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NEWSLETTER

VOL. XIII NO. 2

APRIL

1986

EDITOR, ED STERN

Prez Sez

March 22, 1986

Spring has come to southern New Jersey, and I hope some warm weather will begin the "greening" of this area.

This pleasant season reminds me that a number of Air Force-related reunions will be taking place during the year.

The one of major interest to us - the 385th BGMA - is the Memorial Dedication and mini-reunion in Arlington, Virginia, 20 September 1986. Let's make it a MAXI mini-reunion.

Among other meetings is the Air Force Association's Gathering of Eagles April 27 - May 1, 1986 in Las Vegas. (An even bet says that "Sparky" Huber will be there. Ed Stern would welcome a picture of "Sparky" in a 385th T-shirt for the next newsletter.)

Two other meetings are American Ex-Prisoners of War National Convention July 17, 18, 19, 1986, Jackson, Mississippi; and the Eighth Air Force Historical Society reunion, October 15 - 19, 1986, Hollywood, Florida. Gerry Donnelly, our 8th Air Force historical unit contact, will have additional information for our next newsletter.

Bill

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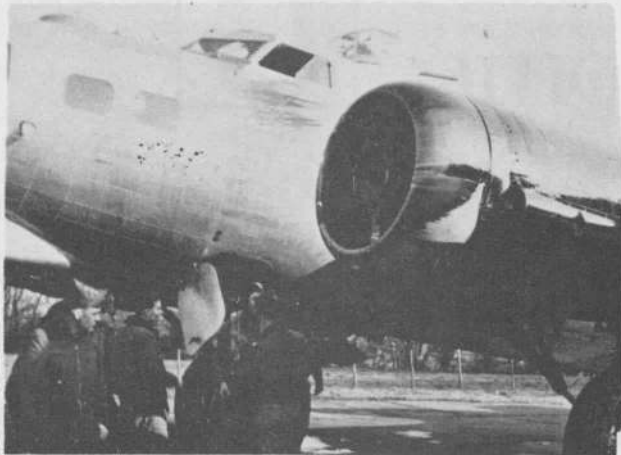
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THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTOGRAPH

By Ian McLachlan



As you all know, I'm always seeking photographs for 385th archives so my plea to all returning veterans is to bring their pictures for me to copy. This was the message to Paul Cooper who'd served at Great Ashfield as a Utility Officer supervising repair and maintenance of non aircraft items. We had a superb day with Paul and Virginia, we even found sections of road Paul remembered repairing more than forty years ago. To my delight Paul gave me a number of pictures, some of which he knew about, others, like the one above had been acquired but he had no knowledge of their history. This set me a puzzle. Using a magnifying glass, I could discern the number 44-8603 on the B-17's nose and my files told me she went back to the States so the damage suffered wasn't fatal. She'd obviously lost a prop but under what circumstances?

Those of you who went to LA know that I plastered the walls with xerox copies of pictures I wanted information on, including this one, and that's how I got to the story behind the picture. Jim Emmons spotted it, and he ought to know what it was about, he was on board as Acting Command leading a Group of 13 ships.

Let's go back to February 24th, 1945. At this time, it wasn't uncommon for the Eighth Air Force to use its power in smaller elements so the 385th microfilm for that day tells us they were divided into 'A', 'B' and 'C' Groups with targets assigned as the Wesel rail Bridge, other rail targets near Bremen and Osnabruck.

As mentioned, Jim Emmons was Acting Command leading the 385th A about which the records say "385A bombed secondary Bremen by PFF. Sav's indicated bombs would have hit approximately in M/Y (marshalling yard) three quarters of a mile N. of assigned MPI. Sav's show no bomb bursts." Flak was described as "intense - accurate - tracking" and here I'll let Jim take up the account from a letter recently received.

"The February 24 mission to Bremen-Osnabruck was a tough one; I flew as Acting Command leading Group of 13 (perhaps one aborted) and we were hit by flak just as we turned on the bombing run. The No. 2 engine took a big piece of flak directly on the prop nose which caused immediate loss of oil and we couldn't feather the engine. We dropped our wheels and slid out of the lead so that No. 2 plane could make the bomb run. The engine was windmilling and vibrating so badly that we could hardly read the instruments, so we decided to slow down to lessen the

vibration. I am not sure of the lead pilot but I remember that he was a good one and he and I both had to hang on to the wheel to keep it halfway level. Anyway, the prop kept windmilling, the shaft got red hot, then broke loose and only the wind resistance kept it on the plane. We had decided to get the Navigator and Bombadier out of the nose, in case the prop spun off and went into the nose. We slowed down to about 120 air speed and it lessened somewhat. I kept talking to the fighters who alternated flying with us to ward of fighters. The P-51's were great to stay with us until they ran out of fuel and then the P-47's came to escort us.

We were flying at around 18000 feet and gradually losing altitude but trying to stay as high as possible to be near the bomber stream. We flew across the Zeider Zee and finally reached the channel without having any fighter attacks. We arrived back at base nearly an hour behind the Group, and when we landed, rather "HOT", we almost ran out of runway, the prop fell off No. 2 engine, tearing all the radar out of the ball where normally the ball turret was. I have that flight time for the mission listed as 7 hours 15 minutes, and I'll bet we were an hour more than the others, or at least it seemed like it to us.

A superb account which gives history to an otherwise interesting but unknown photograph. There were, of course, others on that B-17 so it may be that publication of this story will jog a few more memories to add to the story behind the photograph.



Ian, Julie Bethan and Rowan McLachlan at LA Reunion.

Additional information on the Hutchinson Crew:

Edwin "Johnny" Johnson, radio operator on Maryonovich's crew of the 550th., sent along a note saying that Gordie Ackley, Mary's ball-turret gunner went out to identify Hutch's crew. Johnny Fulgeri, their Ball Turret gunner finished his missions the day before and was the only original crew member who survived. Johnny met him at Atlantic City on return to the States but lost track of him.

Pictures of 550th Squadron at the LA Reunion are available from Emery Blanchette, 1 3638 SE 37th, Bellevue, Wash. 98006, if you didn't get any. They'd be \$3.00 each. Write him.

Letters to the Editor

February 10, 1986

Dear Editor Ed:

I must take an exception to a statement made in the January 1986 Newsletter article "Ex-WWII POW Meets Son 40 Years Later".

Ben Phelper happened to be the bail turret gunner on my crew that was shot down August 17, 1943. Contrary to what Ben has said, he was not the only survivor. There were nine other survivors, all parachuting out and all being taken prisoner.

As to Ben's treatment while a POW, I have my doubts. I find that Ben has been able to publish several articles that make for good reading to those not familiar with the situation, i.e. the article he wrote for Freeman's book entitled "B-17 Fortress at War". His account of the happenings on that fateful day in August is so far from the truth it is ridiculous.

Les Reichardt
Pilot Sack Time
549th Squadron

February 12, 1986

Dear Ed:

I noted the request from Luke Stahlberg and can offer only sketchy information. I was the navigator on J.O. Leonard's crew. We arrived in Great Ashfield along with Stahlberg and crew in February 1944. The only other members I can recall are Dave Gagrrelli (AKA Dave Rally) and Shannon, their navigator. T.J. Maher could have been their bombardier, but I'm not sure.

Two things I do remember clearly are (1) Shannon was awarded the silver star for some heroics when they were hit by flak on bomb run and he gave first aid to the wounded then worked in the open Bomb Bay, sans Parachute, to get rid of the bombs that were hanging dangerously due to damage to the release mechanism. (Think back, you probably wrote the recommendation for the award.) (2) Paul Stahlberg was a quiet, religious, conscientious person. They flew probably as many or more missions in the spring of '44 as any crew. I know we were piling up the coveted 30 pretty quickly and they were a couple ahead of us. Sometime in the late spring Paul was grounded by Doc Huff after he exhibited symptoms of severe combat fatigue. I'm not sure whether he rested and finished his tour or was returned home. We along with Heiser's, crew went home on R 8 R in the summer and returned in September to fly some more.

I missed talking to you at the Colorado Springs Reunion. If I can arouse some interest among the crew members and get some of them to Dayton in 1987 I will see you there.

Sincerely,

Bob Stein

January 9, 1986

Dear Mr. Editor:

Admittedly, I am rather late with this communication. However, I wish to commend highly Forrest and Al and all of their helpers for an outstanding session at Los Angeles. The accommodations, the food, the arrangements, the company, the tours, and particularly the hospitality were all superb!

Dave Oakley

February 20, 1986

Hi Ed Stern:

I got the newsletter and thank you for the mention of the pictures. We were all disappointed in them, my wife and I went to a reunion of the Las Vegas Gunnery school in November 1 985. At that reunion they had a professional photographer from a company called "Reunions with Class". They took a picture of each couple and some random shots. These will be put in a book and sold at \$10 each. We ordered a set of each and gave them to our kids and relatives.

While mentioning the Las Vegas reunion, anyone that went to the Las Vegas Gunnery School wants to be notified of the next reunion please write to: Stan Janesik, 123 Palma Del Rio, Las Vegas NV 89110 and your name will be added to the roster. There were 360 registered for the reunion.

One other thing before I sign off. I was also in that other Air Force in England, the 9th AF. The group got together and had a person specializing in Military paintings to do an oil painting of the group in action. The painting was donated to a museum and prints of the painting was available for around \$40 dollars. I got a copy of the painting. Its a beautiful print taken from one of the missions. I thought it would have been a good idea to have something like that done and present it to the Air Museum at our next reunion in 1987.

Sincerely

Clarence Abrahamson
6431 Menlo St.
Santa Susana, CA 93063

Dear Mr. Pettenger:

As I know from American files, you also were shot down on that same day - October 10, 1943 - as Mr. Whitlow and his crew. As I also know that you are (were?) active in the 385th BG Memorial Association. These are for me the reasons that I should like to ask you if you possibly can help me to trace photographs of the very plane that came down in Holten, on which the numbers are visible. It concerns the B-17G (a redesignated F) #42-3539. It belonged to 549B Sq., so likely it had the indications XA. The individual letter was: P.

Although Mr. Whitlow sent me a very beautiful photograph of the crew, he could not help me with a photograph of the particular B-17 with the indications on it.

Further I should like to have a photograph of S/Sgt. Clarence W. Schaumburg, 16051022. He was not a regular member of the crew and so is missing on the photograph. Are there possibly photographs in file at your Memorial Ass'n on which he is visible?

Mr. Pettenger, I hope you can understand my interest. Of course, the photographs can't be used for the book, I should like to have them in my files, e.g. an exhibition. If you can't help me directly, is it possible to publish my question in the Newsletter of you Ass'n? I did some efforts previously - as did that friend of mine with whom I wrote the book - by writing to Mr. John C. Foad. He never responded, to our regret.

If you really can't help, I hope you can please advise me where I can have other tries.

Yours truly,

Marin J.G. Hols
Boschkampsstraat 21
7451 GB Holten
Netherlands

(Letters Cont.)

February 7, 1986

Dear Ed:

Thanks for the coverage on "Madam Shoo Shoo"! Between Clark Rollins and myself we have the old B-17's name in the newsletter 20 times. That's a record I'd bet!

I was interested in the Jan. issue, picture of damaged truck, that wasn't us . . . The one we hit, had a full canvas cover over the back end! Ha! Turned out to be full of runway workers too! Nobody hurt tho! Thanks again.

Cleve Solenberger
7603 Ulmerton Rd 28F
Largo, FA 33541

February 6, 1986

Dear Mr. Stern:

I am writing to say that I live in Dayton, Ohio. I am the son of Capt. John Patterson 0575844, 385th BG. My father was very proud of the time he spent in Europe with the 385th. He spoke with great fondness for Great Ashfield and the British who were so strong under pressure, in fact, I think the sense of humor of my father was part and parcel of his love for the English.

Since I live in Dayton, I was hoping that I could be of help to you in getting the reunion some things to do here. Our house has an extra bedroom which we would love to have occupied by a member of the 385th at anytime.

In fact, anyone coming through Dayton is welcome at anytime: Tim and Sharon Patterson, 419 E. 6th Street, Dayton, Ohio 45402. Phone (513) 223-0330.

I have some pictures of missions and other things that may be of interest to the group. I should be glad to give them to you if you would like them.

Please let me play however small a part I may in your reunion. I should consider it an honor.

Regards,

J.T. Patterson, Jr.



Col. Van was a good looking guy, wasn't he? Nothing wrong with the other two, but no swagger stick!

HOW GOOD IS YOUR MEMORY?



John Hite sent this picture, wondering whose crew—evidently taken after the Pilot's 25th mission.



Anyone remember these guys? Ian McLachlan wonders.

Your editor seems to remember the second officer from the left as possibly Herb Hamilton, and the big guy on the lower right in the leather jacket—could he be Ivan Klohe? We remember a Klohe, who we called the "Mad Russian" as one of the first replacement pilots to hit Group when we got overseas. He was a "free spirit" and was the subject of a story in Yank magazine.

Anyone remember—after 43 years?

SOME MORE NOTES ON THE TENTH REUNION

The committee members of the Los Angeles reunion were pleased to receive the favorable comments on the reunion from many of those who attended. And the many volunteers who did "the wood-cutting and water hauling" at all the reunion activities and functions, were just as pleased to receive the kudos for their efforts. There is no better reward from their peers than a "well done".

Totton J. Anderson (Andy) did all the leg work in setting up the Queen Mary and Spruce Goose tour. It turned out to be the most popular activity as 120 people participated in it. We even had to charter a third bus for it. Unfortunately, Andy could not be with us at the reunion because of his wife's sudden, unexpected heart attack a few days before the reunion started.

Chet Doron and his wife Betty, not only organized the Universal Studios tour, but negotiated the procurement of the charter buses as well. It was necessary to charter an additional bus for the Universal Studios tour because the people who went on Thursday told the others how good it was, so many more wanted to take that tour.

Doris Inglis organized the Saturday morning Ladies activities. At the Ladies Coffee meeting, she conducted a drawing for numerous prizes. Then she escorted a full busload of the Ladies to Beverly Hills for a shopping tour on Rodeo Drive. It was rumored that some of the husbands took their wives' credit cards from them before allowing them to go on this tour.

Unfortunately, when all seats were sold out for this tour, some of the ladies who wanted to go, had to stay behind. However, they were treated to an excellent presentation by Ginny Sayers, a professional color and wardrobe consultant, on personal color and wardrobe coordinations for women.

Milt Taubkin obtained the Saturday night dance band, which played all the Glenn Miller favorites and other popular songs of the 385th era. Milt also arranged for our Saturday evening speaker, John Latin, the outgoing President of Toastmasters International. John gave an excellent presentation on the Space Shuttle Program.

Walt Stephens obtained the Mexican Combo, which provided the music for our Friday night Mexican Buffet. Forrest Poore conducted the raffle of the B-17 model to raise a few bucks for the 385th treasury. It brought in over \$300.

No reunion would be complete without "ye old watering hole". Our hospitality room was located outside the hotel on the patio near the swimming pool, an ideal location. It was a busy place most of the time and many nostalgic reacquaintances took place there. Our efficient corps of bartenders said they met more people at the reunion than anyone else, and they probably did.

Carlyle Hanson, Ted Heiser, and George Salvatore were the mainstays and Ed Grabowski, Joe Schneider, Sam Lyke, and Ruel Weikert filled in when needed. The well never ran dry and it finished in the black. It was a fun operation.

The 1987 reunion in Dayton, Ohio is the one to look forward to now. The turnout there should probably be larger than in L.A. since Dayton is more centrally located and easier to get to for a lot of our members. I will look forward to renewing friendships once again.

Al Chealander

PLANNING BEGINS FOR 1988 REUNION IN ENGLAND

At the 385th Group Meeting at the Los Angeles Reunion on September 19, 1985, the members voted to return to Great Ashfield for a reunion in 1988. Allan Chealander was appointed chairman for that reunion and with Paul Gelman working with him, has already started to organize the get together. Al says the United Kingdom has its best weather in August and September, so he is planning the reunion for the latter part of August and September, of that year.

A number of those who participated in the 1976 and 1980 English reunions complained that we didn't spend enough time in London, so our trip in 1988 will allow for plenty of time in London to search out the old haunts, do some shopping, watch the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace, tour Westminster Abbey, visit the Tower of London, see St. Paul's Cathedral where there is a memorial to the RAF similar to ours at the All Saints Church in Great Ashfield, and take side trip visits to Canterbury Cathedral, Dover Castle, and Windsor Castle.

We are planning three or four days around the airfield at Great Ashfield and the surrounding villages and towns of Elmwell, Stowmarket, Bury St. Edmunds, Ipswich, Cambridge and Felixtow. In addition, we will work in visits to Scotland and Ireland before heading back to London. Golf at St. Andrews, Scotland and Ballyunion, Ireland, are distinct possibilities for those so inclined. While in Edinburgh, we will take in the Military Tattoo at Edinburgh Castle.

Back in London, we will take another side trip, this one to Farnborough to see the world famous international air show and flying display. Then, one last banquet together in London, numerous toasts, and a bit of auld lang syne before boarding our homeward bound flights the next day. We are tentatively figuring to spend 18 to 20 days in the U.K. The tour will start after we all arrive in London. This means everyone will make their own transportation arrangements from the U.S. to London and return. We will attempt to obtain airline ticket discounts as we did for the L.A. reunion.

It is too early to give accurate cost estimate for the tour itself and airline travel, but you can be sure we will get the best prices possible. We will keep up to date on all cost factors in succeeding Newsletters. An easy way to save for the trip to England, would be to join one or several of the Christmas Clubs at a Bank or Savings and Loan Association. By putting \$100 per month in the Club, starting in January, one would accumulate \$1,000 plus interest, in, November. Many people save for their vacations this way each year, and some who can afford more, have as many as three or four \$1,000 checks to pick up each November. It is certainly more painless than the plastic card vacation where one has to pay off his Visa or Master Charge billings for many months after his vacation.

At any rate, now is the time to start some serious planning and saving for what is being planned to be the best 385th reunion in England ever. It will probably be the first overseas reunion for some and the last for others.



UNDERGROUND SEEMS LIKE DREAM AFTER 42 YEARS

Joel Punches came to the Los Angeles Reunion, and started reminiscing about his experiences and consented to write them down for us.



A get together at Los Vegas in 1980. Pictured from Left to Right: Pilot Bob Taylor, Bombardier Clarence Soucek; Navigator Joel Punches.

I was in the 550th Sqd. in Bob Taylor's crew as a Navigator. Tubby Soucek was the Bombardier and Lapsinski was the Co-Pilot.

I was on my 23rd mission and was assigned to a pathfinder plane along with Capt. Binks from the 385th. We came back from the target over Germany with two engines out and losing 1000 ft. per minute. We got over Holland at 5000 ft. and decided it was time to get out. We opened the bomb bay and all jumped out.

I landed in an open field, hid my parachute and started walking west and wondered what Soucek and Taylor were having for supper. I finally got to a highway and stopped a Dutchman on a bicycle who knew exactly who I was, although I'll never know how he knew because all I had on was my blue electric suit. He took me to a house in a town where I stayed for one week. They gave me a civilian suit of clothes and a false I.D. making me a druggist in Amsterdam.

From there I started on my way for Spain and freedom. The underground people would give me a train ticket and I would follow them about 50 feet behind. They would get on a train and I would sit a few seats behind. They got off and I got off. They went in a house and I went in the house.

I stayed in about four Dutch homes over a period of four months.

On one trip we were eating at a railroad station when two German soldiers sat down and ate with us. I got all puckered up and could hardly eat. They were both real young and tired and could care less about me.

I finally caught up to Capt. Binks in southern Holland in the town of Roermond. We talked for about half an hour in a house and then I never saw him again. I still don't know how he came out.

The underground finally took me to the Holland-Belgium border and said "you're on your own". I walked across the border at night and hid in a hay stack for three days. The farmer finally came out and took me to Liege, Belgium and put me in a 3rd story apartment with a mother and her 18 year old daughter where I stayed for two months. They had no shower, only a wash tub that we could put in the kitchen and heat up. I had never been around such "Free Spirits" before. It was there that I learned to speak French very fast. The whole time was like a 3 ring circus. Soon every one in the complex knew who I was so they had to move me across town.

To get across town we had to cross a river bridge with a German sentry box on one side. As I approached, the German sentry reached out and pulled in a civilian and interrogated him. This scared me so much that I went down under the bridge and watched what was going on. The German would pull in about every 15 or 20 people so I arranged by passing for about 2 or 3 after he pulled one in.

I stayed one more month in Liege and then the American 1st army came thru and I was released. I stayed in Liege two more days watching the Liege people take care of the Quizzlings. They would throw their pianos and furniture out of 4th floor apartments onto the street and then they would shave their heads and take them to jail.

I then went back to England and to the 385th and heard about Hutchison and Pease mid air collision on the same day I was shot down. Also the next day our Co-Pilot Lapsinski was shot down over the North sea.

So I collected my \$1500 back pay, bought a new uniform and took a boat for home. Still a 2nd Lt.

By Joel Punches

Father Jim Drucker completes mission



The Rev. James Drucker kneels at the grave of the brother he never knew.

Standard-Speaker Hazelton

Over 40 years after Joseph Drucker gave his life for his country during World War II, his brother, Father Jim Drucker, found himself not only visiting the cemetery in England, but also placing the cross from his lapel on his brother's grave.

For Drucker, a West Hazleton native, the visit to the grave of a brother he never really knew was the culmination of a "personal mission" that took a winding path beginning with his enlistment in the U.S. Army Reserve in 1963.

He was less than a year old when his brother left for the war and only three when he died in 1945 while serving his country overseas.

Drucker, now pastor of St. -Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in St. Clair, said He not only saw his brother's grave, but also visited 'Great Ashfield Air Base where his brother was stationed. "I saw the actual airstrip that my brother flew on, and saw "385" painted inside one of the old huts," Drucker says.

His brother served with "Van's Valiants," the 385th Bombardment Group under the Eighth Air Force, and flew with the 551st Bombardment Squadron whose motto was 'Strength Maintains Security'.

He says that the visit to Great Ashfield Airbase is etched in his mind, and being the first (and only family member to visit the grave in 30 years hold a special meaning for him, but he adds, "I will treasure forever, the moment that I buried my cross with him."

Plane from the past soars to new home

VINTAGE WORLD WAR II BOMBER AT UPSTATE MUSEUM

GENESEO (NY) -- A vintage B-17 bomber, one of the most familiar of World War II aircraft, landed Saturday at the National Warplane Museum, where it will be permanently maintained.

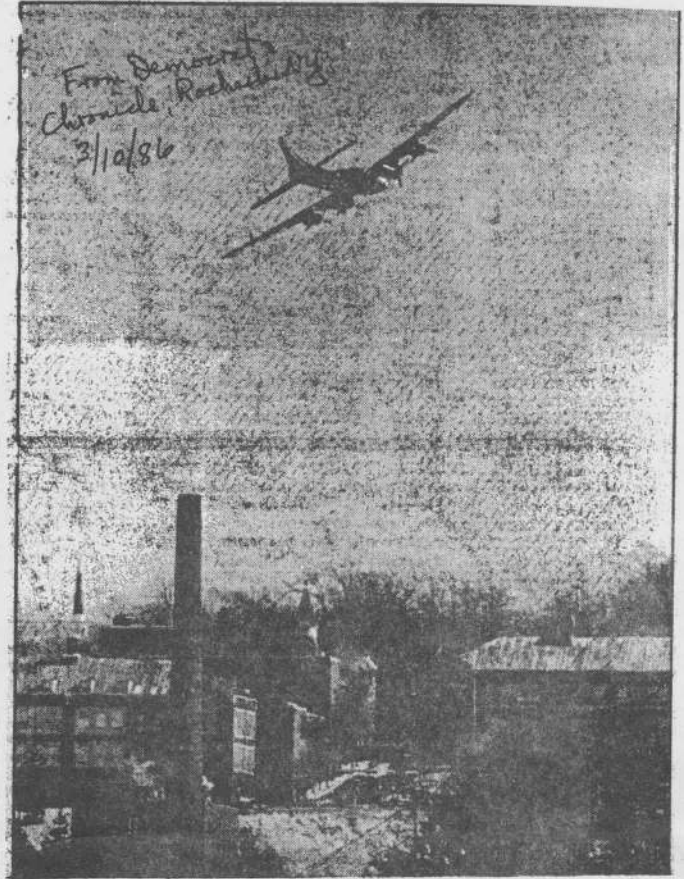
The B-17 Flying Fortress bomber is expected to draw large crowds of nostalgic veterans to the museum, said Catherine Valleroy, director of development at the museum in Geneseo, about 40 miles south of Rochester;

"This was probably the premier bomber of World War II," she said. "This and the B-24 are probably nearest and dearest to the veterans. This is a symbol for what the war meant to them."

The plane is one of only two of the classic bombers in the East still in flying condition, she said. The plane is expected to be flown at various times during the year, including the museum's annual airshow, Sept. 12 to 14.

The plane was bought from Globe Air in Mesa, Ariz., for an undisclosed price. Valleroy said purchasing the aircraft was essential for the 3-year-old museum because it is dedicated to preserving World War II planes.

The plane left Arizona Wednesday and arrived in Geneseo Saturday, after being delayed in Indianapolis because of weather conditions. The vintage bomber's flight carried it over Western New York Saturday before arriving at the museum here.



FARGO IN FEBRUARY Mini-Reunion



Pictured are 385th Members Warren Diederich, Ed Stern and Ralph. Smith enjoying a coffee break at Ole's Coffee Shop in downtown Fargo during a break in the busy schedule of meetings and tours during the Fargo in February Mini-Reunion held on February 1.

385th President Bill Nicholls was unable to attend because of bad weather grounding his plane out of New York.

Tours planned to Bonanzaville, an authentic turn-of-the-century prairie village, various museums, and 3 scenic tours, plus a visit to an outdoor hockey rink, were scheduled by the hard-working committee in charge, but the wives decided to go shopping instead.

Minutes of the business meeting were unavailable at press time. Should they turn up, they will be printed in the July or October edition of the Newsletter.

The Chairman wishes to thank the many people who worked so hard to make the Reunion the success that it was. Their names will also be listed in a later Newsletter. The photographer was as bad as the one at the Los Angeles reunion, but not as expensive.

Vice President Earl Cole learned that the temperature was predicted to be almost as cold in Fargo as it was in Kentucky and insisted on return of his registration fee. Because of the drop in oil prices world-wide, Sam Lyke was unable to raise funds for the trip and had to back out.

Vice President Mary Weikert refused to leave Indianapolis during the January month-end Clearance sales, so she missed out on the Fargo After-Inventory clearance sales.

Secretary George Hruska could not be reached, and Treasurer John Pettenger's fishing boat had engine trouble so he missed his "As available" flight.

A motion for impeachment of officers failed on a 2 to 1 vote. A set of officers to be nominated at the next Reunion was adopted and will be listed in the next newsletter if the minutes should turn up.

It was suggested that all officer's names should be put in a hat, with one name being drawn out to be named Editor of the Newsletter.

(Letters Cont.)

January 24, 1986

Dear Ed:

I am still excited about how much I enjoyed the 385th Reunion in Los Angeles and can't wait to get together again in Dayton. To think, my wife had to talk me into going to the Los Angeles Reunion.

Lois and I visited the 385th base at Great Ashfield in October and had a nice tour of the base by a gentleman that now farms the area. Lois and I are Episcopalians and we attended Service and we never saw such hospitality. I had seen the plaque in the yard at the church in memory of men in the 385th that were lost but had never seen the altar in the Church in memory of the 385th.

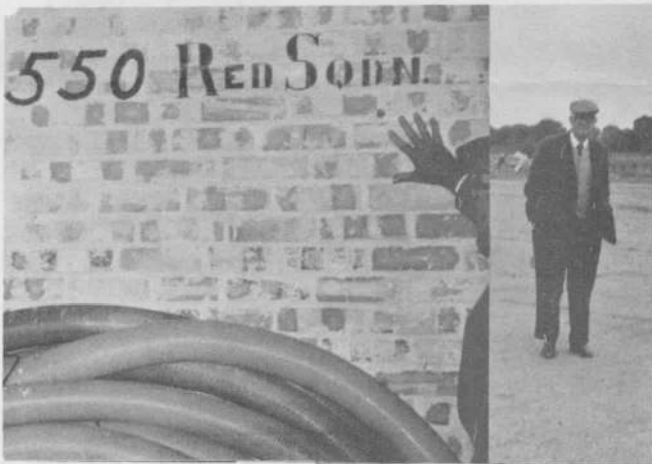
I am enclosing two pictures for you that I took while on the old base and also you will find a couple of things I picked up at the Church.

Ed, I want to thank you and your wife again for the ride you gave Lois and I out to see the Spruce Goose and the Queen Mary. We enjoyed seeing them but most of all we enjoyed the company of you and your wife.

We look forward to seeing you in Dayton and be sure and tell your wife to save me a dance.

Yours very truly,

Bob M. T aylor



March 6, 1986

William A. Nichols
743 Lake Avenue
Woddbury Heights, NJ 08097

Re: 385th Bomb Group, 551st Wolf Squadron

Hi Prez:

Your exciting January Newsletter was well received and I am happy to tell you that since our Los Angeles reunion I have been able to locate FIVE of my crew members: 1) FLIGHT ENGINEER, Walter "Gaz" and Ruth Gasiorowshi, 136 Dewey Street, Pittsburg, PA 15273 2) RADIO OPERATOR, Roland Yunghans, 612 Highland Terrace, Pitman, New Jersey 08071 3) BOMBARDIER, Bill and Mary Feather, 16903 Krug Road, Tomball, TX 77375 4) GUNNER, John and June McKinnon, 4310 Ugstad Road, Duluth, MN 55811 5) TURRET GUNNER, Bob and Ruth Arn, Rout 5, Iowa City IA 52240

Aircraft flown: Madam Shoo Shoo, Lil Audry
Walt "Gaz" sent me several beautiful pictures of myself (Skipper) in cockpit of Madam Shoo Shoo along with our crew. I have a picture of the Ground Crew Chief, maybe someone can recall his name and whereabouts, I'm sure he would like it. "Gaz" also sent me an original oil cloth type of "Wolf" patch, new! !

Pres, I had a real exciting time locating the five, but I'm still looking and searching for: Robert L. Tinkler (Navigator); Robert Schoettles (Co-pilot); Bob Sontchi (Tail Gunner)

We, all six of us, are hoping we can enjoy a mini-reunion before the BIG 1987 Dayton _____ 44th Anniversary, will advise outcome. Meanwhile, please announce a welcome to our new found members! ! !

Sincerely,

Vince G. and Ellie Walzberg
2631 W. Browning
Fresno, CA 93711

(P.S. Walt "Gaz" has been a member for quite some time.)



Original GROUND CHIEF (NAME ??) Madam Shoo Shoo



Gasiorowski, McKinnon, Sontchi, Yunghans

ANYBODY FORGOTTEN THIS??

Not the 550th Bomb Squadron!

We burned down a haystack that night.

V-E Day

NICE-MARSEILLE EDITION
THE STARS AND STRIPES
Daily Newspaper of U.S. Armed Forces in the European Theater of Operations

D+336

Vol. 1—No. 57

ONE FRANC

Allies Proclaim:

IT'S OVER

Surrender Is Signed At Rheims

By CHARLES F. KILEY
Star and Stripes Staff Writer
RHEIMS, May 8 — The Third Reich surrendered unconditionally to the Allies here at Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's forward headquarters at 2:41 AM Monday.

The surrender terms, calling for cessations of hostilities on all fronts at one minute past midnight (Double British Bummer Time) Wednesday, May 9, were signed on behalf of the German government by Col. Gen. Gustaf Jodl, Wehrmacht chief and Chief of Staff to Fuehrer Karl Doenitz.

Under Jodl's signature were U.S. Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander, Gen. Ivan Susloparov, head of the Russian mission to France, who was authorized by Moscow to sign on behalf of Soviet forces and Gen. Buvez of France.

The surrender was signed in five minutes in the SHAJHF war room, 11 miles east of Compiègne forest where Germany surrendered in the last war on Nov. 11, 1918 and the w.ann of the capitulation of France to the Third Reich in 1940.

Flav Irem aarmay

The terms were signed in less than ten hours after U.S. arrival of Jodl by plane from Germany, and if hours after fuel moglatiunp flsi b-gun with the arrival Suttur day of Gen Adm. Hans Georg von Fnedetmg, commander in chief of German navy, who on Thursday headed the Nazi delegation which surrendered German forces in Denmark, Holland and Northwestern Germany to the 1st Army Gp.

Gen. Eisenhower did not take

(Continued on page 2)



GEN. EISENHOWER | PRES. HARRY S. TRUMAN
"The cm mde... has reached its glorious oohOimtorK"

3rd Told Big News After Taking Prague

On the day of official announcement of the European war's end, the Third U.S. Army troops drove into Prague, and Marshal Joseph Blazek announced the fall of Breslau, Germany's ninth city, after a 90-day siege.

The Czechs had looted and destroyed the Czechoslovak commander of Prague defenses had welcomed the U.S. commander of the First Div to Prague, the Germans, who fought a four-day battle, surrendered effective the afternoon of May 8.

A Soviet correspondent reported that the U.S. German commander raised the surrender flag at Breslau at 1800 hours Monday. German defense efforts ended in almost complete destruction of the city.

SWEDS BREAK WITH GERMANY

Sweden yesterday severed diplomatic relations with Germany on the ground that U.S. troops are no neutral government to be recognized. The Swedish radio said all German military units in Sweden had been accepted their surrender.

Peace came to Europe at one minute past midnight this morning (Nice-Marseille time) when the cease-fire order to which Germany had agreed went into effect.

Formal announcement of Germany's unconditional surrender came nine hours earlier in the White House by President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill.

As they spoke the last "all-clear" sirens sounded in London and Paris and the streets in both cities were the scenes of frenzied celebrations. America took the announcement calmly, having announced the surrender when the war was over.

All hostilities had not ceased yet, however. Some German troops were resisting the Russians in Czechoslovakia and some islands in the Baltic Sea. Moreover, up to a late hour last night Moscow had not proclaimed victory.

The surrender agreement, it was disclosed, was signed at 0241 hours Monday in Gen. Eisenhower's headquarters at Rheims, France. To the last the Germans attempted to split the Western Allies and Soviet Russia, offering surrender first only to the Western Allies. This was rejected flatly by Gen. Eisenhower.

Defeat of Germany—concluded in the book-bank and

(Continued on page 2)

U.S. Soldiers Praised In Ike's Victory Order

The test of Gen. Eisenhower's victory order of the day follows: — Men and women of the Allied Expeditionary Force: The crusade on which we embarked in the early summer of 1944 has reached its glorious conclusion. It is my special privilege, in the name of all nations represented in this theater of war, to commend each of you for valiant performance of duty. Though these words are feeble they come from the bottom of a heart overflowing with pride in your loyal service and admiration for you as warriors.

... As I stand by the World... Our accomplishments are... in the air, on the ground and in the field of supply have astonished the world. Even before the final week of the war you had put 6,000,000 of our men and women in the line of battle. You have taken in stride military tasks that would have been

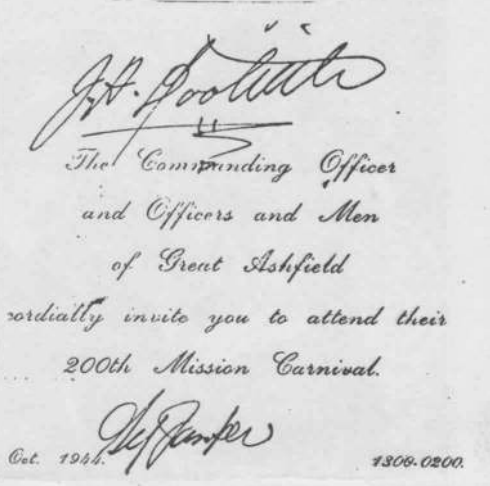
classified as impossible. You have refused and destroyed your savagely fighting foe.

On the road to victory you have endured every discomfort and privation and have surmounted every obstacle. Ingenuity and dexterity could throw in your path. You did not pause in your front was firmly jolted up with the great Red Army coming from the east, and other Allied forces owning him the south.

With victory in Europe lies before us.

(Continued on page 1)

Cleve Solenberger sent this invitation to our 200 mission party. Cleve said it belonged to his Radio Operator and was signed by a couple young officers, General Jimmy Doolittle and Col. George Jumper.



Program.

Evening:

Carnival - Food - Fun 1300-2000
Glen Miller's Band 1500-1700

Guest Stars through arrangements with Mr. James Dyrenforth of B.B.C.

Beatrice Lillie
Paula Green
Marylin Williams and Hugh French

lt. Col. Ben Lyon, Master of Ceremonies.

Movies: "Destination Tokyo" with Carey Grant and John Garfield - continuous 1300-2200

Evening :

Enlisted Men's Dance - Hanger No. 1 2000
with Music by Glen Miller.

Officer's Dance - Gymnasium - 2000
with Music by The Flying Yanks.

YANK

3^d MAY. 14
1944



Yanks at Home in the ETO

Against a background of one of her own creations, Annie Haywood bats a breezy breeze with Sgt. Fred C. DiCiccio (centre), of Somerville, Mass., and T/Sgt. Francis R. Fuller, of White River Junction, Vt., who has just chalked up his 13th Mission.

Runway Artist

OUR honey for this week is Ann Josephine Haywood, a 24-year-old blonde and blue-eyed English miss, whose drawings of curvaceous lovelies on the fuselages of Flying Forts are about the only things that Nazi fighter pilots like to look at in the air these days. Miss Haywood—or Annie, as she is far better known to the boys who fly the bombers she decorates—works in the American Red Cross Aero Club at an 8th Air Force Heavy Bombardment Base near the thatched cottage where she lives with her mummy and her sister Joan. Annie's chief concern is looking out for the needs of the EMTs at the club and she goes in for her fairly extensive art work only in her off hours, all of which leaves her darn little time to exercise the two riding horses she still keeps as a token of the good old days when she had her own string of ponies and used to go in for amateur racing.

We ran into Annie at the base the other day and she took us around to show off some of her handiwork, which struck us as being a large bit of all right and which the combat crews swear brings them luck. She took us first to the Aero Club, whose walls she has decked out with some babes doing the rumba, and then to the Officers' Club where, in the ba', she has painted a large mural of a forlorn-looking looie with a couple of pink elephants leering over his shoulder. Finally we made a swing with her around the field, while she pointed out such masterpieces of hers as *Dragon Lady*, *Thunderbird*, *Pregnant Portia*, and *Shack Bunny*.

All in all, it was quite a trip, for Annie is as bouncing and exuberant a young lady as ever slapped paint on a Fort, and her Aero Club work, plus the fact that she is a familiar sight on the runway sweating out missions, has made her just about the best known person at the base. Everywhere Annie took us the boys waved her a "Hi!" and she was so busy passing the time of day with them that we could barely get a word in. It seemed to us that neither her accent nor her highly vocal spirits were precisely British and later, over a butt, she confirmed this hunch. Turned out that though Annie



was bom near Oxford and her father was a Yorkshireman, her mother is a Viennese. Annie herself spent two years of her infancy in Austria and was brought up here by French and Austrian governesses. She was attending an English finishing school and planning to go to Paris to study art when the war came along and put the kibosh on her plans. "And what a big bum it was," Annie exclaimed, "because otherwise I should be in Paris now! Whoopie!"

The boys at the base keep telling Annie to cheer up, there's plenty of time yet.

Th* British Have A Word For It

We mangled a pinkie while catching our first fly ball of the season and consequently have been out of the line-up ever since, but we've never talked so much baseball in our life as we have the past few weeks. In fact, these British cousins of ours have been getting into our hair with questions about the game and we find it doesn't translate into English worth a damn. It's sort of like trying to describe ice to a gent who's spent his whole life in a bamboo hut on the equator.

When it comes to getting even the simplest idea of the great American pastime across to a Briton, the vocabularies of the two nations are as far apart as it is from here to Ebbs Field. You've got to start somewhere—but/where? The natural place

is home plate, but the chances are your listener thinks "that's something in the family china closet. He knows what a ball is but that's about all—he has no conception of what four balls are or what a fair ball is or a foul one. A strike is fairly easy for him to catch on to if the batter swings and misses, but, he'd like to know, how come a strike if the batter doesn't strike? Only the Briton doesn't call it the batter. The guy's a batsmen—not, of course, to be confused with a batman.

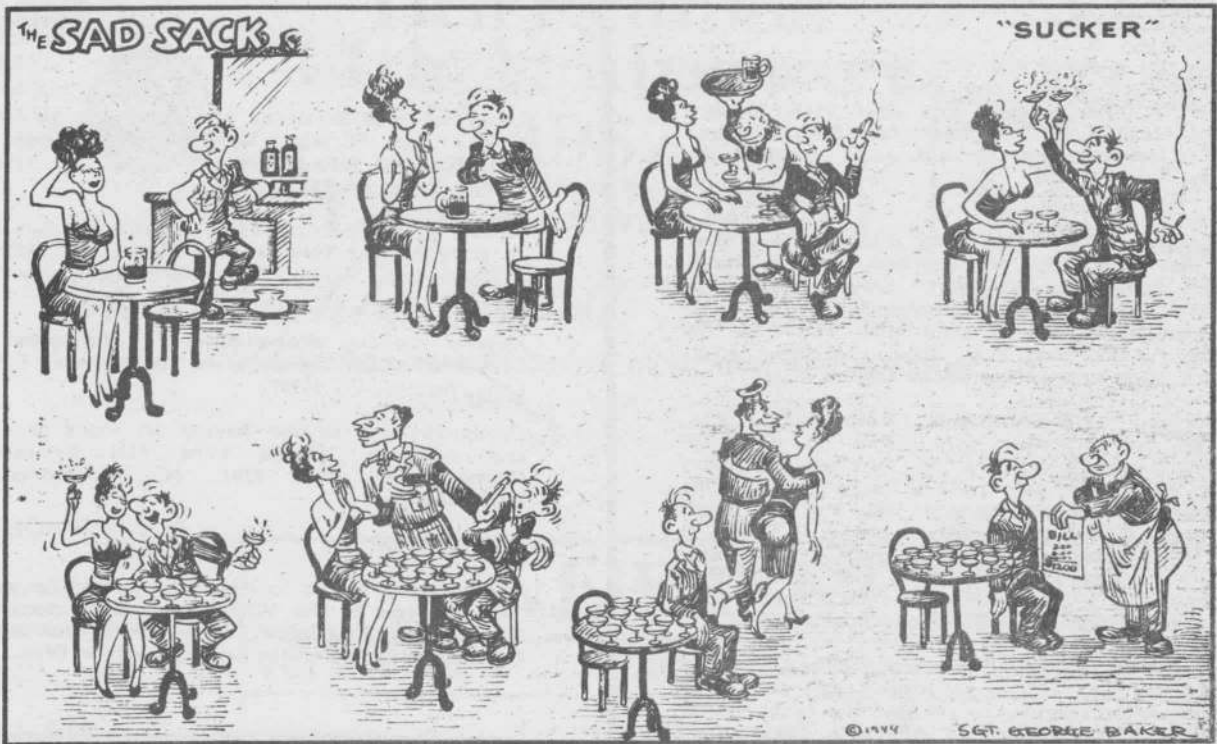
The only thing to do, we've decided, is to give up and learn to play cricket. But not so a friend of ours, an earnest if fairly addepled tech sergeant of the sort that tries to make Frenchmen understand his Pittsburgh American by shouting at them. We were listening to this guy in the park last Sunday as he attempted to explain a softball game that was going on to a young British chap and the way he got nowhere fast was something remarkable. After an hour and a half of it the Sergeant was still bogged down in trying to make clear the difference between a ball and a strike, a job that was considerably more difficult for him than it might have been owing to the fact that he had neglected to tell the Englishman the functions of the Special Service officer standing right behind the pitcher. At that point there was a neat double play and the pupil asked the Sarge what it was all about. Our friend tied himself up in verbal knots for five minutes trying to make the situation clear and then gave up in despair. "Sorry, chum," he said. "But I guess we'd better save that for next week's lesson."

"Not a bit of it, chappie," replied the Briton brightly. "It's all really quite clear to me now. Baseball is a cunning game, isn't it?"

Bargain Counter

Some Joes have all the luck. We're thinking of a T/5 we ran into the other day who told us about a find he had made on his last trip to London. Seems he was mousing around a side street off Piccadilly when he came across an antique shop with a sign in the window reading: "Foreign Coins—id. Each." So he ambles in and asks to see some of them there one-penny coins and the clerk brings out a fistful of European and Oriental money all mixed in with some American nickels, dimes, and quarters. Casual like, the Corporal selects the Yankee dough, together with a couple of Spanish pesetas to make him look like a bona-fide coin collector, and walks out. Oh, yes, the deal cost him eighteen pence and the swag amounted to \$2.05. Cunning* isn't it?

CHARLIE EDELSTEIN SENT YUUK EDITOR THIS "YANK" MAGAZINE ALONG WITH A WONDERFUL BATCH OF OTHER MEMORABILIA THAT WE WILL BE USING IN FUTURE ISSUES



(Letters Cont.)

March 4, 1985

Dear Ed:

This is just a short note to thank you and the others who have provided information concerning my father. I am saving each and every bit of information so that when my sister, 2 brothers, and myself get together this summer, we can share his experiences with some feel for what it was like for him and the rest of you men who fought the war.

Once again, any and all information is appreciated, as well as the smallest effort made to help our understanding of what you did.

Sincerely,
 Luke Stahlberg
 562 Cambridge Way
 Bolingbrook, IL 60439

WELCOME NEW LIFE MEMBERS !!!

David S. Dennis
 Jack T. Cesser
 Mathew F. Peters
 John Richmond

The total is 142. Send your hundred bucks to Treasurer John...let's make it 200 by the September Reunion in Washington.

A thought provoking article from the March 1, AF Policy Letter from the office of the Secretary of the Air Force.

WHEN CHEAPER ISN'T BETTER. Gen. Robert W. Bazley, commander in chief, Pacific Air Forces, responding to a newspaper article critical of defense-related expenditures and programs, wrote, "One could conclude from the article that the root of most problems lies in bureaucracy, sophistication and cost, and that the 'good old days' and the good old cheap weapons were more effective and cost-efficient.

"The B-17 was inexpensive by today's standards, but labor intensive, not very reliable (fewer sorties flown per week than modern aircraft fly per day), and had only a fraction of the capability." Referring to the second raid on Schweinfurt, Germany, in WWII, which used 291 B-17's, General Bazley noted, "...with a handful of F-16's we could take out the same, target with non-nuclear ordnance (dumb bombs), smart pilots and airplanes... We could do it at night or in weather with even fewer F-111's or F-15E's.... We could do it because of a combination of technology, realistic training, professionalism and discipline.

"Not only are today's weapons better, they're dramatically safer by any measurement. The Air Force just completed its safest-ever year (1985)...compared with the WWII time frame when we lost 5,603 airmen while crashing 20,389 U.S. Army Air force aircraft — about three times more aircraft than the Air Force owns today — in one year (1943) in non-combat-related accidents.

"Some day we may need to pay \$50 million for a fighter aircraft. After all, we now pay more than \$12,000 for any of the 'low-priced three' automobiles that used to cost \$2,000. Nobody would dispute that cars are better and more capable than they were 25 years ago. The same is true of weapons. Capability doesn't come cheaply."

Personals

This will be a permanent part of the Newsletters. Please send a short item about you and your family—what's happened to you since 1945. Wives, don't be upset if your not mentioned! Sometimes we get info, sometimes not, so we'll credit you through the kids.

Joel Punches, 550th, went back into coaching after getting out after WW2, and coached at Santa Maria, CA High School for 32 years. Stayed in the AF Reserve for 23 years, too—enjoyed some of those "space available" flights, but the waits in the terminals are too long now. Have two grown sons, and we're going to see all of you at Dayton in 1987.

Clay Gammon, 548th Tail Gunner. Retired as Lt. Col. after 30 years active duty. Now in Electrical Engineering at University of Oklahoma (Editors note—he claims that they have a football team at the same school). Runs 3 miles every morning, pl[^]ys golf year round. Wife works at OU, daughter is Senior in College of Engineering, son is on Police Force. Still wears >1943 leather bomber jacket and it still fits. (Another Editor's note—that's hard on us poor guys trying to make a living in the clothing business).

Tommy Harrison, Group Armament Officer, but he came out so well because he trained and lived with the 550th. After service, he rejoined the family flower business, but was recalled by AF for 2 years during Korean "conflict". Now doing a little Consulting work and enjoying Boating, Photography, Computers, and not working on Saturday—not even gardening.

Al Chealander, 549th Pilot 8 Engineering Officer. After War, returned to LA, finished college at USC, recalled to active duty to fly Berlin Airlift. Got a regular Commission, stayed in, retired in 1971. Recently formed an export-import factoring company to keep busy. Two sons, a daughter, and 4 grandchildren. Like to jog, golf, and travel.

WANTED:]

Copies of "100 Missions, history of the 93rd Combat Wing", and "Kriegie Memories History of Stalag XVI IB". Send information Jim Young, 714 Broadway, McKees Rock, PA 15136.

Picture of Lt. Bristol (550th crew) taken late in July or early August 1944 between huts of the 550th area. Write to Buell Martin, 11 Inkberry Lane, Harwich MA 02645

Anyone knowing whereabouts of a Navigator named Ben Brotherton, please write Tom Carson, 1 Syosset Lane, Novato, CA 94947.

Group History—anyone having an extra or knowing one available, please write Piet Brouwer, De Frankenthaler 87, 2291 JC Wateringen, the Netherlands.

CORRECTION:

Tony Ragone writes to let us know that he was NOT the organizer of the 548th Mini-Reunion mentioned in the January Newsletter. Mary Cirson did that, and Dale Leggett handled the arrangements in Ohio.

Obituaries

Lou Eby, October 31, 1985

William A. Beveridge, 5095 - Elrod Dr., Castro Valley, CA

385 TMB GMA

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