



MEMORIES AND RETURN — 40TH ANNUAL REUNION

HQ 2nd Air Division

- 2nd Combat B. Wg.
- 359th B. Gp.
- 445th B. Gp.
- 453rd B. Gp.

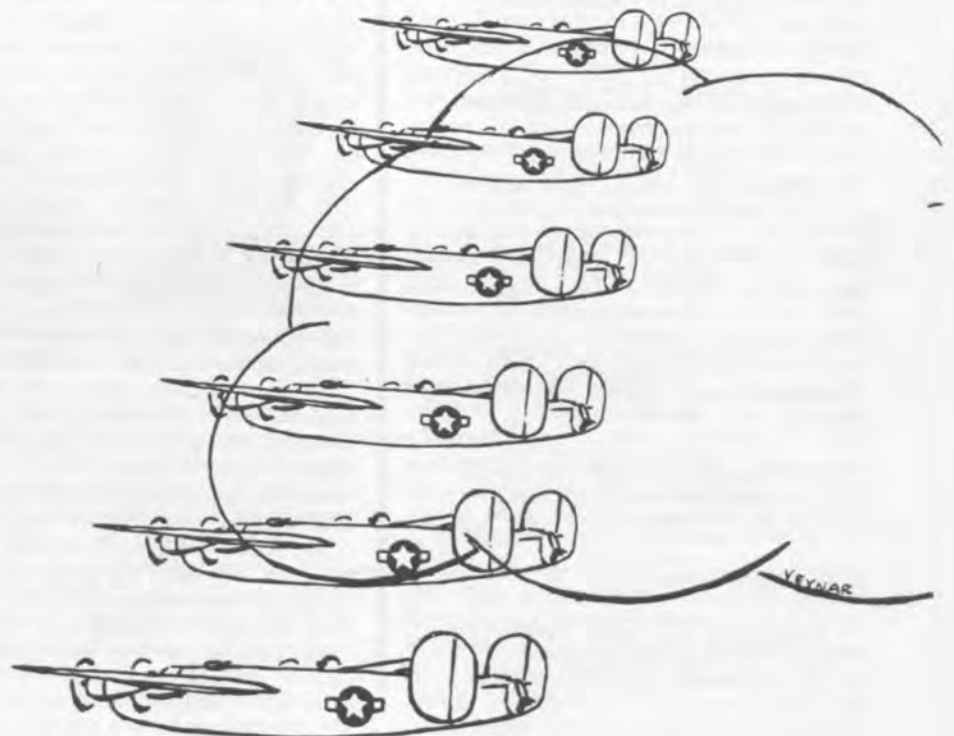
- 14th Combat B. Wg.
- 44th B. Gp.
- 392nd B. Gp.
- 491st B. Gp.
- 492nd B. Gp.

- 20th Combat B. Wg.
- 93rd B. Gp.
- 446th B. Gp.
- 448th B. Gp.

- 95th Combat B. Wg.
- 489th B. Gp.

- 96th Combat B. Wg.
- 458th B. Gp.
- 466th B. Gp.
- 467th B. Gp.

- 65th Fighter Wg.
- 4th F. Gp.
- 56th F. Gp.
- 355th F. Gp.
- 361st F. Gp.
- 479th F. Gp.



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President's Message



As I sit at my desk on this 6th day of April to put together a few sentences for the final issue of the Journal for my year as President, I wish it were possible to talk with each of you in person. Since that is not possible I want to take this means of telling you how thankful I am that you allowed me to serve as your president for the years of 1986-87. It has been an enjoyable and wonderful experience for me. It has afforded me the opportunity to meet more of you on a personal basis and to share the good times together. It has also afforded my good wife, Edna, and my family to know about the Second Air Division Association...the great group of people who make up this organization and the tremendous contributions and sacrifices that the Second Air Division contributed to the Success of Victory during the years 1942-45.

We are proud members of an association that planted a seed and devised a plan to establish the Memorial Trust Second Air Division U.S.A.A.F. before we left the soil of Norfolk in 1945. Forty-two years later the seed we planted has blossomed and continues to grow. Not only do we have a fine "American Room" within the bounds of the Central Library of Norwich which is well stocked with great reference and reading material and staffed by capable personnel, we have also established within these 42 years a great bond of friendship with all of Norwich and East Anglia people. To visit Norwich and to view the American Room, and to be greatly received and welcomed by such friendly people is within itself a great and wonderful experience.

I want to thank the members of the executive committee, all of the vice presidents and the entire membership for the wonderful cooperation that I have received this year. Hard work produces good results: our membership has reached 6500. To sum up my feelings I wish to say, "The Second Air Division Association is walking and talking tall!"

It is with much anticipation that I look forward to being with those of you who are going to Norwich for our 40th Convention May 21-26. In 1988 our convention will be in Colorado Springs. Let's make it a big one!

We had a great executive meeting in Savannah, Georgia in February. It was well attended and the reports were most enthusiastic for the well-being and continued success of your organization.

It has been my privilege to represent the Second Air Division to the best of my ability. It has been my privilege to meet with Lt. General Kenneth L. Peek, Jr., Commander, 8th AF and also to correspond with General Larry D. Welch, Chief of Staff of the Air Force. I relayed to these two distinguished leaders the interest and support of the Second Air Division Association. Elsewhere in this issue you will find a message from General Welch, Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

Unity of purpose, hard work, enthusiasm and cooperation has been the track record of our association of the past. May we continue in these avenues of success. To my successor in office...I ask you to join with me in pledging our full cooperation and support. My wish for each of you is continued good health, peace and happiness. As God richly blesses our lives may we continue to strive individually and collectively to keep the torch of freedom burning brightly!

I greatly appreciate each of you!

Jim H. Reeves

A Note from the Veep



As I write this I do so with an ever increasing degree of anticipation. I am sure all of you who are planning to attend our "Home Coming" share that feeling.

As you read this I will have become a "fait accompli" so somewhere inbetween these two inconsistencies it is my task to impart to you something intelligent.

Of course the main theme will be the reunion itself! Just imagine - our 40th. That in itself is a milestone. Then there will be dinners, mini reunions, Group meetings. Interspersed with the foregoing will come Executive Committee meetings, return trips to our bases, receptions, tours, ceremonies, etc. Finally the General Business meeting and gala banquet.

As the festivities come to an end the "Old Guard" changes as it does each year. This brings me to the point of my message, assuming the leadership of our organization. I'm sure every incoming President has mixed emotions and a certain degree of trepidation - myself included. There are some things I feel should be done, some that should not. Programs that should be continued, enhanced, nurtured. There are some perhaps that should be left to the tender mercies of time and circumstance. Time alone will tell.

However, one thing is certain. I shall lean heavily on the vast backlog of wisdom and experience that has been garnered by our past Presidents, Vice Presidents, Group VPs, officers, representatives, etc. They shall not go unpolled. With so rich a heritage behind us I look forward to a happy and fruitful term.

See you, or will have seen you in Norwich.

Carl I. Alexanderson



POOP from GROUP 467

by Dave Swearingen

First let me apologize to all who read my message in the March issue of the Journal and were offended by one of the sentences. Where I referred to Rod McKay and Lowell Hamma the printed version was different from my hand-written version I had mailed to the Journal Editor.

I had written, "We newer crew pilots had a high regard and respect for these men." The printed version had "We never completely had a high regard and respect for these men." It's unfortunate and I'm truly sorry this happened!

It is ironic that only a few days after I had received my copy of the Journal I received a letter from Lowell Hamma. I had had no communication with him since we were together at Rackheath and went our separate ways after finishing our missions in 1944. He knew nothing of the 2 ADA or

the 467th Bomb Group Association. I wrote him and sent him info on our activities. Hope he will join and attend our Group reunion in Shreveport in September.

As of Feb. 24, 1987 there were 45 confirmed reservations from 467th folks attending the Norwich reunion. This message is for the June '87 Journal which won't be mailed until after the May reunion.

Joe, Helen, Joe Jr. and Joan Dzenowagis are all confirmed for the Norwich get-together. They plan to continue the videotaping project they started last July in St. Charles. Depending on availability of agreement in Norwich they hope to show their 50-60 minute documentary titled "Faces of the Second Air Division." They surely will be at our Group reunion in Shreveport and will have the proper equipment available.

Our Veep wrote that their 14th Dallas 2 ADA mini-reunion dinner was a huge success. The 467th for the 4th year in a row had the most attendees. Again for the 4th year Col. Shower attended and was in great shape!

Jack Stevens wrote that the Southern California mini-reunion of the 2 ADA was at the El Toro Officers Club on Feb. 28th. Some 260 people attended. Jack wrote "Lots of talk, jokes, retelling of heroics (which get better with time) and just getting together."

As of January 5th our Group was 5th in membership with a total of 480. Please help us over the 500 level. There's still a lot of 467th BG Vets out there that know nothing about the 2 ADA and our own Group Association.

Phillip Day's April issue of Poop from Group 467 will have up-to-date information on the 467th BG reunion in Shreveport, La., September 24-27, 1987. Write now and let him know if you will attend, how many and what you would like to do while in Shreveport. He and Miss Cille are working overtime to make this the greatest!

Thanks again for this opportunity to contact all of you by the written word. Please write!



392nd B.G.

by John B. Conrad

It's a pleasure to continue to list new members, including: John M. Serafini, engineer-top gunner on Bruce L. Sooy's crew from October 1943 to March 1944 in the 578th BS and a POW from March 1944 to April 1945; Albert J. Riley, original cadre, ball turret gunner on the Barnes crew in the 576th BS from August 1943 until shot down at Brunswick May 1944 on his 29th mission and a POW until the end of the war; Gail L. Nichols, also original cadre, assigned to sheet metal work and perimeter defense in the 74th Service Squadron, July 1943 to April 1944; Samson Miller, 579th BS; James A. Green, co-pilot on George Bridson's crew, 578th BS, shot down over Munich, July 1944, interned in Switzerland, returned to the 392nd BG in October 1944; Pilot Gilbert O. Eisermann, 578th BS, from March 1944, until shot down over Politz in May 1944, POW until April 1945; Emanuel J. Cappello, 576th BS, flight engineer on the Wilmer Kilmer crew, August 1944 to January 1945; Vernon A. Lindberg, navigator, Doug Ambrose's crew, 577th BS, November 1943 to July 1944; Robert L. Mitchell, gunner on the John Eggleston lead crew, 578th and 579th BS, June 1944 to the completion of his tour in April 1945; Lorenzo R. Burciaga, 579th BS, co-pilot on the Jack Bilz crew, September 1944, completing a tour of 35 missions in April 1945.

If you know or remember any of the new members listed above, please let us know. We'll send you the new member's address so that you may contact him. These members joined to renew their acquaintance with

those they knew when serving at Wendling. Please don't disappoint them.

The growth in numbers of 392nd BG members this past fall and winter is very pleasing. Although past and present officers of the 2nd ADA have worked hard to contact and enroll new members, most of the growth has come from present members who have brought in their friends and buddies. Officers and directors of the recently organized 392nd BGMA, all of whom are also members of the 2nd ADA, have contributed generously to this growth through the exchange of membership information.

With as many as 3,000 serving at any one time when the group was operating at full strength, it is estimated that due to air crew rotation and other transfers of personnel, at least 5,000 men served in the 392nd BG while it was stationed at Wendling between August 1943 and May 1945. The 2nd ADA Roll of Honor lists 748 men in the 392nd BG who were KIA "preparing for, during, or immediately after combat operations." Another 500 may have died as POWs or as a result of disease or accident. Perhaps 1,000 have died since, leaving perhaps 2,700-2,800 eligible for membership. Your help in locating, contacting, and enrolling these men who are eligible but not now members is sorely needed.

In the last issue (March), the first of a "Lest We Forget" series which opened with "The 392nd Echelon arrived at Wendling the 15th of August 1945 (sic)," should read "1943". The second in this series follows: **Lest We Forget** by Myron H. Keilman. "Target: Gdynia, Poland. On the 9th of October, 1943 the 392nd, 44th, 389th and 93rd - all the groups of the 2nd Bombardment Division - were assigned to bomb submarine and port facilities at Gdynia and Danzig, Poland. They are on the Baltic Sea near the Lithuanian Border. It was a ten hour mission, the

longest up to that time, flown by the 8th Air Force. Only our mission to Oslo, Norway, to come in November, was comparable in length.

"The 578th, with Major Polking as command pilot, led the mission with fourteen B-24s. Only ten reached the target. Four safely aborted the mission. Two 579th crews flew with the 44th BG. Heavy smoke screens were so effective that our lead bombardier, Lt. Westbrook, could not sight on the target and the bombing was ineffective. Our H2X radar (Mickey) sets would not be available to us - along with their skilled operators - for another year.

"Our group suffered several fighter attacks. Nine airplanes were shot up but none were lost. Our gunners claimed six enemy airplanes. The redeeming feature of the day was that the Forts made a devastating strike on the FW-190 airplane plant of Marienburg (Malbork), just south of Danzig (Gdanisk).

"In spite of the disappointing results of the long and hazardous mission - here is a complimentary message from the British Fighter Command: To 2nd Combat Wing and Groups, 14th Combat Wing and Groups, Following message received from AOC-IN-C., H.Q. Fighter Command quote 10/Oct May I offer the heartiest congratulations of the British Fighter Command for brilliant exploits of the 8th U.S. Bomber Command during the last 48 hours. In their epic attacks against Danzig and Gdynia they have far exceeded their own brilliant record. Good luck. Signed Trafford Leigh-Mallory." Unquote.

As many members will recognize, this column was written before our 40th Annual Reunion will be held in Norwich May 21-25. For 392nd members, there is a second chance for a reunion this year - to be held by the 392nd BGMA in Tulsa June 25-28. The writer looks forward to seeing you at either or both.

Headquarters Report

by Mary Frances Elder

Several months ago Ray Strong, former President of 2AD, wrote the following letter to Mrs. Jackie Stuart of Aldborough, Norwich, who is writing a book called "Friendly Invasion - The Eighth Air Force in England 1942-45." I think you will agree Ray writes as well as Mrs. Stuart, and we can all emphasize with what he says —

"In October 1942, I was among the early U.S. Army arrivals in Norwich with the mission of organizing the Headquarters of the 2nd Bomb Wing (later to be named the 2nd Bombardment Division and finally the 2nd Air Division). I was a single, 23 year old Lieutenant having been trained in Army Air Corps administration. I believe that there were 12 of us, all 2nd Lieutenants, who had been transported across the Atlantic in a small Puerto Rican "banana boat" called the Coamo. I was seasick, or scared, or both for the entire trip. I didn't go near the mess hall for almost a week! I was so weak when we arrived in Liverpool that I could hardly carry my gear off the ship! Incidentally, I understand that the Coamo was sunk by German U-boats after it left England with a load of troops and supplies for the British soldiers in Africa. After a train trip from Liverpool to London and then out to "Pinetree" (Headquarters of 8th Bomber Command located in the village of High Wycombe), we were sent by truck on a cold overnight trip to Norwich. We were stationed at Old Catton (which had been a Barrage Balloon Headquarters) for a few weeks and then moved to Horsham St. Faith. I soon recognized that I was very lucky to have been assigned to Norwich.

After moving out to Ketteringham Hall, Norwich was the place we went to for an evening out, or to go to the flicks, or to a pub, or to the Sampson and Hercules Ballroom or the Lido Ballroom, and to catch the train to London. In the beginning, we were, I suppose, something of a novelty in the community. But we were welcomed into the homes of the English people. Despite the shortages of food which existed, they were generous in sharing the food and beverages which they had. And we were authorized to take certain foods with us when we visited in a home.

By the fall of 1942, the bombings by the Germans had declined somewhat but we did experience some V-2 rockets coming over and made frequent use of the air raid shelters which had been constructed over several years. I remember that one of my roommates while at Horsham was a young Lieutenant by the name of Leo Eckerle who always kept a bottle of scotch whiskey by his bed. When the air raid warning siren went off, Leo would grab his bottle of whiskey and a can of "C" rations and head for the shelter. He always said that he wanted to be prepared in case it was a long time before the "all clear" sounded! And I can remember several times being in movie houses in Norwich and London when the screen would show that an air raid was in progress. But only a few people left to go to the shelters since, by that time, the major air raids had stopped and it was usually just

a V-2 rocket ("buzz bombs").

During all but the first few months, we had a large detachment of American WAC's assigned to the Headquarters. This hard working and efficient group not only made a significant contribution to the war effort but helped our morale as well. This was another advantage that the Bomber Stations and their combat crews did not have.

One thing that had some effect on the morale of those of us who were not on combat crews was the fact that we knew we would not be going home until the war was over. Some had illnesses and deaths in their family at home during their stay in England. But the most dramatic and the thing that had an important impact on the morale of those concerned was the receipt of a "Dear John" letter. Termination of an engagement or a marriage was something very difficult to deal with from so far away.

Dining out at the 'Bell' or the 'Castle Hotel' and other restaurants was a pleasure. There was, of course, no beef. But I learned that there are many interesting ways to prepare rabbit and pheasant which seemed to be in plentiful supply. There was also plenty of mutton and good old brussel sprouts! There were many delightful weekends on the Wroxam Broads in the summertime. Some of us got together and rented a small cabin cruiser anchored at the broads. The engine had been removed since there was no petrol but it made a great place for partying with both English and American girls. Since most of the young English men were in the services, there seemed to be an abundance of pretty, young English girls in and around Norwich. And I must confess that I felt it my duty to be "neighborly" and to contribute what I could to advancing British-American relations.

Everything considered, I have very pleasant memories of my 32 months in Norwich. I was part of an organization making an important contribution to the war effort. I was proud of its growth from just a few men and airplanes to a strength of 55,000 men and women that had, I believe, 500 B-24s in the air on D-Day."

Ray's letter was fascinating to me, and I was quite interested in the captions Mrs. Stuart is going to use on some of her chapters, such as: Chapter 4. "The need for female companionship; good girls, bad girls, dances on and off base. Prostitutes." and, Chapter 5. "The British pub and its culture, beer, drunkenness." Altogether, Mrs. Stuart covers practically every aspect of the "Friendly Invasion" - from Arrival of the Yanks, Chapter 1, and VE Day, home on the points system, goodbyes, and nostalgia today, Chapter 11. It will be interesting to see what she finally puts in her book - perhaps we can get a copy or two when published.

Next journal we will have a full report on the Norwich Reunion - Delos and I are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible - and renewing some old acquaintances and making some new ones.

Folded Wings

44th

Richard A. Mayhew
Floyd Hursh
Robert E. Ferrell

93rd

William F. Reiner

389th

Paul W. Blakeman

392nd

Holmes M. Alexander (HDQ)

446th

Norman F. Lambertson

448th

Tony Gemondo
Ray K. Lee

453rd

Wilbur L. Earl

458th

Russell E. Lower
Arthur J. Boyer

466th

Frank C. Simek

489th

W. S. Scott Carle, Jr.

492nd

Joseph W. Testa - Assoc. Member

Honorary Member
Philip Hepworth

NOTICE

The Post Office has done it to me again. You will probably remember that in the last issue I mentioned that our local P.O. was being rebuilt and I had a new box. Well they changed the box number again and my new box is 627.

NOTE: P. O. Box 627

Let's hope that this is the last change

Bill Robertie
P.O. Box 627
Ipswich, MA 01938

The 445th Reporting

by Frank DiMola

Final plans have been completed in a rapid few months regarding our Memorial for Tibenham, England. After a long time planning on where, how and when to find a suitable place on the airdrome, the Norfolk Glider Club, Ltd. has come up with an answer. They purchased the old air base and are now putting the entire air strips into full operation for their gliders. The Glider Club has purchased the airdrome for over \$300,000. They were able to raise a good part of it through the membership of the club and the balance will come from other sources.

By the time this article is published, most of you will have received a notice for a contribution. If you have not received one and wish to contribute towards the Memorial, please drop me a line. Mr. Evan Harris, chairman of this Norfolk drive in England has contacted me through Dave Patterson and David Hasting, who both have been a great assistance to me. Evan Harris has planned a buffet luncheon for the people of the 445th Bomb Group on May 25th, 1987, a day when all of us will be visiting the old air base. It may be a ground breaking ceremony or the dedication of the Memorial Stone. At that time I hope to make a sizeable donation towards the Tibenham Memorial.

I wish to thank my committee who assisted me in this drive for us in mailing, stamping and preparing this event. Many thanks to Edward Roloff, John Burke and Buddy Cross. In mailing your contribution please make it out to "The 445th Bomb Group Memorial Fund."

Several mini-reunions have been held in various parts of the country. The 2nd had met in El Toro Marine Corp Air Station, California with an attendance of 268. Our group was well represented with 27 members. Chuck Walker of our group was the MC. The other mini was held in Dallas, Texas. At this time I do not have a report on it but I am sure that somewhere in this issue someone has made one. Plans are well underway for having more minis so all will have a chance to attend one.

A lot of interest has been shown regarding the drainage of the Zeeder Zee in Holland, in the recovering of many British and American aircrafts. Those of you who wish to receive copy, just drop me a line.

Mary Beth (Kennedy) Barnard is still very hard at work in viewing the microfilm she has purchased from Maxwell AFB. The three reels of 16 mm microfilm consist a day-by-day report of the 700th Bomb Squadron

through to 714.

Every day I get more mail about various members of crews meeting up with each other after so many years. Bill Vinton, with the help of Buddy Cross, has met some members and this is the way we are able to increase our membership. We are very close to the 450 mark and I am sure that by June we will make it.

That brings up our mini reunion of the 445th to take place in Dayton, Ohio on September 20-22, 1987. This year again, we will be holding this reunion in conjunction with the 453rd. There are many who can't go to England and wish to attend a reunion in the U.S.A. Well, this is your chance! Remember, we dedicated our Memorial tree and had a wonderful banquet and program. Milt Stokes and I plan to ask Andy Low to arrange the banquet again. No notices of this Dayton reunion have gone out yet, but we will both start the ball rolling soon. You will make your own reservations at the Holiday Inn in Fairborn, Ohio. The phone number is (513) 426-7800. Banquet reservations will be taken later. We expect to visit the museum and see that beautiful B-24 again. So plan on September 20-22 in Dayton, Ohio. More later.

So long for a while, and God bless.

Danny's 489th Diary

by Dan Blumenthal

Friday, Sept. 22, 1944 - At breakfast we ran into Col. Napier. He had pictures of yesterday's bombing at Koblenz. "Good morning, sir. How were the hits yesterday?" "Damn those Germans. They put up a smokescreen, and I can't see the results. We fly for six hours and don't know how we make out!" Things were rough.

S-2 said takeoff was 1020. Lt. Burns (845) and crew sitting at MIZPAH, said the ETR was 1630; another gang claimed we'd bomb from 23,000; soon this spy knew we would hit the choo-choo yards in central Germany.

We swiped a jeep and visited hardstands. "Rip" Van Winkle's crew, deputy lead, was first approached. Nobody offered a cigarette or a candy bar. Navigator Wally Davis enquired "How's the paper shaker today?" We ignored him. Bombardier Anderson glanced at target photos. "Hey Andy, you making with the bombsight today, no?" "Yup," he says, "this Group has my number. I goofed off a year in phases and instructing, but the 489th caught up with me."

Brother Bob Yelton was next. Said Hello

to him, his moustache, co-pilot Buckmaster and Pete Davidson. I told Yelton the ETR was 1630; asked when he'd abort. Ole Yelton got p---- off! "Is that nice? You know if I return early with more than one engine, and a reasonable facsimile of a B-24, they'll restrict me for two weeks." Poor Yelton had his headaches.

The last stop was Capt. Pritchard's PFF ship. The props were already spinning, so we climbed on the flight deck. "What-a-hunk-of-a-man" Luscomb, riding with Pritch, asked "Care to go along?" I told him I'd left my flak suit home; thanks, no. I heard that "Hard Luck" Bobbish was disgusted; tired of hitting railroads. Barnett explained H.L. wanted hard targets - like the North Sea. Seven men were on the PFF flight deck. We said good luck.

At the caravan, Capt. Judd used his right arm for a green light. They shoved off at 1020 sharp, while Harkness (846) and men watched them depart. One had a formation sheet; each pilot's name was called as he took off; it was like a score card at Ebbets Field. They took off smoothly, with Greenberg in -W the last one off, and first to land at 1125 with #3 feathered and his yellow rudder now black...Action prior to return was the five Hethel planes giving us a respectable buzz job. At lunch, Maj. Tanner approached; "Are you the guy that gave me that crappy write-up?"

Somebody said the mission would be rough because Major Harper was Command Pilot. Seems the good major runs into heavy flak, high clouds, and the German Wehrmacht when he's CP. But Capt. Hillstrom, Group leader, aborted with



Unknowns at the carnival. Who has the names?

Harper aboard, so Pritch took over for the second day running.

When the boys returned we got the dope. Ballentine and Brady, leading the Low, said the formation stunk. Others agreed. Things generally were screwed up. Lead lost the target in the scope, so Pritch did a 360 until "Mickey Man" Berth picked it up again. Van Winkle had an accidental release. But all returned.

Bomb hits were unobserved. Lead co-pilot Kavitch got a scare at Control Point 3. He heard someone broadcast "Bandits at 11 o'clock," but it was our P-51 escorts. Brother Yelton returned last and apologized for not aborting. A truly modest here was the gunner on Plater's crew. He nonchalantly walked into the Interrogation room and asked for a doctor. When we asked what was wrong, he said, "Nothing much. I just got a hunk of flak in my arm."

We all returned, bombs probably landed in good range, there's a tea dance tomorrow, so things are indeed bright. Over.

(We've used Danny Blumenthal's diary before. He was a navigator who had finished his tour and had become an unofficial Group historian. CF)



Can anybody identify the 844th crew? Probably Coker, Hall or Morse. Any individual?

BUNGAY BULL

446th BOMB GROUP
by
William F. Davenport



Well, here we go again, only this time this column is being prepared prior to the time of receipt of the last one, due to the deadline created by our editor's desire to attend the Norwich reunion. Hopefully the next issue of this column will reach us prior to the end of June.

Because by the time you receive this you should not only have made a reservation for our Second Annual 446th Reunion at Tacoma, Washington but have your travel reservations or plans well in hand. As previously mentioned in this column and past Beach Bell Echos, things get underway with our successor organization, 446th MAW at McChord Air Force Base on 14 August and continue through 16 August.

The feature of this reunion will be a gigantic hanger party with the 446th MAW in attendance and acting as our hosts. Among other plans are: The presence of all past commanding officers of the 446th, a fly-by of all aircraft flown by the 446th (I don't think this will include the B-24, however, these guys are something else.) Tour of the base, museum, Vice President Bush, maybe Bob Hope, and good fellowship with old friends and our new 446th MAW folks.

Our request for funds for our 446th Association has been rewarding. Many of our members have been exceedingly generous. I have had some comment regarding the funding of individual group organizations. Apparently there is a misconception that the Second Air Division rebates a portion of the dues they receive to the groups for their activities. Gentlemen, that is as stated a misconception. The Second Air Division does not return to the groups any funds for their individual activities. I hope this will settle this issue at least for another year. "Enough of that, Bill, get on with it."

The next issue should abound with escapades both at the Second Air Division Reunion in Norwich and south of there in Bungay where the real action will have occurred. Namely, the re-dedication of the Memorial Gates at St. Marys Flixton, the placement of our Roll of Honor in the Church, and the donation to provide for the gate maintenance etc. in perpetuity. It is also hoped that as we spend several days in the area visiting the old haunts (pubs) that not too many of the fellows will be recognized or embarrassed.

As usual, we have some letters that should be shared:

Hi Bill,

This is the second time I have sat down and written this same letter. When I was in Dayton last July and walked by the 446th memorial, I was really impressed that on it you gave credit to your support groups. I had second thoughts and tore it up, thinking it might cause friction within my own group so I'm really writing this with the idea that you tear it up and that they were meant to be my thoughts to you alone.

I am not listed in the roster because my membership was put in too late for the printing.

As I walked the pavements in Dayton, I could find no other group with the exception of the large marble triangle of a fighter group that gave credit to its ground crews, other than yours.

I would not in any way take away credit from those who went out each time with the knowledge that there was a good chance of not coming back. More than once I sat at the radio desk in the control tower and wondered if I would really have the stuff to do it.

Around the time of the Battle of the Bulge, two of us who had some knowledge of the German language were put on a twenty-four hour notice, fully packed, confined to quarters, to leave at a minute's notice. Whatever it was, was called off and we went back to our normal routine. Those 24 hours proved to me that I did have the stuff, but only because I was drawing from the strength of those I watched go out on every mission.

They have my everlasting respect for their courage. Those of us who worked in the control towers, as well as other units, would watch and count as the aircraft came back, a little sick for the ones that did not, because they too were "our planes" and although we knew very few on a personal level, we had that feeling of loss.

All the support groups had losses, due to terrible accidents on the airfield. I watched one happen when a truck backed into a prop, and it happened so fast that we could not stop it. It's one of those things that cannot be erased from one's mind and took me a long time not to keep seeing that empty bunk in the barracks, even if someone else filled it.

I guess what I'm really trying to say, is that the bomb groups will be remembered because of their casualties but most of the support groups will be forgotten in spite of theirs. I guess the lady who was checking in registrations at Dayton, when we checked in as the compliment squadron, said it best. "I never heard of that before." So you can see, Bill, what a deep impression your memorial made, as I stood there and read it.

I want to thank the 446th for remembering that your support groups were there. I want to thank you for being thoughtful enough to include them.

If the group at Bungay remembered, then indirectly the rest of us are also remembered. My wife and I were hoping to get to Norwich but it doesn't seem possible at this time. Have a great time at the Second Air Division Reunion and also your Rededication Service of the gate of St. Marys Flixton.

*Cheers,
Name Withheld
□ □ □*

I would like to use a portion of Chaplain Gannons monthly newsletter. John is an In-

dian at heart despite his Brooklyn upbringing. Here is a piece about one of our own:

A young man of our 446th Bombardment Group, by the name of John Greene, married a schoolteacher in Ivoryton, near Centerport, Connecticut. She taught handicapped children and organized her class as an Indian tribe in honor of the Pequots and the Mohegans who had lived in that beautiful valley. John's wife was named Elizabeth, but was generally called Betty. As Medicine Woman to her tribe she was known as Spotted Dove. Gramps enjoyed the letters from the Medicine Man who built a wigwam, from Great Feather who also built a wigwam and raised corn and beans, from Little Stream who helped in the building of a wigwam and who ground corn and made journeycakes, from Swift-as-the-Wind who caught fish, from Flying Squirrel who made wampum, and from Little Sparrow who made the Indian Pipe which authenticates all the proceedings of the tribal pow-wow. The youngsters gave much honor to Chief Spotted Dove and her assistant Chief Flaming Candle. In 1974 this class in special education was the first class in that area to become engaged in the riding-for-the-handicapped program. Read about this program in the Reader's Digest for February 1987, pages 96-100, and give glory to Wakonda who can connect up cuts, soothe bruises, and give a sense of aliveness that transcends handicaps. What great things can be done by God, and a child, and a horse — with a little help from some of the rest of us.

(Special note to Betty. Elizabeth is a significant name. Eli was a priest of Yah—za—in the house of the one we call the God of the Hebrews.)

Whatever wigwam, wicki-up, tipi, hogan, long house, or other that these gallant braves live in we can be sure that it will be filled with the Great Spirit.

*Peace! and much love to you all
Gram and Gramps
□ □ □*

Fearless Freddie Again!

While reading the 2nd AD Journal I came across an article in Bungay Bull which was interesting to me!

The letter from Bert A. Farrel, 707 who had in his possession a pilot's diary whose events mentioned flying Fearless Freddie date 6-6-44. You may or may not know that Fearless Freddie was the old B-24D from the 93rd Bomb Group that was originally named "Eager Beaver." I was a part of the original crew that flew her from the States to England in September 1942. Her original tail number was 123737. The "Eager Beaver" crew survived without loss or injury to any of its original crew members.

You might be interested to know that the "Eager Beaver" crew's seven members still living plan a reunion in Las Vegas in November 1986. (You guys never got back to me.)

*Violas L. Flanary
□ □ □*

Fearless Freddie was salvaged after an accident near the end of 1944 or early '45 to answer your question.

As we say, Keep tuned to Beach Bell!

Bunchered Buddies of Old Buck

by Milton R. Stokes, 453rd

A beautiful day is breaking outdoors; it looks like spring. But it is not spring; not yet. The flowers that thought spring had arrived two weeks ago sent up those tender shoots looking for some positive sign that the world would accept them have been repulsed. They were frozen to brown withered stalks. Crocus blossoms which showed such beautiful shades of yellow, purple and blue have been pushed to retreat by our cold, killing frosts. But they will put forth new blossoms, they will push the old dried petals aside and show all who wish to look that new life is evident everywhere. The story is there. It has been told for millions of years. It is a promise of hope and renewal each spring. But some of us miss the opening act of this play. Certainly we see it but pay little or scant attention to the opening curtains. We have too much to do.

You should receive this Journal before we go to England. At our last accounting of people going from the 453rd, there are one hundred and one certified by Evelyn Cohen. More will show up at Old Buck for our Memorial Service, I'm sure. Some have said they wish to attend as they plan to be in England. Would you please register with Evelyn even if you don't need rooms nor plan to attend the banquets. At Old Buckenham, you will be welcome. There will be a service in the church. The Memorial Room will be open at the Village Hall for all to see. At this visiting, I do not believe all of the corrections will be included on the Memorial Plaque. It takes time to coordinate, machine and finish that bronze plate, but it will be done.

We plan a lunch in Old Buck, which will better enable our members to meet the wonderful, caring people of Old Buckenham. So bring your cameras and lots of film. You will want to tour the old airfield. You will try to find your old hut -maybe you will see something you vaguely remember. The old headquarters building was still standing in 1983. Some of the lines on a chartboard were still visible. Really not much remains - only memories that bless and burn. It is only on the old landing strip, a portion of which remains, that one can feel in imagination the rumble of a big B-24 gaining speed for takeoff. Come look, listen and feel. It's all there, if only in memory.

John Erspamer has finally joined the 2nd Air Division Association. You will be as pleased as I to receive his membership application. We have written to him at least six times seeking membership. Remember he was on the program at the Wright-Patterson reunion of the 453rd in 1984. Welcome aboard, Johnnie!

A new member, Lloyd Hughes, joined up in the last month. He lives in western Pennsylvania near my old hometown of Clairton. He says he wrote to "Mr. Milton Stokes...with no results." Boy that knocks the socks off me! I would have remembered anyone writing from western Pennsylvania! But I never received the letter. I'm truly sorry, Lloyd. My wife receives and reads my mail at the post office and she remembers it not. It is so hard to find new members that I cringe when I read a comment like the one above. But you did join up and for that I am glad. My advice to anyone writing to a representative of the 2nd Air Division Association is to wait a reasonable length of time and write to him again. (Ed.: Amen!!)

My wife Lucille and I attended two mini reunions in the last month. We went to Los Angeles to meet people we only see occasionally. One who came was Ralph McClure from Bluemont, Virginia. Admittedly he was far from home, but he was so pumped up from having so recently found his old buddies of the 453rd that he just had to go to California. Ralph was on Munsey's crew when shot down. We got a lot of names from McClure that we would like to contact. Only two, Freeman Perreault from Riverside, California, and Joe Miele of Newark, New Jersey, are members. The others and their airplanes are:

Missions	A/C	Airplanes	Names
120	276	My Babs	Jas Culvahouse
115	214	Wandering Wanda	William Zedalis
112	292	Hattie Belle	Joe Miele
110	108	Arrowhead	Andy Cudding
110	805	Foil Proof	Freeman Perreault
106	166	Century Queen	Jim Mock
106	208	Ohil Silver	Wilton Frank
100	078	Liberty Run	Art Pensack
100	216	Becky	Al Cowell

Can you help us find the current address of any of these men? I'm asking "Willie" Wilson and Joe Strangl for some special help on this matter.

The mini reunion in Dallas, Texas was special because Charlie Boy "Moose" Allen was the featured speaker. Charlie did not disappoint his audience. His repertoire of jokes came easily and smoothly. One wonders just how he can remember so many stories. I was hopeful that Gene Massey and Howard Cole would attend, but this meeting was limited to the North Texas, West Louisiana and South Oklahoma area. Next time I will write and tell the members of the 453rd to please plan to attend.

Berneil (Bill) Ness writes to Evelyn Cohen on membership. He was a bombardier on Basil Costas' crew and lives in San Jacinto, California. Two other crew members of his are members of the 2nd ADA - namely Ed Zdunski and Clair Miller. Both attended our 453rd reunion in Dayton, Ohio in 1984. Basil Costas has not attended any reunion that I know of - Basil, will you attend our next 453rd reunion?

That brings up our mini reunion of the 453rd to take place in Dayton, Ohio on September 20-22, 1987. I am making arrangements for 75 rooms. There are many who can't go to England and wish to attend a reunion in the U.S.A. Well, this is your chance! You will remember that over 240 of the 453rd buddies attended our last reunion in Dayton in 1984. We hope to have as many in attendance in September as we had on that date. Remember, we dedicated our memorial tree and had a wonderful banquet and program. We must ask Andy Low to arrange the banquet again. No notices of this Dayton reunion have gone out yet, but we will start the ball rolling soon. You will make your own reservations at the Holiday Inn in Fairborn, Ohio. The phone number is (513) 426-7800. Banquet reservations will be taken later. We expect to visit the museum and see that beautiful B-24 again. I like that B-32 also! I certainly hope we can fill all those 75 rooms. The 445th will be attending with us. You must recall they dedicated their monument at the same time we did. They have a wonderful vice president, Frank DiMola, and all of them are good guys and gals. We have had nothing but good reports on that reunion, so plan on September 20-22 in Dayton, Ohio. More later.

In the December, 1986 issue of the Journal under "Old Bunchered Buddies," was mentioned a letter from David Ives pertaining to his brother Rodney. He asked for information on his demise; however, I couldn't give him any information beyond what the K.I.A. report showed. My search turned up the 453rd S2 sheet of that crash. Strange too, that in January I received a letter from Ronald Neumanz seeking information on the death of his Uncle Alfred Neumanz. Now Alfred Neumanz and Rodney Ives went down on the same plane, A/S #503 on November 26, 1944. It is strange because in over 40 years since the death of the members of this crew, no one had contacted the 453rd for information. This is the B-24 that went down at Kenninghall, England six minutes after takeoff, killing all aboard. A picture of the crew was obtained. The pilot was Ray Conrad (listed as Conard on the S2 report). His face was familiar. But this is the plane that Frank Kyle had so many pictures of in his slide presentation we saw at Palm Springs. At that time no one knew the pilot of the ship, at least no one could answer that question. Don Olds showed the pictures at Palm Springs and I don't think that he knew the pilot's name. Well maybe now the truth will help the people who have suffered so long for more information. Ronald Neumanz plans to be in England. I have asked him to attend our memorial service in Old Buckenham. I hope to have time to visit Kenninghall when in England in May. I wish to verify these reports.

The promise of hope and renewal is ever present; look for it. We'll see you next in England!

News Stories Needed

Needed for the official records of the Association: copies of any news stories that have appeared about the 2nd AD or its members in local or national publications. Please make copies and send to: Frederic A. Mayer, Director of Public Relations 106 Nottoway Drive, Penllyn, PA 19422

THE PX PAGE

Altimeter Clock

Large, 6½ inch altimeter face clock, battery powered (supplied) quartz movement mounted into a solid walnut plaque, size 9 x 12 inch with large 7 x 3¼ inch engraved plate as shown. Can be made with Airman's wings or as pictured with 8th AF cloisonne and B-24 with your Bomb Group colors on vertical fin. Guaranteed 100% satisfactory or your money back. Please give me as much information as possible. Check previous issues of the *Journal* under "Custom Plaques". If you desire more info or colored photos of unit, write or call (301) 766-1034. COST: \$85.00 plus \$2.50 UPS.

RETIRED AIRLINE PILOTS PLEASE NOTE:

Regarding your inquiries, yes, I can make this Altimeter Clock and engraved plate suitable for your airline, with flying hours, employment date, domiciles, aircraft types flown, etc. Please send for details.

RICK ROKICKI
365 MAE ROAD
GLEN BURNIE, MD 21061



Custom plaques still available. Write for details or check the September or December '86 *Journal*. Costs remain the same.

Lapel pins for civilian suit wear: D.F.C., AIR MEDAL, E.T.O., PURPLE HEART

Cost: \$6.00 each postage paid

Die struck, 8th AF lapel or tie-tac pin. Gold electroplate, ⅞ inch wide, distinctive.

Cost: \$5.50 postage paid

Larger, 8th Air Force Cloisonne, ¼ inch full color, gold rim, lapel or tie-tac.

Cost: \$5.50 postage paid

New sized B-24 gold outlined, fully vinyl covered key tab/ring, with USAAF "Star & Bar" insignia on reverse, 2¼ inches long. Guaranteed to please or money back. (Also, P-51, P-47 & P-38)

Cost: \$5.00 postage paid

Now available: both tie-tacs and tie bar (clasp) with: B-24, Pilot, Navigator, Bombardier, Gunner or Air Crew Member wings. Others on special order.

Cost: \$6.00 postage paid

RICK ROKICKI
365 MAE ROAD
GLEN BURNIE, MD 21061
PHONE: (301) 766-1034



The larger (by 20%) pewter B-24 desk model now available. Customized to your request:

- \$44.95 model cost with small base
- 4.00 large 5" x 7" walnut base
- 5.50 engraved plate
- 5.00 regulation size wings
- 3.00 Bomb Group tail colors
- 5.00 8th AF Cloisonne
- 1.75 for service ribbons (each) if desired. O.L.C. and Battle Stars, \$.75 each

Any or all options can be had, your choice. Shipping costs (UPS): \$2.50 Chicago, east; \$3.50 west.

RICK ROKICKI
365 MAE ROAD
GLEN BURNIE, MD 21061
PHONE: (301) 766-1034



458th Bomb Group

by Rick Rokicki

Call it good planning or maybe just plain good luck, but Bill Jameson and I arrived in Dayton when the weather was at its best. We were lucky that we didn't attempt this meeting a week later; there were blizzard conditions and Ohio didn't escape the last March snowstorm, according to Durwood "Duke" Trivette.

We managed to finish up about 95% of the Memorial project with the Wright Patterson Air Force Museum officials. I would particularly like everyone to know that Dick Baughman, the Public Affairs officer with whom all our business was conducted, was extremely helpful, cooperative and a great representative of the Museum. The site chosen (with a good deal of Baughman's foresight) has to be classified as "prime real estate," not to mention of sufficient size to compliment our memorial.

Some details were still pending with Chris Napier of Black & Lee Monuments. The design, size and lettering are complete and impressive. Without giving away any secrets, the memorial will be over seven feet tall and almost five feet wide. We will have

two granite benches and a wide walk to the memorial emplacement. The viewing area will have 144 square feet of concrete surrounding the stone. Needless to say, this would not be possible without the enormous response and generosity of you all.

The details regarding the overnight hotel package are not yet complete. A letter to all members is planned for early July which will cover lodging, meals and the banquet dinner. It is extremely important that "our man in Dayton" hears from you as soon as possible. Although a good number have already responded as a result of the request I made in this column in the last Journal issue, I ask again that you take a few minutes to either drop a card or letter, or phone in your intent to the Trivettes. Telephone: 513-299-7125. I must mention Durwood's wife, Doris, a charming lady, great cook and a real help to this project, who should receive a big "thank you" from all of us. I know that October 3, 1987 will bring the largest gathering of 458th people in one place at the same time since Horscham St. Faith. Don't miss this one chance to see someone you haven't seen for over 40 years. It's not likely to happen again.

As of this date in mid-April, there will be 61 members, wives and at least one son (Bill & Mickey Cunningham's son, Mike) attending the Norwich reunion. Our lodging will be at the Hotel Nelson, just a stone's throw from the Thorpe Railway Station that many of us were familiar with when we took our 3 day pass to London. For those who are making their first trip back to Norwich, you will find the Nelson to be just a few blocks from the "downtown" section of Norwich; however, be sure you bring a good pair of walking shoes.

No sooner had we reached 516 members when the one letter all group V.P.s hate to get, deflated me a bit. It was the annual "drop" list that Evelyn Cohen sends to advise us who to drop for non-payment of dues. I wrote to all of the nineteen and am happy to say a few have responded and were reinstated. The March issue of the Journal was the last issue received by them, so those who haven't "re-upped" will not be reading this, sorry to say. We lost another long-time member in Arthur Boyer who passed away in February. A sympathy card expressing our condolences was sent to Lois Boyer, Art's wife.

Again, those of you who will not be attending the 40th Annual Reunion in Norwich, why not plan to make the Dayton Memorial Dedication on October 3, 1987. Be seein' you all soon. In the meantime, Kauai, Hawaii beckons and Ceil and I will be gone for a couple of weeks in late April...Aloha!

About The Memorial

by Jordan Uttal

As I write this for the June Journal, on 5 April, I find it hard to believe that a little over five weeks from now I will be on my way to England again for the 40th Convention of the Association. Needless to say I will have much to report about the status of our Memorial after I return, but you will not receive that information until the September Journal comes to you. In the meantime, here are bits of information in which you might be interested:

FULBRIGHT LIBRARIAN: At present, our Fulbright Scholar Librarian, Bertha Chandler, is conducting a major reappraisal of the stock in the Memorial Room with the able assistance of our Library Trust Aide, Tony North. This study will result in considerable amending, renovating, and perhaps redeployment of a large number of books.

Because of the need for additional assistance, Tony North's time at the Memorial Room has been increased by more than 50%. His duties include not only being of assistance to visitors to the Memorial (on which we have had many favorable comments) but more particularly, actively working with Bertha and Colin Sleath on book stocks. In addition, Bertha is collaborating with Colin on the preparation of a report which will contain recommendations for the future of the Trust. We will have this report before we go to England, for its consideration at the Annual Governors Meeting.

NORFOLK COUNTY LIBRARY MANAGEMENT: A restructuring of the management has taken place. It is not envisaged that the changes that have been made will have any great effect on the Memorial Trust. The title of the present librarian at the Norwich Central Library is now "Assistant County Librarian." Colin Sleath, heretofore Deputy Divisional Librarian, is now "Principal Librarian." He remains the normal point of contact between the Trust and the County Library.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS: Since last I wrote you we have had a much larger number of these specially dedicated book donations. The donors have named individuals, combat crews and Groups. In addition, you have been most generous in your remittance with your dues to the Association, for the Trust, and they are most appreciated. I look forward to exploring with the Governors in May the best use to which these funds should be allocated.

WE HAVE LOST A GOOD FRIEND: In 1963 when the Memorial Room of the 2nd Air Division was officially dedicated, the Librarian was Philip Hepworth. From the very beginning of his duties with and for the Memorial he made an invaluable contribution to the success of this unique tribute to our fallen comrades. His enthusiastic support for our Memorial Trust gained him the respect of the Governors, and all of our members who came to know him. We were advised of his death, in Singapore, on his

way to Australia, while the Executive Committee was meeting in Savannah in mid-February. A check is being sent to the Trust for books to be purchased in his memory. Those of us who knew him and worked with him will miss him.

I am looking forward to being with you in Norwich, and to every one of you who does not make the trip, I send warm greetings, and, as always, sincere thanks for helping to make our Memorial grow, and reflect the finest of human feelings.

NOTICE HELP WANTED

1. Please let me know of your change of address. The Post Office charges us 86 cents every time they have to redeliver your *Journal* and send us the correction.
2. If you have a summer and winter address, please send same to me for a permanent record.

Evelyn Cohen
06-410 Delaire Landing
Philadelphia, PA 19114



Arthur V. Cullen (44th)

B-24 Restoration

by Art Cullen

"...when what before my wondering eyes should appear but a P-51 escorting a B-17." Until that moment I had no idea that a fine organization called the New England Escadrill even existed.

On a warm spring morning in late March 50 members of the Second Air Division converged on the country town of Stow, Mass. to visit an old friend, a B-24.

This is a "J" model and although her surroundings were plush, the old bird was in a state of complete disarray having been delivered from England, disassembled, by ship in the fall of 1986.

Originally with RAF Coastal Command, and later a 20-year veteran with the Indian Air Force, No. 44-852, manufactured by Consolidated-Vultee in San Diego in 1944, had been stored in England until Bob Collings of Stow, Mass. purchased the aircraft and had it shipped to his museum facility on River Hill Farm in that central Massachusetts community. Originally planned as a static display, Mr. Collings, after researching the parts possibilities, has decided to restore the machine to flying condition.

The Second Air Division Assoc. group consisted mainly of Massachusetts members although Rhode Island and New Jersey were represented by Gen. Andy Low and Milt Stokes. The group was the guest of Bob and Caroline Collings, owners of the B-24 and the completely restored B-17G "Nine O Nine" which is now on the air show circuit. (Ed. See cover of May 1987 *Air Classics* magazine.)

After introductions a short meeting was held to acquaint the visitors with the background of the project and then the aircraft itself was inspected at the huge hangar-museum complex recently completed by Collings on the premises.

The fuselage, at this stage a hollow shell, stands dwarfed in the cavernous hangar on a cradle which supports the unit at the approximate height and position as would the landing gear. The visitors were immediately engrossed in renewing their 45 year old memories of the old bomber. Some had difficulty in walking along the bomb-bay catwalk being unable to maneuver between the bomb racks. Such is the price of prosperity. Many of these veterans had not seen a B-24 since leaving the English bases in 1945. Some hadn't seen one since bailing out of a



crippled B-24 over enemy territory, while others had, in fact, seen examples in England in recent years and the "D" on display in the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio. There are only six examples remaining of the 19,256 units produced.

Outside the hangar doors, with landing gear attached, was the long wing center section and the engine nacelles awaiting restoration. The characteristic twin vertical tails, minus the rudders, and the outer wing panels were stacked along the hangar walls.

The flight deck is barren with only the control wheels, rudder pedals and control pedestal in place. The seats, instrument panel, partition and all side wall equipment has been removed for renewing. All wiring and hydraulic lines must be replaced.

Following a thorough investigation and much picture-taking of the aircraft components, the group visited the facilities of Nate Mayo, who has been restoring antique aircraft for 25 years and who is coordinating all of the facets of this B-24 project. His shop can handle machine work, sheet metal and fabric recovering. The II AD group was most impressed by the nose and tail turrets on display. These have been completed except for the fiberglass and all agreed that they appeared to be in new condition. Fabric covered parts such as the ailerons, elevators and rubbers have been all repaired and recovered. Mayo and his group of volunteers have achieved impressive results since last fall; however, there is still a long way to go - two to three years and up to \$600,000.

Ray McNamara, a line maintenance mechanic with the 44th BG at Shipham, was asked if he thought he could pick up where he left off on the Liberators. He allowed he would first have to study the manuals.

After visiting the restoration facility the 2nd AD members completed the day with an excellent dinner at the White Cliffs Restaurant, Northborough, Mass.

Bill Eagleson, of the 453rd BG, one of the organizers of this outing, deserves much credit for its success, especially after coming out of major surgery 10 days prior.

When all components are renewed they will be shipped to Florida for final assembly and flight testing. Mr. Collings plans to fly the B-24 to air shows throughout the country and to have it on display at WW II association reunions including those of the Second Air Division Association. Display and flying schedule will be under the direction of the New England Escadrill, a regional organization established for the preservation and operation of warbirds and classic aircraft. The restoration, however, is an independent project sponsored by Bob Collings and accomplished through the donation of time, money and parts of interested individuals. Many of the Second AD guests expressed an interest in becoming involved with the rebirth of this B-24. In addition to the B-24J and the B-17G, other aircraft in this group include a PT-13, T-33, P-51, B-25, C-47 DeHaviland Vampire and an AT-6.



Open Letter To the 93rd

by Floyd H. Mabee (93rd)

93rd MEMORIAL

Joe Beach, Chairman for our Memorial Committee reports photographs of layout were received from stonemason in England, showing their recommendations. After several letters and phone calls back and forth across the states between committee members, final changes and recommendations by almost all have been sent back to the stonemasons. We have met our deadline set by them, so we trust by the time you read this, everything has been completed. The majority of your committee feels and trusts that our group members will be pleased with the final results of the Monument. They gave us a summary of costs: Basic cost 1525 lbs., Base & prep 150 lbs., 15 0/0 V.A.T. 251.25 lbs. for a total of 1926.25 lbs. (you will have to figure how much this is in dollars, as the pound is gaining on us every day), this was for what showed in the photograph. With the final changes we made, we are not sure yet about the final cost. We trust that we will have sufficient funds for this worthy project. A final report of cost will be given at our annual meeting in May, if known and a full report will be shown in the Journal for those unable to attend the meeting. I want to thank all that have made donations so far for this. In case there are any funds left, some of our present committee, including myself, feel that these funds should be used with an additional request for donations, for a past due Memorial Marker, to be placed at the Wright Patterson Air Museum at Dayton, Ohio, along with other group markers already there. I would very much appreciate comments from our members on this subject, and any member (preferably from that area) that would like to be chairman of such a project, if membership wants this. I will promote for the needed funds. I will check with other groups regarding the approximate cost. I have been told by several members that have visited the museum that they couldn't find a 93rd BG memorial among all the other groups that have provided theirs; that is because we have never put one there. I think it's about time we do.

I want to thank all committee members for their dedication to this Memorial project at our old base, Hardwick, especially our chairman, Joe Beach, for his outstanding devotion, personal expense and time is unbelievable on such a project as this.

93rd ROSTER

I'm still looking for someone to take on the job of making copies of current membership lists that I will provide, and mail them out to any member that requests

one. It really isn't that hard to do. The cost for these rosters would depend on cost for Xeroxed copies plus postage. I would do it, but with all the correspondence I have to put out answering questions from all over Europe, England, and the U.S., I just don't have enough hours in the day. Have been in sunny Florida since the latter part of October and have lost all the tan that I got last summer in New Jersey; just can't get away from this typewriter. Please, I'm begging. Whoever does this will get a free up-to-date copy for himself.

JOURNAL ENTRIES

Don't forget to get those interesting stories and experiences sent in to Bill Robertie, P.O. Box 627, Ipswich, MA 01938. They must be submitted at least six weeks prior to Journal date.

93rd HISTORY

If you haven't sent your historic material, pictures and copies of your old diaries, please do it today, if you ever want to see a history published. He will copy and return anything you want back. Send to Maj. Carlos Vasques (Ret.), 6341 Samoa Way, Carmichael, CA 95608.

INFORMATION STILL NEEDED

My request in the December and March Journals for information was very disappointing. From about 500 members, I have received six crew member lists, very complete, with crew name and position, plane number and names. Thank you fellows, but I need more. Our good friend in England, Tony North, Library Aide, 2nd Air Div. Memorial Room, sent me two folders, one of the best I have seen, a summary of the 93rd BG low level attack on the Ploesti Oil Field, 1 Aug. '43. It shows all pilots' names, crew names, their plane number and never before have I seen, the names of the planes on an official document. Just recently he sent me a Recorded on Consolidated loss list, showing plane number, squadron number, name of plane and a short explanation of date and what happened to each aircraft, 23 pages, possibly not all accurate. Thank you very much, Tony, I'm beholden to you. Have sent out several copies of the Ploesti report to those interested. Please fellows, send me the info I ask for, so that I can answer some of the questions directed to me. If you want copies of these reports, you had better send me some info, too.

INFORMATION NEEDED

Bill Marshall, 4 Gannet Street, Hilton Head Island, SC 29928, would like information about his father S/Sgt. Elva Gordon Marshall, service with the 328th Sqdn., 93rd BG. Any information would be appreciated. I would also like to know.

INFORMATION NEEDED

M.F. Van Eyck, 12365 Cohasset Street, North Hollywood, CA 91601 would like information on any Airman in the 93rd BG of Czechoslovak origin, that were in the battle over Ploesti on 1 Aug. 43. Also, anyone that know the whereabouts of the following 93rd men. Robert O. Bochek wartime address, 606-67 N.W. Cedar Rapids, Iowa (I think he was radio operator on "Dog Patch Raider" piloted by Capt. Avendano) (how about, Leigh Claflin and Prince A. Martin, Where is Bochek, you both flew with him. I have a picture of you all.) Praudomil Sroubek, Russell W. Polivka, Stanley Valcik, wartime address, 6402 Prague, Houston, TX and Morris Kaplan wartime address, 1607 North Franklin Street, Philadelphia, Pa. (Your VP would also like this information.) (T/Sgt. Morris Kaplan was Crew Chief on "SHOOT LUKE" - my plane.)

INFORMATION NEEDED

Howard M. Harris, 34 W. Main St., Wolcott NY 14590, would like to find Charlie W. Walters. Last known address, 519 Prospect Avenue, North Tonawanda, NY. He was in the 328th B.S., 93rd BG. He was aided by the same French family that hid Mr. Harris - Monet Madame Andre Le Ferre and their daughter Paulette, 29 rue Hache Junisy Sur Orge, France are coming to the States soon and have requested our help in locating as many of these people as possible. Mr. Harris would appreciate any information and your VP would also like to know the address of Charlie W. Walters.

INFORMATION NEEDED

Jim McMahon, Asst. Vice President, 329th Sqdn., 2100 Mt. Olive Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95404 would like to know the group (squadron) leader for mission to Stettin (Politz) on 20 June 44. He and C.P. Benot Finlay both remembered that they left the formation (they were 1/2 hour behind the wing) and went off with a B-17 outfit and bombed Hamburg. They were left to fend for themselves and went on to bomb the target in an 11 ship formation. They were 1/2 hour behind the main force and got a terrific reception from the Kraut flack batteries. They added their bombs to the already severely damaged target area and all got back to Hardwick (some looking like sieves). Anyone remember that pilot's name? Please notify McMahon.

MEMBERSHIP FOR 2nd A.D.A.

I would appreciate name and current address of any persons that were in the 8th AF 2nd Air Division and don't belong to our 2nd A.D.A. Help me out, fellows. Every member find a member. Let's top those 500 figures shown in the March Journal.

Change of my address as of May 1, 1987:
Floyd H. Mabee
28 Hillside Ave.
Dover, N.J. 07801

The 448th Speaks

by Leroy Engdahl

By the time this article is read the Second Air Division Association will have had their 40th convention held at Norwich, England.

A few of the individual groups had special services of their own, one of which was the 448th Bomb Group Association who dedicated the restored Seething Air Field control tower.

This was a dream come true as the idea developed during the 1984 memorial dedication at the Seething Air Field and a second one at the village of Seething church yard.

The old control tower stood out in tall weeds with most windows broken out and doors gone, all the result of old man time with a little help from vandalism. It looked pretty sad and a few remarked, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could restore the tower to its wartime appearance?"

That was the start; we continually solicited for donations through articles in the Second Air Division Journal. Minnie Whitehead, the deceased wife of Ralph Whitehead, perhaps was the chief instigator of this project and wanted so much to see this project through to its completion but unfortunately she passed away a year after it started.

Ralph Whitehead missed her help but was more determined than ever to see the job through. With the help of Mike Page,

Jim Turner, Ron Everson and Judy Speed the job was completed in time for the arrival of 136 Americans who came for this special occasion. Also in attendance were many of our British friends.

Helping with the program was a chaplain, Air Force Honor Guard, bugler and firing squad from Bentwater AFB, England.

The music and singing leadership was provided by the Vidor, Texas High School Band and Choir by way of a cassette tape. They led us in the singing of our national anthem followed by the singing of "God Save the Queen." At the close of the outside ceremony they also led us in the singing of "The Air Force Song."

I am very proud of these high school youth for their help with our memorial ceremony honoring 450 from the 448th who were killed during their stay at Seething.

On Wednesday evening, May 27th, a one hour social and banquet was held at beautiful Sprowston Hall centered in a ten acre park-like area.

We had as our guest several of our British friends from "The Waveney Flying Group" who now owns the old airfield; several from the village of Seething; and several members of the Board of Governors of the Memorial Library all who have done

so very much to make us always feel welcome.

Some of our 448th have been sending the information previously requested to Cater Lee who was an original 448th Bombardier on pilot Tom Apple's crew. He has offered to compile a roster by the squadron. Please send him your name, duty assignment, squadron and dates you were at Seething. Cater's address is P.O. Box 850, Foley, AL 36536. Cater has offered to do this for free and I am grateful for this favor. Cater also keeps our group roster up to date by the month if we have had a change. He mails me a copy and if anyone wants an up-to-date roster you can have one by sending me \$1.00 plus a stamp to cover cost of duplicating and the envelope which the 448th buys.

There has been some response to the list of names I put in the March issue of the Journal. These are former 448th members showing their last known address whose letters have been returned to me for "insufficient address."

I learned that #13 on the list, Keith Tindall, is deceased. Also #18, George Bayuzick is deceased as was #20 Oscar Rudnick. #34 Bernard Silverblatt's letter was again returned having been sent to 388 Orchard Drive, Pittsburg, PA 15210.

I want to thank those who responded to my request for help in finding our lost brothers. Help came from friends of several groups.

ATTENTION EVERYBODY

Speaking for the Executive Committee and myself I wish to bring two items to your attention and cooperation.

1. I am asking members to have patience as we smooth out the 3rd class mailing glitches. The Association benefits greatly by saving nearly \$12,000 per year through use of 3rd vs. 1st class mail.
2. I encourage our members who belong to the AARP to submit a short "blurb" to the AARP about our Association and its activities. End your letter with the request that the AARP print it. My hope is that if enough members write to them the AARP will see by the size and activity of our membership that we are a viable group, in their age class and worth recognizing for their benefit. We, in turn, will benefit by reaching potential new members.

Any member who wishes one (a blurb) can obtain one by writing to Fred Meyer, 106 Nottoway Drive, Penllyn, PA 19422. Let us all pull together toward the goal of doubling our membership, and in doing so meet old friends we shared a life with.

Jim Reeves



Notes from the 389th

"Operation Manhunt"

by Frank Vadas, Asst. V.P., 389th BG

Mr. Lloyd West, our Vice President, asked me to write a short article on how we go about locating members of the Second Air Division who do not know about the Association. The main purpose of this article is to encourage you, our members, to help increase our membership if possible.

As of March 1, 1987, the 389th leads the Second Air Division Association with 654 members. This did not happen by chance, but by the hard work of its members. Credit must be given to Mildred and Roy Jonasson who, through the years, have signed up more members than anyone I know. We must, however, keep searching for new members. We all know that the attrition rate is high, and as the years go by and we all get older, it will climb even higher.

My wife, Grace, and I became involved in looking for new members through Mildred and Roy over four years ago. Since that time, we have found more than forty new members by a conservative estimate. Let me explain how we go about finding someone.

To start with, we must have a city or town where the "lost person" once lived. An address is a big help, no matter how old it is. We then go to our local public library and look through the telephone books for

the area where the person was last known to have lived. If we have no luck with the phone books, we use the book that lists all the libraries in the United States. This book gives the address of the library nearest to where the person used to live. You would be surprised how many small towns have libraries! Our next step is to write to the library. In my opinion, librarians are the nicest people. They go out of their way to help any way they can.

As a note of interest, we have discovered how very important it is to include ALL information when writing to inquire about someone. We must explain why we want to locate this person, (Privacy Act), his or her full name, what outfit they were with, what job they had in the service, and their approximate age.

The Department of Motor Vehicles in each state is another source of information we frequently use. The library has a book containing all the D.M.V.'s in the country. Some of these departments charge a \$4.00 or \$5.00 fee, but many do not.

Sometimes a letter to the Post Office in the town of the "lost" person's last address is necessary. Writing to Veterans' magazines or State Police offices are other alternatives. They will put the person's

name in the computer and tell if they still live in that state and their present address.

Just now you are thinking, "That sure is a lot of work!" True, it is, but it sure is worth it when we find a person we are looking for. Here is a recent success story. About a month ago, we received a letter from a Mr. E. Paul Robbins. He was requesting help in locating his lost crew members. His pilot and engineer were killed when a B-17 dropped bombs on them during a mission to France. The rest of the crew bailed out and were imprisoned in a P.O.W. camp and eventually lost contact with each other. When they were liberated in '45, they came home and, over the years, they just didn't have the time to keep in touch. Grace and I started to work on Mr. Robbins' request. I must admit that Grace does all the letter writing, and I make the phone calls. Inside of one month, we had located all of his missing crew members. A sad note is that one crew member died five years ago. This is just one example of what can be accomplished with a little perseverance and effort.

On behalf of Lloyd West and I, please help us to find new members. We cannot let the Second Air Division falter because of a lack of new members. If you find a person who was in the Second Air Division and who doesn't belong to the Association, let Lloyd West or I know, and we will send him or her a prospective member packet.

466th Notes

by E. W. Nothstein

It's now early April as I write this message. I am contemplating our reunion in Norwich and the visit we will make to the Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial. Out of the many buried and memorialized there, I knew only a few. They were part of Lt. Theodore Kolaya's crew.

We first met in Lincoln, Nebraska in August of 1944. After crew assignments we journeyed to Gowen Field at Boise, Idaho. During our training there we got to know each other quite well. We shared many moments together - training, eating, flying and plain good times - living.

Our next stop was Topeka, Kansas for staging. Most all of the crews went with us by rail and ship to England. We eventually arrived in Norwich and Attlebridge in mid-December. The enlisted men from both our crews were billeted together in the same hut in the WAAF site. We flew the same first mission together on January 31, 1945. We did most everything together until the 23rd of February. Due to engine trouble they had to ditch in the North Sea. There were three survivors out of a crew of nine.

I will again seek out the men's names on the wall of the missing and remember how things were in 1945. In only six months, we grew to know each other well...I'll never forget them.

Let us also remember those who have left us more recently. Among them are:

Joe Payton	Francis L. Bell, Jr.
Marvin P. Smith	E. Warren Hursh
John W. Rogers	Lee F. Paynter
Fred C. Simek	Dorsey L. Baker

Missives from the 492nd

by Bill Clarey, 492nd

On July 14, 1986, the 492nd Bomb Group Memorial plaque and wreath was placed at the Air Force Museum site, Dayton, Ohio. Colonel Harry Orthman, USAF (Ret.) is shown holding the wreath before placement. I do not have the names of all the members present, so I will leave it to you to pick out the persons you know. A close-up is also shown of the beautiful plaque that is in place.

I know for sure that the members of the 492nd appreciate the work that Al Mohny, Don Prytulak's daughter, Lorraine, and the rest of the people involved, went to in order for us to admire this memorial until the end of time.

During the February Executive meeting in Savannah, the 801/492nd Group (Carpetbaggers) were unanimously approved to be accepted into the Second Air Division. So, fellows, welcome aboard, at long last.

More anon after the 1987 convention in Norwich, England.



Now, She's 'Colonel' Cohen!

by Pete Henry (44th BG)

While attending the Executive Committee meeting in Savannah, Ga. Feb. 13-14, we all had the pleasure of witnessing a very important event. Our very own Evelyn Cohen was appointed Lieutenant Colonel, Aide De Camp, Governor's Staff of the State of Georgia.



President Jim Reeves made the presentation at a dinner following the meeting.

The Way We Were

Submitted by John E. Stevens, 467th BG

(This piece of writing is credited to an unknown West Point Graduate, Class of 1936.)

We were before television. Before penicillin, the pill, polio shots, antibiotics and frisbees. Before frozen food, nylon, dacron, Xerox, Kinsey. We were before radar, fluorescent lights, credit cards, and ballpoint pens. For us, time-sharing meant togetherness, not computers; a chip meant a piece of wood; hardware meant hardware; and software wasn't even a word. In those days, bunnies were small rabbits and rabbits were not Volkswagens.

We were before Batman, Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer, and Snoopy. Before DDT and vitamin pills, vodka (in the United States) and the white wine craze, disposable diapers, jeeps, and the Jefferson nickel. Before Scotch tape, M&Ms, the automatic shift, and Lincoln Continentals.

When we were in college, pizzas, Cheerios, frozen orange juice, instant coffee, and McDonalds were unheard of. We thought "fast food" was something you ate during Lent.

We were before FM radios, tape recorders, electric typewriters, word processors, Muzak, electronic music, and disco dancing. We were before pantyhose and drip-dry clothes. Before ice makers and dishwashers, clothes dryers, freezers, and electric blankets. Before men wore long hair and earrings and women wore tuxedos. We got married first and then lived together. How quaint can you be?

In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was mowed, coke was something you drank, and pot was something you cooked in.

In our time, there were five-and-ten-cent stores where you could buy things for five and ten cents. For just one nickel, you could ride the streetcar, make a phone call, buy a coke, or buy enough stamps to mail one letter and three postcards. You could buy a new Chevy coupe for \$600, but who could afford that in 1936? Nobody. A pity, too, because gas was only eleven cents a gallon.

We were before vending machines, jet planes, helicopters, and interstate highways. In 1936, "made in Japan" meant junk; and the term "making out" referred to how you did on an exam.

We were not before the difference between the sexes was discovered, but we were before sex changes. We just made do with what we had.

And so it was in 1936.

This is "THE WAY WE WERE" - and WE LOVED IT!!!

The Proper Punishment

by Ltc. George Parker, Ret., 466th BG

Soon after VE day and as the Sub Depot C.O. I received a book of transportation tickets for free travel to and from anywhere in England. Also was a note that anyone having relatives in Southern Ireland could request in writing to visit Ireland, transportation free, on a seven day furlough plus two days travel time.

We had four requests. Three sergeants and our chaplain Father Collins.

One of the sergeants returned on time. The chaplain and the other two sergeants were AWOL for two days. I had a problem. I talked to the two sergeants about punishment and they volunteered for a week on the garbage detail, but what do you do to a chaplain? I found nothing in the regulations except to report him to the next higher headquarters.

Since the two G.I.s volunteered for the garbage detail I had a conference with Father Collins and suggested he decide on his punishment. He did. He brought back two bottles of choice Irish whiskey and placed it on the bar at the Officers Club with a sign that read "FATHER COLLINS' PUNISHMENT!"

A Warm Welcome Back To The 467th

by David J. Hastings



**"THE MEN WHO FLEW LIBERATORS
ARE COMING BACK"**

On Thursday May 21st 1987 over 900 members of the Second Air Division USAAF will arrive in Norwich from the United States for their Fortieth Annual Convention and the "Men who flew Liberators" will be back with us. Arriving at London Heathrow airport in the early morning, they will travel to Norwich by two special private trains arriving at Norwich Thorpe Station between 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Then for the next five days they will take part in a fairly hectic convention programme including a Cathedral service, Civic reception, Memorial service at Cambridge, a day with the Royal Air Force at Coltishall and visits to their old bases spread throughout the area. The Sunday evening has been kept free for private visits to their many local friends.

Included in the party will be over 50 members of the 467th Bomb Group — "The Rackheath Aggies," as they were called — who were based at Rackheath airfield, part of which lay within our Parish boundary. Many of you have already seen the unique film record of their stay at the base when the film "A VILLAGE REMEMBERS" was shown in the village hall. The Salhouse railway station was the first glimpse of the field for many of these young men who had travelled over 4000 miles to be at our side in the fight for freedom during those desperate years. The Salhouse Bell and Wroxham Broad were favorite haunts. As a young schoolboy who witnessed their arrival and spent many happy hours at the base, I always feel that we will never be able to repay the great debt that we owe to them. At that time, we had our backs to the wall, we had been through the Battle of Britain and endured the Blitz. Their arrival gave us renewed hope that we would survive and the sound of over 1000 four engined Liberators clambering for height over the Norfolk countryside will always be remembered. So too will their kindness and friendship, the candies, Coca-Cola, ice cream and also the sight of the battered aircraft returning to base after the long mission to the target.

If you have never visited their unique and living Memorial Room at the Central Library in Norwich, then I urge you to go, to see this memorial to the 6000 young men who travelled far from their homeland and gave their lives that we could enjoy our freedom today.

On Monday May 25th, all the Groups will be visiting their old bases. Various ideas for the day have already been planned by Rackheath and I hope that Salhouse will also take part in the special programme for the day, which includes a welcome at the Community Centre at Rackheath and a Memorial Service at All Saints Church. If you have any ideas or suggestions for the day please let me know.

These Veterans and their families deserve a warm welcome.

Miller's Norfolk Band Wagon

by Robin Limmer

If Glenn Miller had never brought his new 40-piece, all-soldier American Band of the Allied Expeditionary Force to Britain in 1944, he might not have held the posthumous following he has today.

This is the theory of author Geoffrey Butcher, who in *Next to a Letter from Home*, has written the first full story of the American Band of the AEF — also known as the Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band — and its 13 months in Britain and on the Continent.

For millions of United States servicemen over here the band brought them what Miller called "a hunk of home," by playing at their airfields and bases all over Britain and later in France and occupied Germany.

Many of these bases, of course, were in East Anglia and it is interesting to note the number of Norfolk and Suffolk locations that were graced with visits from the famous band.

These include Attlebridge, Hardwick, Thorpe Abbots, Tibenham and Wendling in Norfolk, and Framlingham, Great Ashfield (Elmswell), Halesworth, Horham, Kenttishall, Rougham and Wattisham in Suffolk.

At Hardwick, near Long Stratton, they performed in an open-ended hangar where it was so cold that some of the musicians, including Major Miller, played with their gloves on.

According to local residents, says the author, the band played in public at various places in the Norwich area on August 17, 18, or 19, 1944, but no mention of any such performances appears in the Activities List, nor in the local papers at the time.

However, certainly they appeared at Attlebridge — before an audience of 10,000 crammed into a hangar — and at Hardwick.

The UK tour was a phenomenal success, tragically to be overshadowed by the Major's mysterious disappearance on a flight to France. Though it could never be the same, the band stayed together and completed its European commitments in the way its distinguished founder would have wished.

As well as a fascinating story for Miller enthusiasts, record collectors, wartime veterans and the general reader, this book will take its place as a permanent reference contribution to the history of wartime broadcasting.

A Yank at the Lido

Your article and photograph regarding a couple who met at the Norwood (Evening News, November 17) brought back many fine memories of my life in Norwich, from April, 1945 to December, 1945.

The folks of Norwich will rue the day they allowed the Norwood Rooms to close.

For me, of course it will always be The Lido.

John Rex
987 and 1192nd. Military Police Co.,
US 8th Air Force,
E.S. Davis Avenue,
Audubon, New Jersey, USA.

Mission No. 18: "D" Day Tuesday, June 6, 1944

by Mac Meconis (466th BG)

This morning, shortly before six a.m., I was up there at 15,000 feet south of England, headed for the Cherbourg peninsula to lay bombs on the beach preparatory to actual invasion of the continent. As we approached our target two layers of cloud took up such a position that we were afforded only a glimpse of what was going on down there. Between the two layers, down near the coast, still dark before the sun rose, I could see coastal batteries and naval batteries dueling, and the Channel filled with landing craft headed for the coast. Then the cloud undercast hid everything from view and our mission continued on, same as any other we had flown.

It was late yesterday evening that I first began suspecting big doings were in order today. Group operations ordered all lead crews to test hop their airplanes before dark. While at our operations office I chanced to glimpse an alert list labeled "D day missions." On it we were listed for the first and third.

We went up before dark and gave the A5 and bombsight the once over, then returned to the base just before 9 p.m. to learn that we were alerted. Briefing was scheduled for 11:30 p.m., breakfast for 10:30. That meant - well, we knew something big was up. We went to our barracks.

Knots of us were gathered in our hut swapping conjectures and growing more nervous all the time. Dike was like a burnt cat and Miller ubiquitous, both wide-eyed at the prospect of big things. So was I. We three began worrying about Brooks who was still in town at 10:30. He'd gone in that afternoon to get a blouse, having gotten out of camp just before an order restricted everyone.

All three of us dropped into our sacks for a few moments relaxation prior to breakfast, but found it quite impossible to loosen up. Capt. Sargent came in and gave us the same story and schedule about briefing. Dike and Miller smoked cigarettes one after the other. I went into Tikey's room and listened to Smith tell me how "rough" the night assembly was going to be. He wished me good luck with a grim face.

Just before leaving for breakfast Miller wrote a note and left it for Brooks. To this effect - "Where were you for D Day?" If you can't make takeoff, meet us at 15,000 over splasher 5." Later I thought that Brooks might take the whole thing as a gag and go to bed instead of coming to briefing. But he showed up.

After breakfast, which was really a late dinner of meat loaf, potatoes and "oranges" we went to briefing room No. 2 and began sweating out the big news. Hardly necessary to say I felt about the same as back in high school just before going out on the stage. Stage fright with me is a series of

fever spells, fast pulse, yawns and gas on the stomach.

Had to give the day's password to get into the briefing building, then be checked off before entering the actual briefing room.

Heated suits were issued only to navigators, bombardiers and gunners, so we pilots took this to mean our flight would be at a lower altitude than usual. It was.

I was among the first to enter the briefing room. S2 men were all over the place, refusing to answer our leading questions, guarding the large war map, which I noticed had been supplemented by a larger map of the French coast.

When finally all flying personnel had crowded into the room and settled down to a tense silence, Col. Pierce was the first to rise. A blind man could see he was nervous. His hands shook as he handled papers and I saw him wet his lips before read.

The message was from the CO of the 8th Air Force, General Doolittle, who in very few words gave us the significance of what we were assigned to do as our part in the assault. Another message, from Gen. Hodges, told us more specifically that only heavy concentrations of bombs such as the 8th Air Force alone could dump, would be needed to knock out the coastal guns on the invasion coast. His message warned that our bombing had to be accurate because our boys, waiting to jump the beach, would be in LST boats waiting hardly 400 yards off shore.

Then all of our group big wigs had a few words of wisdom to say and our actual briefing began.

Of the whole air force our group was going to be the second to hit the beach. The 458th evidently had more drag with division. We had to be at certain places exactly at certain times in order to hit the invasion coast at exactly the precise moment. With thousands of other bombers in the air at the same time, we had to be on schedule. Night flying normally is bad enough for the risks of collision involved, but this was different - every plane on English soil probably would be up there milling around in the soup.

And soup it was before briefing time. Heavy clouds rolled overhead, going east. The wind swelled. It looked like good weather for cancellation of a mission, not the kind we'd ever expected for the big day. Brooks said later weather prognosticated that the clouds would break up shortly before take-off, allowing assembly by moonlight. I hoped so, but at briefing time it didn't look so good.

More detailed information of the magnitude of the assault was given us. We learned that the attack by air would cover 35 miles of coast between Cherbourg and Le Havre, and that paratroops would land

back of the coastal defense area. Our target secondary was a choke point in a road going through a wood near the coast.

Before leaving the briefing room I searched out our group chaplain and gave him a letter I'd written to Mary and forgotten to mail while I was at the mess hall. Very obligingly he promised to mail it. He and other ground officers and medical personnel stood silently in the back end of the briefing room as we co-pilots, navigators and bombardiers passed out to dress and go to the plane. A war correspondent stayed to listen to the pilots' special briefing.

First on my mind, as I walked out of the briefing room building to a truck, was the state of the weather. I looked up to see the clouds becoming thinner. Occasionally the moon glinted through and gave sharper outline to the activity on the perimeter.

Our planes were all marshalled and ready for take-off. I realized the advantage of having the shark's teeth on our plane's nose when I tried to tell the truck driver where to drop me. "Take me to the plane with the shark's teeth." He had seen it during a run around the perimeter and took me right to it.

Our crew chief, Slaugenhaupt, and some of the crew were already at the plane, preparing it for take off. After arranging my equipment I went around to the right side, on the grass, where I found Rooney, Bertie, Cal and the rest in a group, all grim and ready to express themselves in hushed whispers.

The perimeter was abustle with activity. It seemed as if every plane on the field was lined up, ready for take off. Not as much confusion there as we expected. Everyone seemed to be doing his part, realizing the importance of team work. The field was dark.

When all of the crew finally assembled we gathered on the grass and lay down to talk it over while sweating out time of take off. I lay on my back in the dry grass and listened quietly as the boys continued to conjecture. Overhead the stars began appearing as clouds broke up. The moon came out and lit up the field, only intermittently. The night air blowing from the west was cool. I should have been sleepy but was not.

Shortly before time to start engines we heard Mosquito bombers whistling through the clouds overhead. Then heavy B-24's roared off Horsham and began their noisy drone as they climbed up into formation to the north. Almost time.

Everything, no matter how insignificant it might seem normally, was at this time dramatic - even the way we moved and talked.

A light rain began falling just as we took up stations for take off. Heavy clouds again obscured the moon. Our hope for a moonlit assembly and takeoff vanished.

Our first plane took off at 2:50 a.m. I watched its lights move swiftly down the runway and vanish in the darkness. A few moments later that same first plane, invisible except for wing lights and the blinking Aldis lamp in the tail, passed low overhead,

made a left turn and headed out over the North Sea. Several other planes followed, still not quite in formation. It created a fester of worry in my mind. Planes had to be in formation by the time the lead of a flight passed over the field - or else they'd be lost and consequently endangering every other ship following. Not pleasant.

We lumbered onto the take off runway shortly after 3 a.m. By fluorescent light I watched my wristwatch and counted off the thirty seconds before giving Dike the "go" sign. Our lead ship was in the soup ahead, blinking five dots intermittently as we left the ground and followed. Takeoff and the few minutes immediately afterwards, until we were almost caught up to our lead element, were moments of intense activity for me and Dike. It was our first night takeoff since Marrakech back in February. I think all of us held our breath during those first low altitude turns in the dark, when we were bucking against prop wash and struggling to catch up to the three ships ahead. There was also the fear that we might collide with other craft wandering in the dark near us. They had briefed us to be on the alert for enemy intruders, Jerry night fighters who like to sneak up in the dark and catch you unaware. Fortunately none came.

As we winged out toward the coast we ran into thin low clouds, which did not interfere too much. I kept my neck going, searching the sky around us for other planes. Far to our right I could see another group of lights climbing on a course parallel to ours.

Turning left in a layer of patchy clouds over the North Sea our lead ship and its two wing men were visible for the first time, faintly against the dim light of dawn in the east. As we climbed upward between gigantic columns of clouds, heading again toward the coast, I could see Walling's ship silhouetted against the white moon. It was a sight I'll never forget. My first night formation in a B-24.

Had some tense moments as we slid in and out of formations, trying to chase another plane out of our slot position. All around us in the darkness were other formations, blinking their lights in frenzy, trying to avoid collision courses. We relaxed only after we nestled into formation and the responsibility for our safety as a flight of six ships came to rest on Capt. Walling's and Major Laubrich's shoulders in the lead ship, who did a fine job of keeping us on course and on time as we headed for rendezvous all over England. Brooks jubilantly reported that we left the southern coast of England only a few seconds early.

Enroute we glimpsed something of the tremendous force of planes that were taking part in this assault. Everywhere, no matter in which direction you looked, formations in which large and small were on their way - all headed south, toward the setting moon.

As we passed over the southern coast of England and headed south over the Channel I began straining my eyes to see some of the invasion fleet our briefing had disclosed. A low undercast in patches obscured

most of the water, but wherever open spaces permitted I could see landing craft and large ships moving south and southeast on a fairly rough sea. Also below us, just above the clouds I saw B-26 formations assembling. Didn't see a single friendly fighter, though we were expecting 35 squadrons as cover. They probably were at low altitude, below the clouds, actively aiding the first assault on the coast. We didn't need them.

While over the Channel on our way in we observed a period of interphone silence during which I know each man on the crew prayed for the success of whatever those in landing barges below us had to do. Their job was infinitely more dangerous than ours. We were scared a bit, yes, because we didn't know exactly what kind of air opposition Jerry would throw at us. Frankly, I expected to see a sky full of fighters and flak, all in a confusion. But those boys in the barges knew they'd meet steel and concrete and a tough fight!

The invasion coast appeared momentarily; we saw the artillery fire; and seconds later the top cloud layer was directly under us, drawing the white curtain on the show we'd all hoped to see from our grandstand seats. I prayed that at least one hole would appear to allow our bombardiers to synchronize on the beach, but no - it didn't. PFF ships ahead dropped their bombs, and our bombs were away on their marker trails at 6:12 a.m. We'll never know exactly what we hit. If our bombs helped to heighten confusion and nothing else among the Nazis, I'm satisfied. Tears almost came to my eyes when only for a moment I considered the possibility of those bombs having dropped short of the beach into our landing vessels. Later, back at the base, Major Laubrich told me that Sturock or Hull had taken a Gee fix on our bombs and knew them to have hit OK. Everyone had dropped by PFF and all marker trails seemed about as far in as ours.

It was daylight, with the sun shining above the clouds in the east, as we turned

right to head 270° for 90 miles until we were west of the Cherbourg peninsula. Several bursts of flak came up at a group on our right just after we hit the target. Later, as another group on our right passed too close to either Cherbourg or the islands just west of it, a ball of flak like that I'd seen over Brunswick once, came up at them.

Dike pointed at our clock at 6:30 a.m., the moment when our invasion barges were supposed to move in. We were well on our way back by then, followed by the whole air force.

I wondered how in heck we'd be able to let down safely if a solid overcast lay over England. Used to be bad enough with just several groups to worry about. On the way back clouds below us broke occasionally to afford us further glimpses of the great sea armada still steaming toward the coast.

Our let-down over England was gradual. Clouds broke up and when we arrived back at our base area only small fair weather cumulus and haze existed. The sky was a trifle overloaded but we managed to cut our way through the snag and land safely.

I was so sleepy during the trip back that I contemplated taking a pill to keep awake. Glad I didn't because we were allowed to go to bed immediately after landing. We'd be called if we were needed, they told us.

S2 man Hodges met us at the plane for interrogation. We asked for news, but all he could say was, "The invasion is on."

Another mission had taken off just before we landed, so we expected to fly sometime in the afternoon. Left all our equipment at the plane and went to the mess hall for breakfast before going back to bed. I had a terrible headache and a gaseous stomach from fatigue and engine noise.

Back in the barracks, Smith had appropriated our radio and was listening to newscasts. Our troops were 10 miles inland already.

I wrote another letter to Mary, adjusted my gun, and went to bed. Someone said Nazi paratroops were landed near us.

Changes - They Are Coming

In the interest of saving a great deal of money it was decided at the Executive Committee in February that future issues of the Journal will be mailed without an envelope. That's a savings of about \$2000 per year which, as the saying goes, ain't hay. Similar to non-profit mailing there are bound to be some glitches. We know them as 'gremlins.' If your copy fails to arrive, or arrives as a basket case, simply write or call and I will see to it that you get another copy. If you have some comments on this move, good or bad, just send me a card or letter.

Bill Robertie
P.O. Box 627
Ipswich, MA 01938

Former City Librarian Dies Abroad

The man who built Norwich City Library into one of the best in the country and made his mark in the literary world with his own books on the Royal family and local history, has died in Singapore.

Philip Hepworth, author and city librarian for 25 years, was on his way to visit his sister in Australia. He was in his early 70s.

Assistant county librarian John Viles said Mr. Hepworth would be greatly missed by former colleagues and friends. "His great achievement was his work here as city librarian, and at the Central Library where he acquired important collections like the Colman collection and the American Memorial Library. He started the recorded music department here."

Despite spending all his working life surrounded by books, they were also his hobby. He wrote "Royal Sandringham," an account of the Royal family's links with Norfolk over more than a century, "Norwich in Picture Postcards," and many professional textbooks.

Mr. Hepworth, who lived at Kingston Square, Norwich, came to Norwich in 1951 after working in the library of his home town, Leicester, Sheffield, and Stafford.

He retired through ill-health in 1976 — two years after becoming Norwich divisional librarian in the local government reorganisation.

A keen Rotarian, writing was his main interest, and he penned many articles on local history. "He was always coming into the library after his retirement for research. He was a very well-known man."

His wife Blanche died in 1985.



Mr. Philip Hepworth

Change of Address

When you move please send your change of address to:

Evelyn Cohen
06-410 Delaire Ldg. Rd.
Philadelphia, PA 19114

on the form below, as soon as possible. To send the change to anyone else (Bill Robertie or Group VP) simply delays the change appearing on our records. This could mean that the next issue of the *Journal* will go to your old address and could be lost in the great jaws of the Post Office.

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So. Cal. Members Return to El Toro

by J.F. Thomas (392nd BG)

Proving again that a great esprit de corps continues to grow within our Second Air Division Association ranks, 268 members, wives, and guests gathered at the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station Officers Club on the evening of February 28 to attend the 6th Annual Southern California Second Air Division Association Reunion Dinner. As was the case last year, the Marines provided the red carpet treatment.

While the majority was from relatively nearby areas, guests were greeted from all areas of California, from San Diego to Crescent City, and numbers were welcomed from the bordering states of Oregon, Nevada, Arizona, plus those from New Mexico. Two, Milt and Lucille Stokes, came from a rather distant Westtown, PA. As has occurred each year since the dinner reunions began in 1982, quite a number of new members and first timers were recognized and welcomed. Sprinkled among those attending were several Association officers and their wives: Former President, and now Director of Administrative Services, David Patterson - Alamo, CA; Vice President 492nd BG, William Clarey - Los Altos, CA; Vice President 446th BG, Wm. F. Davenport - Santa Ana, CA; Vice President 65th Wing FGs, George Epperson - Riverside, CA; Vice President 453rd BG, Milton Stokes - Westtown, PA; Ass't Vice President 448th BG, Downey Thomas - Long Beach, CA, and

the writer. Also present was the ever welcomed CO of the 467th BG, Al Shower. All of the above were duly recognized and appreciation for their attendance was expressed.

Directed by Chairman Chas. L. Walker, 445th BG, and ably assisted by Committee members Harry L. Orthman, 492nd/44th BG; Chas. C. McBride, 448th BG; Richard C. Boucher, 445th BG; Richard D. Butler, 44th BG, and with a small input by yours truly, a well decorated, comfortably seated, and most enjoyable program was presented. Ceremonies opened with the invocation by Chaplain Robert Coapman, followed by welcoming remarks, direction of the Color Guard, and pledge to the flag by Col. Timothy Klug representing the Commanding General. After dinner the speaker of the evening, Capt. David Patterson, USAF - B1 Logistics Division - Headquarters 15th AF SAC was introduced by Col. Dick Butler (Ret.) Capt. Patterson gave an interesting presentation on the progress of the B-1 program, and comparative data as to how the B-1 bombloads, speeds, and ranges compare with those of the B-24 as flown in WWII. Following his talk, the speaker answered pertinent questions from the audience. Capt. Patterson was presented a special Second Air Division Association "Rokicki" plaque in appreciation of his contribution to the program.

The program was concluded with door prizes consisting of color portraits by Robert Harper, 448th BG, of formations of B-24s from several Wings being awarded to lucky ticket holders. Expressions of appreciation were made to Col. Klug and the Marines for their hospitality, and the members were invited to continue their visiting as desired.

The Chairman and his committee thanks everyone for their support and help given...both directly and indirectly. A special word of thanks go to Val Boucher, Sally Orthman, Agnes McBride, et al who greeted and registered our members and guests; an important job well done! The atmosphere of warm friendship and general camaraderie exhibited throughout the evening by everyone attending was outstanding and highly rewarding to all involved. Plans are in the initial stages for another reunion dinner in 1988. Any suggestions from the membership will be welcomed.

The next activity for our West Coast members will be the 2nd Annual 2ADA Golf Tournament August 14 at the Navy Golf Course in Los Alamitos. Those who have not registered and/or those who would like to attend the after dinner festivities can get details by contacting Harry L. Orthman - 25382 Adriana - Mission Viejo, CA 92691. Another highly enjoyable occasion is anticipated.

If This is Sunday, It Must Be France

by Fred Carr, 489th

It was Sunday, June 25, 1944. We were flying "Teaser" and were getting close to the target, an aircraft factory at Villacoublay, when flak almost severed our wing between Nos. 3 and 4 engines. We immediately lost several thousand feet of altitude, but after some hasty maneuvering brought the plane under control. Doug Chessir, the engineer, transferred fuel to avoid fire, and for a few minutes we had hopes of making it back to the beach heads, or even England. That thought was dashed, however, when an element of FWs jumped on us. Since we were already severely damaged, evasive action was difficult, if not impossible. The German fighters made continual runs on us, knocking out another engine plus other operational equipment, so to stay airborne and hold altitude we threw out our flak vests and all the excess material we could find. All the while, the ammunition striking the plane sounded like popcorn popping.

Suddenly Doug yelled down from the top turret that the wing was about ready to come off at any minute. With this information, and knowing that we were only providing target practice for the fighters, we decided to vacate. Ground drills paid off. Each man checked out in sequence, and with parting "Good Lucks," bailed out. When everybody else had gone, J.D. Coffman and I began our exodus. Reaching the rear of the flight deck and struggling to get to the bomb bay, I saw the body of one of our crew lying there. I think it was Doyle Yoder, our radio operator, but to this day I'm not sure. Anyway, he was motionless, so thinking he was dead I inexplicably reasoned it would be much "cleaner" if I pushed him out, rather than have him crash with the plane. So I did. Somehow, he revived, pulled his ripcord, and eventually was picked up by the French underground! When I jumped, I held my nose, a la the old swimming hole. I'd forgotten to tighten my leg straps (thankfully, I had remembered to fasten the chest straps), so when the chute opened, I felt as if my upper thighs had been severed!

As I floated down, I noticed that my wristwatch said 7:30 p.m. It took a long time to reach the ground, and I concentrated on getting my bearings. The Seine River and various villages were easily identifiable. I was even able to get my escape kit from my leg pocket, and with some difficulty, to extract the map and verify my location.

I landed softly in a large field, quickly removed my chute, rolled it up as small as possible, and covered it with hay and weeds. I also took off my flying boots and threw them as far as I could in opposite directions. Eventually I stood up to peer over the shoulder-high grain, and discovered that a large circle of civilians had surrounded me and was closing in. Not knowing whether they were friendly or not, I tried to pick an opening and get through. I actually made it, too, but a little boy spotted me and yelled out my position. Almost immediately I was surrounded by handshaking, kissing, French partisans, and just as quickly whisked off by two gun-toting men into the nearby woods. They told me I was near a town called Gisors.

To Buchenwald

It would take a book to tell what happened to me after that. In short, I was put in contact with the French underground, assumed the identity of a Swedish chemist (with all the appropriate IDs and working papers), hid at a convent and at various homes, lived and "worked" as a chemist in a "Laboratoire de Chimie," and made some wonderful life-long friends. The chemist I worked for, incidentally, was the leader of the resistance in that sector of Normandy (Etrepagny), who also, ironically, was the Nazi-approved mayor of the town!

Eventually, J.D. Coffman, Bill Mauk, Bill Alexander and I were reunited to make our way to the coast. However, we were betrayed by a French traitor (who was executed after the war) and handed over to the Gestapo in Paris and put in Fresnes prison several weeks before Paris was liberated. Along with French civilians we were put in sealed boxcars and in about five days arrived at Buchenwald, in Weimar, Germany. The reason for sending us to such a place was probably because we were behind enemy lines and "running around" with the Maquis. The Gestapo called us "saboteurs and spies." My impression is that there were about 68 Americans at Buchenwald who were detected and arrested under circumstances similar to ours, and another 200 or so RAF airmen. I need not describe the nightmare that was Buchenwald; its history is well-documented. Fortunately we spent only about 2½ months there. Allied bombers raised havoc with the SS part of the camp, and within two weeks of that raid we were transferred, again by boxcar, to Stalag Luft 3 in Sagan, Poland. Stalag Luft 3 seemed like Paradise in comparison with Buchenwald, because the prisoners had organized themselves in a military manner, and the Luftwaffe responded in a reasonable way. Obviously, food and other necessities were not the best, but by autumn of 1944 strategic bombing was taking its toll on commerce, bridges, railroads, and all other kinds of distribution and supply. The Germans themselves were hard pressed for a proper diet, shelter or medical treatment. POWs didn't have priority.

On the Road Again

Shortly after Christmas 1944 the Germans decided to evacuate Stalag Luft 3 because the Russians were too close. We spent the rest of the war marching, occasionally riding in the familiar boxcars, then marching again, all the way to Moosburg, near Munich. It was an exhausting and difficult time for all the prisoners, especially so because of scanty food rations and lack of water, medical attention or shelter. We spent many nights sleeping in the snow along the line of march, and our clothing was totally inadequate. If you removed your shoes because your feet hurt, there was little chance of getting them on again - your feet would balloon too much. Those of us who had been at Buchenwald were already weakened by that experience, so the march was a nearly unbearable exercise. The walking distance for that winter and spring trek was estimated to be 500-600

miles! It's difficult to make an accurate accounting because of the zig-zag route and the many detours, but it lasted until the end of April 1945, and it took a heavy toll.

Eventually, we were liberated at a temporary camp near Moosburg by advancing American armor. They literally had to "liberate" us because the Nazis did not, or would not allow the POW area to be a non-combat area.

In spite of all our experiences and heart-break, I'm sure you can appreciate the joy and happiness we felt as we saw the American flag waving from the top of Moosburg's City Hall. It was a feeling of thanksgiving, pride, and love for America which is impossible to describe.

Within a few days Allied Command had organized a massive airlift, and transported thousands of ex-POWs to Camp Lucky Strike in Le Havre. There we were processed, got medical attention, were "deloused," interrogated, and soon put on a hospital ship (once a German luxury liner) for the trip home.

Where Are They Now?

In a big nutshell, that's it. Insofar as I know, all our crew finally made it back. Roy Waller, the bombardier and our wounded radio operator Doyle Yoder were liberated when American forces occupied the communities in Normandy in August 1944. I think all the rest of us were prisoners, but weren't together. J.D. Coffman and I were put into the north compound at Stalag Luft 3, which housed primarily RAF officers and pilots, so we were separated from the others. However, my mother took it on herself, while we were all MIAs, to correspond with the parents of the crew, so I was able to contact all of them after the war and separation. We corresponded for about 15 years, but seldom after that. I guess, because we came from so many different places, from California to New Hampshire and points between, and because we were all trying to pick up our new lives, we didn't have much time to reminisce and keep in touch. In 1972 I was at a convention in Anaheim, California, and found J.D. Coffman's Pasadena number and called him. We had a great reunion at the Disneyland Hotel! For some reason we failed to keep contact, but several weeks ago he wrote to say he and his wife had gone back to Europe in June 1984 for the D Day observances, and had been able to visit some of the people who had hidden him.

Bill Alexander, our belly turret gunner, became a New York City detective, and is now retired from that city's police force. Earl "Jack" Fix, the last I knew, owned and operated a garage in Kansas. I (the copilot) retired last year after 36 years in education, the last 23 as principal of Stevens High School here in Claremont, New Hampshire. I haven't heard from Roy Waller since shortly after the war. (*I bet you will now—Ed.*) The whereabouts of the other crew members - Doug Chessir, Doyle Yoder, Henry Vandogen, Steve Pecus and Bill Mauk - are a mystery to me. Does anybody have a clue?

Dream Flight!

David Hastings' feet may have been back on the ground, but his head was still way up in the clouds after his great flight over America at the controls of a light aircraft.

"It surpassed all my expectations," he exclaimed. "I knew it would be a superb flight. But I never dreamed it would be as good as it was."

The 53-year old Salhouse businessman, who is one of the city governors of the 2nd Air Division's memorial trust, was partnered on his Trans-American mission by ex-Tibbenham-based USAF pilot David Patterson.

Together they flew from west coast to east coast, and back again, with a stop to take in the veterans' 38th Annual Convention in Newark, New Jersey.

"It was a dream flight," beamed David. "I learned more in a few days with David as my co-pilot than I've learned in years of flying."

When I spoke to him a few days before he set out, he admitted that his greatest worry was flying over the Rockies where the air buffets more than anything that flies.

And back home, he said: "It was worse than I ever imagined. It was terribly turbulent. We were getting tossed around and knocked about for four and a-half hours without a let up.

"I just wasn't used to it being that rough for so long - and the amazing thing was they told me it was reasonably calm. It could be a lot rougher!"

With maps on his lap, David clocked up 15 hours 35 minutes flying time on the first half of the two-way journey - and that was just 15 minutes longer than they'd budgeted for nine months earlier.

On the way he'd stopped off at Wendover airfield - home of the 467th, the Rackheath "Aggies" - Topeka, where they found a Dakota, the type of aircraft David flew in during his RAF service - and Dayton, home of the giant US Air Force Museum.

If anything, however, the return flight was even more impressive. Said David: "We thought we'd have a go at flying low-level right across America - but everyone said the weather would beat us and we'd never do it.

"But we did - and it was fantastic. We flew between 4500 feet and 1000 feet all the way, and wherever we went we seemed to time it just right for the weather. Even when there was a lot of cloud about our route took us through valleys of blue sky."

It was during that journey, completed in 18 hours 15 minutes flying time, that the two aviators had the closest thing to a near-miss during their flight. "We met a Boeing 737 climbing out from St. Louis and although distances can be deceptive I'd say he was certainly no more than 500 yards from us."

Flying over Jefferson City they spotted what they thought was a gleaming silver B-17 Flying Fortress on the ground. "We had to go down and check it out - and yes, it was a B-17, belonging to the Confederate Air Force. It was in immaculate condition."

Highlights of the backward leg were flying over the shuttle landing strip in the Painted Desert, and descending to fly up the Grand Canyon.

The 5500-mile round trip was a tiring, not to say, exhausting experience, but said David: "As a pilot to be able to fly for six or seven hours and have night stops before setting off again was great - and what a way to see America."



Pilot and co-pilot . . . David Hastings and David Patterson with their trusty Cessna.

New 2ADA Auxiliary Formed

Since our update in the September Journal, a major milestone has been achieved. As of March 3, 1987, your auxiliary was established as a nonprofit corporation in the State of Illinois. The name of the auxiliary is THE HERITAGE LEAGUE OF THE SECOND AIR DIVISION (USAAF). Thus, the legal structure is in place to start operations during the 40th annual 2ADA Convention in Norwich. This is a most fitting time and place for such an event.

By the time you read this, elections will have been held for LEAGUE officers and Executive Committee members. Their jobs will be busy performing all of the tasks essential to the birth and nurturing of a new organization. They will need plenty of help. Eligible potential members may expect to hear soon from this group, so be alert for opportunities to join and to become involved.

Responses to earlier announcements in the Journal have been substantial and all positive. Interest has been balanced between spouses and children, but not to the exclusion of grandchildren for who some really interesting possibilities await. If they are not there already, now is the time to bring these young people up to speed on what the 2ADA is all about. Enroll them today while they have an opportunity to become Founder or even Charter Members.

Eligible as LEAGUE Regular Members are spouses, grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren of those who served with the 2AD (USAAF) 8th Air Force during WW II in England. Associate nonvoting memberships also are available to certain supporters of the LEAGUE's aims.

LEAGUE Founder Memberships will be tendered to those Regular and Associate members who join prior to midnight GMT August 22, 1987. Following that period, charter memberships will be available until midnight GMT of the 2ADA 1988 Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs.

Avoid that "wish I had done it" feeling later by enrolling now in what promises to be an exciting organization. Until you hear from the LEAGUE Membership Vice President, complete the application below and mail it to:

Bud Chamberlain
769 Via Somonte
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274

B-24 CREW

by Joe Duncan of the Herald Republic

A time machine touched down in Yakima Thursday afternoon.

Borne by four big Pratt & Whitney engines and Davis wings, the huge tan-colored B-24 bomber arrived, marking the beginning of a trip back to 1944 for seven men.



Members of the "Lucky Penny II," standing from left, are: Robert Hon, (tail gunner); Eddie Edwards (flight engineer); Ed Paulsen (nose gunner); Johnnie Miller (radio operator); Winford Pace (waist gunner); Bill Stites (waist gunner). Kneeling from left are Bill Lofton (pilot); Bruce Florea (co-pilot); Leonard Lonigan (navigator); and Tom Welch (bombadier).

The seven — Johnnie Miller of Yakima; Leonard Lonigan of Eugene, Ore.; Tom Welch of Pompano Beach, Fla.; Bruce "Joe" Florea of Columbia, MI.; Bill Stites of Black Earth, Wis.; Win Pace of Salem, Mo.; and Robert Hon of Houston, Texas — flew 35 bombing missions together during World War II.

They lost their youth in the fuselages of Army Air Force "Liberators" in the skies over Europe. It was found Thursday in a reunion with one of the few B-24s still flying.

The organizers of the Yakima Air Fair helped arrange the reunion by signing up a Confederate Air Force B-24, "Diamond Lil," for the 1986 air show Saturday and Sunday.

Though Miller, Lonigan, Florea and Stites had kept in touch after they returned from the war, the whereabouts of Welch, Pace and Hon were unknown. But several calls to long-distance information operators and a lot of detective work located the missing three.

Two other in the 10-member crew, Eddie Edwards and Ed Paulsen, couldn't be found. The 10th man, pilot Bill Lofton, died in a bomber crash in 1945.

The reunion in Yakima was the first time in 41 years the seven members of the bomber "Lucky Penny II" had been together. Their memories quickly spanned the gap.

"It's different to me. It doesn't look the same. Ours looked a lot sleeker," Lonigan, the navigator, said as he ran his eyes over the CAF B-24 parked on the tarmac of the Yakima Air Terminal.

"Yeh, well, it's a B-24," grinned Miller, who was radio operator on the Lucky Penny II.

Actually, Diamond Lil was a LB-30A experimental version of the B-24 and it never

interior, the Air Force put Diamond Lil into service to fly Eleanor Roosevelt on a 1944 tour of the Pacific Theater of the war.

Those particulars made little difference to the Lucky Penny II crew. Welch began the serious reminiscing with a "remember the time" and the transformation from men facing retirement to daring young aviators was complete.

There were tears and cheers to relive. As one air fair board member put it, "That's what this is all about."

Pace, a waist gunner, remembered how the Lucky Penny II shook as it strained to get off the ground with 2,700 pounds of fuel and a full load of bombs.

But, insisted Stites, who also was a waist gunner, "Lofton was the best pilot in the air force."

"And he had the best crew," added Pace.

Stites recalled when the Lucky Penny II was shot down in October 1944 while on its 23rd mission. The plane and its crew were returning from a bombing raid on Cologne.

Every loose object was tossed out in an attempt to keep the flak-damaged plane aloft until it was over Belgium, territory then controlled by the Allies. The efforts were successful and the crew bailed out.

Three days later they arrived at their 8th Air Force barracks in Buckenham, England.

"When we walked in the barracks, they (another B-24 crew that shared their quarters) were busy packing our stuff to send home," said Stites. "When they saw us they thought we had risen from the dead."

Ironically, the Lucky Penny's crew had the task of packing up their roommates belongings a few missions later after the other crew was killed in combat.

saw action as a bomber. Built for the British, it crashed on the delivery flight and the United States bought it back.

After refurbishing the plane with a posh



Seven members of the crew lined up 42 years later in front of the "Diamond Lil" at the Yakima Air Terminal. Two of the crew, Eddie Edwards and Ed Paulsen, could not be located for the reunion. Pilot Bill Lofton died in a B-24 crash in 1945.

Brothers in War Glad to Be Alive And Together

by Merton Vance

WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH — It was the flak they remembered most vividly. For 35 long, lumbering flights in a B-24 bomber, it was the explosions of German anti-aircraft shells that could have ended their lives.

For 10 men gathered at a hotel here this week, it was a time for remembering and reliving war stories. For most, it was the

first time they'd seen each other since 1945. All are retired now except for one, and they are all amazed they are one of the few B-24 crews whose members are all still alive.

The first of their 35 combat missions together, on Aug. 25, 1944, was to hit a Heinkel aircraft factory at Rostock, Germany.

"We were completely unexperienced," said Murray Sheffield, the pilot. "We got a hit on the right windshield, and it cracked like a cannon."

Sheffield looked over to co-pilot Jack Miller, who was white as a sheet and looking to see if he was wounded. He wasn't.

Tom Tinney of Wilmington remembers sitting in his seat as the nose gunner, watching massive formations of heavy bombers making the saturation bombing runs that would reduce much of Germany's wartime industry to rubble.

The anti-aircraft shells exploded around the bombs and, from his glass-enclosed dome, Tinney watched many planes fall in flames.

"I remember the smell of the flak," Tinney recalled. "When you could smell the gun powder, it was close."

For all the close calls, however, not one crew member was ever wounded.

"We came back without a scratch," said Frederick Recuparo, who was the ball turret gunner in the belly of the four-engined plane.

They were among the lucky ones. Of the 10 crews they trained with before going to England, only three did not get shot down, said John Blottie, who was the plane's navigator.

"It's amazing all 10 of us are still alive," Blottie said. "You'd think an irate husband would have shot somebody or something."

"Sheffield did a super job," Tinney said. "He brought us in a lot of times when that thing wasn't supposed to fly."

On many missions, including a raid on Berlin with 3,300 bombers in December 1944, the plane would carry up to 8,000 pounds of bombs.

The men began arriving Saturday and plan to stay through Thursday, reliving some of their missions and looking through scrapbooks and flight logbooks, glad they made it through the final entry, a final raid on Munster, Germany, on March 23, 1945.

Roger Freeman Needs Your Help — Again!

Anecdotes are sought for a proposed volume highlighting the personal experience of Second World War airmen in Europe. These can be on any aspect of wartime experience; training, operational or social; humorous or serious; grim or elating. If you served — ground or air — with the USAAF in Europe during the trouble with Hitler, and would like to contribute a tale or memory, please write:

Roger A. Freeman, May's Barn,
Dedham, Colchester, Essex. CO7 6EW
England.



Members of a B-24 bomber crew pose behind a wartime picture taken beside their plane. From left to right, kneeling in the front row are George Swift, the tail gunner; Arthur Koch, the engineer; John Blottie, the navigator (missing from the original picture); Tom Tinney, the nose gunner; and Frederick Recuparo, the ball turret gunner. In the back row, from left to right, are Ed Crane, the waist gunner; Murray Sheffield, the pilot; Jack Miller, the co-pilot; Scotty Steel, the bombardier; and Harold Riepenhoff, the radio operator.

Do You Remember?

by Colonel Cary Fullbrook, Wymondham College

Most Old Soldiers will have been in hospital sometime in their service. The pain and sometimes the indignity mercifully pale

with the passing of time, but humour and gratitude are always clearly remembered. Do you remember 231 Station Hospital



Is this where you were?

USAAF between Attleborough and Wymondham about 12 miles out from Norwich just off the Thetford - London road?

This hospital became a state boarding school and VIth Form day center for local Norfolk children in the 1950's - what you would call a Public School. Now in 1987 after 37 years of educating boys and girls for adult life the school has only just escaped the county's economic axe because of the cost of maintaining the old wartime Nissen huts in which you were nursed.

Wiser counsels mercifully have prevailed and an appeal has been launched to save the school. Two of the Nissen huts will be retained, appropriately the chapel and the sanatorium, to stand as a memorial for all time to our American friends, some of whom died here but many of whom lived to continue the fight with us in the cause of Freedom. But the other huts must go and classrooms and administrative offices must be accommodated in more permanent buildings. This is the task we have set ourselves. It will cost about \$1,500,000.

When you are in England this summer come and see us. There will always be someone here to entertain you and show you around, but call the Bursar's office on Wymondham 605566 before setting out from Norwich so that we are ready for you. If you cannot come and see us, have you any memorabilia of your time at 231, photographs, insignia, etc. which you would be willing to send us? The school would display it in the chapel or in its well appointed library.

Bombing of Germany Remembered

War can only be described by those who live through it.

And about 30 people who did live through it - all members of 8th Air Forces's Second Air Division Association - met in Savannah during the weekend to share stories and get reacquainted with their old bombing buddies.

The Second Air Division, composed of 14 B-24 bombing groups and five fighter plane groups, operated out of Norwich, England from 1942 to April 25, 1945. During that period, nearly 100,000 sorties and 439 operational missions were conducted from the base. Hundreds of B-24s, fondly called Liberators, dropped about 200,000 tons of bombs on Germany and downed about 1,079 enemy aircraft. The fighter-plane wing shot down 3,670 enemy aircraft.

An estimated 6,400 members of the Second Air Division died in combat, Jordan Uttal of Dallas, co-founder of the association, said.

"What we were trying to do was set Germany on fire," said Dean Moyer, formerly an armaments specialist, describing incendiary bombing raids over Germany in World War II.

Moyer, who is from Evans City, Pa., recalled flying over Cologne, France and

surveying the damage after extensive Allied bombing.

"The city was flattened. The only thing left standing was a cathedral," he said, noting that bombardiers would purposely spare churches if possible.

Maj. Gen. Andrew Low, a West Point graduate, remembers floating down into the hands of a Nazi patrol after parachuting from his bullet-ridden B-24 over Ludvigshaven, Germany.

He said his flight suit was on fire when he hit the ground.

German soldiers took him to a prison camp where he lived on half-rations for 273 days - until the end of the European war.

"They thought I was British. The war was almost over and they knew they (the Germans) were losing. I wasn't treated too badly. A man only needs about 5 pounds of food a week," he said.

Low and thousands of other prisoners were released when Germany surrendered. But as they marched through Nuremberg, Germany toward France, they were mistakenly bombed by Allied forces.

"We left several thousand (dead) in Nuremberg. It's a sad, sad life," he said.

Following the war, Low continued his

career in the Air Force and worked in the Pentagon for 13 years. He is now a graduate-level teacher at the University of Southern California.

In the 70 days just prior to D-Day, Rowe Bowen of Philadelphia said he flew 30 bombing missions over Germany.

"We bombed them by day and the British bombed them by night. We were pinpointing factories and industrial centers while the British bombed active battle zones," Bowen said.

Evelyn Cohen, one of the few women who served in the Second Air Division, was present at the reunion.

She said her duties pertained mostly to administrative matters, but she admitted that being the first American woman to arrive at the air base in Norwich had certain advantages.

"It certainly elevated my social status," she said.

When the Second Air Division pulled out of England, a memorial room was established at the Norwich Public Library. The room is filled with books chronicling the war, and each book is dedicated to a member of the Second Air Division who died in combat.

Let's Play Tag!!!

by Clayton K. Gross, 355th FG



Capt. Clayton Gross

In a thousand flights, including 105 combat missions in my two fighter tours, I remember this one as vividly as any, and man, would I like to meet the pilot of the Liberator that day!

My crew chief, Smitty, came to our Ops office in the early dawn to tell me that "Live Bait" was back in commission with a new engine and needed "slow time." I scheduled the sixteen mission pilots with their two spares, and saw them off with the group for a deep escort mission. Then after another coffee with the Ops gang, I leisurely proceeded to GQ-I and after a proper pre-flight, lifted it into the broken clouds over Boxted.

There are few things I would rather do than fly a beautiful fighter plane, but nothing more boring than flying it straight and level when it was capable of doing so much. I leveled off just below the 3500 foot ceiling and decided on a sightseeing tour. First, I went south to the Thames, then turned West toward the barrage balloon fields of London. Before long on that course, I found company in the form of a B-24 cruising at the same altitude and crossing my course, left to right. Since it looked like something to do, I banked right and pulled along his right side. I really didn't want to frighten the bomber crew, so I sat - oh, maybe 50 feet off his wing tip, throttling back a little to match air speed. I could clearly see pilot and co-pilot not frightened, but grinning - ear to ear. They beckoned me in, and now I grinned - they were speaking my language.

I moved in tight - like 10 feet - but they weren't satisfied. With more waving and what I thought might have been a mouthed word "coward," they asked for it! I tucked

Live Bait in under the Lib wing, careful only that their #3 and #4 engines did not slice through my canopy. The co-pilot gave me the universal "OK - Alright!" sign, and I smiled - not ready for what happened next. That bomber broke hard left and up like a fighter who suddenly discovered a covey of 109's on his tail. Blessed with pretty good reflexes which I honed in two years of flying fighters, I tucked back in quickly after the initial move left me just slightly.

For the next five minutes I went for a ride following that guy in maneuvers I had no idea a B-24 could do! I knew several things for sure - they had to be empty and the pilot was no beginner! After five minutes or so, which left me in a fair sweat, they leveled off and, still grinning, waved me forward. I couldn't believe it, but he tucked in on me. Probably I could have lost him if I really wanted to, but I didn't. I took them through the rest of the maneuvers the Liberator tech manual said they couldn't do - and they did them! If I hadn't been having so much fun in the air, I would have wished to be on the ground to watch the show -unbelievable!

When I finally leveled out, my big friend was firmly on my wing, still grinning. He then motioned me to follow and, leading our tight formation, flew north for 15 minutes. We gradually started a letdown until I could see trees at our level from the corner of my eye. Then we skipped over the last tree patch and let down to ground level - down a runway I found was a B-24 base. I mean, we beat that field up the full length of the runway and then chanelled left and up. I thought he would make a fighter approach and land from that position, but he leveled

out again and signaled me to lead the same kind of buzz job. I sincerely hoped he was the Group C.O. of that outfit because what we were doing was my favorite pastime, and one that notoriously had me in trouble in my 355th Fighter Squadron. I didn't want them to suffer the same fate. In the meantime, I had the reputation of all fighter aviation to uphold, so from a mile or so out, I got my wingman in position - silently wished him well because I needed my concentration and would not be watching out for him. I gave that field a pass that may well have set a USAAF record for buzz jobs in which the participants survived. I know I cut grass and raised dust, and in the pullout, my friend was still there as always. This time he did roll out, gave me a giant wing waggle and made an approach and landing that would have made any fighter pilot proud. After his landing I made one more pass -rocking wings in farewell.

If I knew the markings of that aircraft, I have long since forgotten them. If I knew which of the Liberator bases we beat up, I have forgotten that also, but I do know that everybody at that station was out to watch the show and someone must remember it.

I would love to shake hands with the crew, or at least know who they were. Any information would be sincerely appreciated.

ETO Carpetbaggers

ETO
Carpetbaggers



GEORGE A. REYNOLDS

Because of continuing interest I've reprinted my booklet, *ETO Carpetbaggers*. As you are acutely aware, postage and printing are both up so there is a price increase. For this edition it's \$6.00 (\$7.00 foreign) each. Send check or money order to George A. Reynolds, 1516 Mariner's Circle, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561. The book is softcover, 8½ x 11, 28 pages and 22 photos, some unpublished before.

To the Limit of Their Endurance

by Lt. George M. Epperson, Ret.

The following summary has been drawn from several World War II documents, principally from one then classified SECRET that was prepared for Lt. General James D. Doolittle, Commanding General, Eighth Air Force, in July 1945.

Escort operations were divided into two main phases: through January 1944, fighters were not permitted to desert formations to pursue enemy aircraft; after January 1944, the doctrine of "ultimate pursuit" was adopted. 8th AF fighters were allowed to follow the Luftwaffe until it was destroyed in the air or on the ground.

On early escort missions beginning May 1943, 8th AF fighters flew an "umbrella" over the bombers; however, in applying this principle, the fighters found that the German AF fighters would attack from the sides and front while the defending aircraft remained idly above. The umbrella was soon abandoned; 8th AF fighters on escort spread out more and flew closer to the bomber level.

During the initial period of escort operations, escort was possible only for 20-30 minutes; auxiliary tanks were not in use. Escort tactics all this time were being influenced by three main factors: (1) the need of bomber protection, (2) enemy strength and disposition, and (3) growth of fighter range.

The presence of 8th AF fighters after May 1943 forced the German fighters to alter their own tactics. Formerly they had attacked our bombers at the French coast; they soon learned to withhold attacks until 8th AF fighters had exceeded their limit of endurance. In July 1943, a few 8th AF P-47's achieved tactical surprise by using 75 gallon external tanks for the first time. The number of German aircraft shot down increased sharply. By October 1943, the 108 gallon belly tanks had come into use, extending the P-47 range to 375 miles from base.

Range increases affected escort formations. In June 1943, escort began to open out in order to cover more sky space. Then, as penetrations deepened, fighter formations opened still wider, with aircraft approximately 250 yards apart.

In January 1944, P-38's and P-51's increased their range to Kiel and Munster; P-47's accompanied the bombers as far south as Bordeaux. Longer fighter range made possible a vital change in battle doctrine: group commanders were ordered to pursue the Hun until he was destroyed. Commanders could exercise judgement in leaving the bombers to search for the enemy under the doctrine that

such offensive tactics accelerated destruction of the Luftwaffe. When the Hun did not come up for battle, the 8th AF fighters went down after him, singling out airfields to strafe and bomb when not providing escort.

By March 1944, P-38's had a potential radius of 585 miles; P-51's with two 75 gallon wing tanks, 650 miles. When the P-51's began to use 108 gallon tanks, their range was increased to 850 miles.

May 29, 1944 marked a historic occasion for fighter escort. P-51's furnished support at Posen, Poland, over 700 miles from base, and returned with the bombers. From then on, fighters escorted the bombers wherever they went. In June 1944, P-51's flew escort all the way to Poltava, in the USSR, 1700 miles from base, where both bombers and fighters landed at Russian bases.

In August 1944, bomber boxes became smaller and columns longer; more fighter units were necessary. Fighter groups met this need by increasing strength to 85-90 aircraft and by slicing operational units into "A" and "B" groups with upward of 24 aircraft each, each having its own Air Commander. Heavy losses were inflicted on the Luftwaffe, which found it increasingly expensive to attack the bombers through our fighter defenses.

Microwave Early Warning (MEW) control was moved from the UK in November 1944 to Gulnen, Holland; this gave 8th AF fighters additional "eyes" further into enemy territory. Coupled with intelligence derived from enemy radio communications, MEW gave fighter controllers remarkable knowledge of the progress of enemy interception.

By September 1944, P-38 groups were replaced, and by October most of the P-47 groups were re-equipped with P-51s. December saw the entire fighter force operating P-51's except for the 56th Fighter Group of the 65th Fighter Wing, Second Air Division, which retained the P-47. The switchover caused notable gains in range and in actual number of escort hours. It was the final phase in the transformation of a fighter force having primarily a protective escort function into a much more versatile one possessing offensive and harassing capabilities as well.

In his outstanding book, "The Mighty Eighth," Roger Freeman said it best: "Probably the greatest single contribution of the Eighth Air Force to victory in Europe was the star part its fighters played in attaining combat superiority in continental air space."

Tail End Charlie Over Ploesti

by Bill Nelson (93rd)



Our crew was in the 329th BS, of the 93rd Group for our first 12 missions and later we were assigned to the 409th BS same Group.

Our first mission was on a target in Sicily on 7 July 1943. We also bombed some targets in Italy. On 19 July 1943 when I was on the tunnel gun in the hatch and was about to squeeze the trigger on an Italian fighter 'Macchi' a burst of flak hit us and I ended up wounded with splinters of plexiglass and flak around the right eye which, after landing back at the base, they had to remove with tweezers. The eye still bothers me at times. That raid, incidentally, was the first raid on Rome by American bombers. I recovered well enough and the next mission was 1 August 1943 on the Ploesti oil fields.

We were flying "tail end charlie" in Col. George Brown's flight. I was again on the tunnel gun. Going over the target I threw a burst into some buildings where there was a gun firing. It blew up. We

were so low I'd almost swear if we were any lower the end of my gun barrel would scrape a rooftop. We got out of there in a hurry with all our guns blazing away. Our tail gunner Russell almost got his eyebrows singed when our commanding officer's plane "Hell's Wench" took some direct hits and went down barely missing us in our B-24 "Valiant Virgin." We made a lone withdrawal and made it back to our base in Benghazi with only a bunch of holes in the plane.

Later the "Valiant Virgin" was taken up by another crew and got shot down. We finished our tour in a plane named "Wildcat." End of experience.

I must say I am very glad that I joined the 2nd Air Division Association and have touched base with at least two that I flew with. They are Jim McMahan and my pilot Col. DeHant (now retired.)

LAST CALL

Due to the complexity of ordering books from England (time), this will be the last offering of Roger Freeman's "Mighty Eighth" series. I have an order on the way which should arrive by the middle of June. Order now or forever hold your peace.

The Mighty Eighth - New edition \$25.00
 Mighty Eighth War Manual \$28.00
 Mighty Eighth War Diary \$28.00

Send check or money order to Bill Robertie, P.O. Box 627, Ipswich, MA 01938. First come, first served until supplies are exhausted.

Bertha is Waiting to Hear From You!

by Lyndsey Hewison
 Eastern Daily Press



They were the days when James Stewart dropped his Hollywood hero roles for the real thing — flying combat missions from Norfolk airbases. The days of blackouts and rationing; when nylons, chocolate and chewing gum were just memories — unless you had a transatlantic friend. Remember those wartime days — and those friends? Then Bertha Chandler would like to hear from you, literally. This charming American — whose middle name might be enthusiasm — is waiting, cassette recorder at the ready, to capture those memories and give a voice to that episode of social history.

Collection

Bertha, from Sharon, Massachusetts, is the resident librarian in the American Memorial Library in Norwich. And although the very approachable Fulbright scholar is only part way through her year's stay she has already marked it with energy and innovation. She's bubbling over with schemes to forge and strengthen links between her country and ours; to give even more life to the 2nd Air Division Association Memorial Trust's working reminder of over 6,000 American war dead. And one

project she's particularly keen to see succeed is the collection of Norfolk memories of everyday wartime life when the Americans were here. She wants them to balance the growing quantities of memorabilia arriving at the library from ex-American airmen. "About 60 cassette tapes have been given to the library and people are beginning to send diaries, the compasses they carried, brochures from different social activities they attended and the maps they used. "The one thing that's missing is simple recollections, particularly aural recollections of the people who were here. That's something I would like to develop more from a social sense than a military sense — how did the people who lived here feel when their village population was increased tenfold by Americans who were very different socially in terms of the money they had. She's particularly keen to tape recollections commenting: "There's an excitement in hearing someone talk which you lose in the written word." She adds: "As a librarian I feel books are very important but the human element brings it alive in a way books don't. Both records are important." She'd love to hear from people with memories and those who'd like to become involved with the project, helping to make the tapes and transcribing them. Bertha also needs help for another project: indexing the names of servicemen who signed Red Cross registers. It's a mind boggling task: Bertha has a stack of the registers, the hand-writing often fading, and she confesses: "My ideal would be to do this with a computer but I don't have one. I'd like to see if there are people who would put the names on cards." At the moment if she receives an inquiry about a serviceman — and there's often one a week — a patient search through the registers might be the only way to trace him.

Communities

Bertha's other plans include fostering links between Norfolk and American schools and other communities. She'd also like to produce a guide for Americans coming to Britain, designed to help especially with the language differences. "The potential here is tremendous — if I can just not sleep!" Anyone who wants to share Bertha's enthusiasm can find her at Norwich Central Library, where the American Memorial Library is housed.

Rescue Bid for Flying Eightball Memorials

submitted by John Archer

Moves to preserve crumbling memorials of the American 44th Bomb Group - including a cluster of small murals, and the old Shipdham airfield control tower - have been set in motion by Mr. Maurice Woods, of the Manor House, Shipdham.

Shell

Arrow Air Services, which uses part of the old airfield, has a "Flying Eightball" bar and occasionally shows off its hangar to American visitors.

The control tower is a shell with balcony, windows and part of the first floor gone. Forty years ago it overlooked the busy runways of the "Flying Eightballs," whose men and machines were involved in many exploits, including the raids on Kiel and Ploesti.

With help from the Friends of the Eighth organisation, a building appeal fund has already been launched.

The murals are in a cluster of former military buildings on private land some distance from the airfield. Formerly part of the officers' quarters, the complex is now largely disused, overgrown, and in some cases open to the sky.

Donations

Mr. Woods has permission from the owner to weatherproof the buildings containing the murals. "What I need," he told me, "are donations of suitable building materials, and for someone to donate knowledge and skill to help cover them in."



The gaping facade of Shipdham airfield's former control tower, pictured during a visit by a party of Americans. Now the tower may be restored.

WW II Veteran Receives Air Medal 40 Years Late

by AIC Diane L. Pease



Aaron C. Schultz is presented his long-awaited Air Medal by Col. Ron Clarkson, U. S. Air Force Airlift Center and 317th Tactical Airlift Wing commander during retreat ceremonies May 31.

A High Point resident received an Air Medal here May 31, after waiting 40 years for the presentation.

Aaron C. Schultz was presented his long-awaited Air Medal by Col. Ron Clarkson, U.S. Air Force Airlift Center and 317th Tactical Airlift Wing commander, during retreat ceremonies.

"Shortly after I flew my fifth mission World War II ended and everybody was busy returning home. I was satisfied with just a letter certifying that I had flown the five missions necessary to receive the Air Medal," Schultz said.

"During the war we weren't given the actual medals, just the designating ribbons. Once I got home I sent the information to receive my actual medals and specifically asked for the Air Medal. I was told that they needed further proof."

Schultz may not have received the Air Medal at this time but he did get the Good Conduct Medal, Distinguished Unit Badge, European African Middle Eastern Service Medal and the Bronze Star.

"Last year I read in a paper that a fellow had been waiting for his long lost Bronze Star," Schultz said. "He wrote to a certain government agency, showed proof that he earned it and ended up getting it."

"So I took another stab at my Air Medal and I wrote. The reply said I needed to send proof and shortly after I did, I received a letter of approval."

"I wanted to have the Air Medal on my records because I'm a married man with two children and I wanted to show my children that I earned it."

Schultz was assigned to the 565th Bomb Squadron of the 389th Bomb Group during his armament training in 1943 where he worked on B-24 Liberator Bombers. "As an armament man on B-24s, I was responsible for my one assigned plane. I took care of the machine guns and hooked the bombs to the plane," he said.

Once his training was completed, the crews flew the planes to Europe and Schultz, along with the rest of the men in the group, were loaded on trains. They arrived at Fort Kilmer, N.J., on June 11, 1943. There they boarded the Queen Elizabeth on June 30, 1943, and were taken with thousands of other men to England.

When he arrived at Hethel Air Base, Station 114, England, it became his job to load the bombs on B-24s flying into combat.

"I was transferred to Headquarters Squadron at a later date, where I set up a mock bomb rack in a building and began teaching newly arrived bombardiers from stateside the type of bombing we were doing in England," he said.

The B-24 Liberator had a safety problem with the bomb bay doors causing decreased accuracy of many drops. Schultz modified the safety device and on Sept. 11, 1944, he received the Bronze Star Medal for his work.

"It was a simple modification that took only one hour to complete on a Liberator," he said.

All 389th B-24s received the modification after satisfactory trials in March 1944. The modification was approved for all 8th Air Force B-24s by August 1944.

Though Schultz didn't talk much about this achievement, it is described in detail in the *Mighty Eighth War Diary*, a book about the 8th Air Force during World War II by Roger A. Freeman.

About two months later, Schultz's job training bombardiers came to an end. "All the bombardiers at that time were officers. The major, who was in charge of these officers, approached me one day and said that some of them had been complaining because they didn't like being taught by a sergeant who had never flown in combat. He then told me to disband the school."

"That same day, Col. John B. Herboth, Jr., 389th Bomb Group commander, asked me to take him through the course. He was

so impressed by my knowledge that he asked me if I wanted to fly. I told him that I was not allowed to fly because of my weight. He told me to be at the morning briefing with a parachute."

Schultz flew his first combat mission as a bombardier on Nov. 21, 1944 when he bombed an oil refinery in Hamburg. "My first mission scared the hell out of me. The sky was literally black with flak. Occasionally, the plane got punctured and flak would ricochet inside the plane. All I could hear over the roar of the engines was the thumping and thudding of the plane getting hit."

According to Schultz, he was probably one of the first enlisted bombardiers in World War II.

He flew his second bombardier mission on Nov. 29, 1944, when he bombed railroad yards at Altenbekin. His third mission was on Christmas Day, 1944, when he flew over the famous Battle of the Bulge near Wahlen as a crew member.

He then flew as a waist gunner on Feb. 26, 1945, during a bombing raid known as the "Big B" over Berlin. Schultz's last mission was spent as a waist gunner on March 11, 1945, when U-boats were bombed near Kiel.

World War II ended and Schultz returned stateside June 8, 1945, married and settled down to live in High Point.

Forty years later, standing at attention as Pope's commander pins on his medal, Aaron C. Schultz realized a long sought after dream and is now able to tell his children he really did receive the Air Medal.

Son Plays Cupid and His Mother is a GI Bride at Last

Wartime love baby Stephen Mathews has played Cupid and united his parents after 42 years.

American GI Henry Mathews fell in love with Stephen's mother Margaret at a dance in Norfolk in 1942. The young sweethearts stayed at a hotel one night, after a bombing raid meant Margaret couldn't get home.

Nine months later Stephen was born. The couple intended to marry but their plans were scuppered when Margaret's mother became ill. Henry returned to America and Margaret promised to follow as soon as possible.

But she never made the Atlantic crossing and both eventually married someone else.

They were simply memories to each other until their son Stephen, aged 42, of Hoyle Way, Eaglescliffe, Cleveland, decided to track down his long lost father. He found him in Wisconsin, surprised him with a phone call - then flew out to meet him.

He put his parents (both by then divorced) back in touch and they found the flame of love still burned strong.

Now the couple have finally married and are honeymooning with Stephen and his family.

Margaret, 64, said: "Nothing had changed between us. The 40 years apart just slipped away as soon as we met."

The Death of a Lady

By Herman A. Peacher



This is the account of FLAK MAGNET'S last mission and what happened to her crew. This frightening experience is narrated by Herman Peacher (tail turret) with the input of the rest of the crew.

We were Crew #33, members of the original 458th bomb group, 753rd bomb squadron. The crew consisted of:

1st Lt. George N. Spaven, Pilot
2nd Lt. Robert Zedeker, Co-pilot
2nd Lt. Peter Kowal, Navigator
2nd Lt. James F. Martinson, Bombadier
T/Sgt. James H. Wedding, Engineer,
Top Turret
S/Sgt. Cedric C. Cole, Radio Operator
S/Sgt. James L. Fittinger, Nose Turret
S/Sgt. Lawrence J. Scheiding, Ball Turret
Sgt. Robert L. Allen, Waist Gunner
S/Sgt. Herman A. Peacher, Tail Turret

It was Saturday, April 22, 1944. We were called out twice but the missions were aborted. The third time, later in the day, we got the green light. Our primary target was Hamm, Germany, a huge marshaling yard. Takeoff was without incident. At approximately 1936 hours at 20,500 feet we started the bomb run to the target. Less than two minutes later, before release of the bombs, Crew 33 were to wish their ship bore a name other than FLAK MAGNET.

According to Wedding (engineer): "I observed a crippled B-17 off our starboard wing being escorted by a P-47 heading back towards England. This sighting gave me a certain sense of security. If we should get hit, that fighter escort would be available. However, shortly after this sighting, along with other crew members, I noticed the flak barrage boxing us in. The first box was low, but dead ahead. The second was high, but still dead ahead. The third boxed the aircraft at 8 o'clock, 11 o'clock, 2 o'clock, and 4 o'clock. The fifth projectile penetrated the fuselage in the front bomb bay

area and into the center wing section, penetrating the three main fuel cells feeding #2 engine. The 88 millimeter projectile exited just aft of the life raft hatch slightly to the starboard top of the fuselage. A huge hole opened up with part of the fuselage skin flapping like a half opened tin can."

There was a torrential downpour of gasoline in the bomb bay. Without hesitation, Wedding jumped from the top turret to the flight deck and into the bomb bay entrance. He immediately opened the bomb bay doors to dispense with the gasoline in hopes that it would clear out the fumes and eliminate the chance of fire. At this instant we were a flying bomb. Wedding had checked the fuel gauge and confirmed that the three fuel tanks that were hit were empty. He put #2 engine on crossfeed. He estimated we lost 550 gallons of gasoline but there appeared to be enough fuel to get back to England. Cole, the radio operator, tried to call in fighter cover but to no avail.

In the meantime the intercom from the waist crackled, "We are soaked and waist deep in gas! Let's get the hell out of here!" Allen (waist gunner), Scheiding (ball turret) and Martinson (bombadier) bailed out of the waist windows. As for me (Peacher - tail turret), nothing came over the intercom to alert me. I was watching fuel streaming off the right hand stabilizer and getting more uneasy by the minute. I glanced around and saw a pair of feet disappear out of the waist window. I immediately doubled up in a ball and rolled backwards out of the turret. We were carrying a big electric camera in the entrance hatch. That was where I elected to go out. All the corrugations in the floor and every depression was full of gasoline. It was also running out the camera hatch. When I exited the hatch, the door caught me around the knees. I hung head down for an instant until I kicked loose. According to Armstrong, engineer on Dreamboat - our

wing man, it looked like I was holding on with my hands and was afraid to let go.

Fittinger (nose turret) was called back to the bomb bay to see if he could release the bombs. The only way they could be released was with a screw driver. He managed to get rid of three or four bombs. He was working with a walk-around oxygen bottle which lasts about three minutes. This bottle ran out and another was given to him by Cole and Wedding who were in the bomb bay with him.

A FW-190 made a firing pass from about 5 o'clock and above. Bullets riddled the tail section and glanced off the remaining bombs. The #2 engine was also set on fire. Fittinger was getting groggy again so Wedding and Cole got his chute, snapped it to his harness and pushed him off the catwalk. Cole and Wedding bailed out the bomb bay opening.

Zedeker (co-pilot) recalls: "I thought we had been hit by more flak because of stuff flying around the cockpit. Then I saw the FW-190 peeling off to the right of us. He circled around and ahead of us and lined up about 10 or 11 o'clock for a frontal attack. I got up and said to George Spaven (pilot), "Let's get out of here!" I looked back but he had not moved. I slapped him on the shoulder and said, "Come on!" He nodded and then all hell broke loose. There were tracers and pieces of aircraft flying everywhere. George was hit numerous times because the instrument panel had disintegrated. If it had not been for the armor plate on the pilot and co-pilot seats I would not have made it either. George slumped over the controls. I jumped down on the catwalk and bailed out."

Kowal, the navigator, had opened the nose wheel doors. This was his escape hatch. As he started through the opening the green earth below turned red from tracers. After this stopped he bailed out. As he and Zedeker, hanging in their chutes, glanced back at the crippled FLAK MAGNET there was a big flash and explosion. Both wings blew off and disintegrated. The fuselage lowered her nose and slipped down to earth, shielding George Spaven who made the supreme sacrifice.

In 1946 Spaven's mother received this word from Washington taken from captured German records:

"1st Lt. George Napier Spaven, Jr. was shot down by enemy flak April 22, 1944, a short distance from Hoetmar, District of Waredorf, Prussia. He was interred April 23, 1944 at 10:00 A.M. at the communal cemetery, Hoetmar, grave #2.

The rest of the crew, after interrogation and several instances of beatings and mistreatment, were sent to different P.O.W. camps. There were numerous injuries to the crew. Some crew members were sent to Luft Three and others to Stalag Luft 17B. I (Peacher) was sent to Obermassfeld where my badly broken ankle was put in a cast after a period of 20 days. Later I was sent to Luft IV, then to Luft I P.O.W. camp. Starvation was the worst part of our internment.

All crew members are still surviving today, despite various health conditions, with the exception of Robert Allen, who passed away approximately three years ago. Ours was an ordinary crew, but to me - very special and the best! We have a bond stronger than blood relation.

Letters



W.B. Smith's quad grandchildren

Dear Evelyn:

Sorry I am so late with the information I promised. Now you can see why I'm missing the trip to England. Maybe next time.

W. B. Smith (445th)

+ + + +

To The Members of the Second Air Division Association

In 1987 we face a significant challenge to keep our defense initiatives on course. We are a continually improving Air Force. Our people are of the highest caliber this nation can provide. The aircraft we fly are the safest and most cost effective in history. And, thanks to improved training, increased sortie rates and adequate reserves, our readiness is the best in the world.

However, as you know well from your experience in World War II, we can't rest on past successes or rely on yesterday's equipment. The international military balance is dynamic. We must keep our momentum going. Strategic modernization, for example, is our highest priority. The B-1B bomber and Peacekeeper missile are both recent additions to Strategic Air Command's alert force, strengthening our deterrent capability. Behind those successes, we're studying ways of making these forces more survivable, such as building the Small ICBM or Midgetman and placing additional Peacekeepers on mobile railroad cars. The bottom line is we can't afford to stand still because the threat from our potential adversaries remains real and is ever changing.

General Tooy Spaatz once said that "public support is as essential to effective air power as industries, airplanes and airmen." With your help and the continued confidence of the American people, we will maintain the great legacy of service the Second Air Division helped establish.

Larry D. Welch, General, USAF
Chief of Staff

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Bob Bieck was one of our early pilots and crews in the 453rd Bomb Group. Like many, he remained in the service and lost contact with his original friends that date back to March Field CA. And for some reason or another never got involved with the 2nd Air Div. Assoc. until recently. In one of his letters to me, I couldn't help but smile, as I read of the innocence of the events as they unfolded thru the years running into people that were associated with the 453rd.

He is now retired, living in Lakeland, FL, has the leisure and comforts of retirement. If you think some of the excerpts of his letter are worthy of telling in the Journal, some of the events may be enjoyed by some who know him. I got his permission, and told him I would write you. Attached is a copy if you want to consider the space, and interest.

Mike Benarcik
2900-A Concord Pike
Wilmington, DE 19803

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Received the March 1987 Journal and have read most of it already. I looked back to the 1977 Roster and I see Evelyn Cohen and you have held the same offices all these years. This should be put in the Journal and congratulations to you both.

In the 1977 Roster I counted roughly 1,931 names listed. A more accurate count in the 1987 Roster shows 6,225.

I have sent a card to 362 enlisted men, 50 officers retired in the 93rd BG for a total of 412 cards sent out. I have received 176 letters to date.

Bob Boutain (93rd)

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Re: The two articles appearing in the March 1987 issue about the mission by the 389th BG to Duneberg/Neumunster written by Coy Lawson and by Ken Jones.

I was riding in the somewhat precarious front seat, the nose gun position, on the plane directly behind the Deputy Lead on that Duneberg mission April 7, 1945. After the Lead and Deputy Lead were taken down by the enemy 109, our pilot ordered the firing of the flares and then took over the lead position. Our 19 year old pilot, 1st Lt. Jeff Piercy, lifted our plane slightly to avoid being the next victim of the havoc being thrown our way. The chronicle of events as seen by Mr. Lawson seem to be the same as my observation. However, I have always felt that the enemy pilot was already dead on impact as he was slumped over and could have possibly pulled the stick along with him. But as to that, I could not attest.

While re-forming the squadron we ended up under the high right and was on the bomb run. When I saw their bomb doors open, I alerted our pilot and we then ended up under the low left, also with their doors open. The bombs of the high right came so close to our wing that we could read the fine print. Almost at the same time the left low dropped their load close to our left wing. All this time we were able to stay out of the way and send our own bombs to the target area.

Our tail gunner, Bernard (Bernie) Dispenza, kept a sparkplug from that 109 which had penetrated our plane near the tail section, hit the bulkhead and landed just behind him on the walkway.

We also flew the mission to Furth the next day, April 8, somewhat unnerved from the close call of the day before.

Enclosed are two pictures - one of the Angel Ann and one of the crew. This picture was taken while in training at Boise, Idaho. Goldstein did not go with us to England. Perhaps some of the 2AD members will recall either the plane or some of the crew.

Ross D. Woods, Rt. 2 Box 64B, Fontanelle, Ia. 50846



Back: Gilbert Mieritz, navigator; Goldstein, bombardier; Jeff Piercy, pilot; Sylvester Steinke, co-pilot. Front: Frank Stanek, upper gunner; Bob Fox, armor gunner; Bernard Dispenza, tail gunner; Bill Peak, radio operator; Rentz, engineer; Ross Woods, nose gunner

Dear Mr. Robertie:

As a new member of the Second Air Division Association, I'd like to compliment you as editor of the Journal. This is a very interesting publication and I'll look forward to future issues as they are published.

I learned of the 2ADA only last June during a reunion of my B-24 crew in Yakima, Washington. Sorry I didn't know about the Association long before, but I'm glad to be a member now and hope to continue my affiliation for a long time to come.

My wife and I plan to attend the reunion next May in Norwich and we are most enthusiastic about meeting Association members and participating in reunion events.

I was left waist gunner on "Lofton's Crew" of the 453rd Group, 734th Squadron. We flew our 35 missions between July 31, 1944 and February 22, 1945. We were shot down and bailed out during a mission to Cologne (our 23rd mission) on October 17, 1944. We were fortunate to bail out over American occupied territory in Belgium and returned safely to England to complete our tour.

Pilot Bill Lofton fell behind in missions due to an accident on the air base in which he fractured both arms. The other members of our crew completed our missions with spare pilots. Lofton later was killed in a B-24 crash at our air base at Old Buckenham.

I'm enclosing some materials for your consideration for publication in the Journal. The Yakima Herald-Review story and photo article was carried in that newspaper during the time of our crew reunion in Yakima, Washington. I think they did an excellent job on this feature and perhaps you can make some use of it. I'm not sure about reprint rights, but I presume they would approve with appropriate credits. The war-time photo of my crew, of course, is clear for publication.

My crew members as they appear in the old Air Corps photo are: Front row (left to right) William E. Lofton, pilot, Blythe, Calif., (KIA); Bruce J. Florea, co-pilot, Columbia, Mo.; Leonard Lonigan, navigator, Eugene, Oregon; Thomas Welch, bombardier, Pompano Beach, Florida. Back row (l-r) Robert Hon, tail gunner, Houston, Texas; Hilliard (Eddie) Edwards, flight engineer, Coral Gables, Florida; Edward Paulsen, nose gunner, Chicago, Illinois; Johnnie H. Miller, radio operator, Yakima, Washington; Winford Pace, right waist gunner, Salem, MO; Wilbur Stites, left waist gunner, Black Earth, Wisconsin.

Thanks for your consideration, Bill. I don't know what your deadline for copy is, but I presume your next issue (December) is long ago put to bed. If you can use any of this in a future issue, please feel free to do so. It may be of interest to some of the old flyers from the great glory days of the B-24.

Wilbur Stites
9334 Kahl Road
Black Earth, WI 53515

+ + + +

Dear Fellow Internee.

Here is the **final word** on the Swedish Internee's Reunion. The information contained is as follows:

ALL AMERICAN INTERNEES IN SWEDEN DURING WW II!!!!

The reunion is to be held in the town of Vasteras from Monday, Sept. 7, 1987 through Saturday, September 13, 1987. You must pay your way to Vasteras...BUT!!!...All former internees, their spouses, and one child, or grandchild will be given housing and a great time, including transportation. All internees will be the guests of the American Ambassador at a dinner to be held in Stockholm. On the last day (13 September) people of the town of Vasteras will host everyone at a dinner in our honor. Our visit to Vasteras will coincide with their "Air Technical Days", and a P-51, a Jug, and other aircraft will be there for us to see once again. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to return to our "Haven of Refuge." We are to be the "Guests of Honor" although I think it should be turned around.

The person to contact in Vasteras is as follows:

Miss Katherine Wiren, Stadshuset 721-87
Vasteras, Sweden, Telephone-46-21-16-2289
Do it now! You'll regret it later if you don't.

I will act as a contact point. I now have a current list of over 105 men who are interested in going to the reunion. If you contact me I want the following information: name, address, phone number, date of internment, squadron and group numbers.

I will supply a list, to anyone on the list, if you send me a S.S.A.F.

Jim McMahon, "The Framby Kid"
2100 Mount Olive Drive, Santa Rosa,
CA 95404, Phone: (707) 525-9707

+ + + +



Left: "C.D." Johnson. Right: Joe Bradley

Dear Bill:

Enclosed a little story submitted to me. We met Joe & Peggy Bradley in 1980 at our reunion in Cambridge. It turned out that they lived only 4 miles from us in N.J. I received Cecil D. Johnson's name and address from the 8th Air Force Historical Society, sent him an application and he joined. Through correspondence with him found that Joe Bradley and C.D. Johnson were on the same crew, so got them together again. Things like this make this job a little more bearable.

I hope you got my Journal report O.K., I was just looking over the corrections that Evelyn sends, hadn't noted the box number change on your address before.

Looking forward to seeing you and Hazel in England.

Floyd Mabee

+ + + +

Dear Ms. Cohen:

Am writing to you as a result of seeing your name on page 48 of Tony North's LIBERATOR ALBUM Volume #3 which I just purchased.

I am very much interested in all aspects of the 8th Air Force and the units that flew the B-24 Liberator in particular.

I am currently collecting written material about the B-24 and the various combat crews that flew her during WW II. I am continuously running into Out-of-Print or the B-17, so when an apparent lead favoring the B-24 becomes real I act as quickly as possible.

I am hoping that you and your organization may be of help in aiding my continued search for those interesting stories about those gallant flying crews of WW II.

Samuel L. Tompson
429 Cottage Hill
Elmhurst, Illinois 60126

+ + + +

Dear Bill and Hazel:

I don't know how we veterans of the Second Air Division can ever thank you two for the professional work you have done with the Journal. Snookie and I read every story with the warmest memories of those who the Association and you made possible to meet. Please keep up the work. God willing we can get a lot more accomplished.

Bill, I need help with some history of one Lt. Glen Billingsley who flew with the Second Air Division from mid-1944 to around November of that same year. His family and friends who reside in this area have had little information except that he and his crew simply disappeared.

Glen's best friend, John Yanni, a neighbor of mine would like us to find, if possible, more about how Lt. Billingsley's death occurred.

Snookie and I have been very lucky with health and our children, now grandchildren and hope you and Hazel enjoy the same.

Jim Auman
352 Church Street
St. Marys, PA 15857

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I am sorry I couldn't get this to you some time ago.

I waited on one crew member for their input but never got it so went ahead. I had some trouble getting a good typist then the studio goofed up my pictures.

Anyway here it is. I didn't put any detail about our POW days, just what happened when we were shot down. It was a frightening experience.

I think it turned out pretty good. I hope you don't have to edit it any. I also hope it will make the June edition of the Journal.

Let me know when you get more copies of the 8th War Manual.

Hope you & yours are all well & happy.
Herman A. Peacher

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Hope to see you at Norwich in May, although my transfer of funds (pounds to dollars) delayed my payment to Evelyn.

Just reading the article in our 2AD Journal by Lawson: "Duneberg" where he states: "I am aware that Hitler never approved a Kamikaze type unit." Of course you may know, there was such a unit and I correlated that data first-hand after the war in Germany. I was Chief Air Weapons & Tactics Branch, Military Analysis Division USSBS in Germany (later also in Japan but this is of less interest to 2AD). I'll get this data together if you wish for the Journal: perhaps I'll bring some materials to Norwich.

I helped my friend Len Deighton with data for "Goodbye Mickey Mouse" (Len and his family, incidentally, are now residing with me at Castle Matrix, although he is generally travelling with them - last word from Berlin - always writing another best seller).

For Len, and for you, I am finally starting to get my wartime files organized but it's taking time. I've been very busy with my architectural restoration, as well as editing for LEONARDO (Science & Art Journal) and an International SUBMARINE & AEROSPACE magazine (France). I am also editing the Newsletter for the Heraldry Society (I was elected Chairman).

By the end of this summer I should have my files in order and then you should visit here. My research in Germany began the day the war ended in Europe: I was sent with Dr. Ed Paxson to find out what new & proposed weapon data drawings and prototypes was sent (by submarine) from Germany to Japan. We just about finished this research when the A-Bomb dropped. This data was integrated into the USSBS European Study, I was then sent to Tokyo for some months where I studied weapons and tactics of all three Jap services.

Best wishes to you and your family.

Sean O'Driscoll
Castle Matrix
Rathkeale, County Limerick
Ireland

+ + + +

Dear Mr. Robertie:

I hate to trouble you again but just as in December my March edition of the Journal has not arrived.

Perhaps it may be one or several postal employees who are lazy. Attached is a clipping suggesting a postal watch tracer.

John Mesarch
5371 Grant St.
Merrillville, IN 46410

P.S. I don't have any problems with any other mail.

+ + + +

Dear Mr. Robertie:

At the suggestion of a friend of mine, Philip Kaplan, the co-author of an excellent book entitled "One Last Look" dealing with the story of the B17's based in England during World War II, I am writing to you with regard to a book I have written. My book entitled "Tale of a Guinea Pig" was published both in Great Britain and the United States.

I am contemplating having a third hard-back edition reprinted, and naturally from a commercial point of view the American market is of great interest.

I am writing to enquire if your organization would be interested to help me market this new reprint.

I visit the United States quite regularly and have delivered talks on air fighting at such organizations as the Smithsonian Institute, and I am constantly being asked where copies of my book can be purchased, but regrettably further copies are now not available unless this reprint is undertaken.

I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing from you shortly, as you will appreciate I am anxious to complete my market survey.

Geoffrey Page
Sheppey Cottage
103 High Street
Wheatley
Oxon OX9 1XP

The Vengeance of This Astonishing Guinea Pig

by David Lewin

When Geoffrey Page (see letter above) was shot down in his Hurricane during the Battle of Britain many gave him chances of survival as nil.

He had third degree burns on his face, his hands and his legs and there were gunshot wounds in his left leg.

In hospital a nurse looked at this swollen lump of flesh and falteringly asked one question: 'Next of kin, please.'

Geoffrey Page said to her: 'Sorry to disappoint you, sister. I'm going to live.'

Geoffrey Page survived 15 operations in two years at Sir Archibald McIndoe's plastic and burns unit at East Grinstead, and went back to flying. He was shot down again and taken back to McIndoe. 'Clumsy, aren't you,' said the surgeon.

Genius

What kept him alive was hate...hate for the Germans who had maimed him. He determined that for every one of his hospital operations he would shoot down a Nazi plane. And he did — with two extra for luck.

Geoffrey Page tells his story on the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Guinea Pig Club, that remarkable group of fried airmen who were given new faces and bodies and, above all, new spirit by Archie McIndoe, the surgeon of genius at East Grinstead. 'His fingers gave me back my pilot's hands,' says Page.

It is quite simply one of the best books I have ever read about the men who fought the war in the air. The few who became the many. It is funny, poignant, larky but always with the ring of appalling truth.

Geoffrey Page is not a professional hero. He flew because he was 'a nut about flying.'

When he shot down his first plane early in the war he learned something new about himself: 'I enjoy killing. It fascinates me to see my bullets striking home and the Hun blowing up before me. It also makes me sick.'

When he was shot down the operations were hell. Women turned away and screamed at the sight of his face. At first he hated the surgeon for causing him so much pain. Then he went back to loathing the Germans.

Back in the air, and before he became a Wing Commander flying Spitfires, he teamed up with James MacLachlan, a pilot with only one arm. They were 'two mentally deficient cripples' in two planes with only one good hand between them. In ten bewildering minutes they shot down six German fighters.

When his private score was finally settled Page suddenly felt no elation, only emptiness. 'Vengeance was mine...but now it seemed shallow, puerile and purposeless,' he writes. 'The girlfriends I'd had since leaving East Grinstead (and he had many despite his burns) I had treated as doormats. There had been no room in my heart to love.'

'Hate had filled it to capacity. Now hate was spent, leaving a void.'

Slab

What makes Tales of a Guinea Pig important today is that it is the story of triumph and survival.

He married a beautiful girl, Pauline, at the end of the war. He has three children. He is still married to her. He still flies.

He still needs operations at East Grinstead although Archie McIndoe is dead. He has been 'on the slab' 35 times to date.

And at night he can still hear the telephone bell ringing 'to scramble' and he still senses the smell of burning flesh...

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

Enclosed is some material for you to consider for inclusion in the next issue of the Journal. There is an article which was written by Colonel Fullbrook who is very involved with the Trust Appeal. There is a note of explanation from Paul King. There is also one of the Appeal packages. Colonel Fullbrook wondered if you would like to and could reproduce in the Journal the photograph on the cover which shows the Nissen huts. I have visited the College and been impressed with the use they have made of the Nissen huts and with their future plans.

I certainly owe you both some material for the Journal and a general letter! It is a wonderful, interesting year here and I must share it with you - soon, I promise.

My best to you and Hazel,
Bertha A. Chandler
Fulbright Librarian
Central Library
Bethel Street,
Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 1NJ
(0603) 625038 Ext. 270

+ + + +

Same Plates!

When Pete Henry (44th B.G.) visited Florida in February, he stopped to see Bob Dubowsky (44th B.G.) and discovered they have more in common than the fact that they were in Shipdham together. Pete noted that they have the same numbers on their respective license plates: 2ADA 44



Dear Bill:

It seems strange to be writing about something that happened more than 40 years ago. I think it's rather a unique story, and I doubt that it has ever been told. I was a corporal in the 784th Bomb Sq., 466th Bomb Group stationed at Attlebridge and assigned to Group S-2 as NCO in charge of the War Room. My duties included the posting of flak positions on the large War Room map as well as a master mercatur chart for use in tracing flak positions along the route onto mercatur charts for the lead crew navigators. Other duties included serving as S-2 C.Q. to wake up and assist the briefing team prior to a bombing mission. I also helped at interrogation (de-briefing) of the crews after the missions, as the enlisted men of S-2 served the coffee and sandwiches which were served after the longer missions.

Many of you will recall, that at some of the interrogations, the medics served a shot of whiskey to each crew member. With all due respect to the Medical Personnel, the whiskey was not of the best quality. Consequently, many of the shot glasses of whiskey went untouched. Several weeks prior to 18 August 1944 (date of 466th 100 Mission Party), one of us came up with a brilliant idea. We simply carried one or two clean cups on

our tray when picking up the dirty coffee cups and emptied the untouched shot glasses of whiskey into the clean cups on our tray. We obtained empty whiskey bottles from the medics and proceeded to fill them. By the day of the 100 Mission Party, we had a few bottles of whiskey for use in mixing with the free English beer. Needless to say, several of us were pretty well stoned at the north hangar by the time Glenn Miller and his orchestra had played a few big numbers for the party.

Bill, I have several photographs from S-2, including group pictures of our 466th S-2 personnel and several from various bombing missions of planes in formation, etc. I also have 3 large scale maps (1 in. = 1 mi.) of (1) Norwich & Great Yarmouth, (2) Fakenham, and (3) Swaffham & East Dereham, printed in 1940, and a copy of the 466th B.G. 200 Mission Booklet, and 2 silk escape kit maps. I loaned some of the above to Lt. Col. Woolnough several years ago, and if you know of anyone else who would like to borrow some of the above, (with the assurance of its return), please let me know. I had one complete escape kit and donated it to the 8th A.F. Museum a few years ago.

Charles J. (Chuck) Hinnen

+ + + +

Dear Bill:

I am enclosing the article I dashed off some four years ago, as per your request. Use it as you wish. It is just some rambling thoughts about "those days."

I see by the letterhead that I had just been doing NIGHT CROSSING, the film about the East German balloonists who escaped from behind the Iron Curtain.

As you can see from this one, my latest project is THE LAST DAYS OF PATTON. We did it entirely in England last summer and it will go on the air next September on CBS, a three hour special. George C. Scott plays the General again and Eva Marie Saint is his wife.

I am prejudiced, of course, but I feel that it turned out extremely well and I am proud of it. It is the true story of the last six months of Patton's life, his quarrel with Eisenhower, his firing, the famous accident and his death. George and Eva are some actors; the rest of the cast is marvelous as well.

Sometime in the near future I hope to get a film underway on General Chennault and the Flying Tigers. We've been working on it for some time and hope that it might happen.

Thanks for all your good work for the organization. Sorry that we can't make the Reunion. Maybe next year in Norwich.

Warm regards.

Delbert Mann

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SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

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