

NEWSLETTER OF THE 385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



COMBAT UNITS

HQ. SQUADRON
548th BOMB SQ.
549th BOMB SQ.
550th BOMB SQ.
551st BOMB SQ.

VOL. XXIII. NO. 2

Editor: Ed Stern
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APRIL 1996

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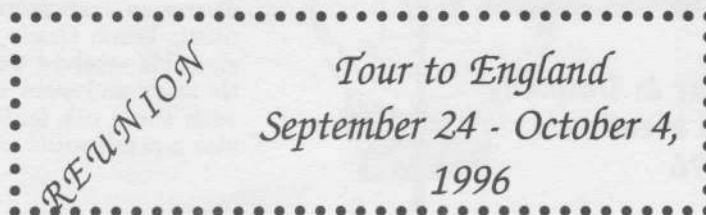
THOUGHTS OF THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased to report that a Board meeting was held in Naples, FL. on March 8th and 9th. It was a constructive dialogue covering various topics important to our Association. Discussion and decision on the following: The trip to England in 1996, Annual reunions, Hardlife Herald, Constitution and By-Laws, Savannah Museum and memorabilia, disposing of the Schweinfurt prints, committees, the Treasury and some other minor discussion.

I wish to thank the following who were able to attend the meeting; George Hruska, John Pettenger, Jerry Donnelly, Mike Gallagher, and to Bob Smith, Ed Stern, Arch Benner, Ruel Weikert, Bill Nicholls and Sid Colthorpe, who, although not present, contributed input to the meeting by way of phone calls and letters.

My Sincere thanks go to Mike and Marian Gallagher for hosting the meeting at their home, and again to Marian for entertaining the wives while we had our meeting.

Till then,
Bob Valliere, President



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CHAPLAIN JIM'S THOUGHTS

Hello again!!

In the February's HLH I wrote about accepting change. Well this time I am writing about "change" - again!! But this time it is about how hard it is to change some habits. Some habits are almost impossible to break. Ya know what I mean??

Are you in the habit of judging the grand kids or any kids when they let their hair grow long or cover one eye with locks of hair? or tattoo their body; put somethings on their navel or 3 or 4 ear rings on each ear. Are you in the habit of wanting others to do everything your way??

At a church I was serving many years ago, one of our older ladies had returned to worship after eye surgery. After the service she said to me, "I really enjoyed your sermon today." That didn't shock me because it built up my ego!! But when I asked her if she had been sitting someplace new in the sanctuary or was the PA system better - it was her answer that shocked me. "No", she said, "I can hear better because I could see you."

Maybe, putting that ladies remark in perspective, we might say if we really see others as they are in-side we can hear them better. Because a person appears outwardly different than we, out of habit, think they should, we are not able to hear them.

Changing that "awful" habit will make everything better. We will be able to hear others better and I believe they will hear us better also.

How about that? Let me know!!

Sincerely in love and peace,
Jim



**Hruska, Valliere, Gallagher & Donnelly
at the Florida Board Meeting
March 8, 1996**

□ □ □ □ LIFE MEMBERS □ □ □ □

Stephen R. Inglis	313
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Ty Winton	February 1996
Clyde Domek	February 1996
Tom Holmes JR.	November 1995
John S. Milnes	August 1995
Robert I. Lojinger	March 1996

Dear Ed,

Enclosed an obituary for Robert I. Lojinger
6405 Shadyglen Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45243

Bob was a b-17 Bomber pilot and served in the 385th (549 Bomb Squadron). He was most proud of the "THE MIGHTY 8TH AIRFORCE." He was a prisoner of the Germans in STALAG 1 for approx. 2 years.

We had good memories of the times we spent with the 385th.

Sincerely,
Polly Lojinger

Obituaries

Eugene Curtis

MITCHELL - Eugene "Gene" H. Curtis, 71, of Mitchell died Nov. 4, 1995, at a Scottsbluff nursing home.

He was born Nov. 7, 1923, in Gering to Albert and Dorothy (Hendrickson) ~~Hendrickson~~ ^{Hendrickson}. He attended school in Mitchell and graduated in 1942. He enlisted in the Army Air Corp Feb. 19, 1943, and was discharged Sept. 21, 1945. He was a top turret gunner on a B-17 named the "Homesick Angel" during the European campaign with the 549th Bomb Group, 385th Division. He received two major battle stars and wore the air medal with three oak leaf clusters and also a presidential citation bar.

Editor's Note: Henry Dvorshak sent us this interesting story out of the Washington Post.

Lots of those top Germans ended up in Argentina for awhile helping Peron.

C6 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1996

OBITUARIES

Famed German Flying Ace Adolf Galland Dies at 83

By Richard Pearson
Washington Post Staff Writer

Adolf Galland, 83, one of the world's greatest fighter pilots whose career in the World War II German air force ranged from flying biplanes to the world's first jet fighters, died Feb. 9 at his Rhineland home in Oberwinter, Germany. He had a heart ailment.

He was credited with 104 "10115" of Allied aircraft and also was famous for his ground-support operations for German infantry in Poland, as well as on the Russian and western fronts. He rose through the ranks of the new Luftwaffe to the rank of major general by age 29, and he achieved the rank of lieutenant general before being demoted for insubordination.

Gen. Galland's fame rested not only on his meteoric raise in rank and his great success in air warfare but also on his flair and gallantry. Pictures circulated during the war showed a darkly romantic, handsome and swashbuciding youth, sporting a black cigar, who might have been cast by Hollywood as the hero fighter pilot.

His skifi and popularity garnered him the ability to disagree violently on air war strategy with Adolf Hitler himself, emerging with nothing worse than a demotion in rank from lieutenant general. He also held the highest award for bravery, the Knight's Cross with Diamonds, Swords and Oakleaves.

Gen. Galland also was that rare warrior, one possessed of such noted chivalry that he is not only highly admired and but actually liked by his enemies. In 1941, when Gen. Galland was commanding fighter operations in France,

the legendary, one-legged, Royal Air Force fighter ace Douglas Bader was shot down. Gen. Galland not only treated his downed foe to a sumptuous dinner but let him sit in the cockpit of the frontline German fighter, the Me-109.

The general also had a telegram sent to London advising the RAF Fighter Command that Bader had broken his artificial leg and that a British plane would be granted safe conduct to drop Bader's spare by parachute. Gen. Galland remained famous for his hospitality to downed Allied pilots throughout the war. After the war, when he was a prisoner of war in Britain, many of the RAF pilots he had befriended repaid his kindness, and many of them remained his friends and colleagues until death.

Gen. Galland, a descendant of 17th-century Huguenot refugees, was born in Westphalia and was a 1932 graduate of a commercial aviation school in Brunswick. He flew gliders and worked as a pilot for Lufthansa until the Luftwaffe officially came into existence in 1935.

Gen. Galland was assigned to its elite Richthofen fighter group. He saw combat before World War II, flying 300 missions in overage Heinkel 51 fighters in infantry support missions in the German Condor Legion. The Legion assisted the Nationalist forces in the Spanish Civil War and used the experience to blood their pilots and develop revolutionary troop support and fighter tactics.

When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, the then-Lt. Galland flew 50 air-support missions in the Henschel 123 biplane. The next year, he was given a

new Messerschmitt-109E. On May 12, 1940, he made his first "kills," downing two Belgian-flown Hawker Hurricane fighters. In the next three weeks, he downed a British Spitfire and two French Morane fighters.

By the time his fighters were being worn down by the Battle of Britain in 1941, the acerbic critic surfaced. The Luftwaffe's commander, Reichsmarschall Herman Goering asked the lieutenant what he should like to improve German success over British skies. He was asked by the lieutenant for a squadron of Spitfires.

After the Battle of Britain, he flew briefly at the Eastern Front before being put behind a desk in December 1941 as a general officer with the title of General of the Fighter Arm. Many thought this would end his flying days.

But in February 1942, he led the fighters flying air cover for the legendary "Chaimel Dash" of the great German warships Schamhorst and Gneisenau, and in 1943, he disobeyed orders and flew a new Focke-Wulf 190 from a Berlin airfield to test it against an American bomber formation, shooting down one bomber. He later shot down another American bomber in another raid.

In December 1944, during the ill-advised German offensive in the West that became known as the Battle of Bulge, the Luftwaffe lost 300 pilots. Gen. Galland, for opposing the offensive and the use of his fighters in it, was demoted, but he was allowed to take command of a very special formation of Me-262 jet fighters that included 10 Knight's Cross winners.

The Allies had nothing to match the jets but pounded the jet air bases day and night and threw enormous numbers of planes against them. Gen. Galland's war ended in 1945 shortly after he was shot down and seriously injured while engaging a formation of American Army Air Force P-51 Mustang fighters.

As prisoner of the British after the war, he lectured their pilots on fighter tactics and strategy and then became an international aeronautics consultant in the late 1940s. He worked in Argentina until returning to Germany in 1955. In addition to his consulting work, he often gave lectures on his wartime experiences, often accompanied by his long-ago opponents.

In the 1950s, he published his wartime memoirs, "The First and Last," in which he recounted not only the highlights of his legendary flying career but also some of the Mights, such as the time his plane collided with a lamppost.

Editor's Note: Ty hosted our Reunion in Ft. Walton Beach in 1983.

The Log, Wednesday, February 14, 1996

Page2A

Obituaries

Tyler Calhoun Winton

Tyler Calhoun Winton, a longtime Destin resident, died at home on Feb. 10, 1996.

Born Aug. 6, 1921 in Corvallis, Ore. to Col. Walter F. and Maria Calhoun Winton, he spent his early years traveling to military installations throughout the United States and South America. Mr. Winton developed Spanish-language skills while living in Peru, where his father served as a military attache. He maintained lifelong fluency in that language.

He was the grandson of early Destin residents Tyler and Ida Reid Calhoun, and visited Destin frequently during his youth, beginning in the 1930s. &

Mr. Winton interrupted studies at Colorado State University in 1942 to enter the U.S. Army Air Corps, where he served as navigator on a B-17 crew with the 385th Bomb Group, based in England.

In 1944, he and Army nurse June Swope were married in Soissons, France.

At the end of World War II, Mr. Winton resumed college studies at Texas Western University in El Paso, and joined the U.S. Border Patrol in 1951. He served with the U.S. Border Patrol for 22 years, retiring in 1973 as Deputy Chief for the Southwest Region. He

remained active in the UJ3 Air Force Reserve until his retirement as a lieutenant colonel in 1981.

Mr. and Mrs. Winton returned to Destin as full-time residents in 1973, and, until his illness of the last year, enjoyed a full life of family and community involvement, visiting the beach daily, and enjoying visits with their children.

Mr. Winton was a member of the 385th Bomb Group Association, the Fraternal Order of Retired Border Patrol Officers and the Eglin Officers Club. He enjoyed traveling to organization reunions throughout the United States and in England.

Mr. Winton is survived by his wife of 51 years, June Swope Winton; by daughter and son-in-law Rand and Hugh Scott and grandson Jacob Sutton of Boston, Mass.; by his son Michael Winton of Seattle, Wash.; by his brother and sister-in-law, retired Brig. Gen. and Mrs. Walter F. Winton of Great Barrington, Mass.; and a large extended family.

Tyler Winton is remembered as a man of great intellect and integrity, a person of wit and humor, and as a devoted husband, father and grandfather.

Graveside services and burial will be conducted on Wednesday, Feb. 14, at 1:15 p.m. in Barrancas National Cemetery on Naval Air Station Pensacola, with a U.S. Air Force Chaplain officiating. No flowers or memorials are requested.

McLaughlin Mortuary, 17 Chestnut Ave., Fort Walton Beach, is entrusted with arrangements.

Dear Mr. Stern,

On July 26, 1943, the crews of Duncan, Harris and Daniels were reported Missing in Action. My brother T/Sgt Benjamin M. Purdy, had substituted for one of Duncan's crewmen and one year later was assumed dead along with the entire crew.

In the early years I was in touch with other families and through one of them I received a picture smuggled out thru Spain of a crew under guard along the coastline. Most of the men were identified as Duncan's crew, by their families, but none came home.

A few months ago I was given hope that my brother was buried in the Netherlands Cemetery. I wrote to the superintendent and found the crew is not buried there. Their names are on the Wall of the Missing because the bodies were never recovered.

I know there were survivors from the crews of Harris and Daniels but could not obtain names.

My hope is that some of these men may know what happened to the crew of Glen Duncan and possibly where their bodies can be found.

Very truly yours,

Claire Bickford
50 Willis St.
Westfield, MA 01085

Editor's Note: This same story could be told about the 385th.
The date June 5, 1945 should be 1994 we note.

The People on the Ground...Group Operations

(From The Beachball Echo of the 446th BG) by Fred Breuninger and Dan Hutto

The majority of all those who served with the 446th Bomb Group at Bungay, England, likely never had occasion to visit the compound of buildings known as Group Headquarters (stateside, it would have been called base headquarters). And most didn't know, and likely didn't care, where the compound was.

The four or five buildings contained offices for Personnel (S-1), Group Intelligence (S-2), Group Operations (S-3), and Group Engineering/Material (S-4). All were in separate quonset hut-type structures. All that is, except Group Operations, which was in a flat-roofed, windowless, building constructed of 12 inches thick solid concrete walls and roof.

Inside the Group Operations building were separate offices for our Group Commander, Group Air Executive, Group Bombardier, Group Navigator, Group Communications, Group Operations, and the base PBX telephone switchboard and teletype machines. Due to the highly sensitive nature of activities that occurred around the clock, the building was guarded by military police at all times.

In essence, Group Operations was in charge of all flying activities, regardless whether operational (combat), or non-operational (non-combat) such as training flights. Within these parameters Group Operations was the official liaison between 446th Bomb Group and 20th Combat Wing, 2nd Air Division, and 8th Air Force. Communication between the various authorities could be via letter, teletype, or telephone.

Upon receipt of a bombing mission "Field Order" (via teletype), Group Operations would:

1. Immediately notify Group Operations Officer, Commanding Officer, and Group Air Executive.
2. Notify squadron operations of number of aircraft required, gas load, bomb load, and intervalometer settings.
3. Notify Group briefing officers.
4. Notify Group Ordnance Officer of required bomb load.
5. Notify Group Armament Officer.
6. Notify Photo Lab so cameras could be assigned to planes.
7. Notify squadron O.D.'s of air crew wakeup times.
8. Notify mess halls of breakfast time.
9. Prepare typed aircraft information plan which included aircraft number and pilots names. This was distributed at briefing for inclusion in pilots' mission kits.
10. Prepare typed navigation route plan showing navigation coordinates, times at



each coordinate, altitudes, winds aloft, and temperatures. This was part of navigators' mission kits.

11. Phone London each night for official time check. This was a special service utilized solely by armed forces.
12. Notify Motor Pool of briefing and breakfast times so that sufficient truck transportation was available.
13. Notify flying control tower of number of aircraft involved and takeoff time.
14. Prepare wall map in Group Operations planning room to reflect mission route from base to target and return.
15. Coordinate and assemble all briefing data and deliver same to briefing room.
16. Have one man from Group Operations stand by at briefings, in case of quick run needed to Group Operations.
17. Prepare Group Operations planning room for lead crew interrogation.

Because loading bombs was a lengthy process, it behooved us to give as much advance notice as possible to armament and ordnance personnel. Thus, the first indication anyone would have of a mission the following day would be this announcement from Group Operations over the base public address 'tannoy' system: *"Will all armament and ordnance personnel please report to their quarters immediately."* Everyone knew what that meant.

Nighttime was when all mission preparation occurred. Thus Group Operations was a beehive of activity during the night hours. Two night teams were created to work nights on an alternating weekly basis. A night shift was 14 hours, from 6 pm until 8 am the following morn-

ing. Each team consisted of four men. One team was headed up by Fred Breuninger and the other by Dan Hutto. These teams stayed in place throughout the war and for all our 273 missions.

There was only one occasion when both teams worked side by side on a single shift on the same night, and that was the night of June 5, 1945 during the "workup" of the highly important first mission of D-Day.

Other non-operational duties included:

1. Preparation of statistical reports pertaining to all flying activities.
2. Preparation of aircraft accident reports.
3. Coordinate training procedures for new crews, including Link trainer and bomb-sight trainer.
4. Schedule practice formation flights.
5. Schedule over-water practice navigation flights.
6. Coordinate with 2nd AD for required clearances and times to utilize bombing range for practice.

No doubt there is equally as much information about Group Operations that has long since been forgotten. Strange how time does that to one.

8th AF NEWS, August 1995 (95-3)
of Minnesota

BULLETIN BOARD

VETERANS BURIAL BENEFITS

Editor's Note:

**Here's where to call for information on
Veterans Burial Benefits.**

**We're all getting closer to having
a personal interest!!!**

VA's National Cemetary Service Hotline

1-800-697-6947

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern time

GROUP HISTORY

We hope you've all received your copies of the Group History by now. We kept checking and were told they would all be out by March 10, so we haven't responded to inquires we received in late February and March. Too bad about the long delay and the misinformation (which we passed on to you). If anyone hasn't received theirs by now, you may as well write them direct-- Southern Heritage Press, Box 10937, St. Petersburg, FL 33733.

GRAND OPENING OF HERITAGE MUSEUM

The mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum at Savannah will hold its grand opening on May 13 & 14. It's located at the intersections of US Highway 80 & I 95 in the town of Pooler. The first day will be devoted exclusively to 8th AF veterans and their families, starting with a ribbon cutting and ceremony at 10 am. To make advance arrangements to attend, call Wayne Corbett at 1-800-421-9428. Also, it would be a good idea to call Bob Valliere at 203-488-1622. He can tell you of other 385th members who will be there, and you can have a mini-reunion at the festivities.

B-17 Flying Fortress Association

B-17 Flying Fortress Association publishes an interesting newsletter four times a year titled "Splendor in the Skies". Dues are \$ 10.00 a year. Write to Don R. Hayes, 1640 Cambridge Drive, Walla Walla, Wa 99362.

REUNION

There'll be a Reunion of the 88th Service Squadron, 424 Air Svst Group at Milwaukee on September 12,13,14. Write to Don Kabitzke, 2464 N Sherman Blvd, Milwaukee, WI 53210 (phone 414-442-8890)

New Book: 385th History

Received a letter from Gerald Astor who is a professional author whose last four books have been about World War 11... He has entered into a contract to write on the Eighth Air Force. In all of his books he has sought to tell what happened through the eyes of those who were on the scene, either through interviews or from various documents such as diaries, journals and first hand accounts. He would like to contact people from the 385th Bomb Group to include their experiences. It would be nice if some experiences for our group would be written into his book. Contact him at the following: Mr. Gerald Astor, 50 Sprain Valley Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583 - Phone (914)723-0733.

TOUR TO ENGLAND

**Reunion is being planned
for September 24 - October 4, 1996
to England**

**For Information,
contact John Pettinger
Box 117, Laurel, FL 34272-0117**

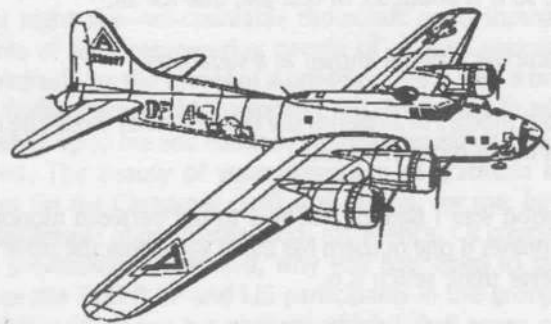
Flying Fortresses In Enemy Hands

- B-17's of the German Luftwaffe

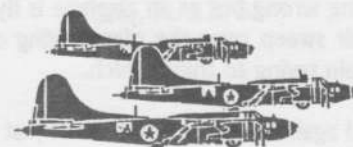
Since so many B-17s were lost over Europe, it comes as no surprise that not a few Fortresses fell into Axis hands, either by being forced to land on German airfields or by the Germans piecing together flyable examples from the bits and pieces of crashed aircraft. By various means, the Germans were able to put about forty Fortresses back into the air, which is a rather sizable force, so much so that the Luftwaffe can be counted as a major B-17 user! Most captured B-17s were given high visibility German national markings and used for the training of fighter pilots in the development of tactics that would be effective against USAAF-operated Fortresses. However, some were flown in their original USAAF markings for various clandestine purposes such as sneak penetrations of Allied territory, the dropping of agents, or the supplying of secret bases. The most well-known Luftwaffe unit to operate the captured B-17 in such a fashion was the notorious I/K.G.200. The exploits of I/K.G.200 are sort of shadowy and not much is written about this outfit in most histories of World War 2. One of their better-known exploits took place in the spring of 1944 in the Western desert (long after Rommel had been run out of Africa) and involved the use of captured B-17s and other Allied aircraft for the construction and maintenance of a series of secret airstrips and fuel dumps. A captured Fortress was used to parachute agents into Jordan in October of 1944. In Luftwaffe service, the B-17 was assigned the cover designation of "Dornier Do 200". There are reports that at least one captured B-17 was used by the Luftwaffe as a decoy. It would follow returning USAAF B-17 formations, pretending to be a crippled straggler and hoping to draw a B-17 out of the formation to cover it against fighter attack during the flight home. Once the protective B-17 closed in, the decoy would fire at it with its own guns or would call in German fighters to finish it off. This practice was enough of a threat that USAAF bomber formations would often fire upon an approaching straggler that could not be positively identified.

In the Pacific theatre, most USAAC B-17s were destroyed on the ground during the first few days of the war. However, the Japanese advance was so rapid that

Allied forces were often forced to leave some of their aircraft behind as they retreated. As a result, the Japanese forces managed to obtain a collection of different types of Allied aircraft that they were able to put back into the air with fairly little effort. The Japanese obtained at least three Fortresses—two B-17Ds and one early B-17E—which were flown to Japan for use in a public display of captured enemy aircraft. These captured B-17s were used for careful evaluation of their capabilities and the development of fighter tactics against them.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks to the 8th of Minnesota Newsletter.



Editor's Note: This is from the NJ Chapter 8AF Historical Society.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS COMMENTS ABOUT FLYING

RPMs are how fast airplanes are going when they can no longer be measured in miles per hour.

There are no such things as Gremlins but they live in World War II airplanes when there are.

Olden time pilot, caps with goggles were a great source of comfort when taken off.

Orville Wright was born in 1871, supposedly on his birthday. He died of a broken heart from 1948 to the present.

The Wright brothers first flew on a Kitty Hawk.

Question: Where did the first Wright Brothers flight take place?
Answer: On Page 19.

Jet planes fly faster but helicopters can fly straight up and down, so it is about six of one and one for all.

Airplane has a plural known as a squadron.

Without motors in airplanes the law of gravity would be maintained much more enforcedly.

One good way I figured out how to tell between monoplanes and biplanes is one of them has more wings than the other when I can ever think which it is.

The meaning of fuselage has a very short memory in my mind.

Airplane flaps are on the wings in case I ever wanted to know.

If I say strut, what I am saying depends on whether I am saying it to a rooster or an old airplane.

Propellers are so long and heavy they are really not good for anything except being propellers.

Pilots always carry altimeters with them. I forget what they use them for, but they remember and that is what is important.

One thing you should always do in finding direction from the North Star is to hope it is nighttime.

Correct my being wrong but as an airplane is flying, does the high pressure air sweep over the planes wing or under it? I wrecked my brain trying to think which.

It is best to land against the wind instead of just plain air. The wind is like air, only pushier.

Anytime there is a force pushing one way, there is another pulling the other way. Only jet planes understand this well enough to make it work for them.

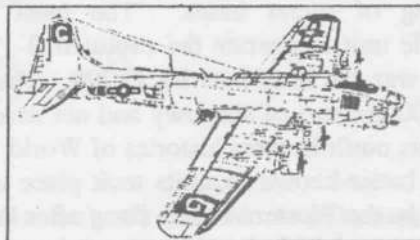
Some broken windows result from jet planes masonic booms.

Get a balloon, blow it up and let it go through the air. Wow, now you understand about jet planes.

I think flying is more fun than just about anything, of course, my uncle is a pilot so maybe I am a little pregnant.

American Optical Company scientists have found that it takes one-fifth of a second to blink, and the average person blinks 25 times a minute. If a pilot was flying an aircraft averaging 160 MPH for three hours, he would fly 40 miles with his eyes closed.

At an auction an 8th AFer finally bought a parrot after some spirited bidding. "He's expensive, can he talk?" he asked the auctioneer as he picked up the bird.
"Talk! Who do you think was bidding against you all this time."



The following page shows the Regensburg citation, precious to me because it cost me my original crew (Sommers). We'd lost Chuck Hiatt (CP) with Harris in July, and had flown Vitry a few days earlier. The cold that I flew with blew into my sinus troubles that fortuitously grounded me for Regensburg.

I left group for the 9th AF in May '44, so don't have the Zwickau citation.

Best Wishes,

Ty Winton
420 Beach Dr.
Destin, FL 32541

Editor's Note: Ty has died since we received this.
His obituary is on page 4.

GENERAL ORDERS)

WAR DEPARTMENT
Washington, 25, D. C., 1 May 1944

NUMBER 96j

E-X-T-R-A-C-T

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XII BATTLE HONORS. — 2. As authorized by Executive Order No. 9396 (sec. I, Bull. 22, WD, 1943) superseding Executive Order No. 9075 (sec. III, Bull. 11, TO, 1943}, the following unit is cited by the War Department under the provisions of section IV, Circular No. 333, War Department, 1943, in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction.

*

*

*

The 3D BOMBARDMENT DIVISION (H) (then the 4th Bombardment Wing (H)) is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy on 17 August 1943. This unprecedented attack against one of Germany's most important aircraft factories was the first shuttle mission performed in this theater of operations and entailed the longest flight over strongly defended enemy territory yet accomplished at that date. For 4 hours the formation was subjected to persistent, savage assaults by large forces of enemy fighters. During this bitterly contested aerial battle 140 German fighter aircraft were definitely destroyed and many more damaged. Despite desperate attempts by the enemy to scatter the bombers the groups of the 3D BOMBARDMENT DIVISION (H) maintained a tight, defensive formation and, coordinating as a perfectly balanced team, fought their way to the assigned target at Regensburg. Though weary after hours of grueling combat the bombardiers released their bombs accurately on the target and wrought vast destruction on an aircraft factory of vital importance to the enemy's war effort. The high degree of success achieved is directly attributable to the extraordinary heroism, skill, and devotion to duty displayed by members of this unit. Their actions on this occasion uphold the highest traditions of the Armed Forces of the United States.

* *

By Order of the Secretary of War:

OFFICIAL:

G. C. MARSHALL,
Chief of Staff.ROBERT H. DUNLOP,
Brigadier General,
Acting The Adjutant General.

This is certified True Copy:

Bertin V. Marshall
BERTIN V. MARSHALL,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Ass't Station S-1.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Leo LaCasse and Milt Taubkin sent letters about this buzz job (in the February 1996 Hardlife).

Dear Ian McLachlan:

In your letter to the editor, 385th BGMA Newsletter of October, 1995 you furnished a photo of a P47 doing a heroic buzz job over the 385th air field. You asked if anyone could tell who the pilot was, etc. I'm sorry I can't provide any specifics you would like to have, but I can certainly corroborate that the buzz job took place.

I was a navigator with the 385th from August of 1943 thru April of 1944 on the crew of pilots McCammon and Jim Emmons. This time frame seems to corroborate with the date indicated in your account of this happening. When I applied to the Army Air Corps in 1942 I knew that more than anything else I had ever wanted in my life, I wanted to be pilot of a P-47 in the European theatre. But in primary pilot training the air corps decided that they would not trust me to fly one of their planes all by myself. 50 plus years of time elapsed since then have not dimmed my recollection of the heart-break I experienced over that happening.

Well anyway it was the most thrilling buzz job I had ever seen. And one of my crew who stood with me watching this take place insisted that he could see grass blades stuck around the P47's engine cowling that it had scooped up from the ground of our field.

You mentioned that you had a discussion with David Wade about another 385th tour for 1996. I hope that trip will take place and that I will be able to attend, and that I can have our son with me. I remember you from our trip of 20 years ago and of course have enjoyed your many articles contributed to the newsletter over those years. So I will surely also look forward to meeting you again.

Your Friend,
Oliver H. Anderson
Burnsville, MN

Dear Mr. Pellman,

I'm writing in the hope you can help me with my research into the history of the 385th. You may have seen my name in the Group's newsletter. I'm the UK contact and do my best to help perpetuate the memory of the men who serve at Great Ashfield.

The reason for writing to you is that I recently heard from Howard Richardson whose co-pilot, Charles A. Manuel, was lost when your aircraft was rammed by an enemy fighter during the Zwickau mission of 12 May 1944. His letter prompted me to check the Missing Aircrew Combat Report which led me to your name and then the roster. Noting that you were the only survivor, I'm hoping that you could let me have your recollections so that the history of the 385th will be further enhanced.

This was the mission during which the Group earned a Distinguished Unit Citation (copy enclosed) and the contribution made by you and your crew could have been no greater. I would be very grateful if you could describe what happened that day, either in writing or on a cassette tape if it's easier. I'd also welcome copies of any photographs you may have showing you and your crew - please let me know costs incurred so I can reimburse any expenditure for getting prints copied. One of the activities I undertake for the Group is a slide show illustrating its history and your story would be an admirable tribute to you and the others of your crew who never made it.

Any help would be appreciated and I'll look forward to hearing from you.

Kindest regards,
Ian McLachlan - Aviation Historian
10 All Saints Green Worlingham Beccles
Suffolk NR34 7RR England

Dear Mr. McLachlan,

Thank you for your letter of December 18, 1995 regarding my husband, Robert W. Pellman. I am very sad and sorry to inform you Bob died of pancreatic cancer on January 28, 1995 after an illness of 7 1/2 months. He is greatly missed by myself and my 3 children. I wish he were alive to read your letter, he would have been so proud as we his family were when it was received.

I will try to relate to you everything as best I can recall.

Bob was on his 28th mission when he was shot down. General Doolittle had increased the number of missions from 25 to 30 before a leave was granted.

Bob always flew with his regular crew on the "Thoroughbred" but he flew this time with Aircraft 42-31787 to get his missions in. I remember Bob saying this was a "green crew" and they were flying in "suicide corner" (which I know nothing about).

When the enemy fighter rammed their plane Bob was blown out of the plane. He was not aware of it at the time, but his chute must have ripped when he was blown out. He said he was on his back the whole time he was falling - could not turn over and the cold was unbearable. He clawed at the chute handle until his hands were bloody, but the chute would not open. At this point he was sure his life was over. All this time he never lost consciousness. Suddenly he saw a little bit of white sticking out - he pulled again - heard a pop (evidently the chute partially opened) he hit the trees then fell to the ground. He spoke of all the bodies and wreckage that were around. It was a true miracle he was spared.

continued on the next page...

After he laid there, I don't know for how long, because he had a back injury for which he wore a brace the rest of his life, couple of broken ribs, etc.. He then hid his chute as they were instructed to do. Laid back down - and shortly there after was found and captured by the Germans. He said he heard a car and the next thing he was looking up at black shiny boots.

After a couple of days of beatings, questioning and other degradations, he was taken to Stalag Luft #4 (I believe it was in Poland - not sure) where he spent 9 months there in prison camp. I believe he said the Russians were advancing so they were taken out of the camp and put on a march for 9 months. In our local newspaper it was referred to as the "Death March" but we were not aware Bob was a part of this until he arrived home. He had lost quite a bit of weight while on this march in addition to prison camp, but he survived and we were all grateful for that. He was taken prisoner on May 12, 1944 and liberated by the British (I believe) on May 2, 1945.

He returned home officially in October 1945 (at this time he looked great) and we were married on November 24, 1945, had 3 wonderful children together, one son and 2 daughters and were fortunate to have spent almost 50 years together.

Bob was so proud to have been able to fight for his country and we are all so proud of him.

There are many stories Bob told our children if you would be interested (stories from Prison Camp). Also, my son Dennis, intends to visit Great Ashfield in England in 1997. He would like to meet you if this would be possible.

Thank you again for your interest and concern and if there is anything else I can do please let me know.

Sincerely,
 (Mrs. Robert W. Pellman)
 Margaret L. Pellman
 2417 Quail Run Farm Lane
 Cincinnati, Ohio 45233
 Phone: (513)451-0472

Confederate Air Force Activities for 1996

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE BLUEBONNET AIRSHOW: April 13, 1996 at Burnet, Texas. For more information contact Harold Smith at (512)756-2226.

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE AIR GROUP ONE AIRSHOW: May 6-13, 1996 at Gillespie Field, San Diego, Calif. For more information contact Bob Neumayer at (619)286-0160.

1996 ANNUAL CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE RANGER WING FLY-IN/OPEN HOUSE: June 8-9, 1996 at Waco, Texas. Features Confederate Air Force warbirds. For more information contact Joe Nemmer at (817)756-2135.

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE GATHERING OF MEMORIES AIRSHOW: Aug. 17-18, 1996 at San Marcos, Texas. For more information contact Lil Ayars at (512)396-1943.

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE WINGS OF FREEDOM AIRSHOW: Aug. 24-25, 1996 at Frederick, Maryland. Featuring the Sukhoi Tour '96 of the Moscow Aircraft Group. For more information contact Tom Payne at (301)631-5357 .

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE WINGS OVER HOUSTON AIRSHOW: Sept. 21-22, 1996 at Houston, Texas. Featuring the Canadian Air Force's Snowbirds precision jet team and the Red Baron Squadron aerobatic team. For more information contact Jack Amuny at (713)644-1018.

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE AIRSHO 96: Sept. 28-29, 1996 at Midland, Texas. Annual homecoming airshow featuring the U.S. Navy Blue Angels jet team. Also featuring Jan Collmer in his new Fina Extra 300. For more information contact CAF Headquarters at (915)563-1000.

Letters to the Editor^^

Hi Ed,
Realize it's a little late for Reunion pictures but these were just developed. Thought the Air force Insignia shot was quite good - but if it's to late, so be it.

It was a great Reunion - as usual!!
Ed J. Stermer



Sept. 30, 1995 - Omaha, Neb.
J.D. Noble, Harold Trousdale & Edward J. Stermer
Remaining crew members of "Angel's Sister" plus
Dean Leyerly who was unable to attend.
All flew 33 missions.



Sept 29, 1995 - Omaha, Neb. - Holiday Inn
E.J. Stermer, Harold Trousdale,
Don Shee, J.D. Noble

This banner was made up for the crew members who came to the "Confedate Air Force" show in Midland, TX in Sept. 1994. It marked the reserved seats for the crew.

Dear Ed,

Many thanks for your thoughtful letter of the 6th. I was especially impressed with your comment about the realism of the "rugged exhaust stained B-17 doing its job" as opposed to glamourized paintings. After I had finished my darkroom-work I had second thoughts about sending the calendars out because "Screamin Eagle" and the other planes didn't look to great.

I'm not certain which mission we were on. I had thought it was November of '44, but after acquiring and reading Willard Richards's book, became doubtful. He writes that the checkerboard pattern on the tail did not replace the square G until '45. Bob Silver also thinks it was '45. We are both sure it was to fire-bomb an enemy troop installation in France. We will explore it further.

I could probably come up with a 1997 calendar for members of the 385th using this shot or one of my others taken during my tour of duty but it would have to be made differently. The packaging would not be too big a problem, but the darkroom work would be too much. I also make Civil War calendars of historical sites for members of round table - buffs that I have been associated with for several years. This year got me. What I'm thinking of now it to make one or two master calendars and have them laser printed. I have worked with a local print shop and this approach looks practicable. What bothers me is that the finished product is not a photograph for an original negative.

By the way, I found the 385th memorial marker and tree at Arlington Cemetary. They look great. I'll send you a couple of pix after the first of the year.

And thanks to your efforts I have now established contact with five "old" crew members with whom I served at Great Ashfield.

Regards,
Jim Dacey
2305 N. Monroe St.
Arlington, VA 22207

****See photo on the next page****



Dear Ed,

Once again I would like to thank you very much for continuing to send us the Hard Life Herald.

It is now over 51 years since I first came into contact with the 385th. Since being hosted by the Creegan family of Fort Scott while I was in the States being trained for the R.A.F. It was a sad year for them, they had lost their son and brother Bud flying from Great Ashfield. It is also 15 years since we first met Sam and Mary Lyke. We value the friendship of these families very much.

I see that President Bob hopes that the younger generation will maintain interest in the Association. In our case we pass on H.L.H. to our son who lives in Oslo, Norway, who takes great interest in the history of the 8th, in East Anglia. His friends in Norway also show great interest, they all belong to Warbirds and help to keep some wartime planes flying.

We see that there are thoughts of you returning to Great Ashfield this year. We hope you make it and that we are among the English friends that will be on the runway waiting to greet you.

Best regards to you and all members,
Pat and Reg Hammond
75 Bromeswell Road
Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 3AU
England

Dear Ed,

Your name was referred to me by a member of the 385th Bomb Group (Carl J. Larsen) he was on the same B-17 crew, that I was on. We flew out of Great Ashfield in England was shot up on our 4th mission to Augsburg (3/16/44).

I am a member of the Swiss Interness Asso., I heard many great things about your group at the San Antonio reunion last year from Swiss Interness Members.

I would like to apply for membership and get on your mailing list.

Perhaps attend your next reunion and meet some more of the old fellows, that I have not seen for over 50 years. The Swiss Interness, have put me in touch with several past crew members, many others have passed on and a couple have just disappeared.

Thanking you for any information that you might be able to furnish me.

Jarrell F. Legg
1364 S. 300 East
Salt Lake City, Utah 84115-1502
1-800-483-1800

Dear Ed,

Thanks to you quick response to my letter of November 8, 1995 requesting an application blank. I am now a life-time member of the 385th BGMA.

I was anxious to join a society that supports the church in Great Ashfield. As I mentioned in my letter, I was fortunate enough to get back to the air base in May, 1994. My wife, my younger son and daughter-in-law, and two of my grandsons were with me and they fell in love with Great Ashfield. We visited with Mrs. K.N. Miles, whose family owned the farm land where the air base was constructed. After the war, her family bought the land back from the government and she still lives there on the farm, as you probably know. She told us some amusing stories about the early times of Great Ashfield Air Base. She commented that she wasn't interested in the "Yanks" at the time, because she was very much in love with an Englishman, whom she married and he is buried in the little cemetery at the church where the 385th memorial is located. She did tell us that the other girls were VERY interested in the "Yanks" there. Mrs. Miles was very hospitable. She welcomed us in her home and showed us all around Great Ashfield. She commented on the reunions you hold there. We took a lot of good photos of the area: her beautiful gardens; inside and outside the church; Elmswell Depot, etc. Mrs. Miles is an avid supporter of the little church. In fact, she was gathering items for a church bazaar when we were there. She was donating some beautiful clay flower pots that she had painted to the bazaar. My wife and daughter-in-law bought several items that she had painted.

Sincerely,
Donald S. Graham
7789 John Pelham Trail
McCalla, AL 35111

Dear Ed,

I've had a brief note from my friend Roger Freeman, who is the Guru of Eighth Air Force writing and research as far as I'm concerned as well as being a very nice fellow to know. Anyway, Rogers queried the fate of the 385th's "Satan's Mate" - she of looping fame - and I'm hoping someone can tell us the fate of this aircraft as well as confirm the serial number. I'd also like to hear from anyone that witnessed the loop or who had the experience of being on board at the time - something you'd NEVER forget. Another question from Roger was to ask if the 385th had a ship called, "Olin's 69ers" - not a name I can find in my records. Finally, I'd welcome any input on the B-17, "Thorobred" (42-31677) so, as so often before, it's over to my friends in the 385th for help.

Will be in touch again soon.

Best wishes
Ian McLachlan
10 All Saints Green
Worlingham Beedes, Suffolk
NR34 7RR England

To: Ed Stern, Editor, Newsletter

I'm assuming that you are still the newsletter editor and that you won't mind this request. Would you please forward this letter to whoever might find information about Preston Piper.

If you saw the article in the November issue of 8th Air Force News about "double duty pilots," you might have noted that one of the pilots about whom we are seeking more information is Preston Piper. In trying to contact him, I learned from his widow that he died several years ago. She has asked me to try to obtain more information about his records in the 385th Bomb Group and in the 56th Fighter Group. I told her that I would try, and so I am.

Mrs. Piper said that she had some materials from his WWII days, yet she would like to know more about his assignments and experiences. I judge that Preston must have had some extra-ordinary experiences which perhaps were written up by PR staff.

In any case, she and her family would appreciate having more information.

Her address: Mrs. Preston Piper
2992 Bird Rock Rd.
Pebble Beach, CA 93953

My address: G.W. Ford
1930 Cabana Drive
San Jose, CA 95125
Ph (408) 377-4018

Thanks for your help.

Dear Ed,

We trust you had a very pleasant Christmas.

The very cold weather has kept Peggy and me indoors and in a few cases relied on friends to get our groceries in, one special one you met in '92 at Great Ashfield, who painted the three trees picture Ray Goodwin, we never did hear from the couple who won that gift although we have met them before. Then again it's not everyone who likes writing.

We had a visit from a friend recently who has asked if he can have our assistance. His name is Dereck Smith, who, whenever he gets the chance will fly in our "Sally B" at Duxford and wherever she is flying, here or abroad.

He has however informed us that as the 385th had a B-17 "Sally B", he would like any ex-crewmen to get in touch with him and swap tales of each others "Sally B."

This side Sally B is named after its boss Eleanor Sallingboe. I believe she hales from Norway or Denmark, but its not any good telling all the Sally B stories, let Dereck do it.

This same Dereck is hoping that one day he will have a building let to him on Rattlesden base to have a museum incorporating Great Ashfield and Royham as well as Rattlesden. It only leaves me to include his address for the Group concerned to write to. Meanwhile our very best wishes to you

Dereck Smith
18 Springfield
Hadleigh
Essex SS7 2SS
England
He is head of sales promotions at Displays Etc.

Les and Peggy Gordon

Aloha Ed,

I recently purchased a new book written by Ray Bowden who gave the group the painting we raffled off at Spokane reunion. The title "Tales To Noses Over Berlin" the 8th AAF missions. I'm sure he will write you soon and tell how, where and how much the book will be.

It is all about the missions to "Big B" Berlin, Germany. Each mission is detailed on both sides, as to losses, ground damage, personal stories by crew members of every Berlin mission the 8th flew. It has so much information on A/C type both bombers and fighters on both sides that it staggered my mind (don't take much to stagger it, I'll admit). The 385th BG has lots of coverage in the book and after reading it, I read it the second time as I couldn't fathom it all the first time.

I feel it would be of great interest to any 385th person. Lots of photos and some of the 385th planes and crew members. It's real easy to read, (has to be for me eh?) as one can stop at any page as a new story begins on the next.

The Omaha reunion was a real success and great. A big mahalo to George and crew for a job well done.

I am trying to locate the 385th member who told me the story at the Omaha reunion about the navigator who used the relief tube up front, and the liquid came back and froze on the ball gunners sight window and therefore prevented the gunner from being able to see out. I came upon a cartoon depicting this very same situation, and will send it to Hardlife Herald when I hear from the ball gunner so I can attach a name of a real life happening to it.

Aloha nui loa,

Jerry Ramaker
310 Simone Ave
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Dear Ed,

Received Hardlife Herald Wednesday and have gone through it making at least one find, on Page 11, center third picture from the top, the captain reads Offutt Field ■ B-17 & B-36, it should read B-17 - B-52 and I know as I spent enough time under those things saying "Halt, who goes there?" I am glad I got out of the APs.

Also on Page 23 the article titled "TV WW11 Documentary to Include Former Resident's Service," I've researched the January 1996 listing of the History, Discovery and A&E channels and it apparently will not be shown this month, if you get an airing time frame and channel prior to an edition of HLH I'd appreciate the information.

To date Ray Baer, Sgt, USAAF, 385th, is the only person known to me to be buried in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, I've placed flowers on his grave for Memorial and Veterans Day 1995.

Then while driving here in the St. Louis area, I spotted a bumper sticker which at a distance revealed the 8th AF insignia and a left side of a B-24 (that other lesser important aircraft) and then the unit designation which I was too far away to read. I tried to catch up to him and talk about the sticker but it was like they say, "Whenever you don't want a cop, there is one," so I held back and lost him at a light. So what brought all this up, I question if we have a 385th bumper sticker? If so how may I obtain?

My Minot time was for one and a half winters, this past week it has snowed around eight inches here in St. Louis, I'm bitching about it and realize how much of a pansy I've become to Winter after my Tucson, Fort Walton Beach, and Honolulu assignments.

Sorry I missed the Omaha reunion, but I did have a good time at the 8th here in St. Louis.

Sincerely,
Allen P. Holtman
MSft, USAF Ret.
Mbr, 385th BGMA
705 Mendocina Ct. #12
Florissant, MO 63031-6093

Dear Ed,

To explain briefly the Al Zimmerman case:

Al Zimmerman, a Life Member of the 8th AFHS, has been expelled from the Society. He has been a devoted member, who, in addition to much input, developed and produced video tapes of important significance, namely START ENGINES - 50 YEARS and BEHIND THE WIRE for the society.

He, along with others, have been trying to have an external

audit done of the Society. The present administration has opposed this and finally decided to have a meeting of the **ethics committee** to determine the Zimmerman case.

This meeting was held at a time and place when it was a known fact that Zimmerman could not be present to defend his actions. At that meeting it was voted to **expel** Zimmerman. This has been done!

Many, many groups oppose this injustice. Letters from them and individuals have been written to the President (Hower) by State Chapter Officers, Bomb Group Presidents and Society members who are aware of the situation.

If you concur, please send a letter, short as it may be, voicing your objection to:

Mr. James M. Hower, President
Eighth Air Force Historical Society
PO Box 1033
St. Joseph, MO 64502-1033

Mr. James M. Hower, President
Eighth Air Force Historical Society
PO Box 1033
St. Joseph, MO 64502-1033

Dear Mr. Hower,

Where do we go from here?

An official explanation must be forthcoming so that the "other side" of the issue can be known. By now you have received many letters regarding the drastic action taken against Mr. Zimmerman. I would only hope that we can be told, in detail, the reasons which compelled the ethics committee to render such a dismissal. I do believe the complete story has yet to unfold.

Or is the release of Mr. Zimmerman the start of some policy of which the members of the 8th AFHS should be made aware of? Can not members disagree with the Administration without being taken to task? A request for an outside audit can not be and should not be, the reason for one's expulsion!

We all look forward to an official elucidation so that this matter can be put to rest.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Valliere, President
385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association
18 Whiting Farm Rd
Branford, CT 06405

To: Ed Stem, Editor-Newsletter of the 385th Bomb Group Reunion Association

Re: Something Worth Sharing with the Members of the 385th.

Dear Ed:

You will recall that earlier this year I sent to you a write-up, entitled "Links in a Chain...a Grateful Nation Remembers", of the incredible experiences which we had from April 28th to May 7th of this year when the Nation of The Netherlands welcomed 60 members of the RAF and 40 Americans from the Eighth Air Force for the commemoration of the "Food Missions" of 1945. (So that the rest of our members may know, there were two of us from the 385th who were present for these ceremonies: Bob Valliere, our President, and myself). On page 11 of my journal was a copy of a letter which was given to me by a civilian, Mr. Jan de Wijs, who was present at one of the food-drop sites to which we were taken.

During the year, I have had several very pleasant interchanges of correspondence with Mr. de Wijs and, in the process, we have become "good buddies". Actually, it is much more than that—"spiritual brothers" would be closer to the fact. His statement of appreciation for the "food droppers" was SO ELOQUENT that I shall never forget it. I find it to be absolutely amazing that in the few brief moments of our encounter on April 30th such a bond could be established...and after 50 years!

Now, because I realize that I was only **one of many** from the 385th who was privileged to fly the Food Missions in '45 and because I know that those of us who attended the ceremonies in '95 were representatives of a very great number of others—mechanics, administrative personnel, medical staff, mess-hall people, photographers, armorers and other specialties I cannot even remember now, all of whom made it possible for us to make the flights, I have something which I would like to share with EVERYONE. For, indeed, "everyone" had a part in the results which were achieved by the Food Missions.

Following is a copy of a message received on a Christmas Card from Mr. de Wijs; I know that I would have his permission to share this "with everyone" because, indeed, he gave me permission to share his original letter of April 30th with all of the people at the commemoration of the food missions:

Dear Bob, there are 4 people to whom I have always sent a Christmas card. Most Dutch people send 30, 40 or 50 (and receive 29, 39 or 49 back). In other words: this card is NOT sent to you "because it is customary". Meeting you has had such an impact on me (and your letters have confirmed it so such a degree) that I have even looked forward to sending you these Christmas and New Year's greetings.

Until 1995 there have always been those 2 dates in my mind: 29th April and 5th May 1945 (our liberation). From this year onward a third date has been added: Sunday 3Qth April 1995.

It was really a great honour to me to stand eye-to-eye with you, one of the men to whom I had been so grateful for 50 years. I

was not only feeling it as an honour to meet you and your colleagues, it also gave me a certain satisfaction to be able to thank you. You (and all the other brave and modest liberators) will probably have your daily worries and sorrow, just as everyone. BUT...it must be a wonderful thing for you to know that thousands of miles away from you there are thousands of men and Women who think of you in gratitude and lasting admiration for what you did and...dared. I have been and will be one of them.

Jan

So, Ed, as you might suspect, this message from Jan shall get a reply from me...and here is the reply which I am sending him...also to be shared with our members if you wish"

Dear Jan: Your Christmas card is, in typical fashion for you, "a thing of beauty". As you already know, I have given a great deal of thought to our meeting of 30 April and the effect it has had upon me. Let me share an analogy of that experience.

The eight days which the "food droppers" spent as the guests of the Food and Freedom Foundation were like a vision of a brilliant night sky—un-countable thousands upon thousands of points of light representing people of all ages expressing their gratitude for the events of April-May 1945. Like a bright comet flashing across this panorama was the instant in which you walked up to me and handed me the letter which you had prepared. The beauty of your expression of gratitude then and now (in the Christmas card) shall always, for me, be the **defining image** of our Netherlands experience. Of course, as I have previously commented, why you happened to select me from the 100 RAF and US participants in the group on that Sunday afternoon is a mystery which I shall never quite understand; I shall simply accept the fact and always be grateful for it!

Because you gave me permission to share your original letter with all of the participants in the Food and Freedom Commemoration, I know that you will feel it is "OK" for me to share this current letter with the other members of our Bomb Group Association...for, in a way, they were there as much as I; they all made it possible and I was their representative.

As always, with every Best Wish.

Most Sincerely,

Bob Silver
4510 SW 62nd Avenue
Miami, FL 33155

Dear Ed,

I've had a query from another historian about the loss of "Stars and Stripes" on 5th January, 1944 so thought I'd ask through HH if anyone can provide additional information and photographs. Enclosed are some notes from my files but they're skinny and I hope to learn more.

Kindest regards,
Ian McLachlan - Aviation Historian
10 All Saints Green Worlingham Beccles Suffolk NR34 7RR England

**BROOK FARM,
BADWELL ASH,
SUFFOLK•
M/Ref:-**

**5th.JAHUARY,1944.
Wednesday,0725hrs.**

B—17G- 42-3544

385th.BOMB.GROUP(H). 550th.Bomb.Squadron.

SALVAGED BY:-SAL NBD by 1 S.A.D. on 7th.January,1944.

**PILOTt-
C-Pi-**

**Nav:- *0-798873
Bomb:- *0-678512**

**T.T.G:-
R • 0 • G t —**

**B.T.Gt- *15059973
L.W.Gt-**

F1.Off .William H.Ilorriss

2.Lt.Benni3 j.Zebarth

2.Lt.Richard S.Proctor

2.Lt.Robert M.Totaro

S.Sgt.Russell A.Stevens

S.Sgt.Chester A.Rober

S.Sgt.Waiter A.Stuebgen

Sgt.Stanley Lowitz(NMI)

S-yTM i m e_A-

**AM/OliC/PH Pa.
PH N.Y.**

PH Pa.

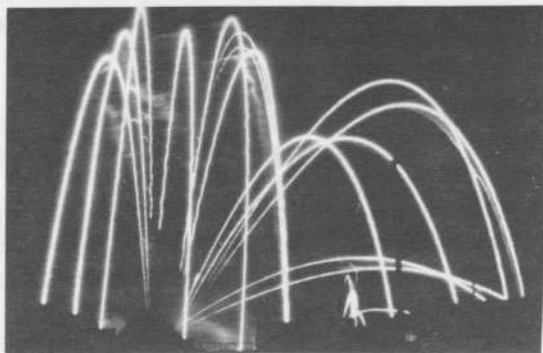
Sixteen M31's,two exploded,14 UXB'a unburied and scattered over an area of approx.300-400yards along with wreckage from aircraft.8dead 1 in hospital-TG.Plane and equipment demolished.

Mission No.49,target Kiel,leader MacDonald and Rome with 26 aircraft.

Dear Ed,

Enclosed is a New Year's fireworks display with flare, on 12/44. Also, a farwell banquet for Col. Van Devanter. Col Jumper is speaking, Col. Lewis on his left, and Capt. Hamilton next to Col Van. I was a member of c/c Wray's and Mellinger's crew. We were the last to leave because we were all detached service and got back to late. With me were Besign - pilot, Bud Kraft - pilot, Al Beckner - Radio, Sau Quiciet - Bombnavigator, me - Engineer.

Thanks for listening,
Joe Sarmoksmi



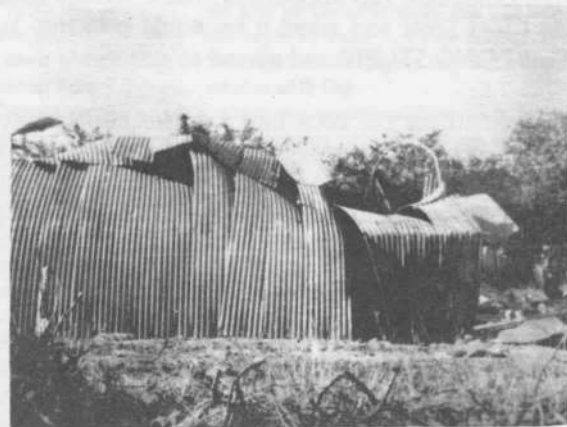
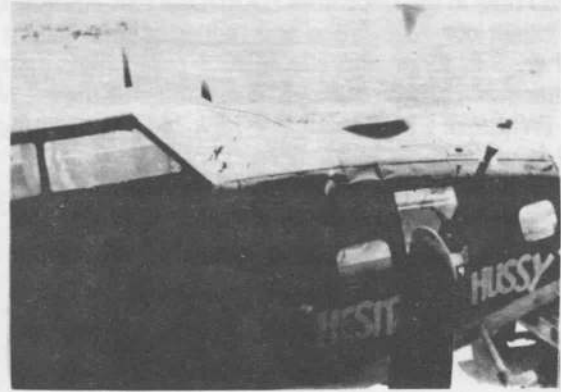
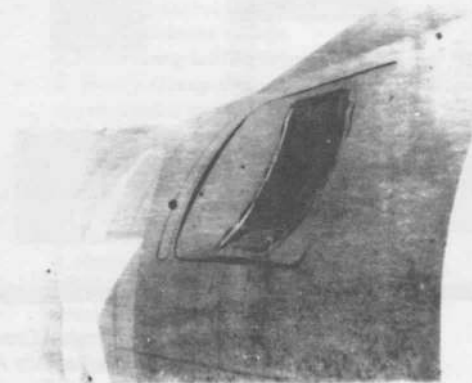
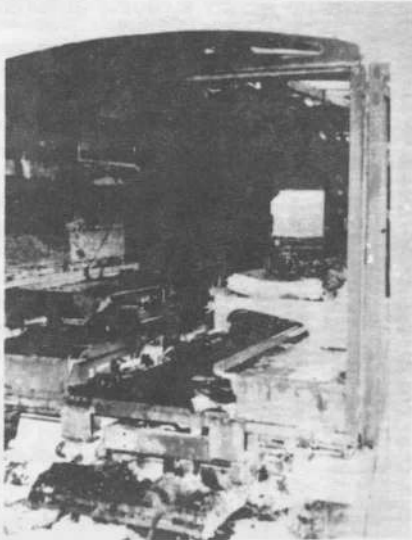
New Year's - Great Ashfield, England - 1944



Dear Ed,
 It's great how using pictures in HH jogs memories and adds to our collective knowledge of and interest in the 385th. this time I've enclosed a few pictures taken when "Round Trip Ticket" blew up in September '43, perhaps we'll get some recollections from these? Sorry for scrawl - this is being written away from home - San Diego in fact! My firm has sent me over on a particular project but the trip is so short and work so demanding that I've got no time to do anything else.

Take care,
 Ian McLachlan - Aviation Historian
 10 All Saints Green Worlingham Beccles Suffolk NR34 7RR
 England

**When
 "Round Trip Ticket"
 blew up in
 September 1943**



Dear Ed,

When I read in the December HARDLIFE that Andrew L. Ryan had joined our Association and requested information on his brother, S.F. Ryan who was MIA, I called him, because his brother was a billet mate and I had witnessed the midair collision (White and McDonald, 12 July, '44, on a Munich mission) in which there was only one survivor, Sgt. A. Tiyeh, out of the 20 crewmen.

Other than remembering Ryan as a very likable guy, the only thing I knew about the accident was what Mike Pappas had told me 45 years later. Mike had been a gunner and was shot down over Berlin. He met Tiyeh in the POW camp and was told the outcome of the incident.

According to Andrew, Tiyeh had contacted the Ryan family after the war and he knew as much about it as I, which confirmed what I had written in my book "THE WRONG STUFF."

As to the book, which is now being finalized, my wife had suggested I ask Southern Heritage Press about publication. While their specialty is publishing histories, like the 385th History, they agreed to go with it, since it looked to be a Good, if not a Best Seller. But what did I know? I was certainly no judge of my own work.

"THE HALDEMAN DIARIES" was on the New York Best Seller List and Sony produced 20,000 CD-ROMs of the book. Well, it came to pass that Scott Klososky, who had put that book together, lived right here in Ponca City, Oklahoma. I had seen him on all major TV networks and his book had been touted by Rush Limbaugh, Ted Doppel and others. So with some trepidation I met Scott and asked if he would help me. He liked "THE WRONG STUFF" and agreed to edit it.

It's difficult to put the book into a single classification. Some say it's an action-adventure-history, but I consider it a How To book: HOW TO: not fly a B-17 by the book; Overcome the Wrong Stuff; Try to find some courage, etc.... Hopefully it will have meaning for those who were there, as well as those who were not there.

A younger corporate pilot was telling me that he was born thirty years to late, because he would really like to have flown combat in that biggest of all air wars. "Except," he said, "I don't know if I could handle being shot at/.... Did you ever get any holes in your airplane?"

They just don't understand it do they? I hope the book will help.

Truman J. Smith
5000 E. Prospect
Ponca City, OK 74604

Dear Ed,

What a great great time we had in Omaha, found my pilot, Col. Art Ray, Radio Operator Col. Frank McCauley, T/Sgt Jack Popp, Waist Gunner, Wally Wojtkowski, Tail Gunner T/Sgt. First time we met Art Ray, what a REUNION after 50 odd years.

None of us changed one bit. My sons Johnnie, from Denver, Colorado, Wally from Valparasio, Indiana, also were there. Wonderful!! Wally's daughter, Natasha received an A on her report card I did not think she would enter it in her school report with my interview by telephone or I really would have exaggerated a whole lot more. Sgts are good for that.

Naturally I thought my grand daughter did fine that why I'm sending you a copy in case you run out of stories to fill the Hard Life Herald. She is a 13 year old teenager. I'm happy she is interested.

Sincerely,
Wally Wojtkowski

Editor's note: Here's Natasha's report. Not too much exaggeration, Wally—What's a couple hundred miles an hour more or less.

INTRODUCTION

Many people sacrificed their youth during World War Two for the sake of the nation and the flag. One of those people was my grandfather.

Entered Airforce
1942

B-17s

My wife Anna
& myself 1942

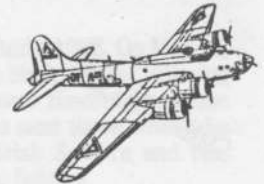


Cockpit
B-17

My Pilot
Art Ray

Original Crew
of Regedy Anne
T/Sgt Jack Popp W.G.
& myself C-1- Frank McCauley-Radio
Col Art Ray - Pilot
T/Sg Wally Wojtkowski

Natasha Wojtkowski
Literature
2nd Hour
10/11/95



INTERVIEW WITH MY GRANDFATHER, WALLACE L. WOJTKOWSKI - VETERAN OF WORLD WAR II

Q: WHAT BRANCH OF SERVICE DID YOU JOIN DURING THE WAR?

A: The Army Air Corps

Q: WHEN DID YOU JOIN?

A: July, 1942

Q: HOW OLD WERE YOU AT THE TIME?

A: 21 1/2

Q: WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO JOIN THE SERVICE?

A: The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941.

Q: WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE ATTACK?

A: Your grandmother and I were dating, and had gone dancing at a dance club. The music stopped and a radio announced the attack. Grandma and I got engaged that day, and married on January 18, 1942. President Roosevelt said this would be "a day that will live in infamy."

Q: HOW DID YOU TRAVEL OVERSEAS?

A: I went overseas on the ship HMS Queen Mary. It took five days, because the ship had to zig zag to avoid the German submarines. I went over in November of 1942.

Q: WHERE WERE YOU STATIONED?

A: I was stationed in Ipswich, East Anglia, England. The base was called Gr6at Ashfield and was near the English Channel.

Q: WHAT TYPE OF PLANE DID YOU FLY ON AND WHAT DID YOU DO?

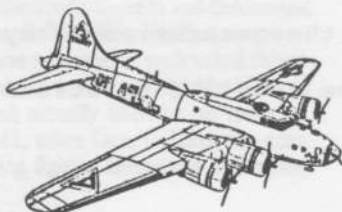
A: The plane was a four-engine B-17 "Flying Fortress." My job was to be the Tail Gunner and man fifty caliber machine guns.

Q: HOW MANY MISSIONS DID YOU FLY ON?

A: Thirty missions. I flew on twenty-five missions to Germany, itself.

Q: HOW WAS LIFE IN THE AIR?

A: The missions generally lasted about ten hours. We flew at 30,000 feet, which is over five miles up. The plane flew at about 350 miles per hour. You couldn't go without oxygen for over a minute, or you would die. The temperature was normally 50 - 60 F below zero. If your eyes watered, the lids would stick together. If you touched any metal with a bare hand, you wouldn't be able to pry it loose. Our flight suits were heated, and we wore oxygen masks.



Q: WHAT SCARED YOU THE MOST?

A: Flak was scary.

Q: WHAT IS FLAK?

A: Flak is a bunch of pieces of metal that were shot from the ground by the German soldiers from large anti-aircraft guns.

Q: DID YOUR PLANE HAVE A NAME LIKE ALL THE OTHERS?

A: It was named the "Raggedy Ann" after your grandmother.

Q: WHAT DID YOU KNOW ABOUT HITLER?

A: We didn't hear a lot about Hitler until I went overseas. The war in the early days was between the Europeans and Hitler until we came to England's aid.

Q: WHEN WERE YOU SCARED?

A: I was very afraid on every mission, (all the time) but you don't think you are going to die when you're young. One time I went to the bathroom area on the plane. When I got back, I saw that the seat that I normally sat in while fighting had been completely destroyed by enemy fire.

Q: WHEN DID YOU FLY?

A: We flew in the daytime, as the English had tried daytime bombing earlier and were not successful. The British planes flew at night while I was there, and hit most of the same cities that we hit during the day.

Q: WHAT ELSE DID YOU WORRY ABOUT?

A: We worried that if we had to bail out or crash that we would be captured. If we fell into the hands of the German citizen, we would probably be killed with their bare hands. If we were captured by the army, we would be put in a prison camp.

Q: WHAT DID YOU GET PAID?

A: I don't remember, but 50% of my pay was as a result of flight pay, which meant that we had to fly at least four hours a month.

Q: TELL ME ABOUT YOUR RECENT 385th BOMB GROUP REUNION.

A: It took place in Omaha, Nebraska. As you know, your grandma, daddy, and uncle Johnny came too. I saw my pilot, who I hadn't seen in over fifty years. I met with one of my best friends from the war, and spent time with the three original members of my ten-men crew. The pilot told us a story of how we almost decided to land in a neutral country, Sweden, because our plane was shot up so bad, and how my best friend and I were preparing to bail out when the pilot came back to assure us that everything was okay.

Q: ONE FINAL THOUGHT?

A: Your daddy was born in July of 1945, and heard all the sirens, bells, and whistles going off as World War Two ended. He did fuss quite a bit.

CONCLUSION

World War Two was a major event in my grandfather's life as well as for other people of his generation. It was a time of working together, sharing, and doing things for the greater good of the country without questioning the reasons.

The attack on Pearl Harbor caught the United States unaware. The war with Hitler didn't have a great impact on the United States until we entered it on the side of the Allies.

Young men left their mothers, wives, and sweethearts to fight for the things that they believed in. The first men of the Army Air Corps to go overseas were the men of the Eighth Air Force, who flew out of bases in England.

During the first two years of the war, over twenty thousand airmen were killed. After the second year of the war, air crews were able to reach their destination, and were able to return safely to their bases by flying in new formations and by using a fighter-plane escort.

These men were scared during every mission, but, with teamwork and will, they were able to succeed. Imagine flying on an airplane at 350 miles per hour at 30,000 feet, in temperatures in excess of fifty degrees below zero, and having an enemy shoot at you with machine guns. It wasn't easy.

By suffering the hardships of war, the generation of my grandfather passed on a legacy of freedom to all generations, including mine.

Treasurer's Report

1995

Balance Sheet

Assets	1/31/94		14,144.10.
Savings		1082.28	
CDs		2000.00	
ineckine		8543.28	
REunion Savings Acct		8730.65	
Total Assets 3/31/96			20,356.21

Profit & Loss Statement

Income

Dues & Donation's	9355.31	
Life Members	1300.00	
R h a z k h x R a i i « x		
Return of Wilbur Deposit	4500.00	
Interest	238.04	
Total		
Reunion profit	8730.65	
Total Income		24,124.00

Expenses

News letter	13980.89
Life Members (to England)	1300.00
Sally B	500.00
McLachlen	500.00
Gordon	200.00
Treasurerexpense	131.00
+ Advaaae for 1997 Reunion!	
Hotel	800.00
	500.00

Total Expense 17,911.89

Net Gain 6,212.20

Note: Not included
Church Trust Fund \$9,268.00
Will be recovered from
Tucson Reunion in 1997

**385th BOMB GROUP
MEMORIAL
ASSOCIATION**



**REUNION
OMAHA, NEBRASKA
SEPT 27 to OCT 1, 1995**

This memento of the Omaha Reunion contains four of the best squadron pictures ever taken at a reunion, plus individual pictures of the attendees, and candid highlights of the reunion. If you did not attend the reunion this is a good opportunity to get acquainted with your new officers. Send your check for \$20.00 made out to 385th B.G.M.A. to George S. Hruska, 7442 Ontario St. Omaha, NE 68124-3563

**LAST CHANCE
AS OF NOW WE DO NOT
HAVE ENOUGH REQUESTS
TO ALLOW A REORDER**



**WE SOLD OUT OF REUNION
WATCHES IN A HURRY.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE ONE
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THEM ORDERED. SEND TO
GEORGE S. HRUSKA
7442 ONTARIO STREET
OMAHA, NE 68124-3563**

WIDOWS

You are invited to become active partners in the Association. Through the years, wives have been an important part of our Reunions. We want you to continue to enjoy the activities that take place and share the bounty of BGMA friendships. For starters, please fill out the following form, send it to Bob Valliere, 18 Whiting Farm Road, Branford, Ct. 06405-3223.

Name: _____

Address: Telephone: _____

Husband's Name: _____ Unit of 385th _____

When WW2 started I was _____

working, where, and what other _____

I met my husband (where and circumstances) _____

Married: when and where _____

Children, grand children, great grandchildren _____

When widowed _____

Suggestions for next reunion and other comments _____

(Please feel free to use an additional piece of paper)

385th BGMA

ED STERN, EDITOR
P.O. Box 2187
Fargo, ND 58108

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