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"The Mighty Eighth Reunion Group"

385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

GREAT ASHFIELD — SUFFOLK, ENGLAND

STATION 155

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NEWSLETTER

VOL. XIV NO. 2

APRIL 1987

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Prez Sez

SEE YOU IN DAYTON, EVERYBODY !!!



Come join us in Dayton, July 24 - 26. You're going to love it!

An air show which promises to be terrific. An air museum which has no equal in the world. Many of you have seen the "Big Bird" since 1945, but I'll guarantee that you'll feel a tingle of joy when you see it close up at the museum.

Before you enter the museum, take time to see the memorial plaque which our group placed in memory of our fallen comrades. A quiet thought as each of us views the memorial will recall many precious memories.

Sam and Mary Lyke are eagerly awaiting your reunion reservations, and I'm sure Ruel and Mary Weikert will be happy to take care of your hotel needs. Earl and Ruth Cole, and George and Gen Hruska will welcome suggestions on news releases, also.

Please, if you have any ideas on promoting information to the troops about this great endeavor, contact the Coles or the Hruskas.



385^T

BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY)

CROUP HISTORY TO BE REPRINTED!

Hard-bound copies as illustrated here —delivery late June — \$20.00 per copy. Send \$20. 00 to John Pettenger for your copy. None available after this reprinting is done.

For those who do not have one, the History is a 100 page account, complete with pictures, of the 385th's history from our inception at Geiger Field on February 1, 1943. It tells, in detail, of the men and missions during the entire war, complete with details on both combat and ground personnel.

|
| JOHN PETTENDER
| Treasurer 385th BCMA
| P.O. Box 117
| Laurel, FL 33545
|
| Here's my \$20.00. Order a Croup
| History Book for me:
| _____
| _____
| _____
|

Letters to the Editor

Dear Mr. Cole:

I read your offer re the British Bomber Command Association meeting coming up 26 May 1987 and think I might be interested in attending it.

After watching those lads land in soup thick 'nuf to cut and one in particular who did what I'd almost call an Immelman off the end of the runway and then set his Lank down on a dime, my hat came off to them every time.

I was in the 548th from about Thanksgiving day 1943 until August '44. Finished my missions on May 5, Big B, and stayed in operations after that until I left for home.

Recently retired as owner-manager of a small property/casualty insurance agency but kept all my licenses but use my securities sales license for my own trades almost entirely.

Will look forward to receiving the application.

Sincerely,

Dari J. Messenger

Ian presents interesting statistics that should add a little to our ground crews egos.

Dear Ed,

I was pleased to read the letter from Marty Cirson and agree whole heartedly with his views. While searching through my files for information to support the "Swinging Door" article, I came across an interesting comparison between July, 1943 and July, 1944 which I give below.

July 1944	Comparison	July 1943
No. of missions	17	7
No. a/c airborne	596	142
No. a. c aborted	34	20
No. a/c attacking	474	59
Tons bombs dropped	1111.8	155.5
Total sorties	543	120
Total ships lost	6	8
Total MIA/KIA	51	81
Attrition rate	9.3%	6.7%
Total Naut. miles	15930	6950
Claims of e/a	65	9
Fighter attack	110	3

Seven times the number of bombs were dropped, 8 times No. of a/c over target and 1/10 the percentage of losses. No increase in ground personnel.

I've underlined the fact that there was no increase in ground personnel which supports Marty's letter. It would be good if some other ground staff could give us their recollections, perhaps tell us the jobs they did and what memories they've got of service life at Great Ashfield.

Best Wishes,

Ian

Dear Ed:

Want to thank you for the good job you are doing in regards to the Newsletter, I know it takes a lot of time and effort.

William Nichols and his wife were in So. Fla. for a meeting of the 8 Air Force Assn., and I had them as well as Gerry Donnelly who lives here in Miami and his wife to my home for dinner and conversation. We had a nice visit.

Hope to see you soon at one of our meetings. Do you know who has the copy of the 30 min. film made of the 385 on one of our reunions back in England. I would like to borrow it, I wanted to make a VHS copy? Would appreciate you forwarding a copy of my letter if you know where it is. Thanks.

Very truly yours

Reid H. Lowe
4850 Palm Ave., Hialeah, FL 33012

Dear Ed,

Thanks for the addresses and the Jan. newsletter. You are right after having read a couple I think I will enjoy reading them. Hope sending the \$8.00 to you is O.K.

Am sending you a picture of the Tommy Vance crew as it is all I have. Sorry I don't have pictures of Meyer, Wells, or Larson. The plane in the picture was not ours. Just a P.R. photo. The plane that went into Lake Zug was named "Lonesome Polecat". Don't know whos it was.

As you wrote, we probably did meet and that was about it. To show you how short my stay was, the name Great Ashfield doesn't even ring a bell. I have thought we were at Elmswell. You're right about Tommy Vance, he was a small man but a prince of a guy. We lost track of he and Carol some years ago but continued to hear of them indirectly through our engineer John and Betty Miller. They told us about a year ago that Tommy died during or after heart surgery. During the previous year.



In the crew picture L to R: back row are, Chas. W. Page, Ball Turret; John Miller, Engineer Top Turret; Robert E. Brown, Radio (not on mission); Elbert E. Mitchell, L. Waist; Jarrel F. Legg, Tail Gunner; Louis B. Liening, R. Waist; Front row L to R, W.T. Vance, Pilot (not on mission); Robert L. Williams, Navigator; Robert W. Dewey, Bomb, (not on mission); Boyd Jack Henshaw, Co-Pilot.

(Letters to the Editor Cont.)



The second picture is the "Lonesome Polecat" the day they pulled it out of Lake Zug 15 years later and before any restoration work.

I never knew Bob Meyer at the group but he did tell me he was called "Junior" and that he had flown all his other missions as Co-Pilot and as group observer in the tail.

Best Regards,

Jack Henshaw

MORE ON LAKE ZUG

Dear Ed:

Re: Oct. '86 Newsletter, back page - B17G pulled from Lake Zug, Switzerland. Anyone Know?

This was put here in the late morning of March 16, 1944 by pilot Robert W. Meyer (mentioned in letter to Ed on previous page of same newsletter). We were 550th Sq. and had been headed for Augsburg, Germany that morning but never got there. I was co-pilot on the crew.

ME 109's put us out of action, we couldn't keep up or maintain altitude and very shortly it became clear we weren't going to be flying much longer. We thought we might make Switzerland, which we did but at about the same time we ran out of engines. Bob ordered us all out and he ditched in the lake.

We were actually W.T. (Tommy) Vance's crew. Tommy was grounded with ear infection this day and Bob Meyers was assigned our pilot. We had not met or flown together before but Bob was experienced. This was his 19th mission I believe.

Besides Meyers and me (on my third mission) the crew was Robert L. Williams, Navigator; Bobs' chute did not open in time and he was killed, from Pittsburg, Ind. 4th mission; our Bomb. Robert Dewey was also grounded this day and in his place at chin turret was Carl J. Larsen, El Campo, TX, wounded in left leg and foot by cannon fire, on his 11th mission; John Miller, engineer top turret, Vienna, Ohio, 4th mission. The only crew member I have been able to keep in touch with all these years. Have his address and telephone number if anyone would like it. Louis B. Liening, R. Waist, Coldwater, Ohio, 5th mission; John E. Wells, Radio operator, Greenville, Kentucky, 6th mission; Elbert E. Mitchell, L. Waist, Sowora, CA, 4th mission; Chas. W. Page, Ball Turret. Took some direct cannon hits. Turret destroyed. Very gravely wounded, was in hospital long after war was over. Christianburg, Virginia, 4th mission. Jarrell F. Legg, Tail Gunner, Chesapeake, West VA., 4th mission

We were all interned by the Swiss. Most of us escaped into France at various times after the invasion and returned to the Group and then back to U.S.A.

As you probably know I am not a member of 385th BCMA. I was there such a short time that I hardly learned my way around and knew no one outside our crew.

This October '86 newsletter was sent on to me by Vincent P. McLaughlin of 385th who I met while interned in Switzerland and have kept in touch with all these years. He of course knew our plane was ditched in Zug.

Jack (Boyd J.) Henshaw
839 Wallen, Rd., Bow, WA 98232

Dear Sirs,

If there was only one B-17 that ditched in Lake Zug, I can tell you all about it. The name of the plane was "Lonesome Polecat". If you can refer to March 17, 1944 of the daily newspaper Zugerbieter, it tells the full story.

We all bailed out over Baar except the Pilot who ditched the plane in Lake Zug. Robert Williams' chute did not open soon enough (may have been wounded by small arms ground fire). Charles and I had been wounded by FW-190 on our way to Augsburg, Germany. This was my 12th mission. They also knocked out two of our engines and another went out over Switzerland.

Our crew was: Pilot, Robert Meyer; Co-Pilot, Boyd Henshaw; Navigator, Robert Williams; Bombadier, Carl Larsen; Radio Operator, John Wells; Engineer Gunner, John Miller; Waist Gunner, Elbert Mitchell; Waist Gunner, Louis Leining; Ball Turret Gunner, Charles Page; Tail Gunner, Jarrell Legg.

My original crew was transferred from B-26 after arriving in England in 1943. We all went to 385 BG, 550 Squad. Our Pilot was Victor Linton, P.O.W.; Arthur Ray, Co-Pilot; Robert Totaro, Navigator, killed at end of runway on take-off; Carl Larsen FLT, Engineer, Switzerland; John Wells, Radio Operator, Switzerland; Gilbert Creath, Tail Gunner, German P.O.W..

My wife Jeanette and I plan to attend the Reunion in Dayton. Later in Sept., another trip to Europe. Two sure stops will be Cambridge, England and Adelboten, Switzerland.

Sincerely,

Carl Larsen
1002 S. Circle Dr., Baytown, Texas 77520

Dear David,

I read with interest your letter in the July Newsletter and can help out with some information. In my files there's a brief history of the 31st Station Complement Squadron and I quote from their records. "Another exception to the usual routine was the death of Sergeant James R. Ezell. Sgt Ezell was one of the Squadron's Link Trainer men, a very skilled and ambitious man, and his loss was keenly felt by all the members of the Squadron. On a routine practice mission on 13th March, 1945, the Fort that Sgt. Ezell was flying in was rammed in the tail by a Liberator from another field. Sgt Ezell was riding in the tail gunner's position at the time and was seriously injured by the Liberator's props. He passed away about 1900 hours that same evening at the 65th General Hospital".

The serial of the B-17 was 42-31335 and she was also a War Weary ship - if you look closely at the remains of the rudder, you'll note part of a "W". The "X" you can see is her call letter. I've copied this to Ed for the Newsletter so we might get additional response. I have a note that indicates the pilot of the B-17 may have been a Joe Vedey but this isn't certain. According to some recollections, the B-24 crashed but I can't

(Letters to the Editor Cont.)

find any record of this. One way you might get the entire story is to write to Norton Air Force Base where the Accident Reports are stored. If you do follow it up to that extent, let me know as I'd be keen to learn.

I'm pleased that someone nearer my own age is as keen on the 385th as I am. We have a duty to ensure their achievements aren't forgotten.

Best wishes,

Ian

More on locating a Lewistown Bride.

Dear Ed,

Through your article in the 1986, July newsletter I did locate a Mrs. Green, the former Mrs. Morrison in Oregon. Information was skimpy but at least I contacted someone. She has a son at the Air Force Academy, he is going to retire in about four years and someday I may get to talk to him.

We were at the Corning N.Y. reunion and met some of the members of the ground crew and had a great time. Hoping to see you in Dayton. Thanks for all you have done in trying to help. I know its like looking for a needle in a hay stack but it was worth the effort.

Thanks again Ed.

Sincerely,

Paul Kostea

Dear Ed,

I would like to add a few comments about the Dresden mission of March 2nd, 1945. The 385th was leading the 8th Air Force that day. Col. Jumper was command pilot. George Salkeld was 1st Pilot. I was flying as waist gunner. Ken Winters, co-pilot, was tail gunner and observer. Joe Fischer, bombardier, Lanar Coverstone, navigator. My recollections are that we were briefed on Dresden. The briefing officer said the Germans were moving their government big-wigs to Dresden. This mission was planned to destroy these people.

Our low sqdn. was attack by FW 190's and we lost four. I thought five at the time so maybe another group was hit. Col. Jumper was very upset at the P51 fighter cover. The P51's had strayed from the area we were in. This was the first and last time I heard a Col. call another Col. an S.O.B.

I am glad to know after all these years that some of our people on those four planes made it back.

Please add my belated thanks to Cheryl, Sid, Lee, Roy and Drew for doing such a great job for the Alington Reunion. For Mary and I it was a first trip to the Nation's Capitol. We had a great time and spent an additional two days and still didn't see it all. Best of all was the opportunity to visit our friends and meet new ones. Best wishes for the Holidays.

Sincerely,

Sam Lyke

INTERESTED IN BOMBARDIERS INC.?

Dear Ed:

Received a letter from: Mr. James Craig, Jr., 32 Birchwood Drive, Ray, New Hampshire 03870, and he was wondering if any former Bombardiers in our association would be interested in joining with other Bombardiers at a reunion. They had 300 + present at Midland, Texas last year.

If any Bombardiers are interested they should contact: Bombardiers, Inc., Box 254, Eagle Harbor, MI 49951 (Michigan)

I guess that Earle L. Cole and Russell W. Fritzinger belong. Keep your cool up there - which means - don't send us any more cold weather than you have to.

George S. Hruska

Dear Ed,

First let me say thanks for the great job you are doing with the magazine. We both find every article interesting. Charles was with the 548th. We met in Elmswell while I was visiting from London. After dating via London - Elmswell, we married February 1945. We have been married 42 years nearly, and they said it wouldn't last. We had a tough time getting permission. Our daughter was born in Bury St. Edmonds three weeks after Charles came back state side. I stayed in Elmswell for awhile and saw them close up the base. It was a sad occasion for us but happy for those that left.

We have been back four times. I have pictures of my daughter and her son and husband in the Church. We were there this past August. It seems you always have to go back. The memories are still there. I have a son and daughter, two grandsons and a granddaughter. Charles retired in May and spends his free time now fishing and crabbing and finishing our summer home. We were at the reunion at Fort Walton Beach where we met some great guys and their -wives from the 548th and enjoy our mini reunions each year. This past September we were in Corning, New York. It was the same dates as the mini in Washington, sorry we missed that. But we will all be in Dayton in July so I will introduce myself.

Well Ed, after all, this the reason for the letter was to tell you the couple in the newsletter you ask do you know, are Bill and Joan Beach. We were friends in Elmswell, Bill was from Springfield, Mass. We lost touch with one another some years ago.

We also found a lost name in your newsletter Okie Gannon. We hope to see in Dayton, if possible could an update on addresses be put back in the newsletter. We are still looking for former 548th members. To you and yours and all members of 385th Best wishes for Great New Year and a great reunion.

Sincerely

Irene Huber

Dear Ed,

Enjoy your newsletter immensely, keep em coming!

1 put my time in with the 550th as an engineer on W.W. Smith's crew. We were fortunate to have had Ed Hallisey as crew chief, he did one heck of a job for us and "Haybag Annie".

My reason for writing is to ask if anyone has a copy of something I somehow lost several years ago. I was awarded membership in the Lucky Bastard Club and was given a certificate that as near as I can recall the wording was something like this...

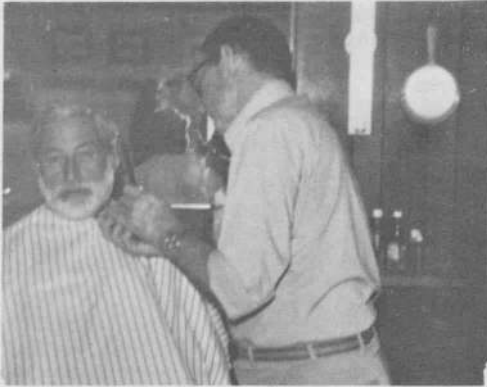
On this _____ day of _____, 1944 the fickle fingers of fate finds it expedient to place upon the roll of the lucky bastard club the name of _____ who on this day has achieved the record of having delivered tons and tons of H.E. good will to the Fuehrer and would be Fuehrers

There was more to the wording but I have forgotten whatever followed. If you or anyone else can send me a copy I would appreciate it.

Hopefully, one of these days. I'll be able to attend one of our reunions.

Sincerely,

Paul C. Jadro
953 14th Street, Fortuna, CA 95540



Loy Davis of 550th Supply, cutting Riley Simpson's hair 40 years later.



Loy got carried away and Riley lost his beard, too.

MONTHLY ENGINEERING ACTIVITY REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 1945

During February sixty-five (65) engines were changed. Thirteen of these were pre-slo-timed engines (explained in last month's report). Each pre-slo-timed engine involves an extra engine change for the mechanics. Therefore, to account properly for work done, it should be considered that seventy-eight(78) engines were changed. The pre-slo-timed engine idea has been found practical, if used with judgment, in keeping more aircraft operational. In several instances it made it possible to provide the extra one or two aircraft needed by operations to set up a full formation of thirty-eight aircraft. The breakdown of engine changes follows:

CAUSE	NUMBER CHANGED	PERCENT CHANGED
Internal failure	23	39%
Low Compression	14	20%
Battle Damage	2	3%
Excessive oil consumption	16	25%
Excessive time	10	13%
TOTAL	65	100%

The average time on new engines was 356 hours ; and the average time on overhauled engines was 203 1/3 hours.

Harry N. Monfort
Major, Air Corps
Station Material Officer

EDITORS NOTE: These jobs were in addition to the regular daily maintenance. As Marv Giron said in the October Newsletter, those mechanics managed to find a few things to do besides cleaning up their barracks for inspection.

Dear Mr. Stern:

I enclose a letter for inclusion in your Newsletter for members of the 385th Reunion Group. We took over from Mr. and Mrs. Ellis in keeping you in contact with Great Ashfield but we have never received a newsletter, so we have to borrow one if we are to read it. If necessary, we are prepared to pay towards the cost of receiving the Newsletter.

We are very pleased to see your members on their visits to Great Ashfield and sometimes we find that they do not know about the reunion group, so we do inform them about it.

Is there any news of the next reunion at Great Ashfield, which I know your members thoroughly enjoy. If we can be of any assistance do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Stephen and Petrina Miles

Dear Mr. Stern:

I am sorry you have not heard from us for sometime, I feel we are not keeping you as well informed as our predecessors Mr and Mrs Ellis but we are now hopefully putting that right.

Petrina and I were again very pleased to see old acquaintances again last year and to greet new visitors to Great Ashfield and we look forward to meeting more 385th members again this year. If members are in the area we are always pleased for you to call and if possible to telephone before coming so that we can spend some time with them at the base and at the church.

With reference to the January Newsletter and the letter from Jerry Leichtman which said Mrs Patrica Miles had passed away, I think the name may have been confused with Petrina, and she is very much alive!

There is a great deal of activity at the church at the moment with the Tower undergoing repair. It is surrounded by scaffolding and is being repointed (new cement being put around the flints). Some other parts of the external walls have been done. As one can imagine, this has been a very expensive operation costing £20,000, fortunately with grants, fund raising and your generous donations we have nearly reached this goal, as we have been saving for the past four years and we must thank you for all the contributions you make towards our church. This is very much appreciated.

The trees in the churchyard are going to have surgery work done on them over the next three years to make them safe and extend their life span.

We have only had one bad spell this winter with snow and now the weather is improving we are busy with spring work on the farm.

We look forward to meeting members visiting the base this year.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen & Petrina Miles

(Letters to the Editor Cont.)

Dear Mr. Stern;

I was pleased to read the article in our News Argus regards your stay during the war and your interest in stories and items about your former buddies.

It just so happens that during those war days I was Assistant manager of a drug store which was sort of a meeting place for the boys when they came into town. I became acquainted with a great many of them.

Being something of an artist I was commissioned by the 49th. Bomber Squadron to design and make their shoulder patches. They called themselves the Wolf Squadron. I am inclosing one of the shoulder patches which I made for them and also a pencil copy of the original design. I also made many signature labels for many others. I am inclosing a few which did not come out too well. But thought that perhaps you would remember some of them. I am not sure just which squadron they were with but thought that they might be of interest to you.

I also designed several other figures which the boys painted on the sides of their planes. One in particular was called "The Pooper Doodle". Unfortunately I understand that this particular bomber was shot down on it's first flight over Italy. There was only one survivor.

Those were great days and I will always have fond memories of them. I trust that this little bit of history will be of interest to you. I am eighty six years old now but I am still well and active. I sincerely hope that these little mementos will prove of value to you.

Most Sincerely,

Fred H. Horner
Box 417, Lewistown, Mont. 59457



DI TORS NOTE: Is this where the 551st Wolf insignia came from?

Dear Ed;

I received your answer that you had received my letter and photo's. Very nice to hear from you.

You may already know, but here goes on a very good piece of news. Patricia & Stephen Miles are the proud parents of a baby girl. Their first at that. She was born on

September 28, 1986, and weighed in at 8 lb 6 oz. Her name is Rachel Cecilia. Mother and daughter doing well. Father Stephen wrote me the news, and his letter was some what rational, so he is doing as well as can be expected.

He said after a cold wet summer, autumn was nice, with no rain for one month. Things are alive and well at Great Ashfield it sounds like.

They sure a nice couple, Ed, and are doing a grand job with the all Saints Church, and letting people run all over the old base, take their time away from their work and answer all the silly questions from people like myself when I was there.

The senior Mr. Miles, who actually owns most of the field, is a very nice gentlemen, and I was fortunate enough to meet him on the runway last August.

I'm sure going all out to attend the next reunion in Ohio, and will be driving my motor home through Fargo on the way. Probably sometime in the first part of July 1987. I'll stop and say hello if O.K. with you.

All for now Ed, and I did see on the TV the other night where Fargo had a blast of winter weather. Take care on the slippery streets.

With warmest regards, & Aloha Nui Nui,

Jerry Ramaker

Mr. Ed Stern, Editor 385th BGMA

A TYPICAL MONTH IN THE LIFE OF ARKIE HUBER

by Bob Douglas

I arrived in LV, with nothing but time to kill. Arky wanted to enlarge his printing shop again as big. Another friend of his came over and we started. We put up the outside walls, placed rafters, etc. We took the screens and window glass out of the windows so we could place and nail them from the inside. Arkie's cat found out it could jump through the window, onto the back privacy wall, with ease without going around the house. This went on for days. As we completed the job, Arkie put in the screens, after the cat had jumped outside. We kept on working, and all of a sudden, we heard the darndest noise, and we came running, if you ever seen any of the Tom & Jerry cartoons, this is what the cat looked like, his nose and head through the screen, and his claws buried into the screen, tearing it to shreds. He had to jump over four feet, so he had plenty of speed. We laughed about it for days, and the cat kept looking up at the windows. Later, while drywalling the interior, Arkie was very careful to mark all the electric lines and all the water lines, so we wouldn't drive any nails into them. We replumbed and wired, and he marked these also. We worked till about 6 in the evening, so we decided it was Miller time. Arky said I got two more nails to put in and open me one. He came in and we had a couple, and planned the next days work. We were in about one hour, and we went back out to the work area. Arkie walked in first before I had turned on the lights. He let out a war whoop. There was water 4 inches deep on the floor. His last nail, where there was a bulge in the drywall, you're right, a water pipe. Otherfellows went home and Arkie and I had supper around midnight, after repairs. Arky has customers come and go all day, but today there were a bunch of Frenchmen, who were participating in the Red Flag Exercises at Nellis came in to purchase merchandise. Arky lined them up according to size, and displayed his products. He told them if they wanted an article let him know, and he would place them in front of them. There were about 8 of them. Six of them told him what they wanted, a few articles, but two of them kept nodding, and Arkie kept piling, saying, this is a good day. When it was all over and time to settle up, he found out these two didn't understand any English, but just nodded their heads in approval of the product. They didn't buy only a scarf, and it took Arkie 3 hours to refold and repack the articles. On anotherday, Arkie cleaned up his order desk, and put the trash into a large deep dumpster

(Letters to the Editor Cont.)

across the street. It was about 6 ft. high. He found out he had thrown out an order from Germany. He takes his brand new aluminum ladder, placed it against the dumpster, and climbed in. He searched for about 20 minutes and found the order, started to get out, someone stole his ladder, thinking it was being scrapped. Much noise and hollering, till he found another ladder to get him out. Never found the ladder. He still growls about it. After I left, as I said, he has much company, and many volunteers to help. He orders 15 ton of limestone gravel for his driveway. They deliver it while he was gone. Dumped it clear inside the lot, and he wanted it on the outside. He thought nothing of it, because he could get help from his customers. He waited 4 days, and not a one came. The 5th day he started with a wheelbarrow and shovel and rake, spreading the gravel. It took him 3 days, and many sore muscles. He just filled the last wheelbarrow, and here comes some customers, offering to help. He turned it down, saying, where were you when I needed you? There are too many little things that happen, to put it all in the newsletter. See you all in Dayton.

An interesting story sent in by Bob Douglas.

PITTSBURGH, PA

There was a small gathering of the Eagles in Pittsburg. The crew of Joe Schneider's aircraft, from the area, convened at the home of Lloyd Wright. Including Joe and Lloyd, Al Parisian, they were accompanied by their wives, Esther, Margaret and Betty. There were many tales told and many drinks drank, but not before 11 o'clock.

The reason for the get together, they are all celebrating their 39th wedding anniversary, all within 10 days, for them.

I was on my way to DC, and I always stop and see Joe and Esther, and he told me of the gathering, and invited me there. It was only a couple of miles off the route. I was a week early to go to DC, because Arke was in Boston for the 452nd reunion, and I was going to meet him a week early to do some sight seeing.

We had a beautiful lunch at the home, the ladies with their thing, and the men with their thing. Later, after many pictures, and talk, Joe and Esther took us all out to a very fine restaurant in Pittsburg, for dinner. Came back to the Wright's home, shot the bull, as well as the wives did. They have been doing this for years. They are a really close knit group of people. We broke up for the day, I went to the motel and they bedded down at the Wright's. Next morning, the Wright's made a typical farm breakfast. It took two hours to eat it. They were still at the table talking at 11 o'clock, then Joe and Esther took off for Berwick. Esther is having trouble with her broken leg bone. The Parisian's went with them. I stayed awhile, then I head for DC.

A argument arose over what was the longest, nonstop, mission, and the target, time wise. Lloyd's record shows 9 hours 20 minutes, target, Plausen, Germany. Akrie's group record shows, Politz, Germany, Poland. Time 11 hours and 3 minutes, 4/11/44. It was his 20th , and they lost their Bombadier. So much for the road.



Al Parisian, Lloyd Wright, Bob Douglas with Trapper John, and Joe Schnieder -- and a wife keeping an eye on them.

Dear Mr. Stern:

Through the newsletter, I've heard from three old crew members — Jack Surritt, ball turret, Floyd Reinken, waist gunner, and Ed Sloane, radio. Most of my crew flew 3 missions with me in 14 weeks, the first one on D-Day. We had to break in a new pilot a few times, which is why Bi Leverett, our copilot, dropped behind, then he got his own crew and airplane — which was shot down over Berlin on Oct. 6, 1944, along with 12 other 385th B-17s from the 549th Squadron.

I had always thought that Bill bumped his head on the bomb bay doors when he bailed out, but that isn't what happened.

Because I was slowed to a halt for awhile, I didn't get around to telling anyone what Mike Pappas wrote. Attached is what he sent me; maybe you'll want to lift some of it.

Sincerely yours,

Homer Groening
2705 SW Patton Ct., Portland, OR 97201

EDITORS NOTE: It's so good, we're printing the whole thing. Note to Frank Marano, 549th Exec. Officer — See — I told you, your guys were a bunch of thieves!

Dear Homer,

I read with much interest and amusement ("Old 530") your letter to the Editor in the January 1984 issue of the BCM, newsletter. And as soon as I noticed your mention of Bi Leverett, I felt compelled to reply.

I was a member of the 549th from early June 1944 until I went down over Berlin on October 6. The ship I went down in was B-17G #42-97275, of the 551st. I was flying as toggler, and the skipper was Bill Leverett—a hell of a nice guy.

As you undoubtedly know, Bill died on the operating table in 1947 while surgeons tried to correct skull and neck injuries stemming from a beating with a shovel by civilians in Berlin. All through his time at Luft One, he suffered terrible headaches several times a day. After the Russians arrived in May, 1945, I climbed through the fence into his compound and had tea with him and some of his room mates, celebrating our "liberation." You'll notice that I put that in quotes, since the Russians never liberated anyone—even their own people who had been captured. Anyway, Bill showed me the ugly scar on his neck and head, and told me the whole story. I feel a deep loss when the sister of our waist gunner who had been killed by fighters informed me of Bill's death.

There's an ironic twist concerning the ship we went down in. It was called "Roger the Dodger"—the name and cartoon that I myself had painted on the nose of "275" at the request of the original crew of their new bomber.

In your second paragraph you mentioned that you hadn't heard of B-17's flying lower than 20,000 foot missions besides that trip to Paris, except for the parachute drops to the F.F.I. Incidentally, I made one of those drops myself—I mean I really kicked those bundles out the bomb bay, and to this day, I can still visualize the upturned faces of those French civilians about three hundred feet down there, waving their hands as they scurried to grab the bundles and load them on horse-drawn carts. It was a real good feeling, and for a few seconds there, I almost had the urge to jump out and join them. At that time, I was flying as tail gunner with the original crew. I graduated to the nose after they went down over Munster while I was hospitalized for a social disease contracted at Piccadilly.

Anyway, about the twelve thousand foot missions—I flew three of them as toggler to Brest, France. I'll quote the dates and targets: August 26, 1944, German ammo and fuel dump; September 3, German barracks; September 5, German coast defenses. We flew unescorted in and out on all three missions, with no fighters encountered and only moderate flak. And I didn't have to wear my oxygen mask, which was nice, because I smoked then.

(Letters to the Editor Cont.)

Here's a point of interest, referring back to that secret supply mission to the Maquis. We flew it unescorted, but were tracked by another B-17 about three quarters of a mile off to our right. It had a triangle marking on its tail, and was flown by a Luftwaffe crew that was just being nosey.

I didn't know you back then, Homer, although we might have met in passing—maybe on our bikes. So I hope you don't mind the first name basis. But I did have other contacts with the 551st, besides the "nose art" I performed on "Roger the Dodger". Those other contacts' were more of a surreptitious nature. I used to steal my bikes from your outfit when planning to check out the pubs in Stowmarket. But I always returned them to the exact spot from which I had stolen them upon returning home. (Well—most of the time, anyway.)

I got a kick out of your "needle-and-ball-air speed" story. It reminded me of listening in on the intercom one morning as we prepared to take-off for Munich and the buzz bomb factories. While waiting on the taxi line, it went something like this:

(Pilot to engineer) "What the hell's wrong with the cylinder head temperature on number three?"
(Engineer, referring to indicator) "It's okay. Bob. It acts that way every once in a while."
(Co-pilot's voice) "Piss on it—let's go!"
And away we went.

Sincerely,

Mike Pappas

Hello Ed,

After reading the "Letters to the Editor" portion of our newsletter several times I felt the urge to participate and maybe add something of interest.

I was with the 551st Squadron for a very short period at Spokane and then was transferred to Hdqs. Sqdn. as group armament inspector and later at Great Ashfield got into aircraft inspection as well. I came to know most all the crew chiefs and mechanics on the routine inspections by MSgt. Jim Caneu and myself. I was especially pleased to see the article by Marty Girson in the October newsletter about the crew chiefs and mechanics. He hit the nail on the head about the working and weather conditions.

I was with the group from the beginning, coming from the 34th Bomb group at Blythe, CA. I got to know of most of the original air crews also, but can't recall any names now except those mentioned at times in the newsletter.

I married a girl from Stowmarket (Mavis Symonds) and we flew back in 1965 to see relatives and made an auto trip around Great Ashfield which brought back many memories. We're going to try to go again next Sept. "Space A". I will look in on the church and try to contact Mr. McLachlan.

I've enclosed copies of some articles from the "Yank" magazine and pictures of three A/C with damage. "Rum Dum" probably one of our most famous with 110 missions during which time the nose was blown off at least twice. The article on Lt. John Morgan is especially good since he was our Congressional Medal of Honor winner.

I only learned of the 385th association two years ago from my old 1st Sgt. (and best man) R.J. Lapine and am sorry I've missed all the previous activities and newsletters.

We are looking forward to making the 87 reunion in Dayton and hope there will be many more new comers like myself.

Thank you all for all the memories being refreshed.

Best Regards,

Marium D. Unruh
CmS USAF Retired, 528 Jean Lane, Battle Creek, Mich. 49015



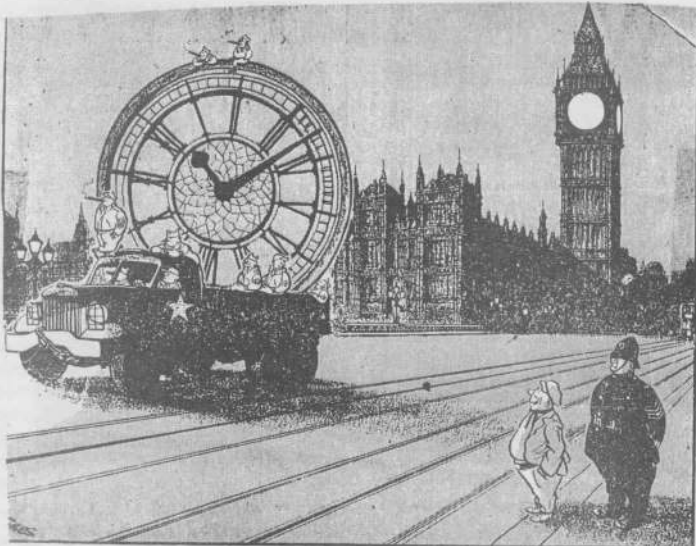
Capt. Irving Frank's Raunchy Wolf-- our first crew to finish 25 missions.



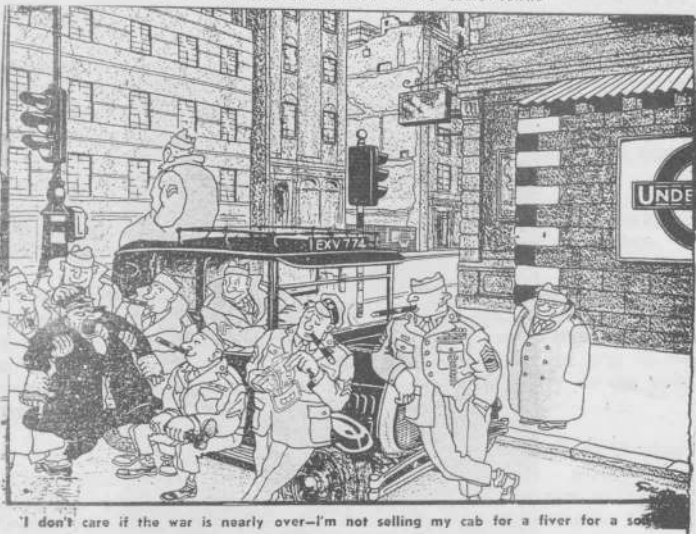
Another shot of a minor repair job! (One man was killed in this collision)



Ordnance Bike Repair Shop



"Rare boys for souvenirs, these Americans"



"I don't care if the war is nearly over—I'm not selling my cab for a fiver for a soldier"

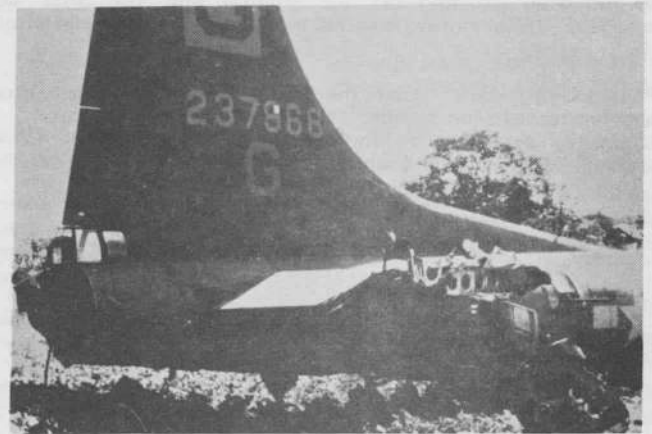
THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTOGRAPHS by Ian McLachlan

Here is another in this occasional series which will interest 385th veterans and, I hope, prompt recollections so I can add to the archives, I should really call it 'some' of the story behind the photographs because the information is full of gaps which aren't filled even after a careful search through 385th records for the period, July, 1944. These pictures of a sorry looking B-17 depict 42-37966 called, I believe, "Swinging Door".

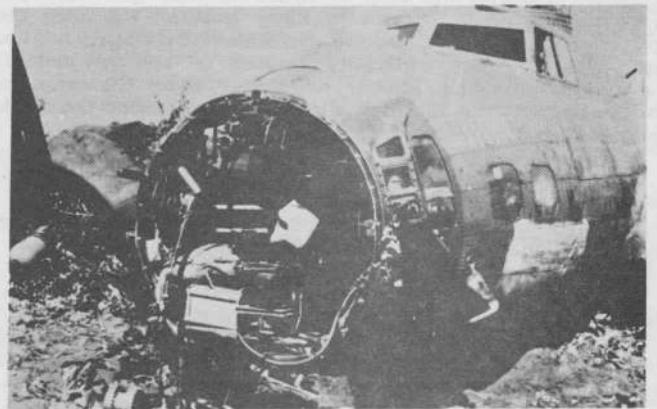
On 8th July, 1944, the 385th were on tactical operations over France to support the invasion. The "Swinging Door" took minor flak hits and these may have contributed to the crash because the pilot, 2nd/Lt. Anthony D. Gagnarelli peeled off as usual and came in to land on the main SW-NE runway. During final approach, he asked co-pilot 2/Lt. William F. Laughter for flaps but they wouldn't operate electrically so he ordered the engineer to check them urgently but continued in on his approach. His touchdown was over half way along the runway and Gagnarelli hit the brakes. Smoke scorched from the B-17's tires and she burnt rubber for at least 700 feet before losing brake pressure. With the runway used up, the crew braced themselves for the inevitable and the "Swinging Door" careened off the NE end of the field. The distance from the runway to the Wetherden Road was 150 yards but the B-17 had too much momentum and lost her port wheel in a ditch before ripping through the hedge, over the road, through another hedge and into a beet field. The starboard undercart sheered off and the "Swinging

Door" slewed round tearing off her right stabilizer. Moments later the ball turret was gouged out and the Fortress shovelled earth into her engines, breaking number three from its mounting before coming to a standstill with her starboard wingtip stretching over the road. Sadly, two civilians had been caught in her path and one was critically injured while the other escaped badly shaken. The only crew casualty was one of the gunners taken to hospital suffering from shock.

Like I said, this is some of the story behind the photographs but I'm left with many questions. Who were the rest of the crew - are any of them in the 385th BGMA? Who was the civilian, did he recover? What was the target they had been to? Incidentally, this was the day Arch Benner got hit by flak over France and scraped "Mickey II" onto a landing strip near Cherbourg, but that's another story.



8/77 44 Landing Accident, Great Ashfield



SWINGING DOOR

A favorite poem of Bill Dorney, Bombardier on John Pettenger's crew, who died in November.

Stowmarket, England October 10. 1043

*I am hurt
But I am not slain
I'll lay me down
And bleed awhile
And then I'll rise
And fight again*

8th Air Force 551st Bomb Squadron 385th Bomb Group



Dear Ed Ed:

If the salutation sounds like a stutter, it ain't necessarily so. It's just that I recognize your title and the work it entails and I thank you for the good way you are handling the office.

Ed, the reason I have written is to see if you could be of help in helping one of our members. By you, I ofcourse mean the Group. The enclosed letter to me from the pilot of my crew from the 548th Sq. It is the first letter that I have been able to get from Geo. C. since I was able to locate him about 5 years ago. From his letter and from what I was able to get from our mutual friend "Arky" in Las Vegas, Geo. C. is having a very bad time and could use some help from anyone that could substantiate his service and particularly to a specific accident which Geo reports is the basis for a lot of his disability. I would hesitate to reprint all of his letter but hope an appeal is not inappropriate, for the Newsletter, could be published in the next or an early issue. I'm not quite certain of the date he referred to as "When 'Scotty' was killed" but I have written to the other two known survivors of my crew for their verification which I will relay to you upon receipt.

Having spent nearly 35 years supervising the educational portion of the "GI BILL", lost records, particularly of WW II personnel, was not an uncommon occurrence.

Oh, yes Ed, the letterhead herein is my recent design for a lapel pin or cap pin to honor the area veterans, all volunteers, who conduct the military funeral ritual at area cemeteries including Camp Butler National Cemetery. Last year, we performed the ritual 158 times and so far in 87 have had 30 funerals at which we participated. I was elected as the first commander of the group in Dec. 86. We have approx. 30 total active members from all of the various veteran organizations. Just a little something extra to keep busy in retirement.

Trust you can see a way to help Geo. C.

In Comradeship,

George Behl
51 Windsor Rd., Springfield, IL 62702

Dear George:

Thank you so much for writing me as I welcome your cards and letters very very much. I know that you are not aware of me being a pretty sick cookie.... This is the fifth time that I've been in the V.A. Hospital, and each time I've been in I've had surgery - both eyes - cataracts removed - glasses are over 3/8" thick. Then, the next surgery, about a year later, was on a serious "urethral-stricture" - that was caused by the parachute harness I wore - and due to serious wounds to crewmen in the back - and that was when 'Scotty' was killed - remember - and I went out wounded myself - out of the front escape hatch and my leg strap hooked onto the door latch and I hung in mid-air 'till the firemen lifted me off and into the hospital with frozen legs and a badly crushed urethra (urination tube from the bladder). I've

already had six operations on it and I still have to "catherize myself" every time I must urinate! And George, believe it or not - nothing is shown on my service records!!! They have my "eyes" listed as "NSC" - my urethral problems as "NSC" - my frozen legs as "NSC!" My original records were "LOST" in transit between "Great Ashfield, England", and "Langley Field, Virginia."

Now, I badly need substantiation of these injuries plus that I was even a combat pilot! ? Can you beat that? If you could, George, see if you can get some of the fellows that you contact and please send me "substantiations" of what happened!! Please!

I am in a wheelchair - no props - no wings - no crewmen - kinda frustrating! !

Well George, if you would be so kind, see if you can help me...

Thanks for everything, and I sure will try to get to the next reunion "GOD HELP ME!!"

I sure appreciate you writing me.

Thanks a million
Your Ex. Pilot

George G. Czerwinski
P.O. Box 142 South Milwaukee, Wis. 53172

Dear George:

Thank you for your letter which came yesterday.

Martin had a heartattack the day after Thanksgiving and underwent 3-By-Pass Surgery on Jan. 7, 1987. He is recovering beautifully and we are planning on attending the 385th Reunion in Dayton, Ohio, July 24, 25, 6 26th. Hope to see and meet you there.

Please put our name on the mailing list as we are anxious to renew and locate members of his crew. Thank you.

Sincerely yours

Dorothy Siefert

p.s. Martin sends his regards and thanks for your letter and enclosures.



Earl Studdard

Dec. 14, 1985

Noble Brucker

May 27, 1985

A letter from the Artist who designed the 551st insignia—a retired druggist from Lewistown, Montana.

Dear Mr. Stern;

First, thank you for your courtesy in answering my letter. I am afraid that I made a mistake in saying I made the patches for the 549th Bomb Squadron. I guess that when one gets old the memory is likely to fail them. Now that you mention it I guess it was the 551st instead of the 548th. I believe that the 548th was the first squadron in Lewistown and came here from Moses Lake.

Anyhow, thanks for the picture.
Best Wishes,

Fred H. Hornet

Here's a follow up on a most cordial invitation to London. Earl Cole will be there for sure.

Bomber Command Association
Reunion Dinner
Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London
23rd May 1987

Our chief guest of honour for the Eleventh Bomber Command Reunion Dinner will be Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Michael Beetham and our special guests are Lady Harris and Lyn Bennett.

Our chairman for the evening will be Squadron Leader David Shannon of the famous Dambusters.

A warm welcome awaits our friends from the "Mighty Eighth" and we hope to see many more this year.

We are expecting guests from around the world and hope to see every squadron in Bomber Command represented.

Many distinguished guests will be attending and we can look forward to some fine speeches. Following the speeches there will be dancing to the New Dorset Orchestra until 1:00 a.m.

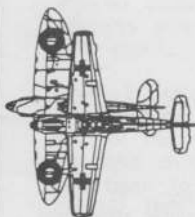
Tickets are available from: Ray Callow, 104 Kirkham Street, Plumstead, London SE1 8 2EN; Tel. 01-317-7243. Price per person \$26.

Here's advance information for your 1988 travel plans.

REUNION AT GREAT ASHFIELD IN 1988

Plans for the 1988 reunion in England are just about complete. The dates are August 16 to September 6. All participants will make their own flight arrangements from the USA to London and return. Since people will be coming from all points of the United States, it is practically impossible to secure a reasonable group fare rate with an airline. Discount fares to London are available from large cities in the US. Day 1, August 16th, will be the departure date from the US. We will all meet at our London Hotel, The Mountbatten, during the morning of Day 2, August 17th. Coach shuttle service will be provided between Gatwick Airport, Heathrow Airport and the Mountbatten, which is located in Central London. Day 2 is the beginning of the UK ground tour which will end up at the Mountbatten on Day 21, September 5th. On September 6th we will depart London for the US, and coach service will be furnished to Gatwick and Heathrow Airports. We will be in London for four days, and that should provide sufficient time to see all the historic places, visit the old haunts, take in the Theater, and do some serious shopping. Ample time has been scheduled for the nostalgic return to Great Ashfield. We will visit the airfield for a long look around and some picture taking. On Sunday morning, August 21st, we will visit the All Saints Church for a Remembrance Service. Lunch will be a buffet affair with the villagers. More about this reunion tour, which will take us through England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, will be published in future newsletters. All 385th

members, relatives, friends, and former members of the Groups and their friends, are eligible to participate in this tour. In the meantime, make plans, mark calendars, save bucks, and start looking forward to "Merry Olde England" in '88.



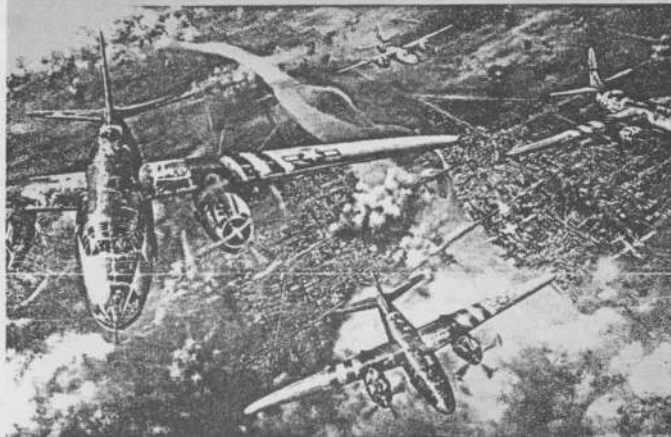
THE AVIATION ART OF RANDY GREEN ASSIGNMENT AGREEMENT FORM

An interesting possibility for commissioning a piece of art work that would feature 385th planes in one of our outstanding bombing raids has come up.

Clarence Abrahamson has put us in touch with an artist who specializes in Aviation Art, and he has done the preliminary investigation. We would chose one of our raids (Berlin, Marienburg, Munster, Schwienfurt). The artist would be given the particulars, and he would develop a painting that would be available to buy as a "Limited Edition".

The Group would furnish the "up front" money and would then sell the pictures to those interested. The subject will be discussed at the Reunion business meeting. If you have any suggestions, please write Clarence at 6431 Menlo St., Santa Susana, CA 93063.

ARTIST-SIGNED PRINT RELEASE



THE BRIDGE BUSTERS

Signed Limited Edition of 200 prints
size 25"x38", FULL colour, M2.00

Don't read this if you've already attended a Reunion—you already know how great they are!

But if you haven't gone to one—if you're putting it off until it's more convenient—if you think it isn't worth a few hundred bucks—if you don't thin you'll know anybody—read on.

The 300 to 400 who usually show up look forward to seeing the new faces—the ones they haven't seen in 40 and more years. You'll be surprised to find someone you last saw in a POW camp, or the guys you went to Ipswich with when you missed the last train back, or the Mess Sergeant who slipped you a can of Spam to take to town, or one of the fellows who kept your plane flying, loaded the bombs, or flew on your wing your fist 6 missions.

Don't miss another one—it's getting later than you think. Get your wife enthused, send in your reservation, and make this 11th Reunion the best one we've had!

385th BOMB CROUP PX PRICE LIST

Address all orders to: 385th BGMA
 c/o O.A.R. PRODUCTS
 P.O. Box 3842
 No. Las Vegas, NV 88030
 (702) 649-6701

Make all checks payable to O.A.R. PRODUCTS.
 Allow 4 weeks for delivery. Prices include postage and handling.

Shirts and jackets available to be printed with Squadron or Croup insignia or B-17 aircraft, with wording "385th Bomb Group - Mighty Eighth".

T-SHIRTS colors: lt. blue, white, tan, yellow, and (silver in mens only)

Mens (s-m-l-xl).....\$6.50
 Womens (s-m-l-xl) . . . \$6.75
 Childrens (xs-s-m-l).....\$5.50

COLF SHIRTS colors: lt. blue, white, tan yellow and (silver in mens only)

Mens (s-m-l-xl).....\$10.00
 Womens (s-m-l).....\$9.50

SWEATSHIRTS colors: lt. blue and grey

Mens (s-m-l-xl).....\$8.75
 Childrens (xs-s-m-l).....\$7.75

JACKETS colors: red, white. lt. blue

""Jackets sold with a large design of your choice printed on the back and a Croup or Squadron patch (embroidered) sewn on the front.
 Mens (xs-s-m-l-xl).....\$23.00
 Mens (xl).....\$24.00

CAPS

385th Bomb Croup insignia.....\$5.00
 8th Air Force, 385th Bomb Croup . . \$5.00

PATCHES (embroidered)

Croup or Squadrons.....\$5.00

COFFEE CUPS "THERMAL"

548th, 549th, 550th or 551st Bomb Squadrons..... \$4.25

NAPKINS OR SCARVES colors: blue, white, green, red, rose, pink

""Napkins or scarves are printed with the 385th BM CP insignia in the corner \$2.50

APRONS "BBQ" colors: natural.....\$5.00

NIGHT SHIRTS colors: blue and red

one size fits all.....\$5.00

REUNION BOOKS

Soft cover: 7th, 8th, 9th or 10th reunions.....\$3.00 ea.

THE LETTER author Frederick H. Thlenburg. Hard cover novel, A story of a B-17 crew based at Great Ashfield, how they lived and fought

.....\$5.95

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH GOURMET COOKBOOK

Paper cover. Authors Laverne and Shirley Rohrbaugh. Contains 333 recipes of the Pennsylvania Dutch (Cerman) origin . \$5.00

BELT BUCKLES 8th Air Force insignia with 385th Bomb Croup (H) identification hand crafted hand cast, hand polished, solid bronze

*.....\$15.00

385th BGMA DECALS\$.50

""Please note: A portion of the proceeds go to support the 38th Bomb Group.

For a list of other WWII designs available, please send \$1.00 to O.A.R. PRODUCTS.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS NEW SLATE

The nominating committee presents the following members for officers indicated:

President: Earl L. Cole
 Barbourville, KY
 Vice Presidents: Samuel E. Lyke
 Bartlesville, OK
 A. L. Benefield, Jr.
 Ozark, Al
 Secretary: George S. Hruska
 Omaha, NE
 T reasurer: John F. Pettenger
 Laurel, FL

Nominations will be accepted from the floor for any officer during the membership meeting, Monday morning July 27th.



MONTHLY REPORT ON 385th
 ORDNANCE
 ACTIVITIES MARCH 1945

Ammunition:

During the month of March 2407.3 tons of demolition bombs were loaded on aircraft. Of this initial loading 1950.8 tons were expended.

As a result of "scrubbed" missions, aborts and aircraft not dispatched or airborne, 456.5 tons were caused to be unloaded, which, summed up, records an effort of 2863.8 tons moved by Ordnance personnel to service aircraft this month.

The figures for tons handled in servicing aircraft compare with the month of February 1945 as follows:

	March 1945	February 1945
Initial Loadings (Tons)	2407.3	2072.25
Expenditures (Tons)	1950.8	1301.0
Unloadings (Tons)	456.5	771.25

Tonnage placed aboard aircraft was 335.05 tons greater than February, and is the largest loading in tons of general purpose bombs experienced by this station since the beginning of operations. It exceeds tonnage placed aboard aircraft for the previous "big" month of June 1944 by 32.5 tons.

Expenditures of General Purposes bombs exceed the previous large month, which was February 1945, by 649.8 tons.

Unloading efforts were 324.75 tons less than February 1945.

The figures pertinent to "bombing up" procedure for March 1945 compare with the like month of 1944 as follows:

	March 1945	March 1944
Initial Loading (Tons)	2407.3	882.75
Expenditures (Tons)	1950.8	505.25
Unloadings (Tons)	456.5	360.0

In addition to tonnage handled to service aircraft for March, Ordnance personnel received and stored an additional 1611.75 tons of general purpose bombs, which were delivered to Bomb Storage Area in order to maintain stock levels.

On five occasions this month general purpose bombs were fused "Long Delay". Five hundred and fourteen (514) general purpose bombs were equipped with this type fuse. Five hundred (500) of the bombs thus fused were reported "dropped" on target. The remaining fourteen (14) bombs fused "Long Delay" were jettisoned.

For the first time, on the mission of 15 March, complete bomb loads in all aircraft were fused IDF. A total of 456 bombs were loaded; 442 bombs were expended on targets and the remaining fourteen (14) were flown to sea and jettisoned.

This month saw the initial use of Chaff bombs by this station. These were carried on two missions. A total of 157 of this item was expended.

A new item, Bomb, G.P., 150-lb., was received on the station during the month. The 150-lb., T-1 consists basically of the case for the M-70, 115-lb. Chemical bomb. The burster wall is removed and the nose of the case is faced off and threaded to receive a special

adapter, into which an An-M103 (139, 190) fuse may be fitted. No auxiliary booster is used. The fin assembly used is identical to that used with the 260-lb., AN-M81 frag. bomb. Bombing Table to be used with this bomb is BT-100-B-5.

Bombs with the composition B2 fill are again being received on the station. As an added safety precaution, convoys are being unloaded by utilizing the tractor crane to avoid possibility of rough handling.

A TWX was sent 3rd Air Division with reference to suitability of T-15 Airport Landing Flare, stating that this item in its present state was not considered satisfactory due to the excessive quantities of smoke emitted.

Ordnance personnel continue to improve conditions in the Ammunition Area, and, at the present time, are engaged in a road widening program.

Construction work on additions to present bomb storage revetments is still being accomplished by Engineers from United Kingdom Base Section, and, at this writing, the job is approximately 75 percent complete.

Continued instruction to familiarize new crews, particularly Bombardier and Navigators, to acquaint this personnel with ammunition items, especially bomb fuses, has been carried out during the month.

It occurred during the month that certain ammunition items were in short supply, but in all instances requirements for combat needs were furnished in sufficient quantities for the station needs.

General Supply:

K-1 Material (Cleaning and Preserving Items) have been furnished in quantity sufficient for needs of the station.

The handling of anti-flak equipment by the Squadron Ordnance sections, as outlined in last month's history, was successfully inaugurated. Photographs of the "flak shacks", constructed by the individual squadrons, are submitted with this report.

During the month a small quantity of flak pads were delivered to the station. These pads were designed to be placed on the seat or floor of the aircraft at the position of the crew member concerned. The use of these pads should encourage crew members to wear their flak suits rather than sit or stand on them, as was being done in a number of cases.

A complete set of flak pads is eleven(11) pieces and weighs one hundred and fourteen (114) pounds.

These pads are maintained in conjunction with the flak suit program; and at present, due to the limited supply, are being furnished with preference being given to PFF and Lead aircraft. This does not necessarily restrict the present use to these aircraft only, but "tight" supply of this item is responsible for this priority policy.

It is anticipated that in the near future a sufficient quantity of this item will be available for equipping all aircraft on the station.

An additional 36 flak curtains (24" x 48") were received and were distributed to the squadron Armanent sections for installation. This makes a total of 91 of this item on hand at present.

Local modification was made to all armored flak vests on the station. The modification consisted of

suspending a tab of 5" x 2" webbing vertically from one end at the seam on the neck line at the center of the vest. The purpose of this tab is to afford a means to attach the hose leading from the oxygen regulator to the armored flak vest.

Present manufacture of armored vests in the United States incorporate this modification and several have been received on the station of this type.

Thirty (30) additional bicycles were received from AAF 595 to bring the total on hand this station to 700.

As a result of the short supply of bicycle parts, arrangements were made with the Depot whereby bicycles on the station badly in need of repair, or bicycles which could not be repaired in a satisfactory manner could be cannibalized for parts in order to make other bicycles on the station serviceable. The Depot further agreed to accept bicycles frames which result from this cannibalization and given in return a serviceable item. This procedure was first taken advantage of this month.

The Bicycle Repair Shop completed repairs to fifty-nine (59) government bicycles during the month.

There were no serious malfunctions of Ordnance equipment during the month.

Automotive:

During the month of March personnel of the Third Echelon Shop completed seventy-five (75) major repair jobs on vehicles assigned to this station. In addition to these major repairs, a total of eighty-three (83) minor repair jobs were performed, which were not directly concerned with the Third Echelon maintenance of vehicles. The number of minor repair jobs accomplished during the month was considerably less than is ordinarily handled, and that is attributed to the fact that personnel who generally carry the brunt of this type repair were engaged in constructing a Body, Fender and Paint Shop.

The construction of the Body, Fender and Paint Shop, which was first mentioned in the February history, is practically complete, and is expected to be in use beginning the second week of April.

Ordnance Officers assigned this station:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>SERIAL NO.</u>	<u>DATE OF RANK</u>
H.B. Stokes	0-1550931	Capt. 1 Sept. '44
C.G. Sage, Jr.	0-1552161	Capt. 1 Aug. '44
C. L. Hazelwood	0-1583084	1/Lt 30 Sept. '43
Charles Flesh	0-1551622	1/Lt 1 Dec. '43
J.F. McBride	0-1553696	1/Lt 23 Sept. '43
W.L. Hausman	0-1554560	1/Lt 1 July '44
H.R. Lenz	0-1549612	1/Lt 29 Aug. '43
D. N. Kinney	0-1553489	1/Lt 1 July '44
E. Mossholder, Jr.	0-1550458	1/Lt 9 July '43

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LEFT U.S.</u>
Hq. 385 BG	4 June '43
1735 Ord S&M	9 May '43
1735 Ord S&M	4 May '43
1735 Ord S&M	31 May '43
1735 Ord S&M	9 Jan. '44
548 Bomb Sq.	6 Nov. '43
549 Bomb Sq.	30 June '43
550 Bomb Sq.	16 Nov. '43
551 Bomb Sq.	3 July '44

Ordnance facilities at this station are adequate.

Henry B. Stokes
Capt., Ord. Dept.,
Station Ordnance Officer.

EDITORS NOTE: What did they do in their spare time?

(Letters to the Editor Cont.)

Can anybody help on this inquiry? We wrote and told him the 550th were "Tesla's Terrors", not the Wolf Squadron.

Dear Mr. Stern,

I recently bought an old USAAF "A2" leather jacket. On the left breast is a name tag reading "C.W. Pearson" and a painted squadron insignia representing a wolf with a bomb in its mouth. Inside the jacket is some very faded writing which looks like "C.W. Pearson, 111117S7, 550th"

Clearly it seems the jacket belonged to a C.W. Pearson of a "550th" group or squadron, and the most likely contender would seem to be the 550th BS of the 385th BG as I understand they were known as the "Wolf Squadron."

It would be great if you could confirm that the insignia on the jacket is that of the 550th squadron, 385th group. It would be even greater if you could give me any information on the owner, particularly things like aircrew status, rank, dates of active service, number of missions, most notable missions, name of place of birth, etc. This would turn my jacket into a piece of living history.

Best of all, if you could put me in touch with Mr. Pearson!

Anyway, I do hope you can help me. I am very interested in the history of the 8th Air Force, and collect 8th memorabilia. To have an original 7th "A2" with a known history would "make" my collection!

With my best wishes,
Hope to hear from you soon,
Paul Roberts
Flat 2, 2 Hilton Road, Leeds, LS8 4HB, England

Dear Ed:

I hope you are the correct person to whom to address this. Here with the current address of a member of "The Souze Family" crew, i.e., Lt. Bill Jacques' team, 548th Bomb Squadron

Col. Kenneth L. Walsh, USAF, Ret.
655 East 102nd St., Bloomington, MN 55420 (612) 884-4918

Ken, "Knobby" we called him, was a S/Sgt. waist gunner on Bill Jacques original crew. Knobby has hustled himself thru the AF Reserve program and is now a Bird Col.!!! He'd like to receive info about the 385th BGMA and especially about the July Reunion.

T/Sgt. Pat Connolly was also a member of this crew, flying as a waist gunner, I am sadly reporting that Pat died about 4 years ago. Pat was the owner/proprietor of the Steamboat Inn in Prescott, Wisconsin, at the time of his death. The info in the paragraph I learned in a phone conversation with the current owner of the Inn.

Ed, I'll try to get some info on T/Sgt. Joe O'Donnell. Joe replaced T/Sgt. Reece D. Cartmill as crew chief/engineer/top turret after Reece was killed.

If you are wondering where I'm coming from I was the radio operator on Bill's original crew and flew most of my missions with Bill as pilot. I went back into the USAF in 1946 for about 9 more years of active duty and am now Lt. Col. drawing retirement pay!

Ed, write me if I can help with more info — See you in Dayton in July.

Best Regards,

David Dennis, Lt. Col USAF Ret.
29 S. State Road, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y. 10510

Dear Ed,

In the January newsletter there was an article by Ian about a B-17 which blew up in Hardstand 34 on June 15th, 1944. I was the co-pilot in the plane taxiing by Hardstand 34 that morning and I probably was the first person to call the tower to tell them there were flames coming out of the cockpit.

Wes Brashear was the pilot on my crew and Earl Cole was the bombardier. We were told to abandon our plane, and we headed across the field away from that burning plane at a very lively pace! It blew up when we were pretty far away, but a piece of an engine fell between two of our crew. Anyhow, I thought Ian might like some details which I could provide.

Sincerely,

Hugh Andrew
6303 Tulsa Lane, Bethesda, Maryland 20817

For the Newsletter:

If anyone has any information on the rest-homes that either the group or the 548th bomb Sq. were assigned to for R 6 R please contact George S. Hruska. Time: between March 20th and April 7, 1945.

George S. Hruska
7442 Ontario Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68124

FIND LOST FRIENDS

Want to find someone in the Air Force? Or someone who has been? The World Wide Locator will assist you in locating active duty, active Reserve, Air National Guard, or retired member of the Air Force.

How does it work? It helps to have a lot of information about the person being sought, especially full name, service or Social Security number, and grade. If this information isn't available, the date and place of birth, duty and assignments, and dates are helpful to ensure that you find "the" John Smith you're seeking.

To contact members, searchers should prepare a letter to the individual and place it in a sealed envelope that is stamped with the requestor's return address and the sought individual's name on the address portion of the envelope. The envelope should then be placed in another larger envelope and mailed to HI. AFMPC/MPCDOO3L, Northeast Office Place, 95-4 IH-35 North, San Antonio, Tex 78233-6636.

If you are active duty, in the reserve forces, or retired (or a family member of such a person), there is no charge to you for this service. Be sure to identify yourself in order to avoid being charged.

If you fall into none of these categories, it will cost you \$2.85 (in advance) per name to receive the service. The check or money order should be made payable to AFO, Randolph AFB, Tex.

The fees are used to defray the costs of the research, and they are not refundable, regardless of whether or not the effort turns up anything.

This Was a Year in the ETO

This was the ETO in Anno 1944—most important year in American soldiers' lives and perhaps the greatest 12 months in history:

The New Year—six months, six days and six hours before H-Hour, D-Day—was greeted with customary English atmosphere. You couldn't get a legal drink after 11 PM and if you missed the last bus or train it was TS. . . .

Gen. Ike had been named supreme invasion commander, but no one knew where he was. Lt. Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, new USSTAF commander, hit England Jan. 1, coming from Africa. . . .

Neutral capitals buzzed with talk of "an enemy glider-bomb." That was before the buzz-bomb era. . . . Forts and Libs opened their 1944 offensive Jan. 4. . . .

Jan. 7 Hollywood's George Raft, USO star, was found dodging London MPs because he didn't have orders. . . . Jan. 10 Maj. Bobby Jones, golfer, was in the ETO with AF intelligence. . . .

Jan. 11 saw Col. Oveta Culp Hobby, WAC boss, in England. . . . Same day 59 U.S. heavies were lost in one of history's greatest air battles. . . .

Gen. Ike's presence in England to direct the invasion was announced Jan. 16. . . . There were rumors of Nazi rocket bombs. . . .

On Jan. 18 the 50-millionth V-letter slid into the machine at the APO. . . . American citizens in Britain continued to sign up for the Army over here. . . .

Jan. 21 ARC announced its "invasion plans" were ready to follow the troops into Europe. . . . flak began to get worse over targets along the "invasion coast." . . .

Jan. 23 found ETO and SOS ETO Hq. consolidated under Gen. Ike, with Maj. Gen. (now Lt. Gen.) John C. H. Lee as deputy theater commander. . . . Talk of invasion mounted as new supply depots began popping up. . . .

In Belfast on Jan. 25-doughboys celebrated the second anniversary of finding roses in Ireland. . . . Next day the world earned that glider and paratroops were training in the U.K. . . .

Jan. 28 the Eighth AF observed its second birthday by dropping its 47,000th ton of bombs on Europe. . . . Mobile units began collecting GI blood for invasion stores. . . .

Early in February Irving Berlin's "This Is the Army" prepared to wind up its ETO tour. . . . American girls in ATS, WAAF, WRENS and other Allied auxiliary corps began transferring to the WAC. . . .

Allied planes continued to hit mysterious targets at Par de Calais. Neutrals called them V-weapon sites. . . .

Feb. 17 Gen. Ike began a whirlwind tour of every type of invasion outfit in the U.K. . . . Pvt. Ben Violette, an MP from South Bend, Ind., learned he'd inherited \$200,000. . . . Rear Adm. Alan Goodrich Kirk was announced as head of the U.S. naval task force in the invasion team. USOing Jimmy Cagney took a bow in London. . . .

End of February and early March saw the "Baby Blitz" against London (with piloted planes) at its peak, and GIs helped rescue fire-bomb victims. . . . U.S. ack-ackers went into action. . . . U.S. air forces celebrated Washington's birthday with the first joint north-south attack against Germany, from Britain and Italy. . . .

One of the biggest convoys ever to cross the Atlantic brought invasion troops to the U.K. without a whisper from subs. . . . Technicians of Lockheed Overseas

Corp., in Ulster, faced Army induction.

U.S. planes made their first Berlin daylight raid March 4. Couple of days later the Yanks hit Berlin in force, but lost 68 bombers and 11 fighters. There was plenty of Luftwaffe then. . . . There were too many GIs coming to London to fit in the ARC beds, and club lounges were packed with chair-bedded soldiers. . . .

U.S. planes began dropping newspapers and "truth leaflets" over Germany. . . . S/Sgt. Joe Louis, boxer, began barnstorming the ETO in April. . . . Pvt. Walter J. Thorpe, Abilene (Kans.) farmer, dropped in to see his one-time neighbor, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower. . . .

April 17 S and S was two years old. . . . "Old Blood 'n' Guts Patton arrived in England to command an invasion army. . . . Britain became a moated fortress as a pre-invasion travel ban sealed the U.K. from the world. . . . April 28, London's Stage Door Canteen opened. . . . May 4-W AR WEEK was born. . . .

Aerial attacks against the invasion coast mounted. . . . Every type of unit stepped up assault training. . . .

Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, who opened up again two weeks ago, was announced anti-invasion commander May 19. . . . Two days later the 100-millionth V-letter cleared the APO. . . .

May 28 and five tons of bombs hit the Westwall every minute. . . . D-Day fever mounted. . . . June 4 brought the now-famous "false-flash" of invasion. . . . Same day, Forts began shuttle-raids to Russia. . . . June 6, D-Day. . . .

June 16 VI began to hit England. . . . Yank fliers and ack-ackers helped fight buzz-bombs. . . .

July 4 Stars and Stripes began publishing in Cherbourg. . . . Next day the WD authorized the gold overseas hashmark. . . . American names began to appear on robot casualty lists and four WAC victims got Purple Hearts. . . . War Secretary Stimson showed up in the U.K. . . . Bonuses were announced for expert infantrymen. . . .

Lt. Gen Leslie J McNair, ex-chief of AGF, was killed by enemy action in France. . . . Late July found WACs on the Continent. . . .

In August Paris was liberated and Fred Astaire arrived with USO. . . . Pick-a-back robots began hitting England. . . . Stars and Stripes moved to Rennes, then to Paris. . . . Dinah Shore began wowing 'em. . . . GIs began piling up points under the Demob plan. . . .

The Ninth Army joined the First, Third and Seventh in the West. . . . Marlene Dietrich showed up. . . .

Gen. Ike was 54 Oct. 14. . . . Late same month GIs began getting 48s to Gay Paree. . . . Nov 2 Stars and Stripes celebrated its second anniversary as a daily. . . .

The Luftwaffe reappeared early in November, suffered heavy losses. . . . V2 rockets began hitting England. . . .

Nov. 20 butt sales were halted to U.K. non-combatants. Later Joes began getting five packs per week. No explanation given. . . . Thanksgiving brought turkey to GI messes and ARC. . . .

December, and combat men began going home on rotation. . . . Ike and six others got five stars. . . . Christmas: Turkey, but gloom over German counter-attack. . . . Glenn Miller was reported missing on England-Franco flight. . . .

And this morning, GIs in the ETO are waiting for the New Year, thankful the enemy attack has been repulsed by the sacrifice of doughboys in the line. . . .

Dropped J miles Before He Could x His Chute -

John C. (Red) Morgan, Congressional Medal of Honor winner from Amanillo, yesterday told of a three-mile drop through space before he could teth his parachute after the plane in which he was flying blew up over Germany.

On Mar. 6, 1944, Morgan's plane, assigned to the 38.5th Bomb Group and piloted by Maj. Fred A. Kabo, of Cicich, Cal., was hit several times by flak and caught fire over the target area. Shortly after Kabo gave the "bail out" order, the plane went into a dive and then exploded.

"I was just conscious of something terrific happening and I had a faint idea of a lot of metal tearing at me and then I was falling." Morgan said. "I don't think I ever lost consciousness."



Morgan

I had my chute under my arm when we blew. I kept trying to get it on. When I was falling feet first the pressure kept pushing it up too high, and when I was falling head first it kept pushing it past my chest. I guess I was on my back when I finally got it fastened on. . . . I think you think clearer when you're so damned near dead.

"Three or four seconds after the chute popped open," Morgan continued, "I landed in the top of a tree. I fell out of it—about 30ft.—and landed on my feet. I felt like I'd busted every bone in me. What a jolt!"

Morgan was captured by soldiers from a German flak battery and taken to an interrogation center near Frankfurt-on-Main. Eventually, he wound up at a prison camp near Barth which was liberated by the Russians and from which he and more than 9,000 other Allied airmen were evacuated by 5th Air Force Flying Forts.

Of 12 men aboard Morgan's bomber, including Brig. Gen. Russell A. Wilson, 2nd Division commander who was flying as pilot, only four survived, Morgan

the Texan, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Morgan, live in New York, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1945. Flying as co-pilot with the grade of Flight Officer, he was wounded and detoured pilot of the controls for an hour and single-handedly fought his damaged B17 on to bomb target at Hanover.

Three nostalgic clippings from the East Anglia Times of 1946. Strain your eyes a little and read the story "Memorial to U.S. Airmen".

EAST ANGLIAN DAILY TIMES, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27,



HONINGTON: The 8th U.S.A.A.F. bade farewell to Great Britain on Tuesday afternoon, when the Stars and Stripes which have flown over so many airfields in East Anglia, were hauled down for the last time, and General Kiel handed back the Honington Station to Air Marshal Sir James Robb, A.O.C. Fighter Command, on behalf of the R.A.F. The picture shows: (1) The Stars and Stripes being lowered: (2) The last flight of the 8th U.S.A.A.F. (1. A.J.J.T. photos.)

AMERICAN GIFT TO GREAT ASHFIELD CHURCH

On Sunday evening a service was held in the Parish Church, Great Ashfield, before a crowded congregation, to dedicate a beautiful silk flag, presented by the U.S.A.A.F. in memory of their comrades who have given their lives. This flag will eventually be placed in a permanent memorial chapel in the North aisle of the church.

After shortened Evensong, when the two lessons were read by an American chaplain, the Chaplain presented the Colours to the Vicar (the Rev. Vincent Davies), who passed them to the Rural Dean (the Rev. E. Sewell Wontner) for dedication, after which followed a Bach Chorale and Easter Anthem, rendered by the U.S.A.A.F. choir, accompanied by their own organ.

An address was given by the Rural Dean, and after the Blessing "O Valiant Hearts" was sung kneeling.

A very impressive service concluded with the hymn "Through the night of doubt and sorrow," when the newly-dedicated flag and the Union Jack were carried side by side in procession.

1946

MEMORIAL TO U.S. AIRMEN

CEREMONY IN SUFFOLK VILLAGE CHURCH

Officers and men of the 385th Heavy Bombardment Group of the United States 8th Army Air Force stationed at Great Ashfield Aerodrome who gave their lives in air battles over Europe are commemorated by a memorial chapel in Great Ashfield Church, which was dedicated on Tuesday by the Bishop, of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich (Dr Brook).

The Stars and Stripes flew over a bronze tablet on a granite base, which was placed in Ashfield churchyard some time ago.

A large congregation attended the ceremony, including a representative contingent of the American Air Force, while several visiting clergy occupied seats in the chancel, together with a representative of the Free Churches, the Rev. John Bishop, of Elmswell.

General Kiel, of the U.S. 8th Air Force, who read the lesson, asked the Vicar (the Rev. Vincent F. P. Davies) and parishioners of Great Ashfield to accept the beautifully-carved altar and reredos forming the memorial chapel, "In accepting it," he said, "as a per-

manent part of your centuries-old church you who worship God within its walls could offer no higher tribute to our dead."

The General, together with the Rural Dean (the Rev. E. S. Wontner), the Vicar and the churchwardens (Messrs. P. S. Wakelin and F. Rodwell), accompanied the Bishop to the memorial chapel for the dedication by his lordship, who afterwards returned to the high altar to dedicate a silk American flag, which will be given a permanent place in the chapel.

In his address the Bishop said, the altar and reredos would be an abiding memorial to gallant men who came from far over the seas to fight for the common cause, and gave their lives in the service of righteousness and justice. The memorial was a symbol of the comradeship in arms of our two nations, and those who come after would hold it an honoured and cherished possession.

THE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

"I see in this American flag," continued the Bishop, "a pledge of the promise that, as we have stood together in the work of destroying an evil monster which threatened our civilisation, we shall stand and serve together in the not less arduous and critical task of building the new world on the ruins of the broken past. The fruits of victory will only be gathered if in the tasks of reconstruction we stand and work together. A generation ago we won the war and we lost

the peace. Are we going to do better this time? The problems which confront us are infinitely greater than in 1918. Those foolish people who supposed that once the war was over all our troubles would be at an end have been sadly disillusioned. Peace and prosperity do not lie just round the corner.

"Our path in the coming year will be a hard and long one. Side by side with grave and heavy economic problems there lies the urgent problem of preserving the peace of the world and preventing another war, which, with modern discoveries, would mean the destruction of civilisation and the human race. . . . The one hope for the building of the new and better world, of solving mankind's social and economic problems and of maintaining the peace of the world is that our two nations shall continue to stand and work together. In the tasks of reconstruction."

During the service the Bishop rehallowed the 14th century font and a Jacobean altar table which have been brought back into the church. The altar table had been restored by one of the churchwardens. On it is to be placed a fine linen cloth trimmed with Bruges lace, which is being given by a New Hampshire lady.

Afterwards parishioners and friends of the church gathered in a school for a gathering on the school.

Look what your editor saved all these years! Remember all those shots?

Here's a newspaper story about the B 52 that Combat crews of the 385th should be able to relate to and appreciate.

BATTLESHIP OF THE AIR IS OLDER THAN THE MEN WHO FLY IT

IMMUNIZATION REGISTER¹

Or-
 LAST NAME: *Stem* FIRST NAME: *Edward* ARMY SERIAL NO.: *2248420*
 GRAPE COMPANY REGT. OR STAFF CORPS: *21st Jo-y* AGE: *23* RACE: *X W*

SMALLPOX 'VACCINE

DATE	TYPE OF REACTION ⁴	MED. OFFICER ¹
<i>7-43</i>	<i>Immune</i>	<i>W.H.</i>
<i>3-H-44</i>		<i>R.H.</i>
<i>22 MAY 45</i>		<i>W.H.</i>

TRIPLE TYPHOID VACCINE

SERIES	DATES OF ADMINISTRATION			MED. OFFICER ¹
	1ST DOSE	2D DOSE	3D DOSE	
1st	<i>3-7-43</i>	<i>3-21-43</i>	<i>3-21-43</i>	<i>W.H.</i>
2d	<i>3/7</i>	<i>3/16/43</i>		<i>W.H.</i>
3d	<i>3-21-43</i>			<i>W.H.</i>

TETANUS TOXOID

INITIAL VACCINATION		STIMULATING DOSES	
DATE	MED. OFF. ¹	DATE	MED. OFF. ¹
<i>3-7-43</i>	<i>W.H.</i>	<i>3/4/43</i>	<i>W.H.</i>
<i>3-21-43</i>		<i>3-21-43</i>	<i>W.H.</i>
		<i>3/16/43</i>	<i>W.H.</i>

YELLOW FEVER VACCINE

DATE	LOT NO.	AMOUNT	MED. OFF. ¹
<i>'23/42</i>	<i>351</i>	<i>1 cc</i>	<i>W.H.</i>

OTHER VACCINES

DISEASE	DATE	TYPE OF VACCINE	DOSES	MED. OFF. ¹
<i>Wood type</i>		<i>(S)</i>		
<i>TYPHOUS</i>	<i>3/29/43</i>	<i>4-5-43</i>	<i>4-11-43</i>	<i>W.H.</i>
<i>CHOLERA</i>	<i>3/29/43</i>	<i>4-5-43</i>	<i>4-21-45</i>	<i>W.H.</i>
<i>Stem typhus</i>	<i>3/27/44</i>		<i>4-21-45</i>	<i>W.H.</i>

Robert A. Kuhn Captain
Joseph H. Blanton Jr. M.C.
John C. Martin 1st Lt U.S. Army

Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D. (AP)

The B-52 does not swoop into the air, straining to be free of the runway.

It lumbers.

It does not respond instantaneously to commands. Its crew has to engage in hard physical work to fly it. When it lands, it needs a parachute to stop.

Outside the bomber community, there is no glamour to this type, of flying.

But the B-52, the workhorse of America's manned bomber force for 30 years, remains a key part of the nuclear triad even as the last of them stationed here at Grand Forks departs for other bases to make way for the new B-1B bomber.

The B-52 is a huge, eight-jet airplane that has been part of the Air Force so long it has outlived its nickname — the Stratofortress. It can no longer fly in the stratosphere and drop bombs from on high and expect to survive against modern fighters. Hence, it has been modified accordingly over the years.

Part of that modification work has placed the B-52 back in the headlines. By equipping the planes to carry the new, air-launched cruise missile, the United States will soon exceed the limits of the SALT II arms accord. That has generated controversy over the wisdom of abandoning the never-ratified accord in the absence of a new arms control agreement.

The SALT II debate aside, the equipping of B-52s with cruise missiles provides just the latest indication of the Air Force's intent to continue relying on these planes to the next century. And that means more generations of air crews, younger than the plane itself, must continue to train.

A recent seven-hour flight aboard a B-52 shows the training isn't easy.

Part of the low-level bombing run by "Teepee 15" is broken off under standing safety rules when a key piece of radar navigation equipment goes on the fritz. Later, the bomber is ordered to "drone patrol" — flying as a target for fledgling fighter pilots at 19,000 feet instead of taking evasive maneuvers.

If the B-52 had been on an

actual mission, the balky equipment would not have forced a retreat, says the pilot.

"If it were the real thing, we'd never quit," says Capt. Richard B. Witt, a graduate of the Air Force Academy who has been tapped to move up to the B-1.

Instead, they focus on the mechanics of flying this behemoth with droopy wings — following checklist after checklist, repeatedly practicing the tricky maneuver of aerial refueling, flying at high speed while hugging mountains and valleys at 400 feet altitude.

It is demanding, and tiring, in part because of the absence of any creature comforts.

The plane is unbelievably noisy. The crew spaces are tight, almost claustrophobic. The heating system leaves the pilot and co-pilot sweltering while the two navigators — one of whom in the old days would have been called the bombardier — shiver in their compartment on a deck below the cockpit.

The navigators and the electronic warfare officer and gunner, who sit facing aft in a small compartment behind the cockpit, never see the outside. The gunner has four 50-caliber cannon sticking out the tail, but he uses radar to direct his fire.

The men clambered up a ladder in the plane's belly to start their

day, carrying boxes of cold sandwiches and small coolers with juice and cola along with their flight gear.

Hooking up with a KC-135 tanker flying overhead can best be described as "walking an elephant," says Witt. Minute adjustments of the eight throttles are required, "like squeezing a mouse," he says.

Brought together by bloody battle

Yorker helped British author tell story of Munster bombing

By PEGGY SPANGLER
Daily Record staff writer

When Ian Hawkins was a 5-year-old school boy in Suffolk, England, he watched the 8th Air Force blacken the sky on its way to bombing raids in Nazi Germany.

The 95th Heavy Bombardment Group's lead navigator, Ellis "Scrip" Scripture, flew 40 of those missions.

Neither knew of the other's existence.

Then, eight years ago, a strange turn of events brought the British civil engineer and Scripture, then vice-president of Teledyne-McKay in York, together.

Hawkins had survived his World War II school days, and gone on to become a civil engineer working for a Saudi Arabian construction company. In December 1976, while sitting outside the king's palace in Jeddah, Hawkins was attacked by an alcoholic Australian who had been in Saudi Arabia for less than 36 hours.

The assailant sunk an axe into Hawkins' brain. Four hours and more than five pints of blood later, a Saudi houseboy found Hawkins, by then near death.

He was flown back to England, where a neurosurgeon saved his life. But the damage to his brain left Hawkins paralyzed, without a voice and unable to continue his career in engineering.

During the recuperation period, in which Hawkins regained his voice and use of his left arm, a longtime interest surfaced. Memories of his boyhood during the war fluttered in his mind.

"On my way to school, I'd see a thousand planes — B-24's and B-17's. The sight and sound was indescribable," Hawkins said during a recent visit to York. "It created the everlasting impression of the incredible sight and sound of air power."

Years after the war, in the late '60s, Hawkins joined with other World War II buffs in forming FOTE, Friends of the Eighth (Air Force).

"We meet quarterly, and have gone out to excavate relics at crash sites," he said. His wife, Mary, said Hawkins brought many of the relics home — she drew the line, however, when he appeared one day with a propeller.

After he was attacked, while still in the hospital, Hawkins noticed an ad in the 8th Air Force News. In the ad, author Len Deighton was seeking information — and Hawkins supplied him with the names of American fighter pilots and loaned him two books.

Thus began a friendship through which Deighton inspired Hawkins to give writing a try. Along the way, Deighton sent both encouragement and advice.

Already interested in the 8th Air Force, Hawkins chose to focus on a bombing raid on the German town of Munster, a raid referred to as the modern day Charge of the Light Brigade and a raid likened to Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg.

Hawkins learned to write with his left hand — and subsequently wrote 4,500 letters seeking information about the 8th Air Force raid on Munster.

But it was an ad that Hawkins placed in the 8th Air Force News that brought him together with Scripture.

"I answered the ad by telling Jan that I vaguely remembered being the lead navigator in that raid," Scripture said. "He wrote back that I was."

Hawkins' extensive research had paid off — he knew more about the raid on Munster than did many of those who participated. And much more was to be the result of his laboriously written letters.

The journey back in time to Oct. 10, 1943, was, for Scripture, a difficult one. By day, he worked — and "went back into combat at night." His contribution to Hawkins' book, *Munster: The Way it Was*, was several months in the making.

The mission had not been one Scripture chose to fly.

I had been raised in a strict Methodist home. My parents were God-oriented people and were quite active church members. I was shocked to learn that we were to bomb civilians as our primary target for the first time in the war and that our aiming point was to be the front steps of Munster Cathedral. I was very reluctant to fly this mission. In fact it turned me off completely.

Scripture's commanding officer, Colonel Gerhart, had something to say about the reluctance.



British author Ian Hawkins (right) paid a visit to Elis Scripture on his recent trip to the U.S.

He said, "Look Captain, this is war. . . spelt W-A-R. We're in an all out fight; the Germans have been killing innocent people all over Europe for years. We're here to beat the hell out of them. . . and we're going to do it."

"We have, to date, been very diligent and concentrated in all our efforts on U-boats yards, aircraft plants, oil installations and other industrial targets connected with the German war machine. We have astutely avoided the possibility of bombing civilians."

"This decision has only been reached after great consideration. It has become very apparent to the allied leaders that we must now carry the war to the German people to make them realize that there is a war going on and that they are the victims of their own military leadership in Germany. People there are beginning to have real doubts about the Nazis' capability of winning this war. All of us are well aware of the countless atrocities committed by the Nazis in the name of the German people."

"Now, I'm leading this mission and you're my navigator. You're leading this mission also. . . any questions?"

'On my way to school, I'd see a thousand planes — B-24's and B-17's. The sight and sound was indescribable.*

Ian Hawkins

I said, "No, Sir, " and that ended the incident.

Of the 67 bombers that flew over the German border to drop their loads on Munster, 30 were lost. About 300 men stayed behind in Germany — 100 of them dead, the others became prisoners of war or found their way back across the border.

Hawkins book is a compilation of views of the bombing as seen through the eyes of those involved — not only American servicemen, but the Germans who survived the bombing and those who fought off the attack from the air.

About 98 percent of his 4,500 letters drew responses. The book was more than five years in the making. But it was a story both the author and Scripture wanted told.

"Wars are caused by a lust for power — and wars are not a normal state for mankind," Scripture said. Hawkins had come

to the U.S. to the reunion of the 95th Heavy Bombardment Group attended by close to 500 people in Valley Forge early in September. After the reunion, Hawkins visited with Scripture and his wife, Peggy.

"It is a story that needs to be told," Scripture said, agreeing with the author who chronicled the event. "Not for the glory — but for the gore. It's terrible for man to be pitted against man."

Understanding the tragedy and futility promotes peace, he said.

In November 1981, Scripture wrote to Hawkins. His letter is the final quote in Hawkins book:

*We are getting ready to celebrate Thanksgiving in the United States. This is our traditional family reunion eoef ye'r
pause to thank God for all our many blessings. Too often wd forget!!*

I shall always be very grateful that I was allowed to continue my life and to enjoy the laughter of children and grand-children. We hope that they will be spared the heartbreak of war and its terrible destruction.

The great tragedy was that the peoples of the whole world were forced to barbaric acts against each other because of the political, ambitions of a few hated men. The world's history has always been thus. . . and unfortunately, the trend continues today in so many areas. All of us grieve for those who continue to be exploited in the name of political gain: Our weapons are now so deadly and uncontrollable that the world would indeed be devastated if man allows his senses to get out of control. We must do all possible to prevent another outbreak of man's hatred.

Man was made to create, not destroy.



Personals Personals

RILEY SIMPSON, 550th. Returned to Jeffersonville Indiana after War, worked for Jeff Boats. Retired and bought home place from parents and now lives in Greensburg, Ky.

LOY DAVIS, 550th Supply. After being part-time barber in the 550th became full-time upon return to Kentucky. Four grand-children, one already married. Used to enjoy dancing to Blue Grass music, but finds that the music has gotten faster now that he is 65 and weighs 40 lbs more.

JOHN HILL, 550th Supply Sergeant. Married the girl he wrote to for 3 years while in the outfit, went into Real Estate Mortgage business. Lived at Amityville, NY, then retired to Florida. Five children and a good number of grand-children. Too bad we didn't know that he officed in Rockefeller Center all those years—he'd have had a lot of company!

ARCH BENNER, Pilot, Commander 549th, Aug. 1943 through 1 944. Base Engineer in French Morocco and Lincoln AFB NE, 5 years, returned to El Paso as Deputy Base Engineer at Biggs AFB, then to Kelly AFB. Then back to El Paso—reason 6 kids, 10 grandchildren. Now retired, play a little golf, see friends.

"The Best of World War II"

* One of the best stories to come out of World War II was about a bombing mission over Europe, which mandated complete radio silence. The bombers and fighters were to observe strict radio silence during flight to the target. During the first half hour of the flight, all was quiet. No intercom, no radio talk, no nothing. Then from out of nowhere, on the radio, a voice said, "Who Dat?" Then silence.

Ten minutes later a different voice said, "Who dat, say dat?"

Silence again, then the first voice, "Who dat say dat, when I say who dat?"

This went on and on until finally the flight leader broke in and said, "All right, knock it off. I know who's saying who dat."

Silence,

Then a loud "WHO DAT?"

TREASURER'S REPORT

December 31, 1986

ASSETS	12/31/85	12/31/86
CD's	15,000. 00	21,000.00
Checking Account	11,748.44	8,036. 55
TOTAL ASSETS	26,748. 44	29,036. 55
INCOME		
Dues 8 donations	6,480.00	5,761.00
Life Memberships	1,200.00	1,000.00
CD Interest	1,673. 11	1,714. 84
Checking Interest	197. 27	298. 90
Canteen	602.47	0
Reunion Surplus	3,110.80	0
TOTAL INCOME	13,263. 65	8,774. 74
EXPENSES		
Newsletter Mailing	6,362. 77	4,114. 63
Church Great Ashfield	1,300. 00	1,400. 00
Arlington Memorial	0	972. 00
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,600. 88	6,486. 63
Net Gain	5,600. 88	2,288. 11

Respectfully Submitted

John Pettinger
Treasurer

LIFE MEMBERS

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Lou Massari

385TMBGMA

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