



## NEWSLETTER OF THE

385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

## COMBAT UNITS

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

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#### **AUGUST 1988**

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# Prez Sez:

Here's the complete list, as of July 15th, for our trip to Great Ashfield. It'll be a great Reunion that we're all looking forward to with much anticipation. Congratulations to Al Chealander for doing such a fine job of getting it going!

#### THE REUNION AT GREAT ASHFIELD Sign-up Roster As Of July 15, 1988

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Want to join Ginny and Al for a spot of tea at the Ritz? See the story in this issue of Hardlife Herald, and make your arrangements.

#### PLANS SOLIDIFYING FOR 12th REUNION IN FARGO

Plans are rapidly being completed for the 12th Annual 385th Reunion to be held August 24-27,1989 in Fargo.

The Registration Fee of \$60 will include all functions for the Reunion except green fees for the golf tourney and admission to Stock Car races, should anyone wish to see that kind of excitement.

The balance of the program will include the traditional Saturday evening dinner dance, a North Dakota family style dinner on Friday, a Saturday Continental breakfast, and a final Scandinavian Smorgasbord breakfast on Sunday morning.

Transportation and admission to 16 area attractions that will be available as individual choices will be included in the \$60 registration fee. In addition, sons, daughters or other guests may attend these functions at no cost, and can choose any meals they wish for the cost of the meal.

North Dakota's B-l Bomber Base Commander has promised to have a minimum of 2 B-l's with crews in Fargo all day August 25 for our inspection. In addition, anyone wishing to visit a Missile Silo will be welcomed for the trip to one of them.

The next Newsletter will contain Registration forms, along with a list of activities available. A Hotel Reservation form will be printed, listing the Headquarters Holiday Inn, with a maximum rate of \$60 Double, or a Select Inn Hotel immediately adjacent to the Holiday Inn with a \$30 rate (double). Either will be found to be first-class in their categories. Camping facilities are available at the Holiday Inn, or in Fargo's World Class Camp area.

Plans at this time call for the Golf Tourney to be held on Thursday, Aug. 24.

#### **Exception to All-Inclusive Registration FEE!**

The Registration fee does NOT include money you may try to win or lose participating in North Dakota's legalized Black Jack, Bingo, or Tip Jar gambling. Please discuss this investment with your wife and family. Your Host Committee will direct you to the necessary areas, although you really can't miss them.



Roger Maris Baseball Museum—One of the attractions at West Acres Mall adjacent to Fargo Reunion Headquarters Hotel.

#### BONANZAVILLE USA

Bonanzaville, U.S.A., located off 1-94 (exit 85) at West Fargo is a 45-building restored pioneer village. Original buildings moved on site include a jail, town theatre, depot, country church, school and general

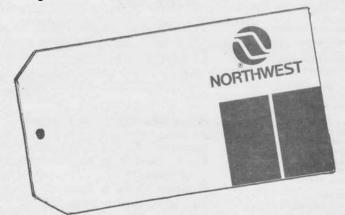
store. Special collections include antique cars, farm machinery, airplanes, Plains Indian and military artifacts. A huge museum is open year-round, the 15 acre village from late May to late October.



Site of Friday evening activities at Fargo Runion

#### Northwest Airlines to be Official Airline For 385th Reunion

Members flying to Fargo for the Reunion in August of 1989 will get preferential fares by flying Northwest Airlines, according to an agreement reached with the Fargo Host Committee.



Serving Fargo with 7 flights per day with one-stop service from most major cities, Northwest is offering 40% discount from all full adult fares, or 5% discount from the lowest applicable special fare at time of flight.

In addition, full credit on Northwest's WorldPerk Free Flight plan gives a Free round-trip flight on Domestic travel after just 20,000 miles.

Also, Northwest is donating one free round-trip ticket for a drawing to be held at the reunion, plus additional free tickets for each 40 tickets sold for,the Reunion.

Further information will be available in future Newsletters. Reservations can be made by calling Nor-thwest Meeting Services weekdays between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Central time -1-800-328-1111. Please mention our special code 17524.

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#### AFTERNOON TEA IN LONDON

One of the most popular British customs is the ritual of afternoon tea. Tea rooms all over England do a flourishing business of providing afternoon tea, usually from 3 to 5:30 p.m., to workers, shoppers, travelers, tourists, vacationers, and local residents. An afternoon tea is more than "tea and crumpets"- it is a ritualistic event that provides a brief escape from the humdrum of daily activities. It creates an atmosphere of warmth, physical comfort and well-being. The food is superb - several kinds of finger sandwiches, assorted pastries, scones (with clotted cream and preserves) and of course, the tea itself. It is substantial enough to serve as an early supper or a late, late lunch. There are enough calories at an afternoon tea to confirm that confirm that "the dollar is weak against the pound." Americans and Europeans visiting London usually frequent the elegant tea rooms of the good hotels. To name a few - The Waldorf, Ritz, Savoy, Claridge's, Connaught, Berkshire, Dorchester, and Brown's Hotel. Herrod's and Forthnum's have nice tea rooms which are popular with shoppers. The cost of an afternoon tea at these exquisite tea rooms ranges from 7 to 9 Pounds, VAT included, per person. The formality of the afternoon tea suggests that the men should wear a coat and tie and the ladies something a little dressy.

American visitors in London who would desire to find themselves steeping in an old English custom of luxury, ceremony, relaxation and a sense of the past, it is the afternoon tea, of course.

Want any copies of YANK magazine? Here's a source.

## "Tell us about the war."

How do you begin to describe the glory courage, *etprit* and the lighter aide of the greatest conflict of all time?

The pages of YANK, the popular WWI1 magazine, tell all. Share your legacy of **why** and **how** the war was fought and won. From the cruel Pacific jungles to Rome and Berlin by land, sea and air. Crack CI reporters, photographers and cartoonists covered all fronts, all branches to create YANK, a diary of the war that changed the course of history.

YANK coverage is closeup, gutsy. Thousands of pictures, hundreds of cartoons. News briefs from home. Vignettes on GIs slugging it out, world leaders and I'SO troupers like Bob Hope and Joe E. Brown Thousands of trips down memory tane. A collector's item. You'll treasure YANK. YANK Mail Call ... ^0 years later!

I on joy YANK very much. Always did. —George Kozar, Oak Park, III.

I really enjoy the reprints. Guess I'm reliving my WWII days —Lucky Stevens, Mountain Lakes. NJ.

Hooray for you! I enjoy that trip down memory lane as you so aptly put /t.—Robert W. Ammerman, Union, N.J.

YANK reprints have brought back a great many memories, and I thank you for having restarted d—Jack I. Bomsteln, Massapequqa Park, N.Y.

Wow! YANK again. I want it.— Ken Fitzgerald, Canton, Conn.

> Name\_\_\_\_ Address.

YANK doesn't need any comment about its originality. We all enjoyed it in service. You've provided a rare opportunity to treasure a lot of memories — Edward Zlats, Marianna, Pa.

You've made a lot of old soldiers and Navy types, like me, happy—Curtis Kimball, Lincoln, Nebr.

I've facsimiled 3.000 copies of this or that from YANK pages, sent them to old comrades. I had fun at the postoffice opening YANK and "complaining about 40-years-later mail delivery.— G. D. O'Connor, Lima, Ohio.

/ want to thank you for the memories. I relived every moment. The good and bad altogether make those memories live forever — Romeo Routhier, Guatemala.

THE ADMY STATUTE

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#### August 1988

## U.S. Medals First to Honor F ormer Prisoners of War

#### The Philadelphia Inquirer

The United States is about to become the first nation in the history of warfare to honor its soldiers who got captured.

Thanks to Sen. William V. Roth Jr., R-Del., Prisoner of War Medals will be issued this spring to up to 142,000 former POWs or their heirs.

Veterans groups across the country have supported the law sponsored by tyoth that created the medal, a circular pendant, dangling from a ribbon of black, red, white and blue, its bronze face engraved with an eagle surrounded by barbed wire and bayonet points.

If all goes as hoped by officials of the American Ex-Prisoners of War group, the first medals will be presented by President Reagan in a Rose Garden ceremony on national Prisoner of War Day in April.

But the Department of Defense once hoped such a ceremony never would occur.

"Early on, we felt (being a) prisoner of war was a fortune of war and not the basis for issuing a medal," said a Pentagon spokesman.

tagon spokesman. The U.\$. Army. Institute of Heraldry, which' keeps track of such things, could find no example of another country that ever gave a POW medal. And there are some former POWs who question the appropriateness of the^ medal. A Pentagon colonel involved in distributing the medal said he has a small bundle of letters from former POWs opposed to it.

But Roth, who introduced legislation in 1984 to create the medal, said: "I felt that basically no recognition had been given prisoners of war, who noonaliy were front-line soldiers who, after cap-. ture, served under extremely difficult circumstances with honor."

Pete Zastrow, coordinator for the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, said that "obviously, being a prisoner of war is an extremely hard thing to do. It's probably a whole lot more worth-while than a lot of colonels arid generals in Vietnam who got (a medal) for flying over a battlefield."

But, Zastrow observed, "there are prisoners of war and then there are prisoners of war. People who blundered along and did something stupid and got captured ... somehow it's hard forme to see that as heroic.

"If Twas giving (medals) out, I'd do some distinguishing how a person got there."

Former POWs or their heirs must provide evidence of an honorable discharge.

Remember her? Al Chealander sent this interesting story in.

## **AXIS SALLY**

A researcher named John Sutay from Connecticut has found information concerning the whereabouts of a woman who was known as "Axis Sally" during World War II. He had tracked her down and found that she has been living quietly in Ohio. Sutay had begun his research on "Axis Sally" after reading an article on a B-24 Liberator bomber flying out of Italy during the war. He mentioned the "Axis Sally" broadcasts in English from Berlin to bust the morale of American troops. Millions of other American who were overseas in Europe also remembered these broadcasts which taunted the allied war effort, warned of super, and as it turned out, fictional German weapons that were being produced. But she especially played on the feelings of young homesick Americans. "Hi, fellows, I'm afraid you're yearning for someone. I just wonder if she isn't running around with the 4-F's back home." While many could laugh such things off, her statements proved disturbing to others. Sutay also chronicled another instance, a broadcast directed at the 340th Bomb Group shortly after it arrived in Corsica. That the Germans were well aware of the arrival was pointed out when "Axis Sally" went on the air to inform the 340th it would soon be greeted by an attack from the Luftwaffe. Not many days afterward, a captured British plane, still bearing British markings, flew over the field of the 340th, dropped flares, and within minutes, two dozen Luftwaffe aircraft swooped down, killing a number of personnel, doing considerable damage. "How did you like that, 340th?""Axis Sally" cooed the next day over the radio. Actually, she was an American, born in Maine, who attended college in Ohio, had ambitions to become an actress, but never 3uite realized them. She was in Paris in 1928, was a ressmaker's apprentice in Algiers in 1933, and arrived in Berlin in 1934. At the outbreak of the war, she was teaching English in the German capital. Sent back to the United States for trial after the war, a jury acquitted her on seven counts, but convicted her on one, for her part in the "Vision of Invasion" broadcast 25 days before D-Day in 1944 by the German Radio. In it she played the role of an American mother who dreamed her son was killed in a cross-channel invasion. Released after 12 years in prison, Sutay said she started teaching German, French, and music in a religious institution and at the age of 72 went back to the Ohio college and received a Bachelor's Degree. She is now 83, he said and living quietly, (submitted by John W. Kellogg to 15th Air Force Story, a 15th Air Force History.)

## Axis Sally dies

Columbus, Ohio (AP) Mildred Gillars, known during World War II as Axis Sally for her propaganda broadcasts for Nazi Germany, has died. She was 87.

## **Origin of the Word "FLAK"**

Frank and Dotti Halm, co-editors of Nostalgic Notes, Newsletter of the 94th Bomb Group Memorial Association, ran the following information about the source of the word "FLAK" in the September, 1987 issue.

"FLAK" You knew what is was, antiaircraft artillery, but did you wonder what "FLAK" stood for? Well, here 'tis' Fliegerabwehr-kannon! The British called it "Ack-Ack", the Army called it Triple A, but we and the Germans knew it was "FLAK".

This article was also printed in the Official Newsletter of the Bombardiers Tnc



"We were all young once."

August 1988



Back from Berlin — happy day!



Chaplain Jim -Christmas at the Aero Club.



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Les Blakely — Elmswell Pub (Owner's son)



Caroline Bewler at the Aero Club



After an argument with a concrete wall.

## Letters to the Editor:

Here is a good deal of information on "Ruby's Raiders".

Dear Editor:

In our Newsletter (Vol. XV No. 3, Jan., 1988) Re: the story of Ruby's Raiders.

I can only send you a copy of WAC. Cpl. Ruby I. Newell's newspaper picture that was sent to me by WAF. Sgt. Cynthia B. Lowry after my return to England from my R&R in Atlantic City. Hope that it will help. This picture was printed in a Philadelphia Paper.

Thank You

"The Lone Wolf of the 549th" Ralph B. Joye 676 Carson Dr., Land O'Lakes, FL 34639



August 1988

Letters to the Editor con't.

#### Dear Mr. Ed Stern:

I look forward to receiving your newsletter every copy, but I really got a start in the Jan. '88 copy. On page 14, the first article by John DeBerg, had a half column (vertically) about our trusty "Ruby's Raiders" that John had taken from a page of "Yank" Magazine. . . Boy, would I love to see that copy of Yank! That article was, I'm sure, about our Cpl. Ploss, the very one responsible for the fine "nose art" on the beautiful B-17's of the 385th. I looked at the latest copy of the 385th BGMA roster, and do not find Cpl. Ploss listed . . .would like to know what has happened to him. If anyone knows, please let us know.



George Stasny, BT Gunner, "Ruby's Raiders"



The original "Ruby's Raiders" Crew. Blackwell's Crew

Now, about "Ruby" ... here's how we named our B-17 after her: When we were about half through our tour, we were to get a new ship, and as our luck would have it, at about the same time, there was a beauty contest being held to determine the most beautiful WAC in the UK. The winner was the truly beautiful Ruby Newell from California (I don't know the city), and someone in PR, I suppose put the two events together and brought Ruby to the 549th of the 385th and we had quite a day of getting aquainted with both our beautiful "ladies". We even took Cpl. Newell for a ride in our new "Ruby".

I am sending a photo of the crew of the original "Ruby's Raiders": Pilot, Frank Blackwell; Co-pilot, Herbert McGregor; Bombardier, John Heister; Navigator, Marshall Lash; Engineer gunner, Stephen Fabeny; Radio, Orval Garrett; Waist, Maurice Shannon; Ball turret, George Stasney; and yours truly, Earl Martin in the rear office.

I am also sending a photo of George Stasny with Ruby under her likeness on the nose. This photo shows Cpl. Ploss' signature on the painting. I would like for you to print this photo, if possible, as George is *a* stroke victim, shut-in who can't communicate by phone, but can read and listen to tapes, etc. Also, for some reason, George's picture is not on the larger photo.

We loved our "Ruby", but we didn't really mind leaving her for a new crew to finish the war in. I hope they treated her well!

Sad notes: We lost Frank last year, and I read in one of the newsletters that Ms. Newell passed away about three years ago.

Thanks for a fine newsletter...

Sincerely,

Earl Martin 1016 So. 26th, Fort Smith, AR 72901

#### Dear Ian:

I am writing to you, as I hope you can clear up some confusing info for me. First, a bit of my background, and the reason for my interest.

I was an original member of the 385th BG - 548th Sqdn. Our crew was formed at Ephrata, Wash; then onto Spokane, Wash, to join the 548th Sqdn. at Geiger Field.

Our original crew consisted of pilot - Wm Swope, Copilot - Billie Ruby, navigator - Wm Baird, bombadier -H. Behr, top-turret & engineer gunner - Joe MacLavish, radio operator - John Richardson (who has previously written to you about Lt. Ruby's Eerie Tale), me Robert Lopiano - waist gunner ass't. engr., John Sufford - waist gunner asst, radio oper. and Aldo Tarini - tail gunner.

#### August 1988

Letters to the Editor con't.

After 5 or 6 missions, Safford was called back to the U.S. for pilot training, and Tarini was dropped from flying status; at that time we picked up H. Anderson, and Ed Roddy as waist gunners, then I became the tail gunner.

On 29 Nov. 1943 we lost our pilot Capt. Swope, he was flying with another crew (Lt. Weider's); so Lt. Ruby became our pilot. The next 5 or 6 missions the original crew were completing our tours. My last mission was Christmas eve day, 24 Dec. 1943 (what a great Xmas gift for me).

Lt. Ruby fell behind us in count, and probably had between 5 and 10 missions to go. His crew was the one you noted in the "Erie Tale" story of the 385th BGMA newsletter of April 1985 of which I received a back issue. I've only just heard about the 385th BGMA in the past year. I am now a member and I did attend the reunion at Dayton, it was great.

Now for your help, Ian, I recently purchased a photo book called "Vintage Nose Art" by Gary Valant, and on page 68 there is a photo of a B-17 called "Ruby's Raiders" B-17 - Ser. #44-6483 385th BG 9 AF. This air craft named for Cpl. Ruby Newell, Long Beach, Calif, voted most beautiful WAC in England.

When I read your account of the "Eerie Tale", I was under the impression that "Ruby Raiders" was named for Lt. Ruby; but its serial number was 42-6004. Maybe 2 different aircraft had the same name, not unusual. I just was wondering about these circumstances.

To add to the above, today I received my copy of Jan. 1988 newsletter, and on the back page is a partial story of "Ruby's Raiders".

By the way Ian, our original B-17, called the "Belle of the Blue" is pictured in that photo book on page 27. It's a great book with very interesting nose art.

Ian, I've enjoyed writing to you and hope to hear from you. I'm enclosing a copy of my dairy if you're interested, if not just discard it. You may have trouble reading it, but remember it was written by a nervous 20 year old gunner.

Sincerely,

Robert Lopiano 75 Summit Hill Dr., Rochester, NY 14612

#### Dear Robert,

Thanks for your letter of 29th January.

I was delighted to hear from you and really appreciated the copy of your wartime diary. Several of my friends in the 385th have sent copies of their diaries and I keep them all as part of my archive. I certainly won't sling it away. You may not think so but I'm sure future historians will find diaries like yours to be of great interest. I know I do. Now to your query. I've not seen the book, "Vintage Nose Art" but, if the photograph of "Ruby's Raiders" is captioned, "9th AF" then that's an error but the main fact^ are correct. I've got several nose art shots of "Ruby<sup>f</sup>" including two in colour. These were taken when Ruby Newell named the aircraft. I also have a side view of 44-6483 which was apparently lost on 24.5.45. My belief is that this was, "Ruby's Raiders" but the side view (copy enclosed) was taken from the port side so doesn't show the nose art the starboard side in the same view as the tail number. Whether 42-6004 was named after Lt. Ruby isn't known to me, perhaps, if Ed publishes this, we'll get other comments.

Looking through the 385th microfilm, I can't see any reference to 44-6483 being lost on 24th March, 1945, but the Cumulative Loss Listing does show it as MIA, and as belonging to the 385th. As so often happens. I'm puzzled. Given time and the financial wherewithal!, I could quite happily give up work and devote my energies to research. As it is, the children have to eat so the puzzle of what happened to "Ruby's Raiders" will remain unresolved for the time being. I hope I've answered your main query - it was named after a very, pretty WAC. Sadly, I believe she died a year or so back.

Best wishes,

Ian McLachlan "Tasdale" 1 Joy Avenue, Newton Flotman, Norwich Norfolk, NR151RD

Dear Ed,

I'll be laying a wreath for the 385th at Cambridge again this year. I'm getting it made to represent the dark blue 'G' with red/white on the edges to symbolize the checkerboard markings which came later.

Ian

#### Dear Mr. McLachlan,

I was very pleased to get the crew report, and surprised to have it come from England.

I will address your questions to the best of my recollection.

The plane had no name. It was a new silver ship and had only been used about 3 times.

The 385th never reached Furth that day, the mission was recalled and within a few minutes of turning for home we got into the "Flak" as we passed to the South of Stuttgart.

Your letter confirms my recollection of the time. It was a Wednesday, Julius King (from Florida) and I were S/Sgts. and we were both transfers from older crews. King had about 25 missions and I was on my 22nd or 21  $^{\prime}/_{2}$  as it would be counted in the Luft camps in Germany.

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Letters to the Editor con't

It was the 4th time out for King and I with Lt. Bristol, and it was the 4th mission for all of Bristol's original crew and the 5th mission for Bristol.

There were some photos taken after I joined Bristol's crew. They were taken between the huts in the 550th Sqdn. area. We went down not long after this so someone may have the pictures and not know who the crew is. I would like to have them if they exist.

My first 16 missions were with Lt. Fred Borus but when we cut to 9 men on most crews, I was the one removed. I then flew 2 missions with 2 pilots I don't remember. Then followed the 3'A trips with Bristol.

I met Lt. Bristol because I had CONNECTICUT in large letters on the back of my A-2 jacket. He's from New Britain. We talked of our home state then he asked if I would like to join his crew as his 2 waist and tailgunners had been sent to the Ninth Air Force. We went down to operations and asked that I be Lt. Bristols new tail gunner.

The last town I lived in Connecticut was Avon only about 20 min. from Lt. Bristols home. I visited his mother about 5 years ago. I have only been on Cape Cod for 3 years.

Your letter memtions 7 chutes. If that is correct then something happened to one of our men after bailing out.

Five of us were in one lock up til dark, then we were taken to Mainz. I think I saw King about 5 days later but am not sure of it. I know King was not rounded up with the group on the first day.

A tall civilian with a wide brim hat came to our cell on the 9th and said: "Three of your comrades are dead, won't you give their names?"

We were not supposed to tell, but it was stupid! It makes no sense now, all we did was make the waiting longer for the families of the dead men. It must have been that the dog tags of the 3 were destroyed.

The plane broke up quickly because of our load of incendiaries. I learned our ship had sort of run wild through the formation from Clarence Peeks a photographer on that mission. He also told me the nose broke off, that explained how Bombardier Campbell got out. Lt. Campbell had told me in the first lock up he could not move, then he was suddenly free of the ship but did not know how he got out. The nose falling off also explained how the Germans had the Navigators bag intact in the police station. I was dumbfounded when I saw that bag- because after I opened up I saw our plane falling below the group and it had burning chunks sort of melting away like a candle and when it hit in some sparse woodland there was a large central fire with a separate ring of fire around it.

I met Peeks at the Air Crew Camp at St. Wendel. He was shot down Aug. 15th in the "Homesick Angel" I recognized him with a new bunch of P.O.W.'s brought up the road one day.

I believe Peeks is the photographer standing to the left in the picture of photos in the History.

I made the June 22nd Paris trip with Lt. Borns. There was red "Flak" and one of my amo boxes in the tail was splintered with a good sized hole in the tail cone. It seemed extra cold and we landed after dark.

Lt. McDonalds tail gunner was flashing a aldis lamp on the return and they were shot up by a night intruder that zeroed in on the light. They landed at a A-20 base and came back by truck late at night.

Lt. McDonald & Capt. White collided in front of us at Munich on July 12th. The only survivor of the 20 men was one of McDonalds waist gunners named Atilia from Brooklyn, NY. I met him after we moved to Stalag Luft 4 from St. Wendel in Sept.

Thank you for the crew report. I have been intending to get one for a few years but writing, (as you can see) is not one of my fortes. And so I always have more letters pending than I ever write. My only good subject in school was history.

I started this letter in November and it is now Pearl Harbor day! Dec. 7.

I believe I have rambled on too long here. (It all seemed important at the time.)

Sincerely,

Buell Martin II Inkberry Lane, Harwich, Mass. 02645

#### Dear Ed,

Enclosed is a batch of pix — all with return address on the back. Most of these have names on them. Lt. Fellers was a classmate (43-J) from Turner Field, GA. Feel free to use whatever you need.



Standing L to R: Lt's R. Dykins, A. Brower, V. Ferguson, R. Hill. Kneeling: Sgts: E. Snow, J. Harmon, W. Saliceno, J. Minco, F. Wolf, TKemler.

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Letters to the Editor con't.





Lt. Stodola with "Miss "D" Day"

Green Sqdn., 385th B.G., E Fellers

One man with no contact since WWII is Bob Dykins formerly from Washington, Indiana. He was a classical student of piano and on frequent passes to London, he would use time to practice piano.

Cheers,

Vic Ferguson 515 W. 3rd, McGregor, TX 76657

# How that '17 looped the loop, as you read in the January Newsletter.

#### Dear Ed,

I receive the newsletters regularly and wish to thank you for the good job that you are doing. I really do enjoy them. They really do bring back some fond memories.

My reason for this letter is to try to fill you in on some of the missing parts of the front page of "Yank" magazine that John DeBerg sent you.

I have been wracking my brain for the past few weeks trying to get it all together and this is the best that I can come up with.

The B-17 that did the "flip" was named "War Cry".

I was Assistant Crew Chief on the "Cinderella" and something happened to the Crew Chief of the "War Cry" and I took over the maintenance of the plane along with 2 of the finest mechanics in our Squadron, Sgt. Cameron Osborne and Sgt. Handy Gibson (I think we were all sargeants - if not then, we are now). We were the ground crew to ready the "War Cry" for combat. We replaced engines, super chargers and whatever else was necessary to get her in tip-top shape.

The day came when she was ready. The bombs were loaded on board and she took off on a bombing mission over Germany. She got into a slip and did a flip with bombs and ammo and the whole bit. She didn't drop the bombs. The crew returned to the base, got out of the ship and kissed the ground. I couldn't imagine what was happening but when I parked the ship and looked inside I knew why. Bombs were still in place but everything else was upside down, ammunition was scattered all through the plane and the rest of the equipment was one big mess.

We checked the plane from nose to tail and wing tip to wing tip. We couldn't find a crack or a rivet out of place.

I cannot recall who made up the flight crew of the "War Cry" but upon reading this item in the January '88 newsletter, I really would appreciate it if some one who might know could send me some information as to who they are and how I could reach them. For this, I will thank you in advance.

After that I was assigned a new plane and I christened her the "Frances" for my wife and Ozzie's wife. She was a dependable and proud plane and completed many missions safely.

I am quite proud of the fact that none were injured in any of the planes I helped to service and we never lost a plane in combat.

War was winding down and we had an opportunity to fly home in the "Frances". We made three stops and landed in Connecticut.

I am enclosing a picture of the Ground Crew members and myself of the "War Cry". From left to right are Sgt. Cameron Osborne, Sgt. Handy Gisbon and Myself - Sgt. Thomas Gentile.



Left to right: Sgt. Cameron Osborne, Sgt. Handy Gibson, Sgt. Thomas Gentile.

We had a 30 day furlough and reported to Alburquerque, New Mexico where we were to receive training on B-29's but the "A" Bomb was dropped in Japan and it ended the war.

This is the best recollection of what happened. Hope I can clear some things up for you.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Gentile 201 Newark Ave., Lyndhurst, NJ 07071

Letters to the Editor con't.

Dear Ed.

I enjoyed seeing the list of 385th planes in the April issue, but couldn't find ours. I'm not sure that we even had a name for the first 6 or 7 missions; it seems like we were flying several different planes.

But after that they made a lead crew out of ours, and we got a different plane, as well as some different crew members. WE originally had had Bob Silver and Mike Gallagher as pilot and co-pilot. About the time they made us a lead crew, they moved Silver into the operations office, and made Gallagher a pilot with another crew. Here are the names of the new crew:

Pilot — Virgil Benson Co-Pilot — ? Nash Navigator — Roger Oates Bombardier — Sylvan Lieberthal Engineer — Mike Kindya Radio — Rudy Burkhardt Radar Oper. — Natal D'Andrea Waist Gunner — Buzz Sawyer Tail Gunner — Jim Dacey

Since they had taken out the ball turret, we thought Gelding was an appropriate name for the plane.

I have never heard from Benson or Nash but Bob Silver, Mike Gallagher, Syl Lieberthal and I have kept in touch through the years, and have gotten together several times. In 1985 we also had Kindya and D'Andrea with us.

I enjoy the newsletter very much, especially some of those mission stories.

Forgot to mention we were in the 548th Squadron. We got over late, 10/6/44, and I flew only 18 missions before VE Day.

Sincerely Yours,

**Roger Oates** 961 Camino Del Retiro, Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Dear Ed,

First, referencing the Nose Art and B-17 names: Our first ship was "Possible Straight" so named because its last three serial numbers were -123. I don't have the full number but it was a B-17G, operational in 1945 and had an "X" on the tail. Maybe from the full list of 385th numbers, someone can come up with the full serial number.

Later we got another B-17G, serial number 42-102684, which we named "Sweet Chariot" because it was cornin' for to carry us home. (We flew it back to the states in June '45.) It had 54 mission bombs on its nose. Crew Chief was John D. Hite and he flew back with us in it.

The "we" above, are Crows Crew. I was navigator.

In my scrapbook I have photos of some of the nose art.

I have pictures of the following: Ragged but Right, Vat 69, Target for Tonight, Rum Dum, Barbara-B, Ruby's Raiders, & "Haybag" Annie.

I only have prints, but if any of the crew members of these planes want copies and will pay for negatives to be made, I'll be happy to oblige.

Target for Tonight is new to the list in the April "88 Hard Life. Also please note that the parentheses around Haybag in "Haybag" Annie is part of the name as painted on the nose. Barbara-B has no picture, just the name, at least on the right side of the nose. "Haybag" Annie has a picture of Annie standing and drinking a cup of something and saying, "Good old girl". Target for Tonight has an unclad lass bathing in a large wineglass with a line of music notation in the background.

Another subject, the newsletter heading: I like it -especially since POSSIBLE STRAIGHT is in there! However, I put in most of my 26 missions in 385th forts with red checkered tails, the square G had been phased out. How about somehow, including that motif in the heading also. And I'm sure others have added to the names list so that it can grow in the heading.

yours,

Bill Varnedoe, Jr. 5000 Ketova Way, Huntsville, AL 35803

#### Dear Ed,

I noticed in the newsletter, one of the members is Bob Weixler, I knew a Bob Weixler in the ground crew of the 548th Bomb Sq. from Louisville, KY. I lost track of him after we came home. Could it be the same Bob?

He developed a cockney accent while in England, on the way home on the boat he would speak in that tongue and the English sailors thought he was a stowaway.

Thanks for the newsletters, I really enjoy them.

Anthony J. Dresel 1595 Cooper Ave., Louisville, KY 40219

Editors Note: Our Bob Weixler also lives in Louisville ... Hope they get together.

Mr. Stern,

As a member and recipient of our 385th Newsletter, I am responding to your April 1988 issue, specifically with reference to the "Nose Art" article which does not list our B-17 which was known as "Perrys Pirates".

August 1988

#### August 1988

Page 11

#### Letters to the Editor con't

This name was taken from the comic strip of that era along with the fact that our lead pilot was Robert Perry. We were assigned to the 551st squadron of the 385th stationed at Great Ashfield.

Some young British gal who I think stayed at our base, painted our logo "Perrys Pirates" which was a sexy gal in a scanty pirates outfit with a drawn sword in one of her hands. I don't recall our planes serial number nor our crew chiefs name.

We were assigned this new B-17G on about our crews 4th or 5th mission and most of us completed 35 missions with her. I later understood that she was shot down on her 85th mission which went to Berlin.

Our crew consisted: Robert Perry - Lead Pilot; George Fanning - Co-Pilot; Peter Yanilos - Navigator; Stanley E. Potter - Bombardier; Joe Bloom - Radio Operator; "Chick" Belden - Engineer & Top Turret; Glen Berg -Waist Gunner; Frank Nutt - Waist Gunner; Myron Culkin - Ball Turret; John Dorand - Tail Gunner.

I don't recall one of our original waist gunners that we lost and was replaced with Nutt. We also lost Culkin and I can't recall his replacements name. I sure would like to know the status and address of any/all of my old crew.

I sure enjoy the newsletters and I send my best to all of the former 385th members.

Sincerely,

Stanley E. Potter 2095 East Post Road, Marion, Iowa 52302

A letter from John & Lucy Ellis to George and Gen Hruske.

Dear George and Gen,

You will probably have given up any hope of receiving a reply to your very kind letter dated February 6th last year, but, glad to say, we are still alive and have been meaning to write for a very long time.

We have had part of the schedule of the visit to England; Bath is mentioned, but the part we have leaves out the Bath visit. I think you would miss Monmouth on the journey, which would go along the Motorway, M4 from West Wales to cross the Severn Bridge and on to the Bath turn-off. This would miss Monmouth by about 17 miles, as we are that amount North of the M4 at Chepstow. We will try to get to Great Ashfield, and have invitations to stay, but, also we might try to get to Bath, only about 40 miles away, and join the group there for a short while. My father was born in Bath - we holidayed there every year with my Grandmother whilst I was young, so it is almost a second home to me. I am sure you will enjoy visiting there, as there is so much to see - a week or more is not enough. We had three weeks in South Africa last November-December, visiting our younger son who works there. We flew out via Luxembourg and Johnannesburg to Cape Town, three planes in one journey, and the same home. We visited quite a lot of the South West Cape, including Cape Town, we went to the Cape of Good Hope, where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet, and one of the roughest places in the world, but that day the sea was almost dead calm and the brightest blue. We were able to visit the top of Table Mountain, by cable car and also went along the South Coast for many miles, over many spectacular mountain passes and into Oudtschoorn, where the ostrich feather industry flourished for many years. Altogether a very memorable experience.

I also went to Ireland with Roger for a few days, sailing by ferry from Swansea to Cork. That was another wonderful experience.

We have had a very mild winter here and this spring things are very forward, as there has been little frost and snow to retard growth. We prepared some ground and sowed grass seed for a lawn last autumn, it is now green and level as though it has been there for years.

We shall look forward to August and September and hope that we shall be able to make it to see you all once again in Great Ashfield, and, possible, Bath as well. We must get the rest of the schedule and find out date and time and programme for Bath.

Thank you very much for writing to us - it is good to be remembered by our friends from America, and do please accept my apologies for such a long time since you wrote to us. No excuse really, just always feeling a little too occupied. People talk of a serene old age - do you have to be 90 for that?

With every good wish,

John and Lucy Ellis 13 Dixton Close, Monmouth Gwent Np5 3HE, Monmouth (0600) 5944

#### Dear Ed,

I would like to pass on to our members a couple of addresses that may be of interest to them

Anyone who has not received any medal, citation or campaign ribbon etc. can send a photo copy of their discharge, which does indicate what you were awarded, along with a letter indicating which ones you are missing to:

Chief Air Force Reference Branch National Personnel Records Center (Military Personnel Records) 9700 Page Boulevard St. Louis, Missouri 63132

As an example, I sent and requested the EUROPEAN, AFRICAN, MIDDLE EASTERN CAMPAIGN medal, which we all had coming, and about 2 months later they sent it to me. They also sent a record of all citations etc. that you received. Letters to the Editor con't.

Next, Ian McLachlan sent me an address for possible complete records of any mission one may be interested in. I sent for #142 June 25, 1944 and received 121 pages of that mission. Cost was \$42.35 and took about 2 months to receive, but was well worth it. Really complete including loading lists of all crew members and position each A/C in the formation that day, all observations etc. At this rate the 396 missions the 385th flew would be 35,816 pages and cost \$12,535.60. It would fill 30 volumes, now wouldn't it?

Mr. George C. Chalou Reference Branch General Archives Division Washington National Records Center Building, 4205 Suitland Road Suitland, Maryland

Our government really have some lengthly addresses don't they.

See everyone in Fargo in '89 eh Ed? I'll be there, so stay as healthy as you can, take it easy and above all "HAVE FUN".

Aloha Nui Loa from Hawaii Nei,

Jerry H. Ramaker 76-6176 Lehua Rd., Kailua Kona, Hawaii 96740

Aloha Ed;

Great paper of Apr. "88 as usual. Re: Nose Art info. "Wells Cargo" last 3 ser. # only 778, completed 25 missions with our crew and was still flying missions as of July 1944. Assigned to 548th BS. Pilot was 1st Lt. Wells. Sometimes on 2 engines and at times with lots of holes in her, but always made it home. 2 aborts, if I remember. Last mission buzzed the tower and then crew rode on her dorsal fin & back by the tower & to our hard stand.

Jerry Ramaker

President Earl L. Cole

Dear Earl,

First off, the reunion at Dayton was grand, and it was my first but not my last as we plan on attending in Fargo next year. I also like the letter from the PREZ on the front of our newsletter.

In answer to the possible painting of a mission that would truly represent the 385th BG (H), I would like to suggest mission #107 to Zwichau, Germany on May 12, 1944. As our group history indicates, this was one of our most outstanding missions. We led the division forces and the 4th Combat Bombardment Wing. The 385th received a citation for this mission, that is also in our group history book. This mission belongs to the 385th and would distinguish us in a painting very well I feel. The citation could be printed on the back of the painting so as to further describe this outstanding mission.

The idea of a mission painting is great, and I for one would support such an effort.

Take it easy Earl, stay as healthy as you can, and above all have "FUN". Aloha Nui Nui from Hawaii Nei,

Jerry H. Ramaker

Mike had a letter that brought forth this confession.

Dear Jeff,

The story of your Dad's adventure outside of town here aroused some of *my* memories. You see, I *too got* lost on a cross-country flight — my *graduation* flight from Primary!

It was 1943, and I was flying the Fairchild PT-19A with open cockpit and no radio. As I made a right turn onto the second leg, I had to unfold my map from the clip board on my knee to continue the vector. Somehow, the map got sucked out of the cockpit and sailed away, leaving me stranded in strange country. For about forty-five minutes I zig-zagged across central Oklahoma, trying to recognize names of towns on water towers and depots, but to no avail. On top of that, in my anxiety, I forgot to switch wing tanks, but recovered before the engine died, and landed in a wet oat field.

Farmers came running, and after I calmed them down, they told me the little town nearby was Hitchcock, about sixty miles to the northwest of El Reno, with which I was familiar. I still regard that adventure an "orientation" landing. It sounds "navigational" that way.

After I returned to Mustang Field, I had one hell of a time explaining the mud on my ship, and the green oats and mud which jammed the tail wheel. But I graduated anyway, only to be washed in Basic. That was a different kind of story, however.

Sincerely, and many thanks,

Mike Pappas

Dear Ian,

Thanks for your letter, and especially for the kind offer of mission summaries and maybe even a picture of Whitey's plane! I really do appreciate it. As it happens since I wrote to you I've had another letter from Ed Metcalf, and he's provided a lot of new information, hopefully enough for our purposes. Of course, after 43 years, there's alot he can't remember. In fact, he's keen to hear anything I can dig up too. August 1988

## 385th BGMA NEWSLETTER

Page 13

#### etters to the Editor con't

Their B-17 was called CURLY'S KIDS after the pilot, J.O. Leonard. Being almost bald, he was known as 'Curly' sometimes also as 'Pappy' Leonard. Here's the crew list:

J.O. Leonard. Pilot ('Curly' or 'Pappy'); Edward Metcalf, ball turret ('Junior'); Eugene Hackle, co-pilot; Bob Stein, navigator; Al Lages, bombardier; Charlie Bond, engineer; Rea Lee, tail gunner; Pete Defeudis, waist gunner; Wilber Nutter, waist gunner ('Wash'); Carl Pearson, radio operator ('Whitey').

In his original letter Ed said that their tour was from March-June 1944, and '25 plus' missions. In his latest letter he simply says 25 missions, but I'm sure it must have been more because this was the period when the tour was upped twice. In early April it was upped to 30 and in late May to 35. If he flew most or all of the 385th's missions in March (14) and was past 15 when tours were upped then he would probably have flown about 27, otherwise probably around 32-3. Anyway, I've written to him about this. He can actually remember 15 missions, all in April-May-early June. He was at the reunion in Dayton with Bob Stein the navigator, and they were given a list of all the group's missions. They marked in the 15 they could remember and kindly sent it to me. They include two notable events: Zwickau and Magdeburg.

April 9 — Warnemunde
April 13 — Augsburg April 19 — Werl
April 19 — Werl
April 22 — Hamm
April 24 — Fredrichshafen
April 26 — Brunswick
April 29 — Magdeburg (Berli
April 30 - Clermont-Ferraud
May 12 — Zwickau
May 22 — Keil
May 25 — Liege
May 29 — Leipzig
May 31 — Hamm
June 5 — French Coast
June 6 — Caen

He says he's sure there was a Munich mission not on the list (perhaps Munich March 18th? He may not have noticed this one.)

n)

By my calculations the raid on Hamm was Carl Pearson's 21st birthday. What a way to spend your 21st!

Anyway, any extra information you can dig up will be much appreciated. I'm particularly eager, of course, to trace the 'missing' missions — hopefully without having to go to Washington! Thanks again for all your lelp.

ill the best,

?aul Robert Flat 2, 2 Hilton Road, Leeds LS8 4HB From Newsletter Vol. XIVNo. 1 Jan. '87 From book by Andy Rooney & Bud Hutton " Aerial Gunner"

he was grounded, Jim was awarded his first Oak

to the Air Medal; that was for the second uster fi<sup>^</sup>Rmssions, ending with Bremen on October 8. It always took a couple of weeks for the papers to go through on awards. Gramps Jewel, Dixon's wise old top turret gunner, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, having been credited with three enemy fighters, totaling fifteen points, and having enough missions to his credit to pass the required mark of twenty-five points for a DFC. Jim wrote home, explaining the awards system. One point for each mission, five points for an enemy aircraft destroyed; five pomti^neexsary for the Air Medal and each subsequent Ouster, and twenty-five points for the DFC. The letter started him thinking about awards, and the two dollars a month extra pay a fellow got with the DFC, and he figured it was all cut and dried but maybe it was just as well that way; you knew where you stood, at least as far as the awards went

Dear Ed,

Was wondering if this point system was really used? We flew 25, yet have only Air Medal/30LE - No. D.F.C.. Is there an expert among us on this subject: "Medals & Citations for the 385h"?

I suppose Clark Rollins has already sent you the enclosed picture! He can still get in his A-2 and loves to show it off! This was taken in Cleveland at old 94th Squadron Restaurant (recently renamed to 100th B.G.)

Keep up the good work!

Cleve Solenberger, (Eng. Madam Shoo Shoo) 7603 Ulmerton Rd. 28F., Largo, FL 33541



Clark Rollins - Co-pilot on Tommy Thompson's crew of "Madamm Shoo Shoo".



James I. Hastings, Jr. — May 1988 Francis J. Wagner — July 1988 Letters to the Editor con't.

Dear Mr. Stern,

My ending up in the 8th AF was something I had nothing to do with. When I went in the Army, I was immediately sent to Camp Forrest, Tennessee, where I became Supply Sergeant for the Induction Station (shortly after my June 27, 1941, swearing day). I stayed for around 11 months. The Post Sergeant Major (who I played baseball with) called me up to post headquarters and told me my name was on a cadre for the infantry. He asked how I liked airplanes and arranged for me to visit the first sergeant at an Air Base they were opening on the other side of town. My orders for transfer came the next day. I stayed at Tuilahoma/William L. Northern Army Air Base until May, 1943. Then it was time to go to Kellogg Field, Michigan, for to make up 12 Station Complement Squadrons. I sailed the Atlantic in the Aquitania the first of the month. During my two years with the 385th, I tried my hand at flying, but I washed out after 3 missions. I was honorably discharged September 9, 1945.

Yours sincerely,

Robert C. Cribb 104 Granger Road, Spartanburg, SC 29301

Dear Ed,

I have the Ronald Molan film he took of the 385th BGMA in 1976 in England. I was to send it to Reid Lowe in Miami Lakes, FL after we looked at it. I have called information for his telephone number and they advise me he no longer lives there.

If you have a current mailing address for him or telephone number, would you be so kind as to let me know it.

Sincerely,

Charles Smith 634 Longwood Drive, NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30305

Dear Ed,

As an English friend of the 385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association, I would like to say thank you again for continuing to send me the Newsletters. I take great pleasure in receiving them and reading all the latest news of the Association.

I am a member of my own Royal Air Force Re-Union Association of those of us who trained to be pilots in the U.S.A, during the war, and realize the comradeship that these Associations bring out in us.

With reference to your War Brides letter from Kathleen Marano in the January issue, I can re-assure her, and others of you who remember Ipswich, that the

Great White Horse Hotel has *not* been demolished. They are actually doing some modernisation work on it at the moment but basically it is still the same building as they had their reception in.

I and my wife hope you have a very good time when you arrive over here for your trip in August, and hope very much that we will be able to meet some of you at Great Ashfield.

Yours sincerely,

Reg Hammond. F999 75, Bromeswell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, England, IP43AU

Dear Ed,

After I got the other letter written I remembered to ask you if I had written to you about trying to locate someone. If not I would like a notice in a future newsletter I have gone through the 8th AF search service, and VFW, DAV magazines. I have tried the VA, St. Louis etc. I thought a short article like below might jog someones memory.

Does anyone remember ROBERT L. FLETCHER serial number 18075234, and ENGINEER-GUNNER. Anyone recall who's crew he was on, anyone have a roster with his name on it? We transferred out about August 7, 1944 as spare gunners to the 397BG, 597BS a B26 outfit in Bournemouth England. There were several others transferred out the same time, anyone else recall going to the 9th AF? I have contacted the 397BG and they gave me his serial number but have nothing else, they have no newsletter, I have tried writing many Robert L. Fletcher's from phone listings people have sent me. From what I have been told, the serial number indicates he enlisted from Texas. Anyone have any Robert L. Fletchers listed in your phone book or any other suggestions? Would appreciate any help you can give.

As ever,

Clarence Abrahamson 6431 Menlo St., Santa Susana, CA 93063

#### Dear Ed,

Enclosed are *a* couple of items of possible interest the orders assigning crews to an airplane at Kearney, NE and so, on across. We have a new photographer son-in-law who made several enlarged prints of the Hesitatin' Hussy for us and an extra for the newsletter. We do enjoy the newsletter.

Burnell A. Cook Rt. #3 5377 S. Lake Road, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Interior Shot of Jesse Ashlock's Hardlife Control Tower.



## Log From Hardlife Control Tower

у" VF^^AY-25 MAY. its-0001 Watch 6 j-yy B. rw>0 5!° £> 815 fing - T/0 0815-ETR 1200 of the boarts DS36 0WS~ A-48, Al-55, or B-53 provis & returning y at Ha Ist A. a.C. 0800 Of Watch i M. g. Connif 36 Flu Pitet A/2 123 P/X Fust A/2 0ff watch Ingl 0916 in 1st St.a.c. Conh iin On Watch LT. Q.C. songles 1230 AST 2 EVIVAL MISSION /7&> /} \*c 368 down - grp. ops. · mor ow 1.500 will not retien . The 2845 3&F es. ale 668 it is not known where '=%7 c-0 (=down, % 597 landid 2304 1 outstandin 2345 7c 8^3 3 od. of watch & de capt. a.c. C 2359 mgy 1945 SA fuiday 36 0800  $<\& X, 7t/a77^r >$ 1/cr. G.C. 1030 or parade 0900 w 1 Clip /'cF /a fZj 0950 Watch With Connig Post # 4. C 11/2T. a.c. 1230 /U3 . Nite flying tonight r U 31

August 1988

Off Watch no. Conniff niler. G.C. 1800 I/LT. Q.C. On Watch 1800 1.0. 2200 ETR- 0245 allentes 2030 scuebbed, Col: 2155 Reed MAY 1941 Watch Con 10.000 1 green - All R/W aufueld 0800 flues N says O.K. to clo ers poor With 10 30 starting markon 13/31 In repairs R/ul 28/15the lying night flying 2124 72 227 onday 28 MAY 1941-Weitch 0001 464 +118 Jacon 0025-0039 636 4/5 Row night Ce S' FIRST e/rb dawn 361 F/Z Jast dowN »<?\*/∎ & e 3. ol'ff AROMI glacy 1/2T.a.C. Walch 9^0-0 im , 07 Dr. M---Ward RIW 25 1537 hangel 1655 loworroy-(^Z>W 190! nm gel. L) i/[J^| Conif 2015 107 tt.a. 3800 636 4/3 2148 922 A/R 2205 RS 13 e/R RSt 2351 ecun 2400 an Watch a.c. 9 MAY 1050 000 Watch 0001 636 4/5 xom night Flying 0213 JOW N R/W 13/31 4. S 0755 andi 1/c ra.c. Witch 0800 , 10tht . 4 < \sjJc~L 174 Olh 6800 61 I ar c on the grand for one Major Weibert cultorizes F/C to fold 0910 a in after calling .. fortas to apply the all mit been cleared This ~ /A-r>>vn >» <- not To d ih regime ice R.-J. 1^ 'G. , Ist A. 1230 If Watch 4.1. 0 Chalch! 1230 AF pongle 127. a.C Match R. F. Ciren 1st H. a.c. In Watch R. F. H. Ciren 1st H. a.c. Note My Truntin & Celestial Nav. - 7/03"300 1800 18 --1705 IV te Ly 569 5/6 fat affinte ly 1148 597 F/X. (and Af nite flying - 3 local - 11 cd. nev. 2209

## Why did you think it was OK to close on May 27, 1945, 'Spoon'? And how about you checking out on May 29, Sponberg?

#### STATION 155 C-OIE TOUKtUCTT

1. Station 155 Golf Tournament ".ill be played ,.t the Ipsvich and Bury St. Edmonds courses.

2. The tournament Till be a modal plays and '.ill consist of fifty six holes.

3, Golf dubs vill be obtainable at the Athletic Department. Two sets of clubs vill be available for a foursome.

4. The four players vith the lowest score '.ill represent the station in the 3rd Division Golf, ournament which will be hold the (?th  $\ll //th$  of Juno. Players vith the fifth and sixth lowest scores vill be carried on our station team as alternates.

5. The following is a 1. st of players and the days they play. All scores vill be turned into the . Athletic Department.

#### GO IP SCHEDUIE

Sat. May 26th Sun. May 27th Stat Tonoy - Sqr Krone Lt. Col. Witherspoon Cpl. Roger Huff-Pour some Capt. Caples -Foursome S/Sgt J.V. Purpuri. • -Capt. Enmons ~ at at Ipsvich Lt. Sponberg -Ipsvich Pvt Toomey -SAIKTONE Lt. Jills --S/Cgl Turoy -F ours omo Cpl Roger Huff -Four some Lt. Mo ro -S/Sgt Purpuri at S/Sgt Kluttz at Pvt Toomey -Ipsvich Ipsvich T/sgt Baker -Tues. Hay 30th i.Ton. Hay 29th Sq . Xir INE -S/Sgt T-owey--Lt. Jills -Lt. Moore-Foursome Cpl. Roger Huff-F ours omo S/Sgt Kluttz at S/Sgt Purpuri at Ipsvich T/Sgt Hiker-Pvt Toomey -Bury Lt, 7ills -Lt. Col. Witherspoon -Foursome Lt. ?ioro -F ours omo Capt Caples -S/Sgt Kluttz -Capt. Emmonsat at Ipsvich Lt, Sponborg -T/Sgt Baker -Bury Wed. May 31st Lt. Col. vitherspoon -Capt; Caples -Foursome Capt. Emmons at Lt. Sponborg -Bury

Lettc s to the Editor con't.

Df r Allen,

Your idea on a 385th anthology is one that's been running around in my mind for some time now. At present, I'm working on my first book which is due out next year. It's working title is "Final Flight" and it tells the stories behind some of the British, American and German aircraft I've excavated. The Hutchison-Pease collision of 21st February, 1944, is featured because that was the story which began my research and introduced me to the 385th. Beyond, "Final Flight" I'm working with an ex Eighth AF photographer, Russell Zorn, on a book which used pictures from his extensive collection and describes events behind them. I like the idea of a 385th anthology but publishers have to see a market for a book before they undertake it. I think the story of the 385th is worth doing and will see what reaction I get from my publisher over here although, in truth, I reckon it's more suitable for an American publisher. One thing I do know, there would be hundreds of hours of work in it.

I wonder what the Group thinks of having an anthology — how many of them would be prepared to write their stories. I reckon you'd need someone to dig into National Archives as well.

Befit wishes for now,

Ian

A letter to our Treasurer from an old friend of your Editor.

#### Dear John,

I read in the AIR FORCE Magazine the announcement of the upcoming 385th Bomb Group reunion this August. Having been a member of the 385th, I contacted Allan Chealander for the particulars. He is sending them to me and advised me to contact you with regards to joining the Association.

I was in the 550th Squadron and flew 30 missions between shortly after D Day and approximately May 1945. IF YOU WISH SOME KIND OF DOCUMEN-TATION, I still have most of my records and would be happy to furnish you the information required.

I have enclosed a check for \$8.00 as suggested by Allan. Please add me to the membership, and if you could send a copy of the last newsletter, I would appreciate it.

Regards,

Richard A. (Dick) Cowan 4854 Tiffany Way, Fair Oakes, CA 95628

Dear Ed,

In response to your request for more names of plane I can aad 3 from photo's I still have. They are: Madam Shoo Shoo — Hare's Breadth — and our ship during

most of our tour — Angel's Sister. I do not have serial numbers for any of them but E.E. Martin was crew chief. We were *a* crew that arrived late in the war and served in the 549th Sq. from Nov. 5, 1944 thru March 23, 1945. Even though we were late we certainly had a lot of "things happen". We loaned out Dean Leyerly, our Radio operator, on Dec. 6, 1944 and that plane went down so he POW'ed the rest of the war. On Jan. 14, 1945 Lee Trouth our bombadier caught flak over Magdeburg - Hollendorf and died that night. We seemed to have lost engines right and left and frequently had to land in France sometimes for gas, other times because of engines out and red lights all over the cockpit. On Feb. 16, we had to land in Belgium and spent 6 days in Brussels trying to get a ride back. Our good buddies, Ben Taylors crew, were already "dividing" up our candy bars.

Enclosed is a photo of our crew.



Back Row - left to right: \*Clarence Strout - Eng, Jerry Miller - co-pilot, \* Wayne Montgomery - pilot, Bill Lahiff - navigator (now deceased). Front Row: \*Harold Trousdale - ball turret gunner, \*J.D. Noble - waist gunner, Isotti - radio operator, Brier - togglier, \*Ed Stermer - tail gunner.

We're a quiet group but we made most of the reunions and the first big trip to the Base in England. I've always wondered where Ben Taylor, Isotti and Brier are located. Maybe someday we'll meet.

Wayne Montgomery

One last chuckle.

After a Chem. Eng. Degree from U of Okla. I joined the Aluminum Co. of America in 1948 as a Sales Engineer. I sold many millions of pounds of Aluminum forgings, sheet, plate, extrusions and rivets to Aircraft builders. (Mostly to Gruman and Republic-Fairchild in the 1960's) I learned a lot in 37 years about metal stress, fatigue, stress corrosion cracking, etc. in handling aircraft accounts. Any how, if I had known in 1943 what I now know about the properties of metals, I would have joined the Coast Guard and stayed out of those flying machines! Just kidding! Seriously - Aluminum is a great metal and Boeing certainly built an outstanding plane in the B-17's series.

Wayne Montgomery Ret. Capt., Pilot Angel's Sister '44-'45 457 Ola State Road, Gibsonia, Pennsylvania 15044

August 1988

Letters to the editor con't.

Dear Ed,

Thanks for your note of April 6th.

Here's some more photographs for future newsletters. No. 1 comes from Ruel Weikert's collection and shows Lt. D.A. Gray's crew in front of 42-30822 the, "Dorsal Queen". The only problem is, I don't know who's who and hope people can put names to faces for me.

The "Dorsal Queen" went down on 25th February, 1944, during a mission to Regensburg. Crew as follows:

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KIA
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KIA
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t

"A/C 42-30822 received a direct hit from A A fire in the nose, which blew the nose of the aircraft off and also badly damaged the No. 3 engine. The ship climbed in a slow chandelle to the left, passed over another ship in the formation, and then fell straight down smoking. Four of the crew are known to have bailed out and one report from returning crews states that 5 chutes were seen leaving the aircraft. The foregoing events took place directly over the target."

Photo No. 2 also comes from Ruel and is of Lt. S.P. Dixon's crew in front of, "Lady Susie II", 42-5912. Again, I don't know any names.

No. 3. Nothing known at all. Are you in this picture?

No. 4. 9th October, 1943. Lt. McIlveen's crew with "Piccadilly Queen". They were lost on 24.2.44 flying a B-17 serial 42-31349. Mission to Rostock.

Pilot	Mcllveen, Clarence S.	Capt.
CP	Lapczynski, John	2/Lt
Nav.	Dickman, Charles W.	Lt
Bomb	Williams, William D.	1/Lt
TogTG	Scarbrough, John D.	T/Sgt
R/Õp	Rotunda, Charles E.	T/Sgt
Ball	Rigg, Donald G.	S/Sgt
Tail	Barrett, Edward A.	S/Sgt
RWG	Mahoney, Jean A.	S/Sgt
LWG	Malmfelt, Raymond F. S/S	gt

"This ship was last sighted in the vicinity NW of Rostock. . . over Mecklenburg Bay. The ship had earlier sustained rocket attacks from two JU88's which caused the loss of one engine.. .the ship dropped about 1,000 feet below the formation and was jumped by three enemy aircraft which set the No. 3 engine on fire. Last seen under control, gliding towards cloud cover with a Ju88 and Mel 10 following. 7 chutes sighted."









I hope this letter will generate some replies. Pictures without names lack value and interest - I'd like to put this right.

All the best for now,

Ian McLachlan

Page 19

#### Letters to the Editor con't.

Dear Tom.

Page 20

I just turned to that section of the 385th Bm Gp Memorial Assn newsletter **HARD LIFE HERALD** where your article about *"The Armament Section"* was carried.

I think that is a wonderful article! Those troops, the Armorers and other of the Armament Section/Shop, never have had proper recognition given them!

The article is so great I would like to get you to write it to encompass accolades being given *all men of all units Armament Sections!* Would you do that? I don't want to cut the 385th out but it would be more representative of a salute to all if we only used 385th photos and give full credit to you and the magazine as 385thers! What do you say?

With every good wish and appreciation for a mostworthy and well done article...

#### Fraternally,

E.C. "Ned" Humphreys, Jr. Founder & Executive Director Bombardiers Incorporated Star Rt. 1, Box 254, Eagle Harbor, MI 49951

#### Aloha Ed,

Enclosed find an article from the DAV magazine. As we in the 385th BG had many POW's, thought this might be of interest to them.

I know there is lots to do for the FARGO 89 reunion, but take it easy Ed, and hope to see you there. Know it will be a great reunion.

Aloha from Hawaii Nei,

Jerry H. Ramaker

## **POW Medal To Be Issued**

Department of Defense officials have announced that the Prisoner of War Medal is now available to former prisoners of war, who rendered honorable service during their period of captivity.

The medal will be issued at no cost to members of the Armed Forces who were taken prisoner of war and held captive after April 5, 1917. The medal may also be awarded posthumously to the next-of-kin of POW's who died in captivity.

Former POWs, or their next-of-kin, may apply for the medal by writing to the military records center of the military service to which they were part of during their imprisonment. Application forms are available from the military, veterans service organizations and other public service agencies. In addition to writing directly to the appropriate military records center, applicants may submit their requests through a third party, such as the DAV or public officials, who will agree to receive the medal and present it to the requestor.

A toll free number, 1-800-873-3768, has been established to take requests for application forms and provide information about the POW Medal.

Completed applications should be sent to one of the following:

#### ARMY

U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center, ATTN: DARP-PAS-EAW, 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5200.

#### NAVY/MARINE CORPS/ COAST GUARD

U.S. Navy Liaison Office, National Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5199.

#### U.S. AIR FORCE (Including former Army Air Corps Personnel)

Air Force Reference Branch, National Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5199.

Defense records indicate approximately 142,000 service members qualify for the POW Medal from action during World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

#### DAV MAGAZINE

#### Dear Ed,

I enjoyed reading the June newsletter Vol. XV No. 5 until I read the piece on page 4 title "The Armament Section" where I read that I had *'suffered, a stroke and is out of it"* — I don't know where my good friend Tom Harrison gets his material and I am asking for a correction Ed!

I *did* suffer a stroke during heart by-pass surgery in July of 1980 and after intensive therapy and rehabilatation, I am very much *"in it"*. I am still active in my company as a consultant and a member of the Board of Directors. I do spend a good part of the winter in Naples, FL since the cold weather is not to my liking. We return to Michigan for the summer around the end of June.

Ed, thank God I came out of my medical problems as well as I did. If you hear from Harrison, tell him I will be glad to take him on in chess, gin rummy, "scrabble" or whatever — but above all, don't let him do any more "write-ups" on his old buddy.

Bill McInerney 0855917 - 551st - 385th BGR 4051 Gulf Shore Blvd. N., Naples, FL 33940 Letters to the Editor:

Dear Ed,

As usual, I enjoyed reading the latest newsletter. You do all units of the 385th a terrific service. The story on "Rum Dum" jogged this old pilots memory too. I was surprised to read that she was assigned to the 550th andthat she didn't complete her 100th mission until 3-31-45.

My wife accuses me of having a 10-30 memory: I don't remember what happened 10 minutes ago, but I'm pretty good about what took place 30 or more years ago. Now I wonder if I'm slipping in that catagory too, because I thought I'd flown "Rum Dum" on at least 3 occasions and I was with the 548th. Was it usual to fly ships from other squadrons? Also, I thought it had passed the 100th mission mark when I flew it in June of 1944. I have a picture of me standing next to its nose, but from that angle I can only count 61 bombs and 11 swastikas.

After losing our original "GIN Rickey" which isn't listed on the cover of the newsletter, on May 8th, 1944, and 5 of our original crew, I flew a lot of different ships with a lot of new men. I have pictures of a few of the ships but unless they have nose-art you can't identify them. In those days, they wouldn't let you show numbers or letters.

Is there a record of who flew "Rum Dum"? It could be quite a list in 100 or more missions, enough to start a club.

Best wishes,

Fred Ihlenburg 4 Preakness Ct., Lake Oswego, OR 97035

P.S. I'm disappointed not to be going on the G.B. tour in August. Especially since my navigator and his wife, Clem and Terry Irons, are going. But since my stroke late last year, I hesitate leaving the country. For awhile, not too long ago, it took as much courage for me to drive my car as it used to take for a mission to Berlin. I will make the Fargo Reunion in 89 however, and I'm going to try to get at least 5 of our old crew to go too.

Fred

Dear Mr. Stern,

This is to inform you that my father, James I. Hastings, Jr., died at the Southwest Texas Methodist Hospital on May 11, 1988 at 2:40 am. Burial followed on May 13, 1988 at 11/00 am at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, with military honors.

My father was a 2nd Lieutenant Bombardier in the 8th Air Force, 385th Bombardment Group, 551st Bomb Squadron assigned to the bomber "Spirit of Chicago". On his 25th mission, April 29, 1944, his plane was shot down over Germany, and he was taken prisoner of war. Imprisoned at Stalag Luft III, he was liberated on April 29, 1945 one year to the day, by Gen. George S. Patton's tanks.

Please include his obituary in your newsletter.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Hastings 7811 Paint Drive, San Antonia, TX 78227

#### Dear Ed,

I enjoy the 385th BGMA newsletter very'much, but I think I should call to your attention what I believe are two 385th men's names incorrectly spelled. They're both in the 550th, my brother Frank Creegan's squadron.

On Page 6 it's Joe Carpinetti, if he was Lucile (?) Carpinetti's husband. And it's Morris Corgnati, if he lived in Massachusettes, I believe it was. I've enchanged Christmas cards with both families for 40 years. *Not* Carpinatte and Corgrati.

Sincerely,

Rose Mary Bishard 725 S. Eddy, Ft. Scott, KS 66701

#### Dear Ed;

We sure enjoy the fine newsletter and the title **"Hard Life"** is so fitting and descriptive. I was especially glad to read where Dom Jordan from Ft. Myers, FL asked about some information on one of the Great B-17's that flew out of Great Ashfield. It gives me an opportunity to reply and brag on B-17, Mississippi Miss and also to brag about the crew that first flew it and flew it for so long. All of this time we belonged to the 548th Squadron, 385th Bomb Group.

We did not pick up this aircraft on our first couple of missions but did fly it on most of our missions and we flew so often, we did not allow many crews to fly in until we completed our 35 missions, which was a combat tour. Our first mission was to Zwichau and it was a real rough one with many enemy fighters and some bad flak. Our crew was split up to fly with experienced crews for our first mission. Our co-pilot, Charles Manuel was flying in a B-17 that shot down a German fighter that crashed into their B-17 and there were no survivors to my knowledge. This was the mission that the Group received a Presidential Citation.

#### Letters to the Editor:

Our crew picked up a brand new B-17 after a couple of missions and the crew named the airplane the "Mississippi Miss" I guess because I was the Pilot and was from the state of Mississippi. It was a great aircraft and we tried to keep it in good condition.

Our ground crew chief was named Miller and I believe he was from New Jersey. He was one of the finest if not the finest crew chief. He treated this aircraft like it was a child of his. In almost every mission, we would return with many flak holes. However, Chief Miller would work all night and the aircraft would be ready for takeoff early the next day. I think he spent most of his waking hours at night working on the Mississippi Miss so it would be in the best of condition for the next combat mission. We had only one time that we had to abort and return to the base. When we taxied into the hardstand, we thought Chief Miller was going to cry. He saw the feathered engine and he said he would probably have to get a rebuilt engine. He wasn't sure this almost new engine could be repaired or not.

I do remember one time that another crew used our plane on a mission. The crew returned to England and had to land at another base. It was almost dark and on the final approach a German plane was over the field and dropped a bomb and it landed behind the Mississippi Miss on its landing roll. The Pilot apologized to me when he returned for almost losing our aircraft.

Our crew flew our first mission on 12 May 1944 and we flew number 4 position under the lead aircraft for about 5 missions and from then on we flew high squadron lead all but three missions on 11, 12 and 13 July 1944 which we flew as low squadron lead to Munich for 3 days straight. We do not know what happened to this fine aircraft but we give much credit to this aircraft and our crew chief Miller for getting us through some real rough missions and a combat tour. After our tour of duty the crew split up and I went to 4th Bomb Wing at Bury St. Edmunds where I spent 7 months as an operations officer.

Four members of this crew did attend the reunion at Dayton, Ohio last year. They were Pilot Howard Richardson, ball turret gunner Felton Watkins, waist gunner Edmund Nowicki, and tail gunner Robert Myers. We don't know where navigator Richard Royce, bombardier Gilbert Enderle, co-pilot Gorsuch or radio operator Wallace O'Neil are but would like to. Engineer Henry Brown lives in Columbia, SC and William McKinney from Jackson, TN has passed on. Enclosed is a picture of the Mississippi Miss with chief Miller and a picture of our crew. Please return to me.

Thanks,

Howard Richardson 4624 Kelton Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211

Life Members

Harold Schrotter — 179



CREW OF THE MISSISSIPPI MISS - left to right: Navigator - Richard B. Royce; Co-Pilot - Gorsuch; Pilot - Howard Richardson; Bombardier - Gilbert F. Enderle; Waist Gunner - William R. McKinney; Waist Gunner -Edmund G. Nowicki; Ball Turret Gunner - Felton Watkins, Jr.; Rear Gunner - Robert F. Myers; Engineer -Henry E. Brown; Radio Operator - WallaceB. O'Neil



Crew Chief Miller of the Mississippi Miss

A letter to George S. Hruska, Secretary.

Dear George,

Your mailing arrived just a few days after I returned from a trip to England and W. Germany. A high school classmate (flew P-51 Mustangs out of Duxbury) and I revisited our old haunts, including the little town where I was captured after bailing out over Deutschland. Out plane was hit with flak on our 18th mission. Not sure of the spelling, but it was a synthetic oil plant called Merseberg.

I had a hard time finding the remains of the base, but finally located the main runway and some of the hardstands around the perimeter. Not much left, as you know. A young man was building a huge chicken ranch on one end of the runway, and he has a small plane there for personal use.

The air museum at Duxbury is very interesting and worth visiting. Better than the others, including RAF, in the London area.



Chicken ranch at far end of runway now — me in right foreground. Windy & rainy.



The pub at the depot in Elmswell



Old crew quonset?



Remains of old hardstand in foreground



Sqd. 548, Barracks 113 Left to right: Mercer AObernathy, Tim Crimnims, Fred Dunton, Willard Hagman, George Hruska.



Old WWII Truck



Elmswell Station

Can the Association help me locate the whereabouts of my crew? I've often thought about trying to trace them down, but never seem to get around to doing it.

Hope the pictures bring back some memories for you. The WWII truck is sitting on the edge of the runway.

Regards,

Hal Goetsch 9209 Meriwether Ave. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Ed,

I am writing to let you know of a small reunion that took place over the Memorial Day weekend.

Six members of the 548th and their wives converged on Moe Bridge's "Little Southfork" Ranch in Fletcher, N.C.

Those present were Buck and Irene Huber from Fenwick Island, DE; C.J. and Doris Thomas from Greensburg, PA; Marty and Edie Girson from Pittsburgh, PA; Dave and Sue Beam from New Ellenton, SC; Herb and Vera Granger from Greenville, SC; Stump and Frances Osborn from Ashville, NC; and of course Moe and Hazel Bridges.

We had a great outdoor Bar-B-Que with plenty of good food and a lot to drink.

The stories keep getting better and longer. In fact, some of them, I have a hard time recognizing and I was a part of them.

It really was a great weekend and well worth the trip.

I am enclosing a snapshot.

Buck and Irene Huber are missing from the picture.

Edie and I are looking forward to the reunion in Fargo.

Its not true that Fargo still has wooden sidewalks and d'irt streets and a Livery stable and a Wells Fargo office is it?

Keep up the good work Ed. You are doing a great job and I for one greatly appreciate the time and hard work that you put in.

# 385<sup>TMBG M A</sup>

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

Sincerely,

Marty Girson

#### Editor's note to Marty:

No Marty, we do not have wooden sidewalks and dirt street, but we **DO** have a Hanging Tree that we can use for smart guys from the 548th. We look forward to your visit!



Left to right: Bridges, Thomas, Granger, Beam, Osborne, Girson.

#### **Aviation Art of Randy Green**

Almost 20 members have expressed interest in purchasing one of Randy Green's paintings.

In addition to those wanting copies of the picture illustrated in the June Newsletter, suggestions as to a special painting depicting one of "our" raids included Regensburg, Marienburg, Zwichau, Schweinfurt, and Berlin.

Send your requests to Secretary George Hruska, 7442 Ontario St, Omaha, NE 68124. He is tabulating them.

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