



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

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PLOESTI

by Edwin C. Baker (93rd BG)

Orders came down from Command for the raid on Ploesti. Aug. 1, 1943 was to be the day. The evening before we taxied all aircraft out on the field and parked them in a straight line, but cocked at 45 degrees. We were fueled and bomb loaded from this position, so when we started the engines in the morning, no one would have to eat dust and sand. It would also prevent clogging of engine intakes and other sand related problems. We didn't want any aborts. We were loaded with incendiary bombs and some 500 pounders with delay action fuses from 1-hour to 2-days. The theory being it would prevent their fire crews from entering the area not knowing when another bomb would go off. The final preparation was to have all gas tanks topped off. We were going to need every drop of gas to make this round trip.

As operations officer, I went about assigning the crews and aircraft positions. Of course I assigned myself as Co-Pilot/Plane Commander on my old crew and also assigned *Little Lady* to the left wing position of the first element of our squadron. In this position, I would fly the aircraft. The squadron and element lead ship (*Tupelo Lass*) was being flown by Maj. K. O. Dessert (Sqd. C.O.) and Capt. Jake Epting. Lt. Hoover, Wilkie's regular Co-Pilot, begged to go on the mission. Observers were OK'd, so I let him go as extra Co-Pilot and he stood between the seats throughout the flight. We had one other passenger (Observer) 1st Lt. Edward E. Mitchell. I can't remember why he rode with us, or what he did during the mission. I don't remember the positions I assigned for the rest of the aircraft in our squadron. The only reason I remember flying left wing off of Dessert and Epting is because I stared at them for almost 6-hours. I know that the 409th Squadron put up a full compliment of ships — 9 aircraft.

On August 1, 1943 we had a short briefing at 0700 hours. Breakfast, for those who could eat, and we were in our aircraft awaiting flare signal from the tower for start engines and takeoff. The field was wide enough to permit us to takeoff in our elements of three at a time. This put our Group into the air in short order and we were formed on Colonel Addison Baker (Group C.O. — no relation) way before other Groups. We finally moved into position behind the 376th Bomb Group and headed out across the Mediterranean toward first land fall — Corfu (on the Ionian Islands,

off the coast of Greece).

The target approach plan was to fly at tree top level, passing over two towns before reaching the I.P. The towns were Pitesti, Targoviste, and then the I.P. - Floresti. Each of these towns was nestled in a valley surrounded by rolling hills. At the I.P., we would make a right turn (Southeast) and string out into a single straight line (still in formation, wing tip to wing tip) attacking the refinery on the paths we were trained to follow. K. K. Compton (our ole 409th Squadron C.O.) was transferred to the 376th Bomb Group as their C.O. His Group would be the lead Group into the target. We would follow him and be the 2nd over the target. The rest of the Groups would follow in a stair step fashion, each being a little higher than the other.

Shortly after we went out over the Mediterranean, one of the ships in the Group ahead of us must have blown up or something. It went straight down into the sea. We didn't see any parachutes or survivors.

We hit Corfu on the money. Turning inland, we were confronted with high mountains, which were covered with cumulus clouds that rose well above them. A cold chill went down my spine. It was obvious we were going to have to fly thru these. We loosened up the formation, spread out, noted the compass heading and headed straight in, climbing. At 10,000 ft. we put on our oxygen masks. We finally broke thru at about 15,000 ft. and leveled off. It was a great feeling to see the other ships around us and in fairly good order. We quickly squeezed into our 'V' elements of 3 ships as before and crossed the mountains. We felt sure we had been detected now. The plan was to skim across the mountains at a minimum altitude in the hopes of staying below the radar beams. As we crossed the last range, we started a zig-zag descent. We leveled off low and continued pressing forward. We stayed at tree top level, only climbing to get over hills and terrain. Still no flak or fighters. Maybe we were actually going to get away with a surprise.

Before us lay a basin of beautiful farm land, green with neat cross hatched rows of planting. Something we hadn't seen in a long time. We began to see our first peasants. Women in gayly colored dresses

with upturned smiling faces waving handkerchiefs at us.

Before long we came upon our first town — Pitesti. Then the second town came into view — Targoviste. To the complete shock to all of us, the Group turned South. Hebert called on the intercom, "Where the hell are you going?, this isn't Floresti — you've turned too soon." I answered, "I can't help that, we're sticking with the Group." By that time radio silence was broken and I could hear several calls saying wrong turn, wrong turn.

We moved out to our straight line frontal attack position, wing tip to wing tip. As I looked at K.O. in the lead plane, he shrugged his shoulders and made a motion, indicating he didn't know what was going on. He too realized we made a wrong turn. We pressed on. Still no fighters — where were they? Suddenly, the flak started to come. It was bursting above us. Our reaction was to get lower and lower. Our waist gunners were now firing at gun emplacements. I could see men topling over and doubling up as we passed over them. We came along side of an electrical sub station. The gunners let a blast go into the transformers. The fireworks were spectacular. Colonel Baker broke away from the 376th and started a left turn. I had to pull off power. Since I was so close to the ground I couldn't drop down. I kept pulling off more power. I was afraid I was going to run over K.O. from my momentum.

Finally we straightened out and I had to really pour the power to the ship in order to keep up. All hell was breaking loose. Anti-aircraft guns, ground fire and the pursuit ships had shown up. We came across a lake area with sun bathers laying around. Some were military and they jumped up and fired rifles at us. A burst from our gunners sent those left standing scurrying for cover. A machine gun turret on a tower in the area fired at us. The gunners raked the tower and it blew up. We were moving fast now and very close to the ground. Our guns were no longer making short bursts, they were going almost steadily.

We had to raise our left wing to clear a church steeple with a clock in it. The time was 5 minutes to 3 o'clock. We leveled off and opened our bomb bay doors. Straight ahead of us was a row of eucalyptus trees. From underneath anti-aircraft guns started shooting point blank at us. You could hear

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the swish and feel the shells go by us. My God, we're sitting ducks. As fast as we were going I had the feeling we were standing still. The roar of our engines, and noise of guns and flak was unbearable. Planes on both sides of us were being hit — are we next?

We got two hits, almost simultaneously. One in our #3 engine on the right side and one under the belly of the ship. The hits gave us a reaction of being stopped cold in mid-air. K.O. and Eptings' ship shot ahead of us and out of sight. I never saw them again. Finally we were at the eucalyptus trees and had to pull up to clear them. Wilkie and I were both on the controls now trying to keep the ship straight and level. Our #3 engine was on fire and gas was pouring out of our belly tank from flak holes. Silverman opened the bomb bay doors as we came into the refinery area. This added to the drag and our airspeed started to drop. Hoover reached down and pulled the fire extinguisher on #3 and I feathered it.

Silverman hollered "Bombs Away" and our ship made a lurch upward from the relief of the weight. The gas fumes were getting stronger and it was hard to breath. Wilkie and I opened our windows for air. The fresh air felt good, but added to the noise. The fire in #3 engine gradually went out after it was feathered and shut down. Why the fire stream from our #3 engine and raw gas from our belly tanks did not get together and blow us up, I'll never know. Everything was happening at once. I saw Colonel Addison Baker (our Group C.O.) take a direct hit. He pulled his aircraft up and as it fell off on its right wing, two chutes opened but they drifted right into the holocaust of fire as their ship went straight into the ground. They didn't have a chance.

Silverman called out "bomb bay doors closed". I yelled for him to open the damn things, we were being flooded out with raw gas and fumes from the bomb bay tanks. A storage tank blew up in front of us and we flew just to the right of it. The plane on our left went right thru it and I never saw him come out. As we passed the heat of the explosion, it felt like passing a hot iron close to your face. Silverman opened the bomb bay doors. The few seconds those doors were closed is when we passed beside the blown up storage tank. I'm sure if our bomb bay doors had been opened the raw gas flowing out would have caught fire and blown up. Luck was still with us. We had little fires all over the wings, apparently from gas leaks and debris. They went out on their own, fortunately, before any more serious damage was done. We zig-zagged thru columns of black smoke and fire. We still were not out of it yet. The other Groups were coming in on their bomb runs above us. We were

taking the percussions of their bombs and the debris they blew up.

Suddenly we popped out of the hell hole of fire, flame and smoke into the clear sky and green fields beyond. We were clear and still flying although badly damaged, but not fatally. Wilkie and I looked at each other and smiled. As I relaxed my grip on the wheel, I realized and felt the pain of numbness in my hands and forearms. My knuckles were white from gripping the wheel. I took a deep breath leaned back in my seat to relax. I felt as though I had held my breath through the entire bomb run. The thumping in my chest was so hard and fast that I thought my heart was going to pop out.

Hits on our ship not only blew out #3 engine, but damaged our control cables. Wilkie was fighting desperately to keep the ship in the air. I grabbed the wheel again and started helping. Over the intercom the gunners were calling off fighters again and their guns were blazing away. We reduced our power and Hoover periodically called off our airspeed. It was steadily going down, so I had to increase it well above normal. If we could keep this plane in the air, our next goal was to reach the pre-arranged rendezvous for crippled aircraft. I called Rolley (Flight Engineer) to come to the flight deck from the top turret. He said there were fighters around and he was firing like mad and swinging the turret from one side to another. I told him to get out of the turret and let Kim-tantas (Radio Operator) take over and do something about the gas in the bomb bay. Rolley switched us over to using the gas from the 'Tokyo' tanks, which seemed to reduce the flowing from the flak holes. We headed Westward and were all alone, easy meat for the pursuit fighters in the area.

We were so close to the ground, coupled with our gunners still firing, that the fighters didn't press to close. Out of nowhere a ship from one of the other Bomb Groups pulled up along side of us and flew formation. The combined firepower of our planes completely discouraged the pursuit planes and they left us for easier pickings. Our companion ship was not damaged and he was finding it difficult to stay with us at such a slow speed. We were indicating about 150, just staying airborne. We reached the rendezvous point and started to circle, waiting for others. None showed up. Finally, the companion ship called on the radio and said he could no longer stay with us. I thanked him and told him to go on his way, we were fairly safe now.

Rolley came on the flight deck and reported that we lost almost all of the gas in our 'Toyko' tanks and couldn't possibly get back to our base. We called Hebert and asked him for the nearest friendly airfield. He responded with "Our first alternate is a small airfield in Turkey near the town of Edrine, just across the Turkish

(continued on next page)

Ploesti *(continued from page 2)*

border. Or possibly the British held island of Cypress, in the Mediterranean, off the coast of Turkey." O.K., that's it — He gave us the heading.

Every time we pulled the nose up in a bid for altitude the airspeed would drop off dangerously close to stalling. We were still having control problems and running on 3 engines. We kept stair stepping, but we were nowhere near the required altitude to go over the Balkan mountain range. We were at 1500 feet when the mountain range loomed in front of us. Now we had real problems. We didn't have enough altitude to go over them and we were committed to far South to turn back. Damn, after all we had just been through, and now we were hemmed in. As we approached the mountains, we saw a large valley and headed for it. We were about to play the greatest game of chance in our lives. We forged on in.

As we entered the valley an anti-aircraft gun emplacement was spotted on a mountain top above us, they must have heard us coming and were looking up. When they spotted us below them they couldn't get their guns down to fire at us. They waited until we were well into the valley then fired. They didn't come close enough to do us any harm. Suddenly the valley split into a 'Y'. We went left. The next time we came upon a split, we went right, trying to keep in the general direction and heading Hebert gave us. Each valley produced another 'Y' and another choice. We came into some narrow places where our wing tips just cleared sheer walls. We expected to come upon a dead end every time we made the choice of valleys. We must have picked the only route thru those mountains. Finally, to our relief, we broke out into the open country.

Beautiful green trees and some farm land. The pressure was now on Hebert to determine where we had come out. Wilkie cautiously asked Hebert for a new heading. "Hell, I don't know where we are with all that zig-zagging thru those mountains. Give me a couple minutes to find something to orientate us. Do you see any towns or railroads?" Rolley cut in on the intercom and said we had less than an hours gas left. Wilkie insisted that we try for Cypress. We discussed our options if we ran out of gas trying to make Cypress. A crash landing at sea or at best on a sandy beach on the coast of Turkey. No way! Hebert said we could make the small airport in Turkey and gave us a heading to try. As we crossed the border into Turkey, one last attempt by anti-aircraft was made to shoot us down. Again we survived. I prayed our luck would hold out a little longer.

We finally spotted the airfield and headed for it. We made a circle to survey the field and soon realized that it was for pursuit ships and the runways were very short. We could see other B-24s on the

field. If they made it, we could. We picked out the runway that looked the longest and Wilkie started his landing approach. We were still having control cable problems. It was hard to get the ship to respond. I told Wilkie we had only one chance to make it, there would be no going around. We had no electrical power for lowering the gear and flaps. I went to work hand pumping our landing gear down. The wheels finally came down, but our waist gunners couldn't confirm if they were in locked position. With our landing gear in the airstream, our airspeed started to drop rapidly. Hoover was calling it off for Wilkie. My arm felt like it would break as I pumped harder and faster. Wilkie was hollering for flaps. Wheels down or not, I had to give Wilkie some flaps. I switched the selector switch to flaps and pumped like mad. Wilkie pulled off all power to the remaining 3 engines.

When I looked up we were coming in too steep and too fast. I grabbed the wheel and we both pulled with all our strength back, back as far as the column would go and tight against our chest, literally standing on the rudder pedals. We hit nose wheel first and then the main gear with such force that we ricocheted back into the air. We held the wheel tight to our bellies as we mushed back onto the runway again with a bang and the sound of scraping metal. The landing gear held together, but there were no brakes. I let go of the wheel and hit all switches to 'OFF'. We rolled off the end of the runway into a dirt field and up a small hill before we came to a sliding halt. Gas fumes, dirt and dust were everywhere. I hollered, "Get out before she blows up." I went out my side window head first. I got hung up a little, but made it. Scrambling, half crawling and running, I headed up the hill until I felt I was far enough away to be safe. The others quickly joined me. We all sat there in complete exhaustion staring at *Little Lady*. She never caught fire or blew up.

We all sat there in silence and transfixed awe at the ship that brought us thru Ploesti unharmed. I thought to myself — My God, what we had been thru today and this magnificent aircraft stayed airborne and even held together throughout the most abusive landing I have ever seen or experienced. As the dust settled, I could see the holes in her. It was unbelievable. She looked like a sieve, yet not a man on board was even scratched. The landing gear cracked and slowly lowered the belly of the ship to the ground as the left wing buckled at the fuselage and sagged until its wing tip dug into the soft earth.

Little Lady was dying and never would fly again. I almost expected HER to make a final flutter of HER wings. I started to choke up and shake inside not knowing whether it was finally realizing I was still alive or that I was seeing an airplane that we had cared for and babied all these months, slowly die.

Metfield Musings

by Carl Alexanderson (491st)

Listen up on this frequency "Ringmasters" — there's some interesting Poop from Group! Tom Rodgers was wondering if the George Hotel was still extant in Swaffam. It is! Dave Mautner payed a visit while in England this past May, and a letter from Bill Nelson confirms this.

Bill and his wife Betty had lunch and hoisted a pint with the present owner, which is the son of the former owner. Everything looks the same, reports Bill — except for a weekly Flea Market in the Town Square on Saturday.

"Tractor Annie" — who has become somewhat of a tradition with the 491st, is alive and well. She has a farm Northwest of North Pick — raises horses and children. Husband helps in both respects.

Had a TWX from Ray Covert! He holds some sort of distinction. Flew the 1st and 100th mission of our Group. Busted one up coming back from "Market Garden".

Ray flew for United Airlines for 30 years and worked with Bill Stokley (35 years) before Bill's untimely death. Also worked with Bill Clary (VP 492nd) who was in SFO dispatch office. Small world! — but big Airline! Didn't anyone but me work for American Overseas Airlines — Colonial Airlines, National Airlines, etc.?

Received letter from Paul Steichen.

"Here I sit — January 9th — in the silence of my chamber — dogs sleeping by the wood stove — Louise at her Aerobics class and my brain desperately trying to formulate some intelligent communciation.

It has to do with Air Corps R&R some thirty-nine years ago. I know this firsthand, having spent four months at Bowman Field in Louisville, Kentucky. Back in those days there was, here in Pawling, one of the most advanced and well equipped R&R's in the country. I can still hear that Sergeant down in Miami Beach Reclassification Center, saying, "Sarge", where would you like to take your six weeks "R&R"? Naturally I responded — Pawling! You know the rest — four months in KY."

Paul furnished me with copies of "Pawling Wings", the base newspaper — photos of local landmarks, including the most popular Gin Mills and restaurants — which no longer exist — and a copy of an article which was published in the long defunct "Coronet" magazine, circa 1945.

All these things will be available for your perusal in Palm Springs. I still get lots of letters. Some direct — many through Ev — and also through the 8th AF Historical Society, as Group Contact, Charlie Gotham of the 855th and Bob Rosendahl of the 853rd are the latest.

I have a flock of reproductions of the site plan of North Pickenham made by my cousin from the original given me by Tony Wallis when we visited the "Blue Lion" May 83. Will dish out in Palm Springs.

Definition of a Cool Customer

by Dan Baer (392nd)

I have been a member of 2ADA for a little over 2 years. I've read every *Journal* with great interest and note you are always asking for anecdotes for *Journal* publication. I decided to answer the call. It could be worth a laugh.

I think it was sometime in May 1944 our crew was made a lead crew of the 576 B.S. 392 B.G. Of course as a lead crew it was necessary for our bombardier, Jack Adamson, to be on the sight, so consequently I was assigned to fly in the nose turret. I have always felt that I drew this assignment because our aircraft commander, Lt. Bob Demers, recognized my steadiness under fire. Who better to face the fly-thru attacks of the Luftwaffe from the nose turret. I was one cool customer — and I had the sunglasses to prove it.

Be that as it may, my first mission in the nose (having been a waist gunner) was to Bremen. We crossed the channel, penetrated the then enemy-held coast, pressed on through flak and fighters, shot and shell. Now we were at the I.P. bomb bays open, my eyes riveted on the belly of the lead ship (we were deputy lead) ignoring what you'll recall we referred to as 10/10 flak. Suddenly, the moment of truth! The first stick falls from the leaders bomb bay. I immediately flick the switch to toggle out our bombs. "Bombs away," I sing out in the very best Errol Flynn tradition. John Galea, our radio operator who has a view of our open bomb bays, cries out — "Hell no," they've not gone, and he hits the salvo switch.

Okay, malfunction is reported, checked out and everything pronounced in working order.

The very next mission, the same thing.

Now you'll recall I said I was a cool customer. But did I tell you I was also smart. I decided to check this malfunction out for myself, so I rode to the hardstand and proceeded to inspect the turret thoroughly. The problem immediately became apparent to me. (Remember I'm also smart). I rode back to my hut having already decided that silence was the best course.

Now through the almost forty intervening years. I've thought of those two incidents — sometimes with amusement, but always with embarrassment. My thoughts would go something like this: here we are, ten highly trained, skilled, young men. A proud combat crew in the Mighty Eighth Air Force. Ten men trained to one purpose — to get a B Two Four to the target, deliver the bombs and get home, if possible.

Now we're on the run to the target. This is it! This is why all the training, the practice. This is the culmination of all the

About the Memorial

by Jordan R. Uttal

INDIVIDUAL ENDOWMENT PROGRAM: In both the September and December *Journals*, I mentioned this new program which was merely the germ of an idea last May when we visited Norwich. As stated previously, thinking to the future and the financial needs of the Trust, Tom Eaton came up with the idea in our ongoing transatlantic correspondence. It made a lot of sense to me, and the Executive Committee of the Association gave its blessing to the concept at its meeting last March.

Although details were not available at the time, mention of this idea was made, in broad outline at the Association meeting in Norwich, and, up to date, still without specific details, we have seven participants in the program — three Groups (44th, 445th, and 467th), and four individuals. Now with most of the details worked out, I am pleased to present this plan to the membership at large, in the hope that those of you who can, will take this opportunity to make a permanent gift in your own name as follows:

1. The Individual Endowment Program requires a minimum contribution of \$1,000.00.
2. A separate fund is set up, within the Capital Fund, in the name of the donor, and the interest from each fund goes to buy books in the name of the donor, in honor of whomever the donor specifies.
3. All such Individual Funds have been invested in the "Charities Official Investment Fund" (COIF), selected by the Board of Governors because of its steadily growing income.
4. Interest is paid twice a year, June and December, and each year the donor will be advised as to the amount of the interest earned, and the names of the books purchased in his name.
5. You may specify anyone you choose as the honoree, a war comrade, a friend, a member of your family, and in the future any change may be made in the designee by you or your heirs.
6. Additions to your Individual Endowment may be made at any time, preferably in minimum amount of 100 pounds. Whenever you are ready to make an additional contribution, a note or call to me will result in the establishment of an approximate dollar amount. If it works out a few dollars over, the balance will be put in the Capital Fund. If it works out to a few dollars less, the Trust will make up the difference.
7. Checks should be made out to **2nd Air Division Association**.
8. Acknowledgements will be sent from England.

The seven programs already operating range from the minimum \$1,000.00 to \$4,000.00. The three Groups have named as honorees, all the casualties of the respective groups. One individual has named all 2nd AD casualties, another, her late parents, another his late sister and brother, and another, his late brother. So, you see, the details are up to each individual.

This program will provide, for all time to come, to our Memorial Room, new books each year in the name of specific donors, in honor of whomever the donor chooses. This is a worthy supplement to the very necessary growing income from the Trust, part of which, each year provides books, films, and cassettes in honor of all who gave their lives, and will continue to provide generations to come, a warm and vivid reminder of the glorious history, which you all helped make. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have and even more pleased to handle the details of any such contribution you are willing to make.

In the meantime, I sincerely urge all of you to continue your generous support in the form of your annual contributions with your dues. No amount is too small. Also, for those of you who wish to make a special contribution in honor of a specific individual, that plan is still available.

FUND RAISING IN ENGLAND: As mentioned recently, the Board of Governors last May adopted a plan to raise funds locally to help build our Capital Fund. I am happy to report that they have already received two gifts totalling 5,000 pounds. Our congratulations, and thanks to those responsible.

planning, the intelligence, the whole involved process of target selection. "Bombs away!" And that cool, smart idiot in the nose turret hits the trouble light switch!!!!

In my own defense let me say that but for those two incidents, I performed brilliantly. Two out of thirty ain't bad, and anyway, we won the war.

Notice

Blazer patches are once more available. Send check or money order in the amount of \$4.00 to Evelyn Cohen, Apt. 06410, Delair Landing, Philadelphia, PA 19114.

WAC NEWS

by Eleanor Storms (Headquarters)

Historically, wars always bring out a cry for the women of America to offer their skills and to be a part of the action. In 1776, George Washington listened and finally sponsored a bill to pay nurses 25¢ a day while other volunteers offered their skills wherever needed. During World War I, General Pershing requested 100 uniformed, telephone operators who could speak French and 5,000 volunteers with other skills. From 1918 to 1942, women were pressured to become active members of the military force. Research shows that this was a very bleak period. In 1920, Miss Phipps, an Army daughter, was assigned as Director of Women's Relations. She left a plan for women to be IN the Army. She organized powerful women's groups and left statistics showing that 170,000 women would be useful to the Army Corps. But, in 1931, General McArthur considered the plan of little value to the military.

Meanwhile, The Army General Staff compiled the 1928 Hughes plan which made recommendations to settle once and for all the bitter issues between the extreme viewpoints of the women and the prejudices held by the males. The Hughes plan placed the women IN the military and included them for overseas duty. At the same time, the Bowley plan proposed educating and changing the attitudes of the officers. Bowley was convinced women would be a force in the next war. All of these plans were "buried" in the files.

By 1939, winds of war were blowing across Europe and in Washington, DC, Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall's attention was again drawn to using the skills of women during wartime. His staff came up with a plan based on the Civilian Conservation Corps. The women were to be organized in units, under some military structure and serve WITH the Army not IN it. This brought on a flood of mail, telegrams from large women's groups and from private citizens throughout America. The consensus was that women did not want to be involved in an overseas service without being organized and under military control. Corporations threw in their support and some offered to train the women in certain phases. General Marshall responded to this outpouring of ideas by stating that some type of provision must be made for these patriotic women.

desperately needed now. Rogers was sure that women would not go into another war without these protections and testified so. By May, 1941, Rep. Rogers reported that she was ready to introduce HR 4906, a bill supporting full military status. Eleanor Roosevelt suggested the British Anti-Aircraft System; it was rejected because our Civil Defense was weak. General Marshall wanted to add input into the bill. The plan downgraded Roger's full military status to an Auxiliary — one without pensions. She introduced the bill to establish a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps for service WITH the Army and not IN it. Medical care and Sailor Soldiers Benefits would be provided, but none after discharge. A Director would be appointed to work under Army direction. The War Department itself objected to the bill, outlining ways in which the civilian corps and the Army did and did not differ. The bill lay dormant for a year.

By now, Selective Service had drawn millions of men into a possible wartime force and General Marshall foresaw future shortages of men. Marshall realized that the industrial age had brought about many changes for women. They were better educated, had trained skills which could be used immediately and many were working outside of the home. He wrote to Congress and the Bureau of Budget, pressing for the immediate establishment of a Women's Corps under military authority and stating that no plans could be made without their approval. The Chief of Staff had by now hired a civilian consultant, Mrs. Oveta C. Hobby, to work in the War Department. She was to assist and coordinate the women's interests, work with Bureau of Budget, Public Relations and assist the Planners with the WAAC bill.

December 7, 1941, the Secretary of War sent his approval to the WAAC bill to Congress. Rep. Rogers was now confident that the bill, HR 6293, with its amendments, would pass. She reintroduced the bill before a very icy audience. The Navy refused to be a part of a joint effort. They had already had their bill passed through Congress without much opposition, to permit women to be IN the Navy. Only after hours of Army persuasion did the bill reach the floor. The bill passed 249-86, 17 Mar. 1942 with a last caustic remark that the country's courageous men



History of Pallas Athene, an emblem we wore on the right lapel; US on the left.

History of Pallas Athene, an emblem we were to wear on the right lapel and the US on the left. The eagle on the cap became known as the BUZZARD.

Goddess associated with a variety of womanly virtues and NO VICES (Ha) either womanly or godlike. She was goddess of handicrafts, wise in industries of peace and arts of war—also goddess of storms and battle who led through victory to peace and prosperity.

For years, Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers had had an interest in the studies made for these women. She especially favored the Hughes Plan as she had seen first-hand what had occurred to the women in World War I. These women were not entitled to receive medical care nor disability pensions so

were being offended. The Senate too, made stinging remarks, before passing the bill 38-27, 14 Mar. 1941. President Roosevelt signed the bill without delay and the bill became Public Law 554, creating the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. Many of our 2nd Air Division veterans have that law etched in their memories.

A Quick "How To" Guide for Members

Who to contact for the answer to your question or problem.

Lost Buddies & Group Historical Info:

Help in search for WW II acquaintances; information on those you now have located; info on any Group ("then" or now); rosters; etc.

Ask the Group VP

Journal Data:

Questions about articles, people, photos (already published in it, or ones you may want shown in a future issue); extra copies; lead time for submitting data; etc.

Ask Bill Robertie

Membership Policy & Dues:

Membership categories; Association membership policy; questions on dues (send dues payments to her); membership cards; etc.

Ask Evelyn Cohen

- (Some notes: (1) new plasticized cards when issued are valid only if dues are current;
- (2) Assn. has a policy to provide free dues coverage for those members unable to pay;
 - (3) dues paid by new members joining after July apply to the rest of that year and all of the next;
 - (4) dues are on a calendar year basis; statements are sent each year end; please send dues payment back with the statement;
 - (5) three types of memberships apply: Regular (only those in, or associated with, the 2nd Division in WW II); Associate (Regular member's immediate family); Subscribing (other interested persons). For further details, ask Evelyn.

Booklets, Decals, Patches:

The Assn. has a supply of various items available at cost to members.

Ask Evelyn Cohen

Lending Library:

Pete is custodian for items to borrow for mini-reunions, etc. He has: Combat films, posters, visual aids, hand-outs, etc.

Ask H. C. (Pete) Henry

Second Air Division Memorial

Ask Jordan about any and all information regarding the Memorial Trust, the Library, the auxiliary Memorial programs (cassette tape program; endowment program, etc.), donations, etc.

Ask Jordan Uttal

- Donations: (1) ALWAYS make checks to "2nd Air Division Assn."
- (2) Specify on lower left corner of check, or by separate note, designation: Capital fund; or other contribution (books; books in memory of . . . ; etc.).
 - (3) to offer a specific book: write first to Colin Sleath of the Norwich Library (ask Jordan the procedure).
 - (4) Donations to Capital Fund: send with annual dues to Evelyn Cohen; otherwise, send to Dean Moyer (Treasurer).
 - (5) Other contributions: send to Jordan Uttal with note detailing purpose, honoree(s), etc.

See June 1983 *Journal* article, or ask Jordan, for more details.

General Notes:

All addresses of those named above are published on page 2 of every 2nd Air Division Association *Journal*.

Always make all checks out to "2nd Air Division Assn." unless otherwise specified.

All Association Officers are eager to help you in any way they can regarding the Division and the Association. Feel free to contact any one of them. The above listing provides you with the *best sources* of information.

Notice

I would like to hear from all former members of Pilot Class 44-F, Pampa Army Airfield, Pampa, Tex., for the purpose of holding a fortieth-year reunion sometime in 1984.

Please contact the address below.

Fred C. Burlingame, Jr.
126 E. Bald Eagle St.
Lock Haven, Pa. 17745

or David Patterson
28 Squire Ct.
Alamo, CA. 94507

Report of 445th

by Frank DiMola (445th)

I am sure that there will be other reports about the Philadelphia mini-reunion held on November 5, 1983. A turnout of 191 people attended and many were first timers. Our Group, the 445th, had the largest representation — 41. Our Past President and his wife, Dave and Joan Patterson came all the way from the wild west, California. I was really proud of our large turnout. At this writing (12/27/83), a reunion for the Dallas-Fort Worth area will be history. It had been rescheduled from mid-February to January 21, 1984 with coverage from our local television stations, along with British coverage. The BBC interest, at first in British war brides, and — after visiting Norwich, England and seeing the Memorial Library — in the 2nd Air Division Association, has expanded. Buddy Cross (Texas) will give us a report, possibly in this issue.

On our return trip from the Philadelphia, PA, Elizabeth and I stopped at McGuire AFB, New Jersey. We were invited by L/C John C. Attebury to attend a reunion ceremony of the 702nd MAS, 514 MAW (Assoc.). To bring everyone up to date, there are 3 of our squadrons still active in the U.S. Air Force — one of them is the 702nd. I do not have the locations of the 700 and the 701 squadrons and no information on the 703rd. These squadrons are all reserve units doing a great job during the Granada and Lebanon crisis. L/C John Attebury is assisting me in locating the other squadrons. I met many officers of the 702nd and I displayed photos of our Memorial Library to them. In a previous reunion they had last year, James Evans, Tenn., who was the first CO of the 702nd, was a guest speaker. I also met James Graham, Mass., who was an assistant to Jim Evans.

The thrill of this visit was my experience in a simulator (a fancy name for the Link Trainer). Jim and I flew a C5 cargo aircraft under 30% handicap. The excitement and thrill we had just could not be explained. Jim Graham, a pilot, and I, an instrument specialist, had a heck of a time trying to land and we did — we crash landed and we survived. We were told that pilots spend many hours in these simulators before they ever make any attempts to actually fly the huge aircraft.

We were given a grand tour of McGuire Air Base and saw the cargo ships that were in great use for the foreign crisis. A great tribute to them for the job they are doing. We were really proud to have been associated with them. We are invited to revisit McGuire A/B and attend a change of command on March 10-11, 1984.

Received many calls and mail from members asking for information. One was from Bill Kraham, MD, wishing to locate

Chaplain Rev. Joseph Quinlan, Ohio, and within three hours, Bill got the telephone number of the Veteran's Hospital that Rev. Joe was working in and they spoke for some time. All this done on Dec. 24th, 1983 — What a Christmas thriller. Charles Turner, KY, called me while he was in New Jersey visiting his son, John. We planned to meet in New York City, but the weather was very bad. Next time Charles.

William R. Dewey, P.O. Box #413, Birmingham, Mich. 480-12 wants to contact members of our Group that flew on the Kassel Mission.

Hank Lively, KS, sent me a beautiful color photo of his aircraft #129117 that flew in the Gotha Raid, Feb. 24, 1944. Some of his crew members were: Bussing, Drebo, Evans, Feingold, Harlow, Madamba, Massey, and Tucker. A general question most often asked — Do we have any specific insignia or patches for our Squadron or Group?

Buddy Cross and Jim Stewart having a poem writing contest between themselves. I would like to read some of them.

Ken Fox, England, once again is taking members of this Group on a tour of Tibenham, England. He just loves to be a guide.

Don Murray attended the 38th Prisoner of War Reunion — Stalag Luft III, Chicago, Ill. Don met some of his friends and swapped some tales. Don, contact Palmer Bruland, Calif., who is planning a POW Group in his area.

Herb Rudh, Minn., who was buried in many feet of snow and sub-zero temps, plans to meet us in Palm Springs, Calif. in Oct. 84.

Tom P. Hart, TX, in contact with Mary, (Kennedy) Barnard, MA, whose dad was on the Pelton Crew.

I would like to welcome all the new members into the 2nd Assoc. If anyone wants a roster, please drop me a line and I will mail you one. I have not heard from anyone from the Philadelphia reunion where I requested some names and addresses of people that they are in contact with.

ON THE MEMORIAL FOR DAYTON, OHIO

Buddy Cross and I mailed 375 letters to our members, plus non-members, about our Memorial Dedication for Wright-Patterson, Dayton, Ohio. Plenty of details about the dedication in the Dec. 1983 issue. Thus far we have only heard from 35 members, not even 1% — what happened? We left our Memorial Library in Norwich, England — How about a Memorial here in the United States? Our plans are still set for May 8th, 1984. Arrive a few days sooner so you can enjoy the ever-so-many type of aircraft and the museum. This will be a combined affair along with the other Group — 453rd — which was in the same Combat Wing. You have time to make plans and mail in your donations to make this a success.

453rd Bomb Group Corner

by Don Olds (453rd BG)

First thing I want to do is express our sincere appreciation to all of you that remembered Mimi and I during the holiday season. We had cards and letters pour in from all over the country as well as overseas. We received so many kind words, photos, etc. I hope you all understand that it is just impossible for us to reply to each of you individually. So I'm using this little spot in the *Journal* to say 'thanks'.

The project to plant a tree and set the stone containing the plaque in the Dayton Air Force Museum Memorial Park is proceeding on schedule under the able leadership of Glen Tisher. He has contracted for a four inch Red Oak which will be planted in March '84. The plaque will also be in place and covered till the dedication on May 8th. a color guard, band, chaplain, etc., are set up to be part of the dedication. It's going to be a big day and many people will be there to participate. If you intend to join us, contact Virginia Brubaker, POB 149, Westtown, PA 19395. Fifty rooms have been reserved at the Fariborn Holiday Inn for May 6 and 7, so don't delay.

Got a letter from Hubert Cripe, original pilot of Crew #44, 734th BS, saying his co-pilot Russell A. Anderson, passed away this past year. They cracked up *Libby Raider* on return to Old Buck, after it had been badly damaged after one of the groups early raids. Then on the first big Berlin mission of 6 March 44, they were shot down and became POW's at Stalag Luft I for fourteen months.

Morgan Hartman, crew member of #11 of the 732nd BS reports the death of his pilot Edgar Ehrman. Edgar visited me a couple of years ago and spent one Sunday afternoon looking through the 453rd memorabilia. The Ehrman Crew was shot down on 8 March 44 and crashed in Holland. All bailed out and survived.

Lot of our troops are reaching retirement age. Dwight Bishop, O.K. Long, Frank Kyle, Julian Wilson, Herbert Hall, Al Thomale and Bill Eagleson have all reached the magic number recently. Many are hoping this will allow them to become more active in the 2nd ADA and some of them will be attending their first reunion in Palm Springs in October.

Who has the book that is supposed to be in circulation for 453rd men to put down their more vivid memories during their tour with the group? If it has been sent to you and you can't find anything to write, or just don't want to, pass it on to someone else who is on our roster. I thought it was a great idea to have a book containing a few paragraphs from a hundred or so 453rd vets reminiscing about their most memorable moments while assigned to the 453rd BG. After the book

pages were full it was to be donated to a library.

After a long search, I've located Wilbur Earl. Most who were there will remember the 30 May 44 raid on Oldenburg. Earl was flying *Golden Gaboon* when it crashed on the active runway while landing creating a huge fire. Lester Baer, flying *Zeus*, arrived at the base to find the runway blocked. He then made a skillful one wheel landing on a shorter alternate runway in a strong crosswind for which he was later awarded the DFC. All crew members of both planes escaped uninjured.

Herbert Hall, member of the Milton Stanchfield Crew which was shot down while flying *Stinky* on 16 Aug. 44, ending the 733rd BS record of 82 consecutive missions without a loss, shed some light on their final flight. Stanchfield, Frank Mishaga, Gene Trapani and Harrell Fuller died in the incident and in recent years Herbert has located all their graves in Holland, except for Fuller, who was returned home at his families request after the war. Trapani and Fuller both died when Tripani willingly offered to share his parachute with Fuller. We can only speculate that flak or something damaged Fuller's chute and rendered it useless. Incidents like these makes it easier for me to understand how you people willingly donated over 427,000 to erect a 453rd Bomb Group Memorial Room in the village of Old Buckenham to honor all those who died. But really a small price in comparison.

Pictured is 453rd BG aircraft *Becoming Back* at Long Beach, CA in the summer of '45. Ex-453rd men Lavern Phagin, now deceased, Joe Dorsey and Joe Stangl, from left to right are delighted to welcome her to safer shores. It is believed that Stangl painted much of the 453rd nose art.



Thanks to those who requested the set of slides from the Norwich reunion and the Old Buck dedication. They're available to any one who wants them as a cassette narration. You pay the postage.

8-Ball-Y-Hoo

by Pete Henry (44th B.G.)

If anyone is interested in a copy of the October '83 44th B.G. Roster (20 pages), I can have it xeroxed and mailed to you for \$3.00. The 44th is still #1 in the 2ADA with 432 members, but the 389th, with 405, is right on our heels. Keep those names and addresses coming.

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The 68th Squadron Association held a 3-day reunion in Bellmawr, NJ (near Philadelphia) October 20-23 and I attended the Saturday night banquet with my wife. Approximately 65 attended including Elsie and Jim O'Brien, former 68th Squadron Commander. Twenty-two (husbands and wives) were attending their first get-together and I succeeded in signing up four or five new members for the 2ADA. I didn't get an actual count of those who already belong to the 2ADA, but Bob Krueger, Editor of the 68th Sqdn. Newsletter, sent me a list of all who attended. I will contact all the non-2ADA people after Jan. 1 and try to get them to join. One of those new members listed above sent me a letter inquiring about Charles H. Wagner and Arthur W. Feinberg. If anyone knows where these two men are now living, please let me know and I'll pass the information on to Bill. He included the following story about O.K. 'Pappy' Hill's plane.

"We had trouble with Pappy Hill's ship's nose wheel one day and were in a hurry to get it back in commission. Instead of getting wheel jacks which would mean another hour of work, we decided to have all the men on the flight line crawl in the tail of the ship to raise the nose wheel off the ground so he could check it out. We had enough men to do the trick, but we also had a dog named 'Trim-Tab' with us. As Pappy was working the wheel up and down to find the trouble, (the wheel was in the up position), the dog got tired of being with us and walked forward on the catwalk. Her weight was just enough to cause the nose of the ship to drop very slowly to the ground. At that very moment our engineering officer, Captain Sands, drove up to the plane. Pappy's face was a little red. The Captain just smiled and got in the tail so we could put the nose wheel down. No damage was done to the plane and the trouble was corrected. We had a very understanding Captain who was liked by all the men on the line."

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Quite some time ago (misplaced your note, Bob. Sorry about that.), I received correspondence from Bob Jason in LaGrange, IN, advising that he was one of the first few men at Shipdham and they flew missions before the B-24 belly turrets arrived. Bob has copies of the original books compiled by the late Ursel P. Harvell

Open Letter to the 93rd B.G.

by Charlie Weiss

A lot has transpired since my last entry — 36th Reunion in England enjoyed by all, and great plans for the 37th at Palm Springs in October.

HARDWICK: As always Dave and Jean Woodrow rolled out the red carpet for those of us who attended the reunion 1983. They are two of our loyal supporters. Dave set aside a plot of ground between the Officers and EMs Mess as a Memorial Garden to our comrades who gave their lives while stationed in Hardwick. The Memorial Garden is flanked by a lattice fence with a geranium bed in a semi-circle. In the center is a flag pole. Dave had also obtained a flag which had been flown over the U.S. Capitol. Chuck Merrill and I, assisted by those present, raised the flag and lowered it to half mast. A short prayer was said to let them know they had not been forgotten.

Those present felt that a bronze plaque should be erected in the Memorial Garden as an identifying marker. In this respect those of you who wish to contribute to this project may send me your contributions. Any monies collected which are in excess of the cost of the plaque and mountings will be sent to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Fund. I would also appreciate any suggestions on what to have written on the plaque (the size and complexity will not really depend on contributions collected).

NEW MEMBERS: I appreciate the effort some of you have made to beat the bushes and scare up new members. A hearty welcome to these new members.

COMBAT CREWS: We have a hot competition underway to see which crews can produce the members at each reunion. Our 93rd record is fine in attendance at area reunions. Let's see if any crew can top that. (One other Group had 10 crew members present.) It takes a lot of "private eye" work, but let's find them and sign them up.

93rd BG FILM: Through the good graces of our photo officer, A Verna, and the efforts of Hugh McLaren (a 389th type), we now have a video cassette available.

37th 2ADA REUNION: I'm not sure if I will be able to attend in Palm Springs this year, but have no fear as the 93rd "Management" will be properly represented. Wes Rankin, an old war buddy of mine, will act in my behalf to see that new and old members will have a grand and nostalgic time. He will get great support from Carlos and Nadine Vasquez (our new historians). Each reunion seems to be the best ever. Get your applications in early to Evelyn Cohen. She will keep the membership briefed on current status of the reunion in subsequent *Journals*.

HISTORY 93rd BG: Carlos and Nadine Vasquez have volunteered to take a crack at compiling the history of our Group. We were saddened by the passing of E. Johnson, our last historian, who did such a wonderful job.

I refer you to page 2 of the December '83 *Journal* for info on the history. Nadine has had a fair response since the notice. Let's get with it and send her what you have to contribute. Be represented.

I want to thank all of you who helped me last year and for your continued support this year. May you have health and happiness in 1984.

— 44th Liberators Over Europe; 14th Combat Wing(H); and The Destruction of Germany — Trolley Mission — May 1945.

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Gary and June Rowell from Shipdham sent us a Christmas card enclosing \$10.00 to become a Subscribing Member of the 2ADA. Gary was the lone Shipdham resident to greet the 44th B.G. contingent when we visited the base May 30, 1983. We hope you enjoy your Association, Gary.

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As you will no doubt read elsewhere in this *Journal*, we attended a mini-reunion in Philadelphia along with about 20 other 44thers November 5 and had a great time. These mini-reunions are really catching on and, by the time you read this, we will have attended another one in Dallas, TX on January 21. Charles Freudenthal, our 2ADA President this year, told me that he hopes to hold one in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. area this Spring and Fred Thomas, 2ADA Vice-President, re-

ports they held their third annual mini-reunion in the Southern California area January 28. If you think there is a possibility of organizing a mini-reunion in your area, let me know and I will do what I can to help you get it off the ground.

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And finally, Will Lundy has been officially appointed Assistant Group Vice-President for the 44th. I'm sure most of you know that Will has worked very hard transcribing the actual records of the 44th B.G. as provided on microfilm by the Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center at Maxwell Field and published the *History of the 67th Bombardment Squadron — 44th Bomb Group — The Flying Eightballs* in 1982. That book is currently out of print but Will is working on a revised edition and would welcome any information, incidents, history, etc. that you would care to share with him. Write to: C. Will Lundy - 3295 No. "H" St. - San Bernardino, CA. 92405.

The 448th Speaks

by Leroy D. Engdahl (448th)

"448th Members get your passports in order." Orders have been given to the British stone mason to begin construction of the two granite Memorials for our old Seething Airfield adjacent to runway 25 and for the churchyard in the village of Seething. The one for the old airbase will be 3 ft. high, 4 ft. wide and 18 inches thick and mounted vertical. The one for the churchyard will be a little different. It will lie flat and on an incline. Each will have centers at the top of the 8th A.F. emblem with a B-24 on each side representing a specific plane for each of our four squadrons. Each memorial will have two planes.

The wording (a secret for now) was selected by a committee consisting of Charles McBride, Robert L. Harper, George DuPont and Downey Thomas. A lot of time and discussion was given to this.

The wording and design was presented to the members of the 448th B.G. at Houston who attended the 8th A.F. Historical Soc. national reunion in Oct. last year. There was 100% approval. The art work was done by our own Robert L. Harper, a professional artist.

A letter was recently mailed out to all those who have contributed thus far to the cost of these memorials. The letter ask that all those who plan to attend the dedication ceremonies on Saturday, June 9th, 1984, please let me know as soon as possible so I can get in touch with parties in England to make hotel arrangements, bus transportation from hotel to Seething for dedication ceremonies and return to hotel, the Saturday night banquet, etc.

The banquet Saturday night will be preceded by a half hour social. We are most honored and fortunate to have as our main speaker for the banquet, Brig. Gen. Hubert A. Judy, whom most of you will remember as our 448th executive officer. I talked on the phone with Gen. Judy and was very pleased that he has agreed to speak and I'm sure we will all be interested in learning what he has done with his life since leaving the 448th.

Some of the plans for the 448th reunion and dedication are tentatively as follows. Thursday, June 7th, an informal dinner and get-together, with each introducing himself with a short speech of what he did with the group, where he lives, etc. June 8th about 9:30, visit the Norwich Memorial Library, lunch, shopping and the afternoon and evening on your own. Saturday, June 9th, bus or buses leave hotel for Seething at about 9:15 A.M. Now it looks as if ceremonies will be at Air Base first, then at church at the village of Seething, followed by lunch perhaps in village hall.

I am trying to get Dennis Kirkham who has served as announcer for the civilian airshows held at our old base, to act as

master of ceremonies for the two dedication ceremonies. I have also written to the commanding officer at Lakonheath AFB to see if he and a few of his airmen would be our guests to represent the current AF along with the old. I asked for a bugler to play taps and two or three riflemen to fire a 21 gun salute to honor the 350 men killed from our base.

We hope to have small American flags for each American attending these ceremonies, with the British having a quantity of their own flags as it was a joint effort of our two nations in this struggle for freedom.

We expect excellent coverage from the press and television for this event and the general British public will be invited to attend both dedication ceremonies. Certain Britishers who have been instrumental in bringing these events to a success will be our (448th) special guests, along with representatives of the Board of Governors of the Norwich Memorial Library.

At the Saturday night banquet I will introduce these special guests and have short speeches from some, particularly from the British Board of Governors.

Two parchments will be given: one to be hung in the church at the village of Seething and one for the village hall at Seething. These are from the 448th B.G. and have been ordered with a third to be kept by and for the 448th to show those who were unable to attend the dedication ceremonies.

George DuPont will present a few special awards to Britishers who have given of their time and generosity in helping us with our project. George DuPont has really worked hard on this and has been most cooperative in coordinating our effort with these fine people from England.

In addition to the art work on the granite Memorial, Robert "Bob" Harper is doing the art work on the official program and I know you will want to keep one to show your friends and children. I am sure you will thank Bob for all the fine work he has done for us, along with the donation of several beautiful paintings depicting the Seething Air Field and surroundings.

If you donated to the "Memorial" fund and did not get a copy of the 448th B.G. Roster, please let me know and send a 20 cent stamp and I'll send you one. If you did not donate and want a roster, please send \$1.00 to help cover cost and I'll send you one. I made these up at my own expense and would appreciate your sending just one dollar. I apologize for a few errors in the roster caused by my typist leaving out one computer printout page and getting Robert Harper under "K" instead of "H". Those who joined after the original print will not be alphabetical.

Those who may decide to attend after our arrangements have been made, etc., may check at the reading room of the Memorial Library for details.

We hope to be able to stay at Hotel Nelson downtown as it is convenient to the Library and downtown shopping, etc.

Napalm Again

by John Kirby (44th)

The article "Napalm" by James G. Coffey (467th) shocked me back to remembering things which I had blocked from my mind . . . things I long ago dealt with as dreams which never truly happened. Believe me, that mission was one of those THINGS . . . until I read Coffey's article. On that particular morning no one was talking as we stood around waiting beside the plane. I do not remember why we were waiting. Things were so tense that I caught myself staring right into the eyes of the co-pilot. Neither of us uttered a word. We just stared. It is incredible that I can now remember that incident.

Our Navigator, William J. Atkins, broke the thought waves by reaching over and inflating my Mae West. I chased him a bit, but immediately started sweating beneath all of the flying gear.

Atkins had an extra Mae West, or cartridges, and by the time I was strapped up again, we were ready to roll. I owe a debt to Bill Atkins, and maybe he owes one to me, for we kept each other (and the rest of the crew) away from the fear element as we were waiting for whatever in the hell we were waiting for.

Right after I read the article, I called Bill Atkins in California. We both agree that we flew in one of the following: *Myrtle the Fertile Turtle*, *Fearless Fosdick* or *K Bar*. We all seem to forget.

James G. Coffey failed to mention that some of the planes carried Napalm and some carried incendiary bombs. This was a mission solely to end lives . . .! It was a long bomb run and, depending upon where you were flying, fairly routine. However, the flak on that run was at the exact right altitude, the right speed and, it seemed, in bursts tracking right off our right wing tip. The bursts were almost in cadence, with one black puff going off before the last passed from view . . . right in a straight line. I forgot parts of that mission before we landed. As a matter of fact, I do not remember anything about landing. I do remember things I wish I could forget.

I wonder if anyone else associated fear with insanity, having fear just one step beyond. One could survive fear if he could accept the fact that we are all going to die some day, and that we cannot control how or when it will happen . . . just try to keep it from happening in a particular situation. Getting over the 'fear' hurdle is purely mind control and helped me to survive.

Also I learned that forgetting was not a cause for "Section 8", rather it was necessary for survival.

There is no reason to write this article other than to thank Jim Coffey for letting me know that all of those things were not dreams, and perhaps to remind myself that I should call Bill Atkins again real soon and tell him I remember him. It was almost 39 years ago. I have forgotten many things, but I do not want to forget my friends.

392nd BG Report

by Fred Thomas (392nd BG)

Jan. 12. — It could be I'm a budding author. I've heard even good writers have mental blocks, and I'm having trouble getting this article off the ground. Bill Robertie says it has to be to him by Jan. 15 or it goes on the scrap pile, so whatever, I'd better get on with it.

First, we must thank a great many people from over the Earth for their Christmas cards and kind notes. They came from all across the states, a number from our good friends in Britain, and another couple or three from other countries. Each was gladly received and appreciated.

We have had quite a number of calls and letters from those seeing our posters in the Queen Mary and elsewhere. Each has been sent a packet of information and the V.P. of his Group advised. It has resulted in a number of new members, and we hope they come to feel about the Association as we do. Some of those have been from the 392nd. We had a call from Harold Jennings from the McMillan crew. It was the first we had heard from that crew since 1944. Harold gave us H. L. McMillan's address and we have written him. Seems I recall the McMillan crew and the Thomas crew were the mainstays in that meat-grinder operation the 579th Squadron had going over there in the spring and summer of 1944. When we were at Wendling last May, Mrs. Edor Rowlands, a lady who lives on the fringe of the old base, gave us some cards of people who had visited there over the years. That resulted in a couple of contacts. One was Jerry Jones of Ocean-side. We expect to see him soon.

I had the good fortune to see or hear from all of my crew over the past several weeks. They have been very supportive of my efforts, and it means a lot. One sad note; we had the news that our Navigator, Jim McFarlin, died back in September — the first of our crew to "peel" off.

We called on Mrs. Florence Gross at the AARP office in Long Beach. She has been very nice to us, and she took our announcement of our Palm Springs reunion which she believes will be printed in the AARP News Bulletin. If so, a lot of people will know about it; they have 18,000,000 readers. Could result in some new members.

George Epperson, V.P. 65th Wing, and we have been in constant contact about our program to get more participation in our Association from the Fighter Groups. We composed a letter and sent a packet of information to the Presidents of four of our Fighter Groups Associations. We are now seeking members of the 361st F.G. to find out if they have an Association. It is hoped we can have some success in our efforts to give some of the Division action to the 65th Wing.

One thing we have done of importance to the 392nd Group; we have been in

contact with our friend, Mr. Denis Duffield, who lives near Derham and Wendling. You who have been to the old base at Wendling have probably noticed that our obelisk there is badly in need of cleaning — especially the brass plates on the sides of the monument. Mr. Duffield was kind enough to get someone to do the job for the sum of 46 pounds. That and the cost of the money order and the postage came to \$74.00, which we have sent Mr. Duffield. We spoke to half a dozen members about helping us with the bill, and we expect they will. Bob Powers and Don Whitford have given me \$10 each, and we expect other help so that we won't have to subsidize the project. We go into detail here because we believe this instance points out the need for some thought being given by the 392nd members toward having a small fund on hand to cover small expenditures. We are very fortunate that Joe Bush, Group Executive Officer, arranged for us to have the obelisk at wars end. Most Groups are still trying to get monuments at their old bases. The least we can do is keep ours in good repair. We will discuss this at Palm Springs.

We have been very fortunate in arranging our schedule so as to attend the area reunions. We joined the Philadelphia area members for their event on November 5th. It was as always, good cheer, fine people, and great comradeship. Next week (21st) we plan to attend the Dallas area reunion at the invitation of Gerry Merket, Jordan Uttal, and their committee. We look forward to seeing all those folks again, especially since our British friends from the BBC plan to be there. The very next weekend (28th), we here in So. Calif. are having our annual dinner at Tustin. With the help of Dick Boucher (445th) and Gladys Maruschak (489th), we have mailed 375 flyers. The response is good at this time, and we look forward to another great evening. George Epperson is helping with our film showing, and we have been offered help by a number of others which we appreciate.

Folded Wings

Grace Priester Leddy	Hdq.
Walter M. Gibson	389th
George I. Kralowec	392nd
Joseph Zamorski	446th
Ben C. Isgrig	448th
William A. Barden	453rd
Leonard Rowe	466th
Roy B. Davis	467th
Richard W. Ford	467th
Ruth Andrews	Hdq.
Edward P. Reynolds	44th
Felton H. Croswell	93rd
Alvin Casenhiser	389th
John D. Kauffman	389th
William Klopfer	389th
Kyle C. Bailey	445th
Kenneth M. Covey	445th
Martin J. Queenan	445th
Frank Hoice	448th
Glenn R. Matson	458th
Jack H. Hauger	491st

ciate. We have a fine and cooperative group out here. We had hoped to have Myron Keilman, our 579th CO, and Blanche with us, but his vacation plan has him going to Arizona on the date of our dinner. We plan to see them in Palm Springs next weekend and rattle his cage about that.

You can see from the above that we have had a pretty fast pace going out here, and that's not to mention my roaming the "Friendly Skies" for United. As a result, this leaves us with a number of unanswered letters on our desk. We hope to have those cleared before you read this. We thank all of you for your good wishes and offers of help. Also, we thank those who have sent us articles for the *Journal*; not only those of the 392nd, but those from other groups as well. We will feed them to Bill as he gives the word he can use them. We certainly don't want to lose any of them due to the Editor's lack of space.

Notice

One of our 2 ADA members (Hugh McLaren) has arranged for a transfer of a 93rd BG film to a Video Cassette. Scenes of B-24 formation flying and of our stay in North Africa. This is the same film shown at the last five reunions.

Two additional films have also been included on the same Video Cassette: "Ploesti - March, April 1944" (narrated by Ronald Reagan) and "The Fight For The Skies". Both films were purchased from the National Archives at Hugh's personal expense and he also absorbed the original cost of the Master Video Tape. Running time is one hour.

2nd Air Division Members desiring to obtain a copy should send their order to Hugh McLaren, 915 E. Missouri, Phoenix, AZ 85014. Cassettes can be made VHS or BETA so indicate your desire. The cost will be approximately \$45.00 when purchased in quantity from the copy firm. It is therefore advisable to get your orders in as soon as possible so Hugh can consolidate the orders to take advantage of a price break. Any monies collected above the actual cost (depending upon the quantities purchased) will be given to the 2 ADA Memorial Fund.

Charles Weiss, 93rd BG

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
Vere A. McCarty



A member asked how he could get something about his crew into the *Journal*. The answer really pertains to all, so I will use it here; Editor Bill Robertie will use stories based on personal experiences in the UK when space permits. Photographs are hard to use unless they pertain to the story. Letters to the editor will often be used in "Letters", a regular feature of the *Journal*. Also, I like to use bits and pieces of your correspondence in writing this column.

My mailbox seems to keep full, much correspondence from new members, some from old friends. Received a letter from new member Joseph Soders, 704th Squadron pilot whose crew inherited "Red Ass" and Charlie Ryan's lead crew duties. Joe's crew broke up when his bombardier and navigator were appointed 704th Squadron Bombardier and Navigator, respectively, and when Joe was assigned to the newly formed "5th Squadron" of lead crew where he evaluated pilots being considered for lead assignment and where he also served as Command Pilot on occasion. Joe asks for information about his gunner, S/Sgt. Raymond Jones, shot down while flying with another crew and listed as MIA. Does anyone know anything about Sgt. Jones? Please write to me if you do. Jones appears on the right in this crew photo.



Fred Mahnken recalled his favorite memory, "Libs lined up for takeoff, all fans turning, all lights on in the early darkness of D-Day, the 446th Bomb Group on the point!" Walter J. Lockhart remembers that his crew set some kind of 704th Squadron record . . . finished 30 missions in 45 days. Pilots Bob Liedtke and Harold Roach each sent me copies of old Special Orders which listed their crews and others. This material is very welcome, not only to gather as your Group Historian, but they contain Army serial numbers which provides that necessary identification to locate former members when dealing with government offices.

Long time member Harlyn Turner reported on a story he read about in an aviation magazine about an A2 jacket

found in Holland, suggesting we do a follow-up. Before I could get to it, the story found a happy ending all by itself. It seems that Peter Zadelaar of The Hague found this flight jacket in very good condition in an Amsterdam fleamarket. The cigar smoking buzzard, the aircraft name, "Red Ass" and the name and serial number of John T. Biltgen provided identification. Mr. Zadelaar wished to locate any member of the crew to see what he could learn about the jacket's history and to learn whether it could be returned to an appropriate person. It turns out that Biltgen was co-pilot for William B. Hall and Bill is a member of the 2nd ADA.

Four of the original crew of "Desperate Desmond" are now members when M.V. "Sam" Harris (co-pilot) joined up. His pilot was George Mattes; navigator, Clemens Kowalczyk; and ball gunner, John Kivlehan. According to Jordan Uttal, another founder, Clem was one of the founding fathers of the Association. Mattes has visited his former co-pilot a couple times recently and reports that he has severe physical problems. The last time they had met was while flying in Korea.

John Archer sends an interesting report from England: Flixton Farms Estate, including the old Flixton airfield, has been sold. The price per acre, including all buildings and the concrete runways came to 2,119 British pounds. It is hoped that the new owner will be as gracious about American visitors to the old airfield as was the previous owner. John inquired and learned that there are no immediate plans to alter any of the present sites, but there is a possibility that the runways will be torn out. Many of us were saddened to learn a dozen or so years ago that Flixton Castle had been razed. Thanks, John, for keeping us informed about such happenings.



PLAN NOW FOR THE REUNION!
OCTOBER 4-7, PALM SPRINGS,
CALIFORNIA!

Malnutrition

by Earl L. Zimmerman (389th)

Malnutrition you say, yes said the Flight Surgeon, the ground troops are showing signs of malnutrition. The Ground Executive Officer of the 389th couldn't believe his ears. The Flight Surgeon suggested that the Ground Mess Hall be checked to ascertain if the proper food was being served.

Upon questioning the Mess Sergeant, El Rotundo to his friends, the Ground Exec. discovered that, for the past three days he had been throwing food away as none of the troops were coming to the mess hall for their meals. Upon further questioning, it was determined that during the three days mentioned, a Captain from the MP unit, an English Constable and a beautiful young girl, slightly overweight around the mid-section, had been stationed near the main entrance to the mess hall during chow time.

It seemed that the ground troops, when heading for the mess hall, upon seeing the trio at the door, either lost their appetite or remembered other duties and departed the area post haste. When questioned about why the ground troops were suspected of nefarious behavior instead of the combat troops, El Rotundo replied that the fly boys very seldom got to town, but the ground troops were always in town.

But surely, replied the Exec., not all of the troops have a guilty conscience. Well, you put a dogface in a pair of fatigues and they all look alike, and no one wants a case of mistaken identity, replied El Rotundo. Two weeks after the incident, banns were published in a local paper announcing the marriage of a Pfc. in armament and the cute young thing who was seen at the entrance to the mess hall. It seems she lived in a small cottage just a stone's throw from the bomb dump.

Notice

The charge for borrowing 2ADA films will be \$5.00 per reel (\$10.00 for 2-reel 'Target For Today'). This includes postage, insurance (\$200 per reel) and handling. We will loan one topic at a time and would like to have them returned within one week. Please insure each reel for \$200.00 when you return them."

Pete Henry,
2ADA Film Librarian

The Battle of Splasher 5

by Howard W. Johnson (790 Sq. 467 BG)

World War II pilots who flew "the hump" have emphasized the hazards of flying between India and China where the clouds have "rocks in them."

467th Bomb Group, 2nd Air Division, and all 8th Air Force pilots flying combat missions from England in 1944 could emphasize similar weather hazards.

The clouds over England did not have rocks in them. They had *airplanes* — lots of *airplanes* — under, in, and over the clouds.

I submit that English weather and air traffic were greater hazards than the flak and occasional German fighters, that we encountered.

Adding to the constant hazard of collisions was the fact that we had only one electronic "lighthouse" — Splasher 5 — located several miles north of Rackheath on the North Sea Coast — towards which, or away from which, all of our pilots flew ADF courses.

You will recall that our formation assembly procedure was, if possible, to form at an assigned altitude over Splasher 5. If there were clouds at this altitude, we formed at whatever altitude was above the clouds.

There were almost always clouds. During my entire tour at Rackheath, I rarely glimpsed the sun from the grouping.

According to our forming assembly procedure, we took off and intercepted an ADF heading away from the Splasher 5 and continued climbing to a given altitude. We then turned and homed in to Splasher 5. If, on arrival over the Splasher we were still in the clouds, we turned to the second procal heading and continued climbing to another given altitude. We then turned again, while climbing, to home in on Splasher 5. This process was continued until we finally broke clear and could assemble in formation, usually with "Pete—the POM Inspector" as a visual target.

I recall one early morning before dawn briefing at which our meteorologist, "Cloudy Joe", proudly pointed to the weather diagram with a few fluffy clouds drawn thereon and announced that all we would encounter on our entire mission would be a few "cumulus of fair weather".

We made our pre-dawn takeoff. At 300 feet I noticed rain on the windshield. At 500 feet we entered an overcast. I flew out and back to Splasher 5, out and back, out and back and at 23,000 feet were still in the overcast. Some cumulus of fair weather!!!

The return to base procedures also involved Splasher 5. Formations homed in on the Splasher, with individual planes peeling off according to plan, and then returning individually to Rackheath.

It was on one of these returns that I recall suddenly seeing another B-24 in a

collision course off my left wing. I promptly put our plane into a near vertical bank to the right and the other pilot did the same to the left and there was no disaster. But it was close.

For the benefit of any readers who might remember any of us, our crew, in addition to myself as pilot, included Bob Moulton as co-pilot; Don Kaynor as navigator (early transferred to a lead crew); Jack Merritt as bombardier-navigator (Don Kaynor was replaced by additional training for Jack plus a G box); Dave Baumhover as flight engineer; Roger Rafford as radio operator; Glenn Permann originally as ball turret gunner, later waist gunner; Guenter Staedicke and Harold Peek as waist gunners; and Woodrow Spacek as tail gunner.

Our plane, acquired at Wendover, was flown to England via South America and Africa and brought us home safely from 19 combat missions. We named the plane *Ruth Marie* for my wife who shared problems and challenges of our lives at Mountain Home, Wendover, and Herrington.

On D Day, we fought the Battle of Splasher 5 twice. (The Group flew three missions).

Many will recall our pre-midnight briefing on 5 June — D Day eve. We knew something was up — not only because of the timing of the briefing, but because when we entered the briefing room we noticed the presence of a one star General — General Peck. We rarely had a General in attendance at a 467th Bomb Group briefing.

I am sure that this was one mission all of us wanted to fly; to be part of history on the long awaited D Day.

But back to the Battle of Splasher 5.

There were planned to be some 10,000 airplanes in the skies over England and France prior to and during the Normandy landings.

You will recall we had one way traffic. Our planes took off and formed in formation over Splasher 5. We then headed *north* over Scotland, then turned *south* on course to Normandy, then *west* past the Jersey Isles, and then *north* back to England.

On D Day morning we took off long before dawn and made our race track pattern to Splasher 5. To find our formation we had to recognize flashlight signals from the tail of the aircraft on which we were to fly formation. Somehow we did and we were all over the beaches at the time of the landings.

I will always remember that on the way back, our radio operator, Roger Rafford, handed me earphones to listen to General Dwight Eisenhower announcing the Normandy landings to an excited world.

Our day was not over. On return and some rest, we took off for a second mission.

Our return again involved a one way traffic sweep to the west.

We tried to stay beneath a lowering ceiling and on arrival over England this involved our flying through the traffic patterns of many bases on the aircraft carrier that was the island England.

The final challenge for this day was that on arrival near Rackheath the usually silent radio announced "bandits in the area". This meant that all lights on aircraft and on the ground were extinguished.

Once more I headed for Splasher 5 and then out over the North Sea for a while.

Returning to Splasher 5 and thence toward Rackheath, I was delighted to see perimeter lights for various airfields again visible.

Our co-pilot, Bob Moulton, always reliable, announced that he thought he saw the perimeter lights of Rackheath. He was right and we landed about 24 hours after General Peck's original briefing.

Spare Parts

by Roy Jonasson (389th)

I was alone on duty in Tech. Supply. It was very late and I was waiting until the last plane had been readied for flight. Suddenly the door began shaking and there was a banging and rattling outside. "Hurry, hurry, open the door." I ran and opened up the inner door. There stood Uliano with an issue bike trying to get it through the door.

"Quick, give me a hacksaw," he cried.

Well, I wondered what on earth was going on and said so. Uliano started sawing the bicycle in two. I began to get ulcers. "Hey, you can't do that, it's army issue."

"Well, you're in on this now, Jon, what parts do you need for your bike." I nearly swallowed my teeth and practically danced a jig in anxiety. "Well, I'll take the pedals."

"Fine, I'm gonna take the front wheel and I know a guy who needs a new seat."

Being petrified that an officer would come through the door at any minute, I began helping Uliano saw the bike frame up into small pieces. We worked at a frenzied pace. Before you could blink an eye, the frame had been disposed of in the woods. As I biked to lunch the next day, I noticed a Major, walking with a limp, eyeing every bicycle that passed him. When I arrived at the mess hall, I noticed a small handprinted card on the bulletin board. "Used bicycle seat, will trade for pair of handgrips."

Headquarters— Chatter

by Jim Reeves (Hdq.)

In the summer of 1982, I met a nice English couple, Mr. and Mrs. Mick Tipple, from Felixstowe, Suffolk, who were visiting in my home town of Moultrie. Edna and I invited them along with their two daughters, Jill and Belinder to have dinner with us. I discovered that he was very much interested in Second Air Division and knew quite a bit about it. He invited us to visit with them when we came to the Reunion in Norwich in '83. He gave me a booklet on the 390 Bomb Group (B-17 Group) Memorial Air Museum located at Framlingham. After the reunion, Edna and I along with Madeline and Charlie Mills, visited the Tipples and were given a tour of the Air Museum at Framlingham which was indeed interesting. Some of the Exhibits as pertains to 2AD aircraft:

Two B-24 A/C from 489th BG at Halesworth collided at 1235 hours on Wednesday 27 Sept. 1944 at Walberswick, Suffolk, killing all twenty crew members. S/Sgt. Holbert, radio operator on one of the aircraft *Paper Doll* was engaged to a local girl, who witnessed the tragedy.

Bird Dog from the 466th BG, Attlebridge — Pilot, Lt. Adam E. Wunderlich — crashed on 3rd mission at East Tunstall in Norfolk. Target for this date was Marshalling Yards at Saarbrücken.

B-24 *Lucy Quipment* — Pilot, Lt. Robert L. Millhollin, 493 BG — flak damage — crew bailed out over base. Bomber crashed near coast at Parkeston Quay.

B-24 from 453rd BG *Cee Geeli* — Pilot, James S. Munsey, A/C named after his daughter Carol Geane. Co-pilot, Lt. Crall, Mission — Marshalling Yards at Hamm. (This was night that ME 410 German A/C followed bombers home). A/C was hit approaching coast at Southwold. Fuel tanks exploded — A/C fell at Reydon. Part of crew was able to get out. Both Pilot and Co-pilot perished.

B-24 from 448th BG, Sn 42-96744, shot down on 22 April 1944 at Worlingham.

B-24 from 448th BG, at Seething which exploded in air over Badingham, Suffolk, on 10 Feb. 1944.

In addition to the above there were also small exhibits for: *Hairless Joe*, SN 440437 - 492nd BG.

Witchcraft B-24H, SN 4252534 Q2M - 467th BG.

B-24 - 448th BG *What Da Hell* (Duck).

B-24 - 466th BG *Crow's Nest*.

B-24 - name of A/C *Surprise Attack*.

B-24 - 458th BG, SN 42110172 - Pilot, Lt. Barton.

B-24 - 489th BG, SN 4294932 - Pilot, Lt. Fulkes.

B-24 - 489th BG, SN 42-94888 - Pilot, Lt. Calkin.

B-24 - 490th BG, SN 42-94835.

Many interesting photos and personal equipment are a part of this museum. I thought the groups involved would be interested in this information. For more detailed information, you may write: Mick Tipple, 16 Elizabeth Way, Felixstowe, Suffolk, England - 1P11 8 PF.

In Atlanta recently, I had a nice chat with Robert H. Powell, President of the 352nd Fighter and 1st Service Group Association, who was located at Bodney, England and Asche and Chievres, Belgium. Their publication is the *Bluenoser*. I discussed 2AD Assoc. with him. He said he served with General Griswold and inquired about other 2AD personnel.

I am asking all Hdq. members to secure at least one new member. Rick Rokicki recently sent me a printout of Hdq. Personnel and we have lots of "catching up" to do! Eleanor Storms, with the assistance of Lida B. Thompson and Mattie Reinhardt, are working on WAC membership. . . With these ladies at work, I can assure you, our membership will increase.

I am asking each member of Headquarters to do two things . . . 1) secure at least one new member and, 2) make your plans to be in Palm Springs.

Poop From Group

by Jim Coffey (467th)

In the December *Journal*, Phillip Day, my predecessor as your Vice-President, reported on the 467th's successful state-side reunion in Dayton last October. With almost 160 veterans attending, most with their wives, it was the largest gathering of the 467th since the war. It was particularly gratifying to those of us who have attended several reunions, to welcome about 40 first-timers. I expect all of them to join the Second Air Division this year.

With the help of our new "recruits", we plan to reach out to all the 467th veterans we can find. In addition to ground crew and air crew personnel, we hope, in accord with 2nd ADA goals, to increase the participation of the 467th support groups: the armament people, engineers, MP's, medics, finance, adjutant general, chemical and all the others.

Please send me the names and addresses of any prospective 2nd ADA members who were stationed at Rackheath; I will send them the 2nd ADA's new flyer and application blank. After all these years, there are still a great many Second Air Division veterans out there who still haven't heard of the 2nd ADA!

I first heard about the Association in 1952 in New York City. Leafing through the *Times*, the words MISS LIBERATOR of 1952, under a small picture, "jumped up" at me. A phone call to the number included was that of a local member of the 2nd ADA; the pretty girl was his daughter.

This early reunion was the first time "Andy" Debiasse, my Engineer, and I had been together since the war; our wives enjoyed the evening, too. There was one other "graduate" of the 467th attending, a Flight Surgeon. One of the 2nd ADA officers welcomed us and told us of the 2nd ADA's stewardship of the library fund.

Phillip Day's many friends in the 2nd ADA will want to know that, in early December, Phillip was rushed to the hospital for emergency surgery for removal of an abdominal aortic aneurism. His recovery was expected to take five to six weeks.

There seem to be two contrary points of view on readership of the 2nd ADA *Journal* in respect to Group Reports: 1) most people read only the report on their own Group; or 2) most people read all or most of the Group's reports. Based on a small survey, three people that is, I think there may be considerable interest in reading about your stories and anecdotes from the war, current mini-reunions with friends from the 467th and the like. Please send me any material you think of general interest to members of the 2nd ADA.

For example:

Dear Phil, Mary and I are back to our regular daily routine after our trip to Dayton for the reunion. It was a very enjoyable trip and was something I have never experienced before.

I have to write in appreciation of the people who put forth all the effort it took to put on a reunion that all the rest of us could enjoy so much.

Another reason I want to write this letter is for those who have never been to a reunion and for those who were at a reunion for a first time. We were at the reunion at Colorado Springs and we thought that was something, but this Dayton reunion was much more by far. I was surprised to see so many from our 789th Engineering Section, it was great to see them again after 38 years.

I also enjoyed talking to the "Air Crews" very much. My only regret is that there was not enough time to talk to more of them.

It used to be that after each 467th Poop From Group I read, I felt I would surely like to meet the editor in person, well going to the reunion gave me the pleasure of meeting Phil Day and his wife, Miss Cille — he does a great job. I would swear that the way he conducted the Memorial Dedication ceremony he is related to Billy Graham.

Will close now hoping that all enjoyed the reunion as much as Mary and I did. We are planning on going to Palm Springs — would like to see you all there.

In the spirit and comradeship of the 467th, Cheerio.

AI Welters

And That's The Way It Was

by Charles Freudenthal (489th)

June 20, 1944; a routine day. The 1st and 3rd Divisions went into Germany while Second Air Division B24s hit No-ball targets in the Pas Calais area. Twenty bombers landed or crashed in Sweden.

The 489th had two missions and three targets — Bachemont, Regansville and Fleury. Eight aircraft reported battle damage from flak and rockets. Leroy Madson and crew were lost; Ray Beights was hit in the head by flak, but with lots of help from co-pilot William Buckmaster brought plane and people home safely. Harry Carls' aircraft had the oxygen supply line shot out, but made it back. Carls was recommended for the DFC.

Some of the crew members kept diaries, and here's the way they saw things:

Lt. Richard Lingenberg (Bombardier) — "Bombed a no-ball target near Lille, France (Fienville). Early morning mission, up at 12:30; take-off at 4:30, bombs away at 6:50. Landed at 9:00. Saw pretty heavy flak. 'Sharpie' got another hole in the nose turret. He can certainly make himself small when the flak gets heavy. Had a piece hit the glass in front of the bomb-sight, but it didn't come in. Several holes in ship."

William Bobo (RO) — "Hesdin, France, a pilotless plane base. Bombed PFF although target was visual. Bombing was very good. No flak over target, but plenty on leaving coast. Bombs away at 0647. No enemy fighters."

Rudy Hoerr (845th, pilot) — "Target for today was near Bachimont on the Rocket Coast, just a short hop but plenty of flak. We flew ship No. 8832, and now it's a sieve. Certainly glad someone else had ours, as it would have been messed up had we flown it. Woody got a hole in his turret big enough to put your fist in, and has a large chunk of metal as a souvenir now."

Chester Weaks (847th Bombardier) — Regnaville — Another run on the 'Pilotless Plane' installations. They must really be worried about them. They've stopped practically all invasion bombing to concentrate on these rocket bases. Met some flak and no fighters. Carls' ship, in another squadron, came back with about 100 flak holes and two crewmen wounded. Gosa's tail gunner wounded. Everybody got back, but almost all the ships were shot up badly.

Three squadrons went on this one, to three targets.

Stations	1630
Taxi	1700
Take-off	1724
Assy Alt.	22,000
Ref. Alt.	23,000
Lv. Base	1923
Bomb. Alt.	21,000
Zero Hr.	2015
Late T.O.	1905
Target Time	2021
E.T.R.	2120
Lv. Eng.	1943
Balance & Vengrove	

Chat — Holy Balls
I.P. Code — Open Up
Lead — Werdung
Shamrock Blue 1

Lingenberg — "Second mission today. No-ball target 15 miles west of Lille. Flew over Lille and got heavy flak. Pretty accurate. Few more holes in ship. Sharpie got another in nose turret; he thinks they are trying to kill him. Ceiling zero at our field, so landed at Hethel. Saari, Myrick, Pruett and Wellborn are in this Group, but didn't get to see them. They lost six ships on a Big B raid (we missed our target completely). The ceiling at Hethel was only 100', so we came in low firing red flares and almost hit another ship. They really went all out on the flak deal today, and we got our fair share of it. Only bad damage was an oxygen line shot out. They let us sleep until 11:00 and we didn't get back to our field until about 4 o'clock, so we didn't fly a mission. Lost one ship and one other came back on two engines. Things are getting rougher!"

William Bobo — Wizernes, France. No-ball target. Didn't drop any bombs due to lead being knocked out by flak, which was heavy. Over target at 2036. Weather closed base in. Landed at Adlebury (*Ed. Note: Don't recognize this. Could it have been Alconbury?*). Slept in hospital. . ."



Just back from the St. Lo mission, July 25, 1944, Dale Coburn's 4761 has its singed tail looked over by the ground crew (846th Sqdn.)

Irv Schildknecht (846th Nav) — "Fienvillers, a robot installation. We were leading a squadron and caught heavy flak all the way in from the coast — 30 miles. Two engines knocked out by flak. Run was made on 2 engines. Jettisoned bombs when they wouldn't release; also jettisoned guns, ammo, everything loose. Got .50 cal. incendiaries thrown at us on the coast at 10,000 ft. Still at 5000 ft. over the English coast. Landed on one engine at Kings

North, 10 miles from Dungeness; 30 miles SE of London, at a fighter base. Picked up at 1630 today (June 21) and returned to base. No fun. God was with us and brought us home."

Rudy Hoerr — "Went out again tonight to the same area (St. Omer); flew Lethal Linda. My radio operator was wounded — a large chunk of flak hit him in the thigh. They say he'll be OK — 'Boss' Madson was leading us and he blew up in mid-air. We counted six chutes open — hope Pickett made it. Another day like today and I'll resign or go over the hill or something."

Chester Weaks — "Fienvillers — Second mission today. Also 3rd in two days, 6th in 6, 8th in 9, 9th in 11, 11th in 15, and 13th in 22. We sent up four squadrons this afternoon, after getting three shot up this morning. Even on most of the days we haven't flown missions, we had false starts on scratches, and three aborts. Four squadrons went out and none got to drop bombs. Of the four different targets, one was overcast, and the other three missed for various reasons. Our squadron's lead ship was hit in the #1 and #4 engines on the run, and the formation lost 3000 feet altitude before anyone realized he was hit; and finally scattered. He gave no signal. Flak was intense and accurate, and we had some all the way from the coast in to the coast out. Mitchell, our lead, got back to England.

Madson, leading another squadron, was shot down crossing the coast going out. I counted seven chutes out before the tail burned through and broke off. Germans called Madson on VHF and told him to take a 5 degree correction to the right. He apparently thought it was Klein, made the correction, and flew right into a barrage. Tabor was command pilot, John Klein, lead navigator, Pickett, bombardier, Friedenthal, pilotage navigator, and Hansen. Back at the base we had 150' ceiling, and several ships landed somewhere else. We squeezed in, just missing a couple of collisions in the traffic pattern with ships of the 491st going into Metfield, about 5 miles away. (Later) — No one has ever had an word of anyone on Madson's crew. Must have all gone into the channel. They were over it when they bailed out and when the ship went down."

Tom Baker (Base Defense) — "Nothing much has happened lately. They say our planes went out last night at three and one man was killed and another wounded. I saw one of our men who was loading bombs the other day — a 500 lb. one was dropped on his legs. He was lying on a stretcher waiting for the ambulance. I'm thinking about going to Norwich tonight — Tennessee and I."

**PALM
SPRINGS**

Oct. 4-7

31 times up - 31 times down - Bye Bye Airplanes

by Dan Underwood (44th BG)

I made my debut in the E.T.O. on August 12, 1942 with the 820th Engineers and my MOS number was that of a .50 cal. gunner on a half track. In early 1943 the Army Air Force put out a bulletin for qualified personnel to transfer to the 8th Air Force to become aerial gunners.

After 6 attempts, involving requests for a transfer, the then Commanding Officer approved and approximately 5 weeks later I was accepted by the 8th AF.

I was sent to Kirkham Lanc for gunnery training and was instructed to report to a Maj. White. When I arrived at Kirkham, I was advised that Maj. White and his training crew had been sent back to the U.S., to Wright-Patterson in Dayton, Ohio.

I stayed at Kirkham for 6 weeks of training by the British and all that while there was no flight time involved. The only training I received was on the British .30 ca. (waist only) where they had 4 mounted. Also there was no actual firing of the guns involved.

After a bit of this 'non-training', I was shipped out to the 506th B.S., 44th B.G. On the 2nd morning after I arrived, a wake-up man from the picket post woke me about 3:30 A.M. and told me I was flying with Capt. Wm. Duffy. Thinking this was my first training flight, and very first time airborne in a plane in my life, I was quite eager to get the show on the road.

Everything being new to me, I followed the rest of the men to combat mess with my ears open, listening to the other gunners. I soon realized that this was no training flight but the real thing. Having asked for it, I had to follow through.

At briefing I was introduced to Larry Vincent, a gunner on Capt. Duffy's crew. I told Vincent the whole story about my 'non-training' and his reply was that Capt. Duffy wasn't going to like this. The two of us then found Capt. Duffy and explained the facts to him. Capt. Duffy was furious — not at me, but at Headquarters for

sending an untrained man into combat. He told me that due to the bad deal I had received, I could refuse to go up. I said, "Capt., if it's O.K. with you I will go because if I turn it down I might never get another chance."

Larry Vincent took me to the plane, showed me the oxygen system, heated suit, etc. Things I had never seen before.

It was an 8½ hour mission to Southern France and I flew the hatch gun. Flak and German fighters seemed to come from everywhere as at this time there was very little fighter support. I was so scared I prayed more in that 8½ hours than I had in my first 20 years on earth.

I went on to fly 29 more missions as a spare gunner, flying with 9 different pilots and crews and completed my tour on Nov. 8, 1944. My 31st time in the air was flying home in a plane piloted by Admiral Byrd. 31 times off the ground and I have never set foot in an airplane since.

That has to be some sort of record.

THE BOOK NOOK

Fields of Little America

by Martin Bowman

By Martin Bowman. A well written, highly photographic history of the Liberator Squadrons of the U.S. 8th Air Force's Second Air Division (the "B-24 Division"). This work contains a large selection of previously unpublished photos including aerial views of all Second Air Division bases. Coverage includes: Ploesti, the Kiel raids on U-boat pens, D-Day, the Ardennes Offensive, bombing accuracy tables, etc. Excellent photos of aircraft, airfields, nose art, aircrews, and bombing raids. 120 pgs., 172 vintage photos, 8½" x 11", hardbound.

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Target Ploesti

View from a bombsight
by Lemy W. Newby

The Ploesti oil fields in Rumania were a vital source of supply for Hitler's army. The allied determination to destroy them was met by an equal effort to protect, rebuild and retaliate. Lt. Newby was at the heart of this conflict and tells exactly what it was like. In addition to being an exciting war story, Target Ploesti is a fund of precise information on bombers and bombing, on the Norden and Sperry bombsights, on how a bombardier gets the fix on his target or where he finds an alternate "target of opportunity".

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By Roger Freeman

None other than Roger Freeman himself provides this first time, in-depth look at the incomparable Liberator. With emphasis on the plane's individuality and unique qualities, Freeman concentrates on historical high points and previously unpublicized service exploits. Included are emphasis on the type's versatility and use in theatres around the world, personal accounts from new members, vintage action photos, new information which helps provide perspective in the "Lib" versus "Fort" debate, comparisons with the B-17, etc. 8½" x 11", hardbound, 128 pages, 200 photos.

Retail Price \$16.95

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Stories of the 8th

Edited by John H. Woolnough

This book is a collection of 63 first person stories about the American Eighth Air Force in England and over enemy territory in WWII. This 6 x 9 hardcover book (260 pages) is crammed full of first-person stories written by 8AFers. The writer tells of good times and bad times, of success and failure and of victories and tragedies. The stories come from bombardiers, clerks, commanders, English boys, flight engineers, gunners and all who took part in any capacity. A must for any library on WWII.

Price \$22.50. Please send check or money order to 8th AF NEWS, P.O. Box 4738, Hollywood, FL 33083. (Floridians please add \$1.05 for sales tax).

PLAQUES

Again, in just 3 weeks, after the September *Journal* was published, the entire supply of plaques was sold out. Not only that, but an additional 17 orders were filled after re-supplying materials. It was a very busy "end of the year sale". Have enough materials now to do 30 more units this time.

The standard plaque with .50 cal. shells with one "identifier" (airplane, wings on 7/8 inch 8th Air Force cloisonne) is still only \$39.00. The airplane AND emblem is \$5.00 more. ANY combination of the 3 "identifiers" is possible, just add an additional \$5.00 for each one. The 8th A.F. emblem and the pewter B-24 was the "best seller" last time.

The very latest version is now available with a 4 inch 8th Air Force enameled insignia instead of the shells. The cost is an additional \$6.00 (\$5.00 with one identi-

fier), and can be made to your special order just as the .50 cal. shell, since it carries the same size engraved plate. In addition, both types (large logo or .50 cal. shells) can be had with SERVICE RIBBONS, Battle Stars and/or Oak Leaf Clusters. Unfortunately, we are limited to two rows with the shells, but three rows are possible with the large logo. Ribbons are \$1.50 each (includes brass mountings) while battle stars and oak leaf clusters are 50¢ each. Ribbons currently stocked are: Silver Star, Bronze Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Purple Heart, Good Conduct, European Theater of Operations, WWII Victory, and Presidential Unit Citation. Other ribbons will have to be special ordered.

Once again, the plaque size available now is: 6½ x 10", 6½ x 10½" and 6½ x 11", depending on the model of your choice (11

inch boards for ribbon requests). Wings in stock include: Command Pilot, Senior Pilot, Pilot, Navigator, Bombardier, Aerial Gunner and Air Crew Member. Also, please give me as much information as you can and I will "sort out" what will go best, unless not given that option. Engraved plate size: 3¼ x 5¾ inches, black enameled with a contrasting gold colored border. Engraving appears in bright "silver" color. Will need to know:

NAME (engraved in Old English)

RANK (if desired)

DUTY (Pilot, Gunner, Aircraft Mechanic, Armorer, etc.)

BOMB GROUP & SQUADRON (or support group)

LOCATION

DATES (from - to)

MISSIONS, number, decorations, aircraft name or number, etc.)

Anything else that you may consider important.

In addition to the 3 basic models shown, the "new" offerings that contain the 8th Air Force logo and ribbons or the largest one that has the shells and ribbons, please take into account the various options and their cost. Summarize it all and add the appropriate postage. Chicago — East in a semi-circle with Baltimore as the shipping center, add \$2.00 for postage. West of Chicago, using the same semi-circle, add \$3.00. Although the distances are determined by Zone Rates, from \$1.74 to \$3.05, the system has balanced itself.

The important thing is to get your requests in early, tell me what you want and figure it out as closely as you can with the costs as I've given them. If you don't send enough money, I will bill you for the balance when the plaque is shipped. If you send too much, I will refund the extra with your plaque.

Your Association treasury, as of December, 1983, has received \$1,027.00 as a result of these plaque sales. Many thanks for your participation and support. Mail your requests to:

Rick Rokicki
P.O. Box 8767
B.W.I. Airport, MD 21240

STANDARD SERIES



\$39.00 plus postage



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PALM SPRINGS

Oct. 4-7

Mission 250—Big-B by Day

by Glenn R. Matson (458th)

It was our third mission and at briefing we were told our target was Berlin, Germany, the capital city of the Third Reich. The date was 6 March 1944 and the Eighth Air Force was about to penetrate the heart of Germany for the first full scale daylight raid on Berlin. The 458th Bomb Group scheduled thirty-three B-24 bombers, thirteen of them aborted or failed to make the mission. The remaining twenty bombers joined up with the 14th and 96th Bomb Wing to form a composite Wing of the 2nd Air Division. The 2nd Bomb Wing would lead with the 14th and 96th composite to follow six miles behind. The 20th Bomb Wing would follow six miles behind them, bringing up the rear of the three Bomb Divisions of B-17s and B-24s to make a bomber stream of over ninety miles long.

The bomber force consisted of 243 B-24s and 567 B-17s. Originally our target was to be the Heinkel Aircraft Factory at Oranienburg, North of Berlin. It was feared that we would have to fly through the heaviest flak over Berlin to reach our target, so they switched our target to Genshagen to hit the Diamler-Benz Motor Works. The bombers had to fly over 1,000 miles to the target and back.

Temperatures at altitude were near 60° below zero F. We were to stay below 21,000 feet to prevent contrails and make it harder for the German fighters to spot us. At Horsham St. Faith at take-off, visibility was below 1,800 feet and patches of fog, with complete cloud cover between 3,000 and 6,000 feet. This meant going up through the soup for assembly, forming at 10,000 feet.

About 10:30 we departed England and headed for the North Sea and across Holland. We picked up our first fighter escort, the 56th Fighter Group, somewhere over Holland. We were following the 3rd Division B-17s when they got off course between Enschede and Osnabruek. The B-24s and part of the B-17s saw the error and stayed on the planned route.

Our Bomb Group took a course Southeast after passing between Brandenburg and Magdeburg to the IP, then swung North into the wind to the target. The worst flak hit us as we approached Oranienburg. There may have been kids firing those 88mm flak guns, but they were good. It was bad enough riding that flak road in and out of Berlin, but as we arrived at the IP (Initial Point to start bomb run), we were on a collision course with a B-17 Group on their bomb run. Our Group leader who was a Lt. Col. had to abort our bomb run, change course and close bomb bay doors and set up for another run. Again we were off our target and he turned us 360° over Berlin instead of away from it. That put us in almost constant flak for

over thirty minutes. He wasn't satisfied with our other two runs, he wanted to hit the rail station and yards, not just Big-B.

We were flying in the lower left three plane element in the position of Purple Heart corner. The guy leading our element took us under the main Group formation. By now our bomb bay doors were open again and we were in a very precarious situation. We didn't like looking up at those open loaded bomb bays directly above us. Our pilot, 2nd Lt. Charles A. Melton decided to leave the element and slid back up in the formation where we belonged. Our element leader and the other wing man were two of our five losses that day. We feared at the time that our own Groups bombs fell on them. It was on this third bomb run that our Navigator, 2nd Lt. Charles C. Weinum stuck his head up in the navigators dome in front of the pilots and thumbed his nose at them. He noticed a dog fight and got down inside to get a better view through the side window. After he had left, a chunk of flak made a hole through the dome about the size of a fist. If his head had been there, Pow! no head. He stuck his head up there again, saw the flak hole and got the surprise of his life.

We had to divert to an alternate target. By then we had heavy cloud cover and ended up dropping our bombs near Potsdam. With the target no longer visible, we had to resort to PFF (Pathfinder Forces Radar) and the results were very poor.

Shortly after leaving the target area, we were attacked by two FW-190s without causing any damage. Our Group had been badly shot up by flak, one aircraft lost over the target. This was 2nd Lt. G. Clifford's crew on B-24 42-52515. It crashed West of Berlin, eight men were killed, two bailed out when the plane exploded. Three more of our badly shot up B-24s made it to Holland.

The next to go down was Captain J. Bogusch's crew on 41-29286. Four men were killed and six survived the crash and were taken prisoner. Then 2nd Lt. T. Hopkins crew on 41-29299 crashed. All ten men survived and were taken prisoner. Next to crash was Crew #52 of 2nd Lt. Beverly Ballard's on 42-52450. Three were killed and nine men taken prisoner. The Ball Turret Gunner, Sgt. Victor W. Kruger evaded capture for fourteen months when the Dutch Resistance found him and hid him out until the British troops rescued him in April 1945. 2nd Lt. J. McMains crew was shot down by a ME-110 and crashed near Ueltzen, Germany. Two were killed and eight taken prisoner.

As for our crew #67 on B-24 41-28719Q *Paddlefoot* experienced a bit of flak damage, but no one on the crew was injured

and our return to England was uneventful.

This was a very costly mission for the Eighth Air Force as well as the 458th Bomb Group, which alone lost five bombers and three returned with minor battle damage — the most ever for one mission throughout the remainder of the war.

Of the 702 bombers and 832 fighters that reached enemy territory, 69 heavy bombers and crews were lost. Eleven of the 832 fighters were lost to enemy flak or fighters. Of the 69 bombers lost, 53 were B-17s and 16 were B-24s that failed to return. 701 men were lost in action of which 229 were killed or missing. 345 German civilians were killed or wounded and 36 German Airmen were killed and 25 wounded, with a loss of 66 aircraft. Approximately one out of every ten bombers were lost on this mission, the greatest on any separate mission for the Eighth Air Force. We knew we had been on a big one. Yes it was a big one — "BIG-B".

458th BG Report

by Rick Rokicki (458th BG)

Have had considerable success in signing up new members since establishing my "recruiting package kit". Consisting of a back issue or two of the *Journal*, a history of our Second Air Division Assn., a pamphlet on the Memorial Library and a personal letter. Going back to the last 3 months, I sent out 23 such "kits" and had 12 new members sign up. I'm led to believe that this is an excellent ratio, in conversing with other Group V.P.s. In any case, I need lots of help from you fellows who might know of someone who could belong to our Group if he received this information. Give me a chance to get them into the "fold".

All the small B-24 tie-tac/lapel pins with 458th tail markings went quickly. As a matter of fact, a few were made for other Bomb Group readers who read our column. Found out that a mailer and postage exceeded the published sale price and any future requests will cost \$6.00. Thru an ordering error, I have 27 miniature wings — a full line — that I will sell at cost. These pewter wings are exact replicas of the full sized ones and can be used as tie tac or lapel pins. Sizes vary, but generally, they are 1½" long. As usual, any money over costs, goes to the 2 ADA treasury.

For those of you who intend to make Palm Springs in October, react quickly to the deposit request. Too many who wait until the last minute, find themselves away from the main body. Palm Springs promises to be a "Super" event, so don't forget to get your reservations in early. Ceil and I certainly plan to be there.

Hethel Highlights

by Roy Jonasson (389th)

Happy New Year! May this be a truly blessed, happy year for you and your loved ones.

Phone call from Roy Baxter, 389th navigator who lives up in Oregon. That guy is really something! His old crew has never had a reunion, so he is busy rounding up the entire crew. He is inviting all of them to his vacation home near Palm Springs and then all of them will come to the reunion together. He is working on those who do not belong to the 2nd Air Div. Association.

A reminder: send dues directly to Miss Evelyn Cohen, Apt. 06410 Delair Landing, 9301 State Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114. But why not send their names and addresses to Bud Koorndyke and let him send them a little packet telling about our Association?

So many notes at Christmas time. We sat and read them over and over. We had to laugh over Mattox's letter: "... same old thing, get up, eat, wash dishes, go to bed." If that is all you do, how did you ever get that beautiful house built! Boy! Would I like that acreage for my antennae system. Mattox if you don't turn up at our reunion, I'm personally going to haunt you.

Joe Chobey — a youngster of only 63 years — howled in distress because he is still working! MAN!!! Just give thanks you are still working. I've got one foot on a banana peel! 78 years in March — and wish I was 63 again. Joe, we sure would like to see you again. Can you apply for an October vacation, October 4-7. Put in for it right now! I do realize it is hard for you people on the East Coast. But to tell you the truth you can reach Palm Springs from the East Coast as quickly as I can get down to Palm Springs from the Central California coast. I have to drive in to San Luis Obispo, get a Greyhound to Los Angeles. That takes me about four hours! It was hard on us to get to Wilmington, No. Carolina and to Cambridge, Massachusetts. But this year we want all of us to get together — one big bang! Time is running out... PLEASE COME!!!!!!

Now here is one to shake you! Letter from Warren and Rachel Birkhead wanting to know "where are all the 389th". Well, we are all present and accounted for, Warren. Tell me the names of the men you are hunting and we'll try to zero you in on their location. We do our best to get you fellows together — but truthfully the best place is at our reunions. The 389th Roster lists 429 members. An anonymous person also sent in memberships for Mrs. Adovasio and her son. Isn't that great? I hope many of you wrote Mrs. Adovasio and told her you hoped she and her son

would come to the reunion. A "membership happy" individual who wishes to remain anonymous says, "Sometimes I think about just sitting down and writing a check for five or six (men). Would they be offended?" We think it is a TOP idea! This will show our men that we really do want them, that we miss them, and it gives those men a chance to see what's going on in the 2nd Air Division Association. Our Association has a purpose, a unique purpose, and we want all of our men to learn about it. Yeah, man! Get out that check book. Then notify Bud Koorndyke and ask him to send those men his packet to explain all about the Association.

How did you like the Adovasio article? You may be interested to learn that the son has written many scholarly research papers and some books. A copy of those papers and his books are now in our American Room in the Norwich Library in England, in memory of his father.

Well, on the lighter side of life... I've been going through all the back issues of the *Newsletter* of the 2nd Air Division Association (now called the *Journal*). It is filled with funny stories that happened to flying crews. Well, we could tell a few ourselves. SHARE WITH US! At the Norwich convention we sat around the dinner table and shed tears of laughter as one fellow after the other told "tall stories".

Remember boot camp? We all yearned to get off Base and see the town of Wichita Falls, Texas. We were tired of G.I. bed-making, ground detail, K.P. duty, latrine duty. What! You mean the garbage truck goes right through town? Oh boy! I'm gonna volunteer! I jumped into the cab by the driver. Of all things... I was going to see Wichita Falls. "Get down soldier! You don't sit up here! You sit on the back of the truck!" I what! With all those garbage cans? A thousand yucks! Well, we went through town alright. The truck backed up to the river. I sat on top of the cans waiting for the driver to come help me unload the cans. "That's your job, soldier." Down I jumped. The entire shore line of the river was deep in garbage. I sank in it almost up to my knees. When I got back to camp the boys turned the hose on me — coveralls, shoes and all. Lesson? You bet! Never volunteer for anything.

Remember good old Switzer who was in Parachutes? In Wichita Falls one night he got a bit crooked and was acting the fool. "Hey, boys, I'm gonna make a jump!" and he jumped right out of the first floor window. Good old Switzer, he came home and lost his life in a house fire.

And at Hethel — can you remember those miserable wood stoves? We were darn near freezing in that Engineering Tech. Supply hut. You fellows would come in trying to warm yourselves, but we had only that old, broken down wood stove (the bottom had burned out) that gave almost no heat. Well, we solved that. We

waited until another outfit went to dinner and then quickly exchanged stoves. The yelp that came from that bit of mischief resounded around camp for many a day. Carl Frederick, armaments, threatened to murder the guys who stole the stove. Guess you'll have to come to the reunion to carry out your threat, Carl.

One day I did someone in the kitchen a favor. Probably gave him a warm coat. Can't recall now. Anyhow, to reciprocate he said he'd leave the door to the canned food supplies unlocked that night. We boys thought we'd have a feast! I waited until it was good and dark and then quietly felt my way in through the door to snatch some canned fruit. Boy, but it was pitch dark! All of a sudden I bumped into someone. "Oh! excuse me soldier!" I recognized the officer's voice. I won't name him but he left the place right now! And so did I! In the other direction! Come to think of it — how many fellows had been told that door would be unlocked!!!!

We really feel so sorry for all of you who are suffering from the cold and all of that snow. A little snow is one thing — but this is dreadful. We've got a guest bedroom. Anyone want to come and thaw out? We are getting rain, but you don't have to shovel it.

Could each of you go through that list I sent to you and choose two fellows to contact this month? If you did nothing but get a "penny" postal card and send it to those two men — "Hey, remember me? I worked as a postman, or I worked as a mechanic, or I worked on Ole Irish" — won't you try and come to the reunion? Friendship is a great and wonderful thing. Hang on to it!

Notice

There is an all too obvious lack of participation in our Association by the fighter folks. Over the past several months, Fred Thomas and I have initiated a move to do all that we can to bring them aboard. We have contacted the respective associations of the 4th, 56th, 355th and 479th Fighter Groups, and we have recently located a contact for the 361st Fighter Group. If members of the Association are in contact with or know of any of the little friends from the above fighter groups, be they pilot or ground crew, operational or administrative, officer or enlisted, please ask them to contact me at 2369 Oak Crest Drive, Riverside, CA 92506, (714) 682-2579. We'd like to have them again join up with their big friends.

Col. Geo. M. Epperson, Ret.

THE PX PAGE

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Letters



Dear Bill:

Just could not let the year close without writing to express my appreciation for all the work you do in connection with the Second Air Division Association, particularly publishing the *Journal*. I truly look forward to receiving each issue and do not put it down until I have read it from cover to cover, then keep it conveniently by my chair for casual perusing until the next issue arrives.

On the subject of plaques — I wonder if Phil Day has sent you one of the 467th Bomb Group plaques that he and I developed? Most of the Rackheath Aggies were sent a copy, but it might be nice to publish one in a future issue of the *Journal*. I am sure that Phil has an extra copy or so and would be glad to send you one. I have admired the .50 cal. plaque that Rick Rokicki made, so tried my hand using a 2ADA decal on piece of plexiglas mounted on a mahogany board — then adding the aluminum name plate, made locally, and the B-24 tie tack that I ordered from somewhere, but found it too big to wear. The assorted pins at the top were not a part of the original plaque. Over time, I add these pins of various Air Force related organizations so I wouldn't lose them. If this color picture will reproduce, it might inspire other experimenters to try other ideas. This one hangs over my desk in the den and makes a nice wall ornament.

Sorry I could not make it to Norwich this year, but things just did not work out.

Carl E. Epting, Jr.

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Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed is a check to cover my dues and one 2nd Air Division car decal. Whatever is left please send it on to the Library.

I have also enclosed a photograph of a 446th BG, 706 B.S., B-24 called *DO-JIN-DON*. The crew my father was with flew some of their missions on this plane and their A-2 jackets had the same painting on the back as the nose of their B-24. I am sure other crews flew missions in this plane and I would like to know the serial number, what happened to *DO-JIN-DON* and if anyone has any other photographs of the plane. I would be grateful for any information.

Gary A. Indre
3329 Elm Terr.
Falls Church, Va. 22042

Dear Bill:

After all this time, I am able to get around again and glad to be back with the Second Air Division Association. Evelyn did manage to send me the June and September issues of the *Journal*.

I saw the two books listed in the publication, *Fields of Little America* and *The B-24 Liberator at War*. I am enclosing my check for \$30.00 for both books. I was top turret gunner on B24D *Ole Irish*, 564th Bombardment Squadron, 389th Bombardment Group, Pilot Frank McLaughlin.

I would like to know if there are back issues of the *Journal* and how much they cost. Also, would like to know what Life Membership would cost.

Will send you a few articles that I have, just as soon as I can get them reproduced.

Chester W. Moore (389th)

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Dear Mr. Roberti:

I have enclosed some essays written by young children in Norfolk who have been studying what life was like during the war and the impact of the arrival of the 2nd Air Division on their rural communities. This is part of a project funded by the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division in Norwich to preserve the idea of the Memorial Library as a living memory to those who died fighting for freedom. I thought that these three essays might be of interest to readers of the 2nd Air Division *Journal*. I cannot vouch for their accuracy since the children had to rely on the memories of the people they interviewed.

Dr. Roy Baker
School of Education
University of East Anglia
Keswick Hall
Norwich NR4 6TL

The Memorial Trust Library: Norwich

As part of a programme to acquaint the present school generation with the life in the 1940's in England the Memorial Trust has funded an educational project to show the cultural impact on English rural life of the arrival of the 2nd Air Division in East Anglia. The project has invited a number of schools to participate and these essays from 10-11 year old children at Old Buckenham School may revive memories for veterans of the 453rd Bomb Group. The children were asked to interview people who lived near the airfields at Old Buckenham, Seething, Rackheath and Halesworth and these interviews have been recorded on audio-tapes for study by historians of the future. The audio-tapes are being stored in the archives of the Memorial Library in Norwich.

If veterans have any old photographs or documents that relate to the above, or other, airfields and they are willing to donate them or copies to the project and archives we would be most grateful. They can be sent to Dr. Roy Baker, School of Education, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 6TL who is coordinating the project.

VISIT TO THE AIRFIELD

Simon Gradon

Connected with our topic about the Americans in Old Buckenham we visited the airfield.

We were shown round by Mr. Avis. There are three things still standing. Living quarters, Shooting butts and fire station. The airfield is still used but the runway is only about 1 mile long and used to be about 1½ miles long. The width is 50 yds. There used to be an oak tree at the end of the main

Dear Bill:

I have been trying to locate the crew of an aircraft which crashed near Mayfield Derbyshire in late 1944 or early 1945. The details are as follows:

Serial number 42-94904, believed called *Belle of the Brawl*. According to Al Blue this a/c was transferred to the MTO on the 8th January 1945 and the location of transfer was the 2nd Base Air Depot. Judging from the position of the wreckage the a/c appears to have been flying west from Burtonwood, Lancs at the time of the crash.

I have been informed that the serials 94903 and 94904 were allocated to the 489th BG and both a/c were lost on operations. 94904 was not 489 BG a/c.

Could you put a note in your newsletter or magazine for me requesting information? Any other information would be greatly appreciated.

Barry Blunt (BA Hons)
17 Marina Drive
Marple
Stockport, SK6 6JF
Cheshire, England

runway because of this there were a few crashes. One happened when a liberator came over and took the top off the tree. The ammunition store was kept underneath a net. The shooting butt was a place where they tested the guns. They are huge mounds of earth, Mr. Avis said if you went there now you would still find many bullets. The runway closest to the shooting butts was not used very much it was mostly used for lining up planes.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. RAMM

Liam Simington

Mr. Ramm went to Old Buckenham school in 1943. He was ten. He had started a year early. He knew the Americans were coming. They arrived by ship just before Christmas 1943. The Americans didn't build the airfield the Irish did. He made friends with the Americans, they were handsome, polite, friendly. There were 6-700 people in Old Buckenham but 3,000 Americans in the airfield. It took 1 year to build the airfield. Mr. Ramm got his first candy (sweets) from the Americans. In their spare time they usually went to Norwich or Attleborough. At that time there were 5 pubs The Sun, Snake and Toad, The Jolly Spotsman, The Ox and Plough and The White Horse. To build the airfield the Irish had to blow up trees which was a great surprise for the children. Mr. Ramm walked past the airfield every day, so he saw it growing in size. Liberators flew from Old Buckenham. The war ended May 8th 1945 the next day the Americans had gone without a trace. There was a Christmas party in 1944 with 1,250 children. After the war the RAF used it for storing bombs until 1956. The base stayed the same until 1956. It started going in the 60's

SARAH KING INTERVIEWS MRS. BURTON

Louise Arnup

Mrs. Burton used to work in the N.A.F.F.I. She used to know some of the Americans, they were called Barney Lyle who used to be the chaplain, Jess Guarding used to mount the camera on the aeroplanes. Lester Hardwick developed the photographs and Don Miller took them. Mrs. Burton lives in the same house now as she did in the war. She was 15 when the war was on. The N.A.F.F.I. was like a long nissen hut which had a piano in it and one flyer before he went out on a mission always used to play the Dream of Olwyn. But he got killed. Lester Hardwick married an English girl and they both went to live in America.

Dear Evelyn:

Sorry to be late with my dues. Just found out I haven't paid up. Would appreciate it very much if you would send me two 2nd ADA decals. Thanks.

Now I would like to ask some of the folks that are selling the books, needlecraft designs and plaques, etc. How about getting someone to make a puzzle of a B-24. I am sure a lot of us would buy one, maybe 1500 pieces or one we could frame.

Harold H. McNeely
257 Lewis Ave.
Marysville, Ohio 43640

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Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed is my check for \$25.00 covering my dues for 1984 and the balance for the Norwich Memorial Library Fund.

A very belated congratulations on your part in planning the reunion in Norwich. This was our first reunion and we had a wonderful time. After the reunion we drove to Scotland and played golf at the old course of St. Andrews. Going back to the old base, Wendling, was another highlight.

My wife and I are looking forward to the 1984 reunion at Palm Springs.
Kenneth Healing (579th/392nd BG)

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Dear Bill:

Col. Will Williams of Miami recently sent me a copy of your fine publication, the *Journal*. He has been a great help to me with his recollections of the 445th in my research toward a book on the military service of Major Glenn Miller. I wonder whether you would include this letter in your March issue as a request to former 2 AD members who might remember anything about Glenn Miller's appearances at their airfields.

Specifically, I'm trying to find the date and location of Miller's appearance with his band at either Tibenham, Hethel, or Old Buckenham sometime around the early part of the December 1944. Col. Williams isn't sure of the location and date but he remembers that Miller and the band arrived in a couple of B-24s that had been sent to Twinwood or Bovingdon to pick them up. The string section of the band had to stay behind because one of the B-24s had a minor collision with an obstacle and suffered wing tip damage. This was probably a week or so before the 20-mission party for the 445th and if any former members can recall Miller's arrival, the date, and the station, I'd very much like to hear their recollections.

I'd appreciate it if you'd forward the enclosed letter to Walt Laughlin who had a letter in your December issue of the *Journal*. Kind regards to you and your staff.

Dale M. Titler
P.O. Box 7361
Courthouse Road Station
Gulfport, Miss. 39501

P.S. I'm a serious researcher and practicing historian in the areas of aviation and military history, a former flight instructor and WWII AAF veteran (stateside). My books include: *Wings of Adventure*, *Wings of Mystery*, *I Flew a Camel* (with M. C. Kinney, ex-RAF 1918d), *The Day The Red Baron Died* and two volumes for young readers: *Unnatural Resources* and *Haunted Treasures*.

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Dear Bill:

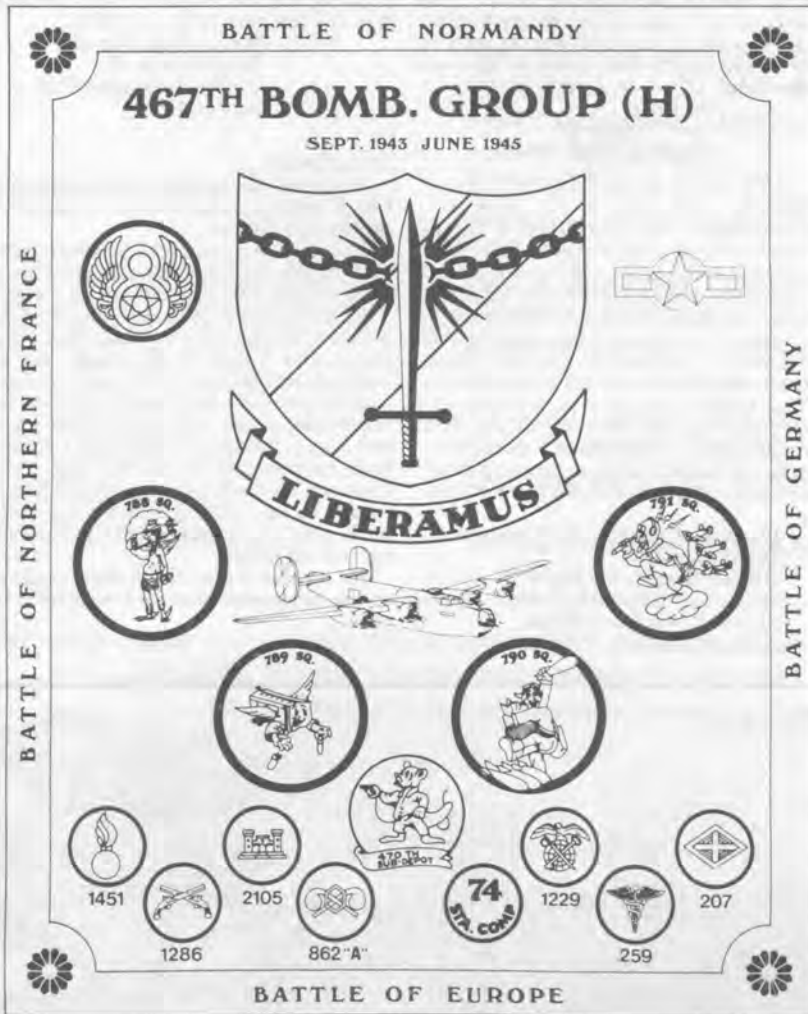
Many thanks for your letter of Nov. 26th last year in reply to my request for contacts with information on Glenn Miller. My sincere apologies for not replying earlier but I can only offer the usual excuses which have in this instance been accompanied by the seasonal commitments over Christmas and the New Year.

I do have other military interests, viz The Pacific War or The Far East War as it is known to Limeys. I have been collecting material for about ten years and for the last eight have been doing exhibitions all over the U.K. — in fact some 25 to date, sort of 'a mobile museum' I guess. Such a wealth of material just has to be shared with others and I am willing to go anywhere to help Ex-Service Associates, to tell the public what their war was really all about. As you can imagine it is a labor of love, a commitment to others as well, but like Miller something I believe in deeply.

I wonder if you know the addresses of Gen. Doolittle (from whom I would like a signed photo) and a certain Col. Robert N. Isbell USAF, although I do not know if he was of the 2nd. Miller did a concert at Ike's H.Q. at Widewing on Aug. 9th and I have seen a photo of his (Isbell's) taken then.

Many thanks and I look forward to hear from you when convenient.

Vic Brown
"Lorna Doone"
Welgate, Mattishall
Dereham, Norfolk
NR20 3PL
England



Dear Bill:

Thank you for your prompt reply to my letter. Glad to hear that my letter reached you by the deadline (quite by accident) and that you thought well enough of my efforts to publish in the *Journal*. I hope it reproduces satisfactorily.

I called Phil and he agreed that it would be great to publish the 467th plaque for general interest of the membership. Phil originated the idea for the plaque and I drafted up one or two alternative designs and between us we settled on the one in color. The black and white was the first proof, but it may be more appropriate for reproduction. Use whichever you think best. The plaque is pretty well self explanatory. We tried to include elements to represent all units attached to the group, more or less symmetrically arranged around the group insignia. There are small changes that I would make if we were doing it over, but generally we were satisfied with the effort considering we did it all by mail. I worked with a local advertising firm here and Phil was able to get the printing done out in Shreveport. I believe they were distributed free (or voluntary contributions) at the group reunion in Dayton in October. Phil has more of the details.

Now that I am retired, maybe I will come up with something for the *Journal*. Most of my mission experiences were rather routine, but perhaps I can recall something of general interest.

Thanks again for all of your hard work and for putting these plaques in print. The 467th one might read better if it could be almost full size — if you have room. Write or call if you need any additional info. (904) 253-6977.

Carl E. Epting, Jr.
427 Hillside Avenue
Daytona Beach, Fla. 32018

Dear Bill:

One of my greatest pleasures is in researching the history of the Carpetbagger special operation of WWII. As you know, this operation was carried out by the 801st BG (Prov.) until mid-August 1944, when the 492nd BG (H) designation with the 856th, 857th, and 859thd BS designations absorbed the Carpetbagger personnel and continued the operations. Therefore, I read with great interest the article by Mr. George Greiff, "Wht Happened to the 856th".

The 856th, it seems, was a very unique squadron. Wherever and whenever calls came in to Eighth Air Force for combat crews to carry out a special assignment, the 856th was called upon. In October 1944, 856th BS personnel were sent to Ancey, France, to carry out the evacuation of American escapees from Switzerland. When crews were needed in November 1944 to help out the 406th BS Night Leaflet Squadron at Cheddington, seven crews were sent there on D/S. And, in March 1945, detachments were sent to operate from Dijon, France, conducting operations into the Bavarian-Austrian Alps. We must remember that the 856th BS operated independently of the group from October 1944 to mid-March 1945, and received orders from Headquarters, Eighth Air Force.

Maybe I can shed a little more light on some of the things Mr. Greiff brought out in his excellent article. I think Mr. Petrenko's unit was stationed at Harrington, Northamptonshire, as were the rest of the Carpetbagger units after late March 1944. I am not sure that the group at Watton was under Second Air Division control. However, the new 492nd BG and its units at Harrington were under First Air Division. Permission was requested, but never obtained, to convert the group to B-17s. Eighth Air Force was responsible for the training of the B-24 crews and First Air Division was responsible for the training of B-17 crews. Eighth Air Force was to say when the conversion was to be done. It never was.

I am enclosing some excerpts from my research which I will call "More of What Happened to the 856th".

George A. Reynolds, in his little book "ETO Carpetbaggers" writes of a unit located at Leuchars, Scotland, on an RAF base, and an operation at Watton AAF 505 which flew British Mosquitos, and Spitfires, on loan from the RAF.

The unit at Leuchars used black-painted B-24s for night operations and others painted in green for daylight jobs. On the daylight operations the crews wore civilian clothes and used NC serials, according to Reynolds.

There is no way of knowing how many separate operations were being carried out during those times. It is likely that many used "D/S from 856th BS" to hide behind.

If you care to you may send this to Mr. Greiff, or use in any manner you see fit.

Ben Parnell

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Dear Bill:

Could any *Journal* readers come up with any information regarding a Cpl. Melvyn Hunnicutt who was with the 3D SAD at Watton, Norfolk, England from 1943 to 1945 and was discharged in Jacksonville, Florida. I thought the reunion in Norwich was great and am sorry I did not get around to meeting you then, but hope to on the next one. Keep up the good work on the *Journal*.

Denis Duffield
Jubilee Cottage
Rushmeadow Rd.
Scarning
NR192NW Dereham
Norfolk, England

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Dear Evelyn:

I'm a little late with my dues, but it is strictly an oversight on my part. I just forgot!!

I will also use this occasion to thank you and your crew for the wonderful time that Betty and I had at the 2AD reunion in Norwich. While I met no one from my old outfit — 464th Sub-Depot at Shipdham, 44th Gp. — we made a number of new friends. I especially enjoyed the visit to the old base — Station 115 — at Shipdham, where I spent 2 years and 9 months during WWII from Sept. 1942 to June 1945.

I know that the 1984 reunion will be in California, but do you know where the 1985 meeting is to be? I am trying to get a mini-reunion set up for my old bunch and if possible would like to have both of them at the same time.

Al Ruby
1106 Rogers St.
Madera, Calif. 93638

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Dear Editor:

On 1 December 1983, the Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center (AFSHRC), located at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, was redesignated the United States Air Force Historical Research Center (USAFHRC). The redesignation occurred because the Air Force desired to emphasize the worldwide Air Force commitment of the Center and its staff. The facility name will remain unchanged, honoring the memory of the first Air Force historian, Dr. Albert F. Simpson.

I would appreciate your printing a brief announcement of this name change for your readers.

Lloyd H. Cornett, Jr., Director
Headquarters
United States Air Force
Historical Research Center
Maxwell Air Force Base
Alabama 36112

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Dear William:

Enclosed please find my duty for the 1984 membership. Sorry that I am so late, but Christmas and New Year kept me busy. But I hope you will accept my membership.

We had a beautiful Christmas and New Year. It was like springtime and I stayed some hours in the sun. Now, the winter returned and we have snow and rain again.

Next Monday I have to go to the Army again. I am aircraft observer in an Anti-aircraft gun unit at Emmen near Lucerne. The job is interesting, but 21 weeks is a long time.

I hope all is well with you. If you feel I can do anything for you don't hesitate and write me. All the very best for 1984!!

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

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Dear Evelyn:

I received the permanent membership card today from you and I want to thank you for doing this for me.

It means a great deal to me to belong to the 2nd Air Division as there are a great deal of memories there that I really treasure.

I just came out of the hospital from having a minor stroke. Thank God that I had the nurse that I had as she really did get me back on my feet again. The second day that I was in there she came and said that I didn't think that I was just going to lay there and feel sorry for myself. She said quote "We have exercises to do so let's get to them," unquote. By the fourth day there I had feeling return to my left leg and my face all came back. All I have now is a little discomfort in my left shoulder.

As soon as I can, I will send some money to the Memorial fund as I do want to do my part.

John L. Boyle (448th)

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Dear Bill:

Enclosed find a picture of Nora and I in front of the Three Nags Pub near the Hardwick base. This was taken by John Archer last July.

If you want to put it in the *Journal* some time, I think some of the men of the 93rd would enjoy it.

It is not open now and not in very good repair as you can see from the picture. Keep up the good work. We enjoy every copy of the *Journal*.

Paul Harwood (93rd BG)

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION
37th Annual Reunion

Hilton Riviera Hotel

Palm Springs, California

October 4 - 7, 1984

Thursday, Oct. 4	Registration Hotel Lobby 9 AM - 5 PM Cocktail Party 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM Dinner & Mini Reunions 7:30 PM
Friday, Oct. 5	Buffet Breakfast 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM Registration 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM Buses depart for March AFB 9:00 AM for Memorial Service and Luncheon Cocktail Party 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM Poolside California Bar-B-Que 7:30 PM -
Saturday, Oct. 6	Buffet Breakfast 7:30 AM - 9:00 AM Business Meeting 10:00 AM - Noon Combat and reunion films 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Ladies Fashion Show and Luncheon 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM Cocktail Party 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM Gala Banquet 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM Dancing 9:30 PM - 1:00 AM
Sunday, Oct. 7	Buffet Breakfast 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

The costs listed below are for the entire package as shown above, including hotel room for 3 nights. Should you require special arrangements such as third party in room, no hotel room, etc., let me know what your requirements are and I will send costs.

COST PER PERSON

Check here if 1st reunion

SINGLE OCCUPANCY	\$390.00
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY	\$290.00 per person

If you wish to share a room let me know and I will try to come up with a partner.

NAME _____ SPOUSE _____ GROUP _____

ADDRESS _____

SINGLE ____ DOUBLE ____ WILL SHARE ____ ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE _____

DEPOSIT _____ PAID IN FULL _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

Acknowledgements will be mailed by Sept. 1st.

Mail reservation form to EVELYN COHEN, 06-410 DELAIRE LANDING RD., PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19114 — 215-632-3992.

Do not mail same to hotel.

CUT ON DOTTED LINE

For guaranteed reservations, full payment by August 1, 1984.

Cancellations — full refund if written notice is received no later than September 15, 1984.

Handicapped — please advise if you need this type of accommodation.

Early Arrivals — hotel rooms will be available at special rates from Monday 10/1 - Monday 10/8.

Extra Charges — all charges other than those listed should be paid directly to hotel on check out.

Parking — there is plenty of free parking at hotel site.

Hotel is not a high rise, just two stories high so no need to worry about reserving lower floors.

Golf Tournament — write to Pete Henry, 164B Portland Lane, Jamesburg, N.J. 08831.

Weather — Palm Springs in October ranges from 74° to 84°. It can be very warm during the day and cool in the evening. Would recommend sweater or light coat for evening, light weight cottons for day wear. Men will not need ties or coats, with the exception of our Saturday banquet and dance.

Car rentals are available at P.S. airport and the hotel has free limousine service from airport, simply call on arrival. Those flying to California, check into flying into Ontario and renting a car from there. It is only one hour to P.S. and an easy ride.. Those flying into L.A. stay away from Sun Air (my spies have so informed me).

There is lots to see and do in P.S. (Living Desert Reserve, Indio Date Gardens, Ancient Indian Canyons, P.S. Desert Museum and, of course, the famous Aerial Tramway (if you have the nerve). There are tennis courts at the hotel and a lovely swimming pool. For those ladies who dote on shopping, let me assure you, you will love Palm Canyon Drive.

NOTE: Please do not come to P.S. and expect to be included in all events, without advance reservations. This is especially true of mini reunions where individual rooms are assigned according to number of reservations received. If you are not positive, just let me know and you can cancel at a later date or make a tentative reservation.

CUT ON DOTTED LINE