature Libs in an overhead flyby bearing "tail feathers" of the 14 Groups. Thanks, Fred, she'll get a frame and a galley spot for sure.

Many thanks to Tony North, FOTE, for responding to the last *Journal* with a good nose art shot of "Star Dust" — repeating, does anyone know this bird's numbers, Sqdn. or disposition? Earlier, Tony sent several mint condition photos of a bird in a hangar and others in flight — a hundred or so more like these and I'll be ready to go with 458th BG III.

I have nothing definite yet on the Group memorial planned for the new Norwich terminal building. The building is still being talked for the future, and possibly by next issue more info will be available. Also, the story of the 6 March Berlin mission could be received by that time. Still needed are patches for the 752nd and 753rd to have duplicated. I have a good source to make the four emblems, so if anyone has these two and will send them on loan to photo-

graph, I'll give assurance of prompt and safe return.

Direct word from the CAF at Harlingen, Texas is that their B-24, "Diamond Lil," flew northward to an air show, and has been stuck there with engine and hydraulic troubles. Any spare parts available amongst our crowd? By way of the 3rd SAD Assn. and Wiley Noble, the 8th AF at Barksdale AFB has a very sharp B-24 on display there. This bird was ferried by CH-54 helicopter from Tulsa a year or so ago, and it's almost unbelievable how that wreck has been converted into such a beautiful bird — if you're around Shreveport, La. don't miss it!

DECALS

If you would like a 2nd ADA decal for your car window write to Evelyn Cohen, Apt. 06410 Delair Landing, Philadelphia, PA. 19114. They are free but be sure to enclose a self addressed stamped envelope.

LETTERS

Dear Bill:

I am writing to inform all members of the Rackheath 467th B.G. of the death of Johnny Pineapple, a great humanitarian.

Johnny should well be remembered by all on base as the lead guitarist with the old Rackheath Airliners Band which was under the direction of Major Rex Floyd. Many of the base dancers will recall how quite a few would stop dancing and gather in front of the bandstand when he would take the solo of "Hawaiian Warchant."

Prior to entering the service he had been featured on radio, movies and nightclubs. After being discharged he continued entertaining with his own band and "Hawaiian Review." He traveled to many parts of the world to entertain service personnel and was always happy to meet any former buddies when ever he had the opportunity.

There are thousands of people who were inspired and their lives enriched just because they met this great person. My wife and I have been truly privileged to have known Johnny personally through the years and we, as all who knew him, feel the loss of such a fine, understanding, thoughtful human being.

He gave so much of himself to so many for such a long time.

Bill Reilly

Dear Bill:

Several years ago there was an article in the *Journal* concerning the 100 mission party held at Rackheath after the Aggies had completed their first 100 missions.

One member had returned for a visit to England and, after searching and inquiring, had discovered the name and location of the lady who had manufactured the cake for the party.

Several months later, in the *Journal*, there was another letter from one of our members, who during the party had ended up doing a forced landing in the middle of the above mentioned cake.

We are now getting down to the reason for this epistle. We think that the time has come to bring the light of day to what really happened, and just who was really responsible for the sad demise of a very beautiful piece of culinary art.

This cake was nicely on display atop a table in the middle of the officer's club floor awaiting the arrival of the General from 2nd Air Division Hdqs. to cut it and officially get the party going.

While awaiting the arrival of the dignitaries we — many members of the group — did partake of a few grams of whatever was available in the form of liquid refreshments. And, during those frequent trips to the bar, a little crook of the finger as the cake was passed would reward a member with a little taste of the delicious icing. Soon this cake's two bottom tiers began to take on a slightly ragged appearance. Some worthy official finally posted a guard over it to prevent any further erosion.

The gentleman, who was mentioned at the beginning as having ended up in the cake, was assigned as the guard on this particular piece of valuable property.

A chain of events ensued that brought forth the ire of one of the members, who offered a reward to two others if one of them would nudge the guard into the cake. Only one of these offered any response by saying "Save your money little buddy. I'll do it for nothing." And a well-placed shoulder as the guard was facing the cake did the job nicely.

Rather than keep this secret penned up any longer, we think the proper credit should be given herewith to a very good friend of ours whose initials happen to be — James Keith Newhouse.

Arthur L. Prichard
Harold L. Smith

Dear Bill:

Twenty-one combat missions in just 65 days with the 392nd BG from March 16 to May 19, 1944. Is that a record? Surely the writer cannot claim that but does remember Group Commander Col. Irvine Rendle picking him out from among many to serve as part of a "new crew orientation team because he is one of our real veterans!"

My first raid was with a lead crew, yours truly flying pilotage navigator and handling the nose turret. Target — Friedrichshafen, poor results so No. 2 was back to the same place two days later. This was the fabled raid where the 392nd lost 15 aircraft and crews, saw 9 more damaged with a total of 154 casualties. I got back in one piece and the crew hadn't even begun ops!

Mission highlights as I remember them would have to include my No. 2 described above; No. 5 where the Prell crew limped into Tangmere (RAF base) on two engines with a full bomb load and massive leak in main fuel cell; my No. 13 which was to Berlin (the Big B itself) on April 29th with the group losing the second largest number of aircraft ever (8 B-24s and 77 aircrew) and, of course, my 21st (and last mission) March 19th to Braunschweig (Brunswick).

The Prell crew was one of three to be lost that day from the 392nd and it is my duty to report that none of the original nine men to arrive in England (save the writer) survived. Later information seemed to point out the fact that all but one hit the silk and seven of the nine were shot on the ground and one died on the plane. Survivors were the writer, Hervey E. Stetson, Bombardier/Navigator and Albert T. Riley, flying with us as Nose Gunner. Riley, at last writing, lived in New Hartford, New York, a suburb of Utica and was into politics.

Stetson spent nearly a year with the Germans in fabled Stalag Luft III as well as time in Nurnberg and Moosburg; being released on 29 April 1945 by a salient of Patton's Third Army with "Blood and Guts" himself making an appearance into the camp.

Returning to the USA on June 6th, one year to the day after D Day, Stetson returned to civilian life, remained in the Reserve and was recalled in 1950 to train as Flight Engineer on B-29's but "finagled out" due to VA back disability which was direct result of parachute landing way back in May of 1944.

Hervey E. Stetson (392nd)

Dear Sir:

I am sending you a photo of my crew of the 93rd Bomb Group. Men are from left to right;



1st row: Bombardier Lt. Robert Powell, Pilot Lt. Walter E. Daggett, Co-Pilot Lt. Fredrick Sparrevohn, Navigator Lt. Richard L. MacMullin; 2nd row: Waist Gunner Laurence A. Reynolds, Engineer T/Sgt. Forrest R. Fessenden, Gunner S/Sgt. Thomas Cooper, Gunner S/Sgt. Madison A. Daniels, Jr., Radio Operator T/Sgt. Daniel Pinholster, Tail Gunner S/Sgt. Allen P. Miller.

Also enclosed is a copy of my missions and our combat record. If any of these men see their picture, I'd like to hear from them.

Allen P. Miller, Sr.
463 Reidmore Road
South Connellsville, Pa 15425

Dear Bill:

It is with deep sadness that I inform you that Philip Manson, formerly squadron navigator with the 787th, 466 BG, passed away on January 18.

Phil and I renewed acquaintances at the 2nd Air Division Reunion in Cambridge, Mass. in 1980, when I learned that he also knew other members of my crew — Bob Applin, Leon Appel, Paul VanPutten.

I recently called him to tell him of the "Still Mighty 8th" article in *The Air Force* magazine (Dec. '82), and we got together on Monday, the 17th, for lunch. Phil brought along his 8th AF album with pictures and memorabilia. We had a wonderful exchange of stories and anecdotes about our missions and gas runs to Lille and St. Dizier. After comparing notes on our physical ailments I tried to encourage him to face his impending visit to the hospital. He was still very much interested in flying, for he had his pilot's license and lived next to a civilian airfield in Stow, Mass. We also discussed the possibility of getting as many of the "local" 466ers together as possible for a cook-out come summer.

He certainly was sentimental and proud of his part in WWII and wanted to share it with me. Little did I realize the seriousness of his physical condition until the following evening when his son Bill called to inform me of his passing. In retrospect, I think Phil must have had a premonition and felt compelled to recall his memories once again with someone who had a mutual appreciation of one of the most significant periods in our country's history.

So long, Phil — off you go into the wild blue yonder. You have slipped the surly bonds of earth and put out your hand and touched the face of God.

Barky Hovsepian

Dear Bill:

Happy New Year! And we hope it is the best yet for you and your family — as well as the 2nd AD Assn.

The 453rd has met its obligation for the Memorial Library redecoration and Group identification. This came basically from the overrun on our Memorial project.

Hope you can run this for us in the March issue of the *Journal*. The message is for all attending the 36th convention in Norwich.

The Old Buckenham Parish Council has announced the dedication ceremony for the 453rd B.G. Memorial Room is scheduled for Sunday, May 29, 1983. There is an open invitation extended to all members of the 2nd Air Division Association, Monday, May 30 is a bank holiday in England — as a result of this, the Parish Council has declared this a village play day.

The schedule is as follows:

- 10:45 Musical Interlude, 3rd AD Band.
- 11:00 Call to order, Chairman Old Buckenham Village Council.
- 10:04 Recognition of Guests
 - Old Buckenham Officials
 - 3rd Air Division
 - 2nd Air Division
 - 453rd Bomb Group
- 11:07 Invocation — Old Buckenham Chaplain
- 11:09 Chairman, Old Buckenham Council
- 11:19 Response, 453rd BG
 - Memorial Project Chairman
 - Presentation
- 11:25 Remarks by Ranking Gen. US A.F.R. 453rd
- 11:30 Benediction — Old Buckenham Council
- 12:00 Lunch — Suggest English Buffet — limited to 2 per person.
- 3:30 Board bus to Norwich.

Plans call for the presence of some vintage air craft to be present on the old field. It should be a pleasant experience for all 2nd AD members. Hope many members will find it possible to be with us on this day that is planned to renew and cement the good relations between 2nd AD'ers and our English friends.

Milt Stokes

Dear Friends of the 2nd ADA:

I have about given up looking for my former crew members so I am taking this chance of writing to the *Journal* for help in finding them.

I was attached to the 67th Squadron, 44 B.G. at Shipham, England from Sept. 2, 1943 to Jan. 5, 1945. I was on the crew of Lt. R.C. Griffith. I am seeking any information about the following crew members who are surviving: Earl J. Parrish, Freedom, Ind., Engineer; Harold P. Harmon, Gorham, Maine, Waist Gunner; Norbert Hoerhl, Milwaukee, Wis., Bombadier; George Strutz, Rochester, N.Y., Waist Gunner; Sid Marion, Ashboro, N.C., Gunner; Forrest E. Bartay, Layton, Utah, Gunner; John Gibboney, Saxton, Pa., Waist Gunner.

If you know anything about these former 44th B.G. members please write me at: F.S. Clark, 220 Fairmount Ave., So. Plainfield, N.J. 07080.

Two other crew members, Abe Sofferman of the Bronx, N.Y. and Lt. David Edmonds of Philadelphia, Pa. first bombadier, were killed in action. I am also interested in contacting their families if possible.

Forrest S. Clark

Dear Bill:

I found a picture of our crew, maybe you can get it in the *Journal*. I don't know where the guys are now. I lost all contact when I was wounded on July 16, 1944 on a bomb run over Saarbrücken, Germany. I was sent to the 231st Station Hospital and to Stone, England. January 1945, I was sent back to the U.S.A.



Top row left to right: 2nd Lt. Bryant S. Wilson, 2nd Lt. Simon G. Pilson, 2nd Lt. George W. Booth, 2nd Lt. Richard W. Davies. Front row: S/Sgt. Robert D. Long, S/Sgt. William N. Croisler, S/Sgt. Norman H. Cohen, S/Sgt. George M. Hansen, S/Sgt. Floyd D. Leverett, and me S/Sgt. Stephen V. Lawnicki. 712 B.Sq., 448BG.

Is there any way I can find out about the missions I flew from D Day to July 16, 1944. I guess that's it for now. Thank you.

Stephen Lawnicki
2155 San Souci
Rosenburg, OR 97470

Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed please find check #1884 for (1) year's dues for my good pal Col. Fred V. Cherry (USAF Ret.).

Highest Ranking Black "POW" in Viet Nam—holder of "Air Force Cross"—(7½) years in prison; (2) years in solitary—and, when they did surgery on him in POW camp,—no anesthesia (to try to "crack" him) (They failed badly)!

He's a "Giant" among the POW's, and a very special "Buddy". Please put him on 392nd Rolls plus tell Bob Vickers. His portrait (oil painting) is in the Pentagon entitled "Portrait of a Fighter Pilot".

Robert Beatson
(P.S. Enclosed is a picture of Cherry and me.)

Dear Pete (Henry):

I was so excited to get the story on the "City of Joplin" plane. The memories start flying immediately. I could cry real easily when I think of the plane's demise.

Our crew picked 201 up at Salina Kansas in January of 43 and started for England with the 506th. We have a great affection for it over the newer ones. Not having nose and belly turrets it was an easier plane to maneuver with or without 4 engines.

It is funny now to think about some of the happenings. We had landed at Marrakech enroute to England overnight. On takeoff the next morning as the wheels left the runway we heard a loud rumbling and vibration from the back. I knew something was wrong but the plane handled OK. Davenport, our co-pilot, called to the back to see if they knew what happened. They were all laughing. The fellows had brought and stored quite a few oranges above the bomb bay and as the nose came up all the oranges came banging down on the metal floor.

201 was the only plane with twin waist guns we think. We installed them for the Ploesti raid.

Remember when Jimmy Stewart's group took one of the old ones like 201 and installed lights all over it to help on early morning assemblies? We thought of doing that to 201 for a while as I think it was the last B 24D to get shipped out.

Thanks again for the information and we have started planning on making the England trip with you all next May.

Bill Strong



Dear William:

First a great compliment for your Second Air Division Association *Journal*. I am always very happy to find the newest issue in my letterbox.

I have a problem, again. You know I am very interested in American planes down in Switzerland and Germany. Together with my best "Lib" friend Tony North, who wrote the very excellent "Liberator Album". I am working on a special project concerning the "Liberators" used with the Luftwaffe during the last world war.

I was able to get good information and pictures of this plane, and so I would be very pleased to obtain further information.

For that reason I ask you to publish my list and the enclosed picture in one of the next issues. Perhaps I could get some new information from our readers.

I am especially interested in Nicknames of these planes, Bomb Squadron/Bomb Group, Full USAAF code, Names of the crew of these particular planes, Pictures of these aircraft.

Type: H-15-DT; Serial No.: 41-28779; Date of Landing: 20 June '44; Target: Politz; German Signs: KO + XA; BG, BS: 389th. Nickname: Sunshine.

Type: H-S-DT; Serial No.: 41-28683; BG, BS: 93rd. Nickname: Jo Jo.

Type: D-1-CO; Serial No.: 23647; Date of Landing: 5.2.44; Target: Tours (F); German Signs: A3 + KB; BG, BS: 453rd.

Type: H-50-CO; Serial No.: 42-73507; Date of Landing: 30 Jan '44; Target: Hannover; BG, BS: 93rd.

Hans-Heiri Stapfer
Bergstrasse 35
CH-8810 Horgen/ZH
Switzerland

Dear Bill:

Ever since I became a member of your organization I have been looking forward to receiving and reading the *Journal* hoping to recognize or catch a glimpse of some familiarity associated with the 856th Bombardment Squadron (H) which was a part of the 492nd BG. I wrote to "Bill" Clary, and he wrote me concerning the identification of the 856th as being a part of the 492nd. Unfortunately he has not been able to locate any records concerning this unit. I am at a quandary as to the meaning of all this. As a double check, I located my Discharge Certificate and sure enough, there in black and white was the correct unit designation — 856th Bombardment Squadron (H), 492nd Bomb Group.

The reason I am writing you is to ask if you could somehow elicit information from your readers as to the history and disposition of the 856th BS (H). I left the unit, which was located at Northampton Aerodrome just outside of Kettering, England in August 1945 for the States, preferring to travel on the Queen Elizabeth rather than fly over to the AFB assigned. I flew several times with Major Tressemmer, a fine upstanding officer, who, I heard, was lost on one of the missions over the North Sea in early 1945. We flew missions at night to Norway and Denmark. Our B-24's were painted black. I believe we had B-24D's toward the end of the war, although we had earlier models also. I cannot remember too much of the Officers and men, or crew, for that matter, never having the intelligence to take notes, etc. I do remember a Major McGuire who did fly a B-24 to McDill AFB and then proceeded to his furlough base in New Jersey. Also, I remember "Stretch" and I were responsible for the "Map Room" at Northampton as well as other duties. I flew as "support" with Major Tressemmer to Stavanger and other points while with the Special Operations Group (OSS). We were deployed for the invasion of Japan when the war ended on August 14, 1945...and I was honorably discharged on September 26, 1945 with over 95 points.

I am a bit puzzled and hope you — or someone can shed some light on this "mysterious squadron". I noticed in several *Journal* issues letters from other members of the 856th BS/492nd BG. One appeared in the March 1982 issue by Bob "I" Mantel; another appeared in the same issue under the name of Ralph P. Beamore, T/Sgt, both stationed at North Pickenham. I was stationed at Kettering/Northampton. Are there any more survivors of the 856th BS/492nd BG out there? Let's hear from you!!

Igor P. Petrenko
856th BS/492nd BG
5604 Sedgwick Lane
Springfield, Virginia 22151

Dear Bill:

I have just returned from the States and saw the latest Second Air Division Association *Journal* on my desk. It is superb like always.

For the first time I spent two weeks in the states and it was very wonderful, I will never forget these days. I hope to come back as soon as possible.

The 1983 Reunion in Norwich is a fine thing and I hope to be there in May or June.



On page 14 is the article "Switzerland a Haven". One Liberator was used for a movie, the plane flew without any signs and the guns were removed. Enclosed please find a picture of this plane. I have no idea which plane it is, but perhaps a reader will know the plane.

Hans-Heiri Stapfer

Dear Evelyn:

I have been a member of the Second Air Division Association Eighth Air Force since last Spring (1982). I receive the Veteran of Foreign Wars Magazine each month and saw the ad in it with Frank Dimola's name and address so I contacted him and he informed me as to how to become a member and I did. That was the first contact I have had since I left the Service in September 1945 and wondered many times what ever happened to the old 445th Bomb Group members. I have contact with only one of my old combat crew and I am trying to locate some or all the rest. I was a member of Jean J. Ridley's crew. We arrived in England in November 1944 and flew our first combat mission on December 5, 1944 to Muster, Germany at 23,000 feet, Target Marshaling Yards, Bombs away at 1016 o'clock, B-24 Bomber, H Model. Total Flying Time 5 hours 35 minutes. Yes, I kept a diary of my missions and made a scrap book after I left the service.

I think it would be very interesting to compare notes with some of the other members of the 445th Bomb Group and this brings me to the reason for writing this letter to you. I read in the *Journal* of the reunion that is being planned in 1983 at Norwich, England and would appreciate any information as to how to get in on the trip for both my wife and myself. How do I make reservations and where, what City will you leave from etc. I do have pass rights and can supply my own air transportation to England if necessary, but where would I meet who and where? Please advise me of what information you have as we are interested in making the reunion in 1983 as we both are retired and have the time.

William H. Vinton
8001 So. McVicker Ave.
Burbank, Illinois 60459

Dear Mr. W. Robertie:

Having recently read "Fields of Little America," by Martin Bowman, I have become very interested with the 2nd Air Division and in particular the 458th BG which was based at Horsham St. Faith Norwich.

On Friday the 24th of November 1944 a B24 of 753 B-Sq. Lady Jane 45133 crashed after a training mission on waste ground close to Barker Street, Norwich all the crew were killed.

Local residents subscribed to a memorial plaque which is now on a block of residential flats on the corner of Heigham Street and Old Place Road.

From the roll of honor at the American room in the Norwich central library, the headstone D. 3.45 and records at the American Military Cemetery, Cambridge, the details differ from that which is on the plaque. On the plaque it is as follows: S/Sgt. John Quick, tailgunner, Muncia, Indiana. Yet the details from the official records are as follows: S/Sgt. Don P. Quick.

If the official records are correct, and I'm sure they are, then the details on the plaque are incorrect and should be corrected.

The number beside S/Sgt. Don P. Quick in the roll of honor is shown as 35169768;

Some of the BGs had names e.g. the 44th BG The Flying Eightballs, The 446th BG Buckeroos. Do you know if the following BGs had names: 392nd, 445th, 448th, 453rd, 458th, 489th and the 492nd?

I would like to point out that any information you care to forward me will not be used by me or any one else for any kind of financial gain, my only interest is a personal one.

I have enclosed two I.R.C.s and an addressed envelope. Hope to be hearing from you in the very near future. Thank you.

Dennis Parker
"Ivy Dene"
167 Gloucester Avenue
Chelmsford, Essex, CM29DX,
England

P.S. How many missions did B24 Lady Jane do?

Dear Bill:

Please put this in your publication.
369th Ftr. Sq. Assn. 359th. Ftr. Grp. (WWII)
Aug 4-5-6-1983 Memorial Dedication and Mini Reunion at Wright Patterson A.F.B. Dayton Marriott. Contact Anthony Chardella, 105 Mohawk Trail Drive, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15235, (412) 793-9010.

Tony Chardella

Dear Evelyn:

Thanks so much for sending my 1983 membership card. Enclosed is my check to cover the dues. I want to tell you how much I enjoy reading the "Journal" and the many stories told. One day, when I feel up to it, perhaps I will go through Charlie's war mementos, including a diary and pictures and send a story along to you about his adventures on the "Jamaica".

Marion Herbst

Dear Bill:

Received a letter from Jordan Urtal on Group Memorial. Met Bob Harper and he is offering \$30.00 prints of 20 combat wing over east Anglia for \$25.00 with \$20.00 going to each groups memorial fund.

Could you possibly get this into the next *Journal* in time for the mid March deadline?

Bob Harper's address is 148 Pebble Beach Drive, Crescent City, CA 95531.

Also check for \$10.00 for a copy of 2nd A.D. roster.

George P. DuPont

Dear Fred:

I appreciate your letter of December 26, 1982. Please find enclosed a check for the 8th Air Force, Second Air Division Association Memorial.

This last September my wife and I, Jack and Ann Crane, Les and Inez Walters, and Harold and Betty Hagopian, members of my crew, spent ten days together in England. We visited the 392nd Base and enjoyed talking to the husband and wife team, Victoria and Roy Parker, caretakers of the memorial at the entrance of the base. We also visited the Memorial Library in Norwich and were impressed by the friendliness of the local people. A very nostalgic and pleasant trip.



I am enclosing a picture of the four of us by the memorial. From left to right on the smaller picture are Harold Hagopian, Les Walters, Jack Crane, Willis Miller. On the larger picture from left to right are Willis Miller, Harold Hagopian, Les Walters, and Jack Crane.

Please let us know when you will have the next meeting.

Willis L. Miller

Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed is my check to continue my membership in the association.

This evening, I have also mailed a contribution to E. Korndyk, 389th VP, for the memorial project at the Norwich Library.

I also wrote to Earl Zimmerman, to tell him that I noted his article on "Switzerland A Haven" as I recognized the serial of the B-24 that I landed in Switzerland with, on July 12, 1944. Hope to renew acquaintances with any other Swiss internees that may wish to contact me. Please feel free to publish my name and address to this end as space in the *Journal* permits.

Robert N. Stone
565th Sqdn, 389th Group
6058 Winding Way
Carmichael, Ca. 95608

Dear Evelyn:

Here are my dues for the coming year. The last *Journal* I received was the September '82 issue (Vol. 21, No. 3). I look forward to receiving these publications, the personal accounts and letters are most interesting. You may wish to print that my father, Lt. Gerald G. Gray, was a Bombardier with the 328th Bomb Squadron, 93rd Group. In January 1943, he was shot down over Sousse, Tunisia when the 93rd was temporarily detached to North Africa. The name of the fateful B-24D was "Double Trouble". My father and a Lt. Cox, (navigator) were the only two crew members to survive. They spent the rest of the war in Stalag Luft III.

I have photographs of nose art of some early 93rd Group B-24's, including "Wham-Bam", "Liberty Lad", "Red-Ass", etc. The photos were taken when the planes were still at Fort Meyers, Florida. Anyone interested in copies should contact me.

David G. Gray
5145 Golden Valley Rd.
Golden Valley, Minn. 55422

Dear Miss Cohen:

Your organization proves its worth again. In your September 1982 Bulletin you listed the attendees at the Nashville reunion.

Among the members of the 446 Group are the names of John and Helen Kinney. I served on John's crew but over the years had lost contact with him.

Since he and his wife were at the reunion, I assume that you do have their mailing address and perhaps telephone number. I hope you will be able to forward me this information as I would like to reestablish contact with John.

My many thanks in advance to you for this help.

John R. Edwards, Jr.
Suite 230
333 Sandy Springs Circle
Atlanta, Georgia 30328

Dear Bill:

Went to visit my aunt in the northern part of the State and we had to put our hound in a kennel. The Vet where we left the mutt had just returned from a trip to Beaver Falls, Pa. where he ate in a restaurant, forgot the name, and the owner had a model of a B-24 and a P-38 on display and the props on both models were turning all the time. Seems the owner served in England and was in a B-24 outfit. Do we know this gent or can we get someone in the vicinity to get over there and find out who the lad is? I shouldn't think there are more than a couple restaurants in a place like Beaver Falls.

Earl Zimmerman, 389th

WARTIME DAYS AT SHIPDHAM

by Eric Smith

On September 12, it will be the fortieth anniversary of the opening of Shipdham airfield, a base that had an illustrious and poignant wartime history, and was a most effective participant in the strategic daylight bombing campaign waged over the skies of Europe. It was occupied by a bomb group of the United States Army Air Force, and their aircraft were involved in some of the most intense and bloody air battles in the history of aerial warfare. On this, its anniversary year, it is a suitable time to look back to those desperate days, and the part played in the story by Shipdham.

Located three miles south of East Dereham, and surrounded by the villages of Whinburgh, Garvestone, Reymerston, Southburgh and Cranworth, as well as Shipdham itself, construction of the base started in 1941 with three intersecting runways forming a triangle, a perimeter track circling the field, thirty dispersed hardstandings and three hangars grouped close together near the technical site on the south side of the airfield.

By the time the airfield was nearing completion, the US was in the war, and the Eighth Air Force was starting to build up its awesome strength in the United Kingdom. The airfield was allocated to the United States and became the first of 14 heavy bomber bases occupied by the Americans in Norfolk. Twenty five additional hardstandings were provided and other accommodations and facilities were increased so that Shipdham could house a complete bomb group and three thousand airmen.

The first unit to arrive at Shipdham was the ground staff of the 319th Bomb Group, but this unit was en route to participate in 'Operation Torch' the invasion of North Africa. It moved on to Horsham St. Faith (now Norwich civil airport), to await the arrival of their B26 Marauder aircraft and aircrews, and then moved on to Algeria.

To replace them at Shipdham, in came the B24 Liberators of the 44th Bomb Group under the command of Colonel Frank Robinson. The 44th Group — nicknamed 'The Flying Eightballs' is the group with which Shipdham is indelibly remembered. It was destined to remain at the Norfolk base for almost three years. It arrived at Shipdham under strength, as it left one of its four component squadrons (the 404th) back in the US. The 404th never did arrive and it was not until March 1943 that a fourth squadron arrived (the 506th) to bring the group up to its established strength.

The group began operations on November 7, 1942 with a raid on the Cherbourg peninsula. In its earliest missions, the 44th attracted severe opposition from the Luftwaffe, and suffered heavy losses.

On January 4, 1943 the group was taken over by Colonel Leon W. Johnson, one of the most distinguished United States commanders in World War II. 'The Flying Eightballs' operated against Germany itself, for the first time, on January 27, 1943

with a raid on the U-boat construction yards at Vegesack. Early raids in 1943 demanded courage and the 44th was awarded a Distinguished Unit Citation for operations over Kiel on May 14 in the teeth of intense opposition from the Luftwaffe.

From June 28, 1943 the group was detached to Benina Main airfield in Libya and took part in the first raid on Rome on July 19. 'The Flying Eightballs' also took part in the epic raid on the Rumanian oilfields at Ploesti on August 1, 1943. These targets were beyond the reach of British based aircraft but could just be reached from North Africa. The low level attack on the refineries is one of the best chronicled episodes of World War II, and 52 aircraft were lost, each with a crew of 10, out of 179 aircraft that took part. The many acts of heroism on this raid resulted in the award of three Congressional Medals of Honor — the highest United States decoration. One of these went to the 44th's commanding officer Colonel Johnson, and he was presented with this in a ceremony at Shipdham later in the year.

American strength built up impressively at Shipdham. Location lists, now open at the Public Records Office, show that on September 10, 1943 there were 333 officers and 2,172 enlisted men based at Shipdham, together with 24 B24 aircraft.

Under the command of their third commanding officer, Colonel James Posey, the 'Eightballs' participated in raids on Norway in November 1943, and lost five aircraft. Another came home in a stricken condition and seven of the crew were ordered to bail out. With a wounded gunner aboard however, Lieutenant R.C. Griffith elected for a crash landing. Touching down on his one good wheel, Griffith held the Liberator until loss of speed forced the left wing down and slewed the aircraft round. There was no fire and it was a good ending to a heroic action.

And so into 1944 and 1945, the 44th continued to operate to widely diverse targets. It dropped supplies in support of the Normandy invasion, and in the airborne operations over Holland. Its final mission was on April 25, 1945 and less than two weeks later the war in Europe was over. After intense celebrations, the 'Eightballs' packed their bags for return to the United States and possible further action in the Far East. The first aircraft left Shipdham on May 22, 1945, the ground staff left on the *Queen Mary* on June 15, 1945 and the R.A.F. took re-possession of the airfield 10 days later.

The 'Eightballs' had left a number of records behind them. They operated from England longer, made more missions, and claimed more enemy fighters than any other B24 Liberator group. In their 343 missions, the group lost 153 aircraft, each with a crew of 10. Some survived as prisoners-of-war, but most did not. They came from sunny California, wide open Wyoming and noisy New York to suffer the unfamiliar damp and freezing British win-

ters in nissen huts, where they crawled from their beds in the early hours, for breakfast, briefing and departure at dawn. In the early days, losses exceeded 10 per cent and their chances of surviving a full tour were rarely better than even. Little wonder that in their spare moments, the 'Yanks' enjoyed their entertainment in local village pubs and in dances at the base and at East Dereham or Wymondham.

With Shipdham back in R.A.F. occupation, No. 258 Maintenance Unit was formed at the airfield, with North Pickenham being used as a sub-site. It operated as an equipment disposal depot in the immediate aftermath of war.

On March 13, 1946 a contingent of three hundred German prisoners of war arrived from Kingscliffe and the airfield area was released for grazing, although it could not be ploughed. On August 15, 1946, with the termination of the war against Japan, Padres Howard and Brunson led a procession of one hundred R.A.F. airmen, two hundred and eighty German P.O.W.s and a small contingent of civilians in a candle lit procession that wound its way past each of the service messes on the airfield. With candles shining brilliantly against background dusk, the combination of English and German voices was most effective and moving. Seven weeks later, one hundred Germans participated in a church service in Shipdham village.

With repatriation of the prisoners complete in 1947, Shipdham became unusually quiet. Part was sold off in 1957 and the rest by 1963. In the late 1960s Arrow Air Services acquired the airfield site and was granted permission in September 1969 to reopen the airfield.

In 1970, a new hangar was erected and a reception area workshops and stores were built. Two runways were refurbished and runways lights — found to be still serviceable — were updated. The work was completed in little over three months to enable the airfield to reopen on June 16, 1970. On January 23, 1973, there was an accident when a Twin Comanche crashed into trees killing five of the six occupants, and there was another crash on July 1, 1974 when a Piper Cherokee hit a caravan on the taxiway. Shipdham however is one of the few wartime airfields in East Anglia that have seen post war flying, and as an airfield that remains instantly recognizable it is a favorite with returning veterans.

Today, the original wartime hangars are still there in the hands of private companies. Perhaps the best view is obtained from the Dereham Road where the runways are still visible. It is easy to let the imagination wander at wartime airfields, particularly at dusk, and it is not difficult at Shipdham to visualize the scene as *Buzzin' Bear*, *Glory Bee*, *Suzy Q* or *Texan* returned home from one of the three hundred and twenty five missions mounted from the Norfolk airfield forty years ago.