

CHAPLAIN JIM SEZ:

Hello! Again!

Marty Girson's articles (all of them) in the last 'Hardlife Herald' were not only very interesting but triggered a lot of memories. It's hard to remember, though, the cost of things in 1960 let alone before that time. But one thing we all must remember is the cost we paid for peace. War is never profitable; everybody loses something, even if some do make money. The suffering, the deaths, the scars, the memories are experienced by all sides. I pray the leaders of the world will do all they can to settle disputes without armed conflict.

Ed Stern's letter to his wife during WWII shows some of the kindness we tried to share with those who had suffered. Remember also how we kept saying each year "home by Christmas." Our suffering has made "me" more grateful for you all, more appreciative of my family and more tolerant of my country.

My heart goes out to the families of our buddies who have died. I trust each have been able to find solace from family, friends and God.

The Love of God surpasses all understanding and will sustain each of us if we will ask.

"Every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

May the God of All bless you and keep you. And may we each remember to pray for each other.

Sincerely

Jim Vance



Harold Jordan
James C McAnally

July 1994
May 199.

The Celebration of Jim McAnally's Life

James McAnally, Age 73 died Tuesday at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center of injuries received while working at this church the previous week.

He was born in Duffau, Texas, moving to West Texas as a small child. He liked to tell his family how he made the trip in a covered wagon. Jim graduated from High School at Post, Texas, then worked at Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego until the time he entered the service.

Few people would ever know that Jim was an American hero in World War II against Nazi Germany. He just did not talk about that.

Jim entered the U.S. Army at San Diego in 1943 with aspirations to become a pilot in the Army Air Corps. The fortunes of war made him a flight engineer on a B-17 "Flying Fortress".

It is a tribute to modest Jim as the engineer that his crew of nine men flew 34 successful missions into enemy territory from their 385th Bomb Group base at Great Ashfield, England. This was an outstanding success rate anywhere in "The Might Eighth Air Force."

Jim, also skilled in top turret gunnery, rose in the rank of technical sergeant, the rank in which he left the U.S. Army Air Force in 1945.

Dr. Eric V. Haubenson

Harold Lane Jordan, age 71 of Crossett died Saturday, July 10, 1993. He was a Captain in the Air Force during World War II and flew 25 missions over Germany. He was a member of the Crossett Presbyterian Church and a member of Big Island Hunting club.



BULLETIN BOARD


REUNION - FREEMAN FIELD, SEYMOUR, IN - OCTOBER 7, 8, 9, 1994. Members of cadet classes 43 -D to 44 - K. Contact Mayor's Office, 220 N. Chestnut St., Seymour, IN 47274 ATTN: Louis Osterman or call 317-888-8661.

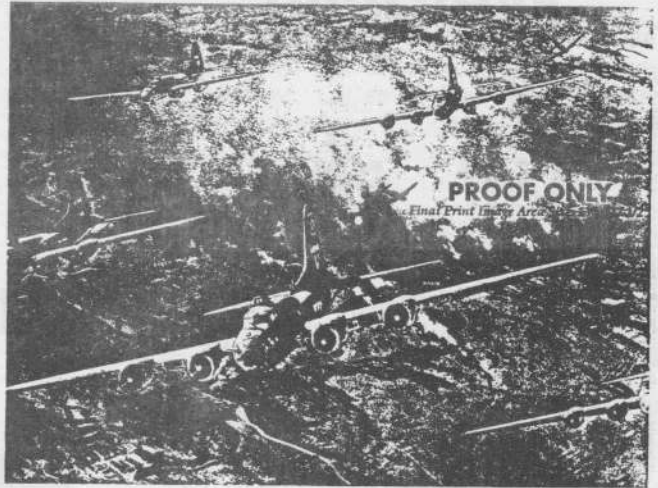
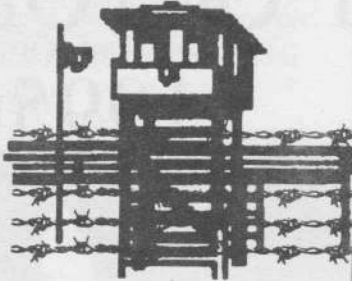
National Prisoner Of War Museum

The American Ex-Prisoner of War organization is spearheading a drive to raise \$2.5 million "to complete a \$9 million National POW Museum at Andersonville, Georgia". The museum will be located at the Civil War POW facility- formerly Camp Sumpter - and will be designed to show the hardships that American POWs from all wars have had to endure.

The organization is asking for donations of any size.

Contact:

National POW Museum, National Treasurer, American Ex-Prisoner of War, P.O. Box 92137, Albuquerque, NM 87199-2137. 



Here's a rough draft of the lithograph of the Schweinfurt raid by artist Ted Wilbur. It's available in a limited print lithograph 17½ x 13, through the United States Historical Society for \$125.00 (or framed for \$200.00). Send your order to President Bob Smith, N12019 Anna J. Dr., Spokane, WA 99218. After the first 100 orders, we will share equally in any financial surplus generated. Response from the first offering in the June Hardlife Herald has been substantial. Get your order in at once. As of press time almost 100 had been ordered.

For a color sample, see the insert in the June Hardlife Herald.

8TH AIR FORCE CRUISE

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society Cruise on D-Day had 116 passengers and wives--with Charles and Sylvia Davis, Santa Barbara, California as the ONLY representatives of the 385th. "Where was everybody?" they ask. We're saving up for Omaha, Charley!



THE 4TH ANNUAL REUNION

The 4th Annual Reunion of Kingman Army Air Field, 30 Sep, 1-2 Oct, '94; Looking for former military & civilian personnel & families; general public welcome; static displays; air demos; dinner & dance; Tours--Please contact us at:

Kingman Army Air Field Reunions

Attn: Rob Chilcoat

6000 Flightline Dr., Box 3

Kingman, AZ 86401

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OMAHA!

**Welcome
to
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The "aha" you'll experience in Omaha says it all. From its nationally renowned attractions to its vast menu of restaurants, from its wide variety of shopping to its comfortable and affordable accommodations, Omaha is a series of exciting discoveries every time you visit

**15 th REUNION
SEPTEMBER
27,28,29,30
and OCTOBER 1
1995**

Reunion
and
Hotel Reservations
forms will
be in October
Hardlife
Herald



One of the region's most spectac'ar sights, the Heartland of America Fountain, with its 300-foot-high water jet and water show, bring smiles and "Ahhhs" of delight.

MORE LATER.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Strangers in a Strange Land is a publication telling of WW2 planes that landed in Switzerland. It's Vol. 2 "Escape to Neutrality" by Hans-Heri Stapfer/Gino Kunzle, published by Squadron/Signal Publications Inc., 1115 Crowley Drive, Carrollton, TX 75011 -5010, pictures 4 385th planes with stories. We're reprinting those stories and pictures with permission from the publisher.



Before dawn on 22 May, an intruding Luftwaffe Junkers Ju 88 dropped several small bombs on the 385th BG's base at Great Ashfield. One of the bombs exploded near a B-17G-35-DL (42-107031) that would land in Switzerland a few weeks after this incident. (USAF)

Gremlin Buggy II, a B-17G-20-VE (42-97603) was an H2X radar equipped Fortress that was selected to fly as deputy lead for the 94th Bomb Group. Most of the specially trained crew, as well as the aircraft itself, belonged to the 385th Bomb Group. One exception was Command Pilot CAPT William Richards who was from the 94th BG. The Fortress led the wing to the primary target, the marshalling yards at Karlsruhe. The Pathfinder crew, under the command of CAPT Norman I. Radin, had already accomplished nine other missions as a lead crew.

Two navigators were carried, 1LT Robert P. Craig operated the H2X radar and 1LT Garnett Turnstall did the regular navigation. Lead bombardier 1LT James D. Goings recalled the mission:

Just as we dropped our bombs, our number two engine was hit. Black smoke poured from it as we dropped out of formation and prepared to bailout. After all the oil leaked out, the smoke ceased. The engine windmilled and without lubrication, a terrific vibration soon started. German fighters were in the area, but they did not bother us since we were heading for Switzerland.

The pilot Norman Radin continued:

We had no maps of Switzerland, but it was a clear day and we could see Lake Constance. We argued that if we bisected Lake Constance in the center we would be over Switzerland. Our reasoning was correct. We were going to ditch in a lake but at the last moment I decided to land in a farmer's small field with the wheels up. On the final approach, we saw a telephone line which cut the short field in half. Nevertheless, we landed safely in the short space. We set the aircraft on fire because it contained secret H2X radar equipment.

While the bomber burned at Knutwil, the crew was taken to the "Schweizerhof" hotel at Lucerne for further interrogation by Swiss officials. CAPT Radin later escaped from Switzerland during June of 1944 via Geneva and into occupied France. The rest of the crew was released during the Spring of 1945.

1LT Robert Daly's B-24J-145-CO (44-40102) from the 492nd Bomb Group was the last aircraft to land in Switzerland during May. Just as the Group hit the IP, Daly lost the number three engine. A short time later the number two engine had to be shut down. A hurried check revealed that the cause was complete fuel starvation. Before the engineer could complete a fuel transfer hookup, the other inboard engine quit for the same reason and the lagging Liberator was discovered by a number of Luftwaffe fighters. Some quick computations on the range of their aircraft with the fuel remaining on board offered only two alternatives — part way to England or all the way to Switzerland. Daly set the ship down at Geneva-Cointrin air field. There was no damage to the Liberator and on 7 October 1944, Oberst Hrtgger flew the Liberator from Geneva to Payerne where the bomber remained for the rest of the war.



This B-17G-20-VE (42-97603) "Mickey" (radar equipped pathfinder) ship was flown by CAPT Norman Radin. It was set on fire by its crew after landing at Knutwil to prevent the secrets of the H2X radar from being discovered by the Swiss. Only the tail remained intact after the fire. (Karl HSnggl)

2LT Donald G. Jorgensen had only 130 gallons of fuel remaining in the tanks of his B-17G-DL (42-38196) Flying Fortress when he touched down at Dilbendorf. The Swiss found over thirty five-holes in the aircraft from enemy fire. (Karl HSnggi)



16 March 1944

The 385th Bomb Group had been briefed to bomb the Messerschmitt factory at Augsburg. About one hour from the target, eight to ten Messerschmitt Bf 109s attacked the formation. The B-17G-30-DL (serial 42-38160) flown by 1LT Robert W. Meyer was hit, knocking out the number four engine and slightly wounding T/Sgt Carl J. Larsen. At 1135 hours the ship turned south towards Switzerland.

Tail Gunner S/Sgt. Jarrell F. Legg stated in a report written shortly after the war:

At the Swiss border, we were picked up by an escort of Swiss fighters. They were very similar to the German 109s so they lowered their wheels and flaps and began to fire flares. We acknowledged with a flare and they came in and tried to lead us to a landing field, but we were unable to stay in the air since we were constantly losing altitude. At about 500 feet, the pilot gave the order for us to bailout.

As the crew left the aircraft over Baar on the Lake of Zug some over-enthusiastic Swiss began shooting at the Americans, thinking they were paratroopers invading their country. At least three shots were fired by Army riflemen.

Unfortunately, the navigator, 2LT Robert L. Williams', parachute did not open properly and he hit the ground at Neugasse in Baar. He was immediately taken to the hospital at Baar, but died a short time later. Carl L. Larsen and ball turret gunner S/SGT Charles W. Page also received medical help from the Swiss.

The pilot had remained aboard, circling over the lake in preparation for a water landing. He made his approach in direction of the small town of Zug. After landing, the aircraft remained afloat for about five minutes before it sank about 1,500 feet from the shore. Two Swiss rescued the pilot from the lake and took him to the police station in Zug. During the Summer of 1952, Martin Schaffner managed to lift the Fortress from the bottom of Lake Zug. After being repaired, the name *Lonesome Polecat* was added to the nose and the Flying Fortress was exhibited throughout Switzerland before it was finally scrapped at St. Moritz during the early 1970s.



EDITOR'S NOTE: This will make you feel good!

MY HERO

It's as old as Humanity for a son to say his father is his hero, but sometimes there is a difference. I am sure my young son sees me as his hero, but unlike my father, I can't think of anything I have ever done in my life as heroic or as self-sacrificing as his service in the Army Air Corp, during world War II.

I am sure there were many things he would have rather done during those years. He probably would have liked to finish college without this interruption. As all young men do, he was probably thinking about his future, not the future of the world.

When the U.S. was attacked he put aside his plans for the future and put his life on the line for the future of the world. There were different tasks to be done in the service and he volunteered to do the one of the most dangerous jobs in the Army, flying on a B-17 Flying Fortress. He never talked much about it when I was young, but over the years, little by little, I have found out more and more of what it was like and my admiration for my Hero has grown and grown.

One time I asked him if a lot of his fellow flyers lost their lives, just how dangerous was it? He told me the government statistics showed a 45% casualty rate for the flyers. He also told me that this rate included injured and killed, most in that number were deaths, for a number of reasons. The crashes were not easy to survive and if a man was injured during the flight it could be several hours before he could get medical attention.

I was in my thirties before asking him a simple question. Dad, did you try to become a pilot? The obvious answer, yes. The competition was tough, so he had to settle to be the Bombardier. The thing I did not know was that he had been in Flight School and had flown trainer planes. I could have really impressed my friends when I was little if I had known this. "My dad can fly a plane and yours can't", I could have said:

In 1974, my knowledge of what happened in those years grew and my realization of what he and a lot of others did was truly heroism. That year he decided to back to Europe to visit some of the people he had met on his unexpected visit to occupied France (he rode a plane down in a crash landing). When he and my mother went to Europe, they decided to take my brother and me with them. Instead of just pages of a History book here were the actual people whose lives and futures were threatened by probably the most evil political system ever to have existed in the face of the Earth, Nazi Germany.

Some describe the French people as not liking the Americans very much, but this is not true when it comes to our role in WWII. The French people we met treated my father with great respect and appreciation. I began to see how much he had done for them, helping them against an aggressor and helping free them from enslavement.

These are the things that make a Hero and a great American. Willingness to sacrifice for the greater good of your country and the world.

Thanks Dad, and thanks to all the men who fought this war to liberate so many.

Lovingly, Your Son

(An actual letter written by a son who shall remain anonymous.)

EDITOR'S NOTE: More from Don Kabitzke.

HYDE PARK CORNER, LONDON

You have never seen England until you visit Hyde Park, London. It is the only place on earth where there is complete freedom of speech, and includes the US. Say too much here and you can be arrested on all sorts of laws, but not in Hyde Park. Someone way back then set the **SPEAKERS CORNER IN HYDE PARK** as hallowed ground where the freedom of speech meant just that. Speakers on any subject give their opinions, wanted or not, to anyone who will listen. It is the only place you can condemn the Queen, King, or whomsoever and not fear being arrested. Sometimes there would be 5 or 6 speaking at once. Take your pick. The most interesting got their audience. Hecklers were sure to arrive and work the speakers over.

Should you use vulgar language and a Bobby was present, he might suggest you refrain, and leave you alone. The English are right. It gives the public a place to let off steam. Some are downright interesting and others on the lunatic fringe. Most of them are pros and could handle the hecklers. If you go to London, save time to go and listen. You might even want to heckle.

The corner was famous for its ladies of the night, especially after dark. GI's and the ladies met and went their ways with men under their arms. You gotta make a buck somehow.

In the opposite corner of the park was a tremendous battery of Anti-aircraft rocket launchers. They looked like a bunch of angle iron slapped together in a box shape. Long slim rockets about 4 feet long were slid in the pockets of the launcher. They were fired electrically from dug in pits when in action. The rockets took off with a deafening roar skyward. The whole park seemed to be taking off. Though crude as they looked, they were just as effective against aircraft. The whole operation was done by females from the special services. They sure learned well.

In peace time the corner is a beautiful park where many London families hold their picnics. The green lawns and shrubbery are well cared for and they love it.

THE NAAFIS'

Throughout the British Isles were clubs set up for military people away from home, much like our USO clubs. They both served the same purposes. They usually had a dancehall in conjunction with a snack bar where food and especially tea was served.

The British welcomed us and it was a nice place to relax and enjoy a "Spot" of tea and crumpets. It took several visits to get used to the taste of tea, once you got in the habit it came easier. The clubs were usually staffed with pleasant women who knew how to make you feel wanted

On the weekends they always held dances and the GI's went for the dancing and finding a young lady to share the evening with. If you were lucky, someone like Gracie Fields might drop in and entertain you. They tried to obtain top notch people who could sing and tell jokes. I enjoyed stopping in for some tea. They served their purpose well.

GRENOCK, SCOTLAND

Grenock, Scotland was at the tip of the Firth of Clyde. At one time it was the most important port in the British Isles. The vast majority of Air Force personnel who came to England went to its port of entry. When the Elizabeth came to the harbor where the action was, I was amazed at the tremendous variety of Aircraft carriers, destroyers, submarines and other naval craft were at anchor.

In that area most of the huge battleships and especially the passenger oceanliners were built. It would be well worth your effort to get some books and read up on the stories of how the Elizabeth and Mary came into being, and especially the dramatic escape of the Elizabeth to the US to get it out of range of the Germans. Millions passed through Grenock, and I still can see what a beautiful quaint city it was.

It made history like very few others.

Donald J. Kabitzke

EDITOR'S NOTE: More from Bob Silver's diary from the "good old days."

4 MARCH 1945 / V 4 / G 262 «

During those cold damp nights I slept in my wool longhandles. When awakened for a mission, I dressed in my "flight" officers uniform. The Germans were extremely rank conscious so we officers always wore our uniform because, if captured, officers tended to get better treatment. I was also a sort of superstition to never change what one wore on a mission. Therefore this particular uniform always got worn. It became pretty grubby and of course we wore other uniforms except on flights. At the flight line I checked out my other gear. First the "bunny suit" went on, this was some coveralls with electric wires throughout. It has a pigtail and plug to attach to the airplane, since the temperature at bombing altitude ran about minus forty degrees Fahrenheit, this warmth was most welcome. There were also boot inserts and gloves with this electric heat that plugged to the bunny suit. Under the heated gloves we wore some tight fitting silk gloves so that if we had to remove gloves for some fine finger touch, we wouldn't

freeze our skin to the metal of the airplane. Next were the flight coveralls. Over that was a life vest, the "Mae West". This yellow vest, really more like a bib, was deflated, but could be inflated either manually by lungpower or by a small CO2 cartridge. On top of this was the parachute harness. Finally there was a flack vest and helmet. This tin hat was normally only worn while in a flack zone. In addition a leather helmet, oxygen mask, throat mike, and headset was checked out. Us navigators also carried a briefcase with maps, flight plan, logs and our ubiquitous friend the handheld E6B plotter/computer. Only then was I equipped to be airborne.

Again I flew with Audrain's crew in No. 42-1022481. We were Lead of the Low Element. Low Flight, Low Squadron.

Today, Furth was the target, but we were recalled because of very bad weather with a front causing clouds to extend up over 30,000 feet. Nevertheless, when we had crossed into enemy territory we got some light, but accurate flack over the Rhine River. Since we had been fired upon, this counted as a mission, a tally we gladly accepted.

5 MARCH 1945 / V 5 / G 263

The target was a railroad marshalling yard at Chemniz. We dropped 250 lb bombs by PFF. As a crew we flew in No. 42-97668, "Leading Lady", Right Wing in the Low element. Lead Flight, Lead Squadron.

Sometimes it seemed the assembly of the formations over England wasn't too well planned, but maybe it couldn't be helped that Groups might have to cross each others paths in going to their respective Splashers. (A Splasher was a radio beacon, used as an assembly point.) At this time practically the entire 8th Air Force was crowded into East Anglia, a space no bigger than Massachusetts. Air traffic patterns were bound to interfere somewhat. After takeoff, on the way to our assembly splasher, I saw a B-17 from another Group pass close behind another. The propwash (turbulence directly behind an aircraft) put the Fort into a spin. He managed to straighten it out, but at once went into a counter spin. He was now too low to recover and made quite a bang when he hit.

We flew in dense contrails most of the way, which made observation of anything but the other 17's of the formation impossible. Several times I felt us make a turn and would look at my watch to mark the time of the new heading. But on looking at the compass to log the new direction, I'd find we hadn't turned at all. It was a case of vertigo in the whiteout. However, there were no fighter attacks or even flack (that we could see.)

8 MARCH 1945 / V 6 / G 264

I was awakened while it was still dark (and cold). I dressed as quickly as possible and went to the latrine which was a couple of buildings away, by now awake, those of us who were awakened boarded a 6 X 6 and rode a mile or so to the crew's mess. There were 3 mess halls: Officer's mess, Enlisted men's mess and Crew's mess. (I don't know what this had to say about our social rank?!) Breakfast was never really tasty. The coffee tasted of rust. The powdered eggs were flavorless and the cereal was doused with lumpy reconstituted powdered milk. But we ate!

6 X 6's then bussed us more miles to the briefing area. The target this time was a Benzadrene plant at Dortmund, one of the synthetic oil plants on which the Reich was so heavily dependent.

We flew as a crew in No. 43-39123, soon to be "Possible Straight", although it wasn't assigned to us yet and wasn't yet named. We were Right wing of the Lead Element, Lead Flight, Low Squadron. 2nd Lt. Robert C. Snowden flew with us as bombardier and Pete didn't fly. We took off at 1052 and were back on the ground at 1808.

A new hazard materialized on this mission, due to some planning or navigational error, a whole group of B-25's came over the target at the same time as the 385th, but headed in the opposite direction. We flew right through each other like cards being shuffled. Somehow there were no collisions. THAT must have confused the German anti-aircraft aimers trying to track us! It sure did nothing for our nerves.

For a change, the weather was clear and we bombed visually. Flack was moderately heavy, but not very accurate, being of the barrage rather than an aimed variety. We sustained no hits.

After de-briefing and checking in our flying gear, we were again given a lift back to the squadron area. The BOQ's of the flying officers in the 550th were some old British barracks with about 8 iron beds on each side of the long building. I scrounged a lamp socket and wired up a bed lamp over mine, using a tin can as a lampshade, we each had a few open shelves to keep our stuff on. My aunt sent me cookies and peanut butter to nibble on, which was quite welcome. I did not keep a diary, but I did draw a calendar on the wall by my bed on which I logged each mission, with some details. This was copied when I left, and furnished the base for this narrative.

After this mission the enlisted men of the crew, Lentz, McDaniel, Kozosky, Barnes, Lancaster and Peters were promoted to Sergeant.

LOOK WHAT THE POST OFFICE HAS!

10 stamps commemorating WWII - one of which shows our favorite airplane, escorted by P51s. You have to buy the series -10 in all - to get one B-17. But, after all, those other guys helped fight the war, too.



EDITOR'S NOTE: A great message from Col. Jumper, May 10, 1945.

PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER TO ALL PERSONNEL

The war in Europe is over. My first wish is to compliment each of you on a good job very well done. This station has made an enviable record, and ended in a particularly brilliant blaze of glory. That record and that brilliant ending is proof of and lasting tribute to the work of each man. I thank you.

Now the celebration is over. We shall forget and forgive the derelictions of VE night, charge them off to joy and to celebration. However, effective at once, we must get back to being a sound and well disciplined military team. In fact, we shall demand more emphasis on the outward manifestations of discipline, military courtesy, dress, and general deportment. We are not fighting now; neither United States military authorities nor the British public are apt to be tolerant of the minor misdeeds of a force now inactive.

Naturally, all of us want to know what is to become of us. The only answer which I can give you now is that I do not know. Somewhere there is a plan, but that plan is not available to me. As soon as it is I shall distribute it as widely as the classification of the document permits.

There are several possibilities, but the one towards which we must work is redeployment to the Pacific. As all of our seniors have pointed out to us, we still have a war to fight. As long as that war goes on we must devote our unstinted effort to preparing ourselves for the Pacific war.

With that preparation in mind the combat crews have already begun an intensive course of individual training. The course will continue until each crew-member is thoroughly proficient at his job. At the same time a cross-training program is in effect, the object being to match our specialties with those required by the tables of organization. Concurrently the material section is checking and consolidating all property accounts in preparation for departure. These projects have top priority. We must complete them at once. The sooner we finish the sooner we shall be ready to sail for home and for the Pacific.

On practically the same level of priority is the Information and Education program. This program presents a singular opportunity for all of us, as individuals, to prepare ourselves both for the Pacific Theater and for the years immediately following the war. Into its preparation has gone many months of sustained effort. The program is good; it has my complete support and will be enforced with all of the rigorousness involved in the enforcement of any other military duty.

Naturally, everyone wants to know how long we must wait before heading for home. Again I must confess that I do not know. As a fairly well substantiated guess, I should say that we may remain in England anywhere from two months to six months. I am convinced that being prepared to go before other stations have gotten prepared can not prejudice our chances of being among the early movers rather than among the late movers. I ask you to recall that, on mov-

ing into the theater, those groups which were ready came ahead of those which were not ready, even though the previously published order of arrival had to be reversed. Certainly the same competition, perhaps to an even more marked degree, will prevail in the determination of the order in which we go home. Let us be ready.

By way of recapitulation, let me implore you to work now even harder than before toward being ready to move; let me implore you to remember your duties as soldiers of the United States and to execute them in a manner which can bring only praise to this station and to our Army which has thus far acquitted itself so gloriously in the battle for freedom.

G.Y. Jumper
Colonel, Air Corps
Commanding

EDITOR'S NOTE: We lost McDevitt & Cornwell on this mission. Anyone remember them bombing our base that night?

NIGHT OF THE INTRUDERS

First-hand accounts chronicling the slaughter of USAAF Mission 311 by Ian McLachlan

Fifty years on, this dramatic account details USAAF mission 311 to Hamm on 22 April 1944 when American bombers suffered their highest ever losses to German intruders. Meticulously researched yet vividly written, the book describes the ferocious action over Europe, and the carnage and confusion over England, revealing the facts behind what went tragically wrong.

CONTENTS

- Commemorating a fierce air battle still remembered with horror and disbelief on both sides of the Atlantic.
- Features eye-witness accounts, published here for the first time, of the disastrous 8th Air Force mission when some 150 bomber aircrew failed to return from Europe, and 14 fighters were lost.
- Describes the subsequent carnage over East Anglia when German fighters, hidden by friendly radar echoes, followed the Americans home, attacking 20 bombers and killing or wounding more than 60 aircrew.
- Written by the author of PSL's best selling 8th Air Force Bomber Stories and packed with human interest stories, it chronicles in extraordinary detail all the raid's events including RAF and German losses in combat.
- Covers many famous USAAF, RAF and Luftwaffe units, serving a wide veteran and enthusiast market.
- Will fascinate East Anglians who remember the tragedy or who are interested in local history.
- Wealth of pictures - many never before published.
- Appendix detailing further information on aircraft and crews.

Hardback, 238 x 169mm, 232pp, 170 illustrations, £17.99 net, ISBN 1 85260 450 6, Book No. R450



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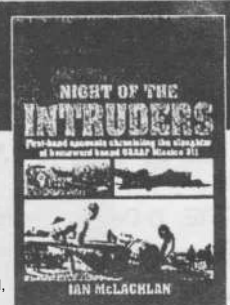
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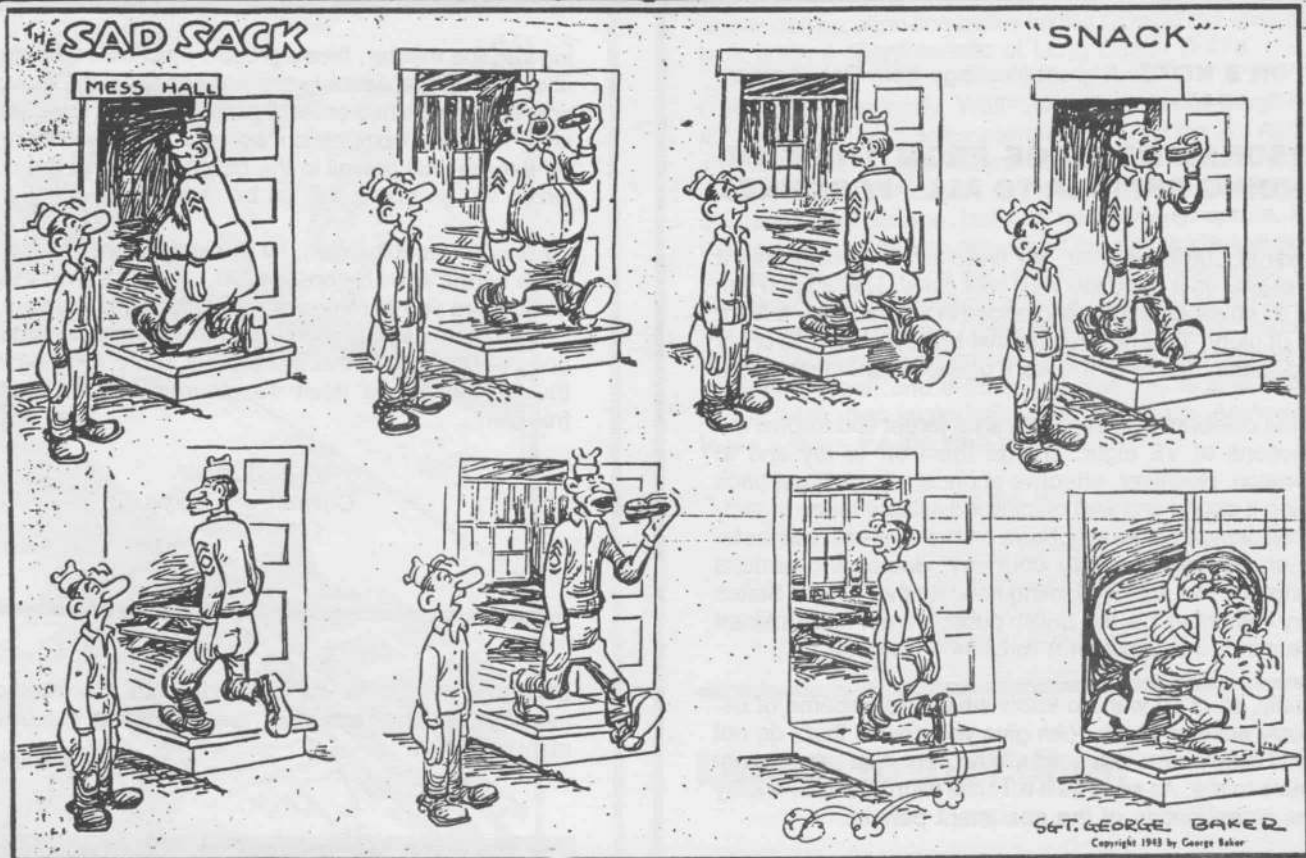
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TO: Members of the Executive Board, Springfield Post 32, the American Legion.

FROM: Virgil Tipton

RE: D-Day Veterans (6 June 1944)

Two members of Post 32 responded to the notice in the May-June 1994 Bulletin regarding their participation as combat soldiers in the D-Day invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944. They are Goerge J. Behl and William E. Reese, both of Springfield. I have examined their records and find both qualify for the honor of being designated D-Day veterans. I herewith submit Resolutions recognizing and honoring these two Post 32 members in connection with the 50th anniversary of D-Day. I found both of these gentlemen to be very modest about their role in World War II.

This anniversary calls attention to one of the greatest historical events ever recorded. Alexander the Great's crossing of the Hellespont to conquer Persia in 334 B.C. and William the Conqueror's invasion of England in 1066 A.D. pale to insignificance in comparison to the D-Day invasion when the mightiest armada ever assembled crossed the English Channel to restore freedom in Europe. This we can all be proud of as American.

Postscript: The Resolutions honoring George J. Behl and William E. Reese were approved by the membership at the Post's regular meeting on May 13, 1994.

EDITOR'S NOTE: George Behl responded to a notice in his Legion bulletin and got a nice "resolution". Any others do the same? Their Post has 1800 members.

HERITAGE CENTER SELECTS BUILDERS

SAVANNAH, GA - Contractors have been selected to build the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center in Savannah, Ga., beginning in July.

The Pickle Barrel Corporation of Savannah, consisting of J.T. Turner Construction Company and L. Scott Barnard Associates architects, was named general contractor.

Maltbie Associates of Mount Laurel, N.J., was selected to build the interior displays and exhibits.

"We are delighted with these firms and look forward to working with them soon," said Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr., Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Heritage Center. "We are confident our contractors will deliver a world-class facility."

Construction will start no later than July 1, 1994, on the Center's 13-acre tract of land at the intersection of Interstate Highway 95 and U.S. Highway 80 west of Savannah. The 95,000 square foot Heritage Center is expected to open to the public in early 1996. It will include a museum, library, static aircraft displays, archives, research center, snack bar, and book store/gift shop.

Phillip W. Corbett
PO Box 1992
Savannah, GA 31402

EDITOR'S NOTE: Here's a historians account of D-Day, what led up to it, and a good deal of the politics of the planning. It doesn't go into the individual battles and sacrifices and turmoil as much as it gives the "Big Picture"- maybe what will be in the history books that our grandchildren will read in their classrooms.

Good reading for those interested in a more complete story, as against the day-to-day fighting. It's written by Professor Emeritus Michael J. Lyons of North Dakota State University, and is reprinted with his permission.



D-Day Invasion

by Michael J. Lyons
Professor Emeritus of History
North Dakota State University

PART I

For those who experienced World War II, whether in the armed forces or as members of the Home Front, it seems scarcely possible that half a century passed since 1944, the last full year of the conflict and perhaps the one which is most vividly remembered today. It is hardly surprising that 1944 has captured the imagination, considering the many momentous events it witnessed.

This was the year that American forces broke through the outer perimeter of the vast empire, which Japan had conquered in the Pacific, and swept on to capture Saipan, Tinian and Guam in the Marianas and Leyte in the Philippines. In the course of this rapid advance, the U. S. Pacific Fleet virtually destroyed the once-mighty Japanese navy in the epic battles of the Philippine Sea and Leyte Gulf. Well before the end of the year, American B-29s were in position to bomb the Japanese home islands and indeed had already carried out one widely publicized but ineffective raid against Japan from bases in China. American submarines were inflicting huge losses on Japanese merchant shipping, posing the possibility of strangling Japan's ability to make war.

In the European theater of operations, Soviet troops had pushed back the invading Germans during 1943 in a series of powerful offensives. During 1944, they unleashed a new array of sledgehammer blows, driving German forces out of the Soviet Union and clearing most of the Baltic States, while penetrating into Poland as far west as the outskirts of Warsaw and conquering much of the Balkans.

But surely the event that lingers in the memory most of all is the Allied invasion of Western Europe on D-Day, June 6, 1944. With the exceptions of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, this is certainly the most familiar event of the war to Americans, including those who were born long afterward. It necessitated years of planning as well as the accumulation of vast

numbers of fighting men and huge quantities of armaments and supplies of every kind. It also represented perhaps the most difficult of all operations, requiring closely-meshed cooperation between naval, military and air forces of two countries — the United States and Britain as well as units from Canada — against a fortified coast and a dangerous enemy.

The D-Day invasion was the culmination of years of debate over the timing, strength and location of the operation and indeed over the question of whether it should be undertaken at all. Josef Stalin, the leader of the beleaguered Soviet Union, had insisted that the invasion take place as early as 1942. This demand reflected his desire to ease the pressure on the Red Army which faced the overwhelming bulk of Hitler's armed forces. German strength was still formidable despite the failure of the attempt to take Moscow in late 1941. At first, American military leaders — Generals George Marshall and Dwight Eisenhower, as well as Secretary of War Henry Stimson — agreed that Anglo-American forces should be ready to undertake a small-scale landing on the coast of France in 1942 while preparing for an all-out assault in the spring of 1943.

British leaders, however, pointed out the difficulties involved in amassing the necessary manpower, equipment and supplies for such an operation in 1942 and urged postponement of any invasion across the English Channel until 1943. When confronted by the impressive evidence which the British had assembled to support their argument, Marshall and his colleagues agreed. But this decision posed the question of what the Western Allies should do in the meantime. American President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime minister Winston Churchill feared that a second German offensive might crush Soviet resistance or force Stalin to seek a separate peace. They also worried about the effect on their Soviet Allies if they undertook no offensive operations in 1942 and simply built up strength in Britain for a cross-Channel Invasion in 1943. The two leaders came to the conclusion that they must strike somewhere in 1942, if for no other reason than to assure the Soviets that they were serious about fighting the Nazi war machine.

This dilemma led to the controversial decision to invade the French North African colonies of Morocco and Algeria, which were not actually under German occupation, followed by a drive eastward. Meanwhile, the British Eighth Army, based in Egypt, would push westward against German and Italian forces in Libya under the command of General Erwin Rommel. The intent was to drive the Axis out of North Africa altogether and open the possibility of operations against the Mediterranean coast of Europe. Churchill and British military leaders pushed hard for such an undertaking and won Roosevelt's approval. Marshall and other American military leaders sharply disagreed, fearing that this decision would delay a cross-Channel invasion until 1944. To them, only the latter operation promised the opportunity to decisively defeat the enemy and

drive directly on the industrial heartland of Germany. Ultimately, however, they had to bow to the President's authority.

As it turned out, it was necessary to delay the North African invasion until November of 1942 because of a multitude of problems. By that time the Soviets had halted the German offensive toward the industrial city of Stalingrad and the oilfields of the Caucasus Mountains. Their success had definitely shifted the balance on the Eastern Front in their favor. Moreover, only six months remained before the target date for a cross-Channel invasion. Despite these developments, Churchill and Roosevelt were determined to strike in North Africa.

Although Anglo-American forces under Eisenhower's command carried out their landings successfully and quickly worked out a cease fire with the French in Morocco and Algeria, they were unable to occupy the remaining French colony of Tunisia to the east. Hitler beat them to the punch by sending German forces there to form a last Axis stronghold in North Africa. This Intervention enabled Germany to delay the fall of Tunisia until May 1943. It also forced postponement of the cross-Channel invasion until the spring of 1944, as American military leaders had predicted. Instead, the Allies carried out additional operations in the Mediterranean during the remainder of 1943 — the conquest of the large Italian island of Sicily in the summer and landings on the Italian mainland in September. Although these actions forced demoralized Italy to surrender. Hitler sent German troops deep into the peninsula. They succeeded in halting Allied progress midway between the great port of Naples and Rome until the spring of 1944.

Meanwhile, none of these operations in North Africa and the Mediterranean seemed like an all-out effort to Stalin who continued to press for a cross-Channel invasion. The British, who remembered the frightful bloodbath on the Western Front during World War I, had never been as keen on this undertaking as the Americans. Their experience with the tenacious and skillful German defensive stands in Tunisia, Sicily and Italy made them even less enthusiastic about the prospect. Increasingly, they urged additional operations against the Germans in the Mediterranean. By doing so, they reinforced American and Soviet suspicions that Britain was more interested in furthering its interests in the Mediterranean than in making an all-out commitment to crush the Germans. It was not until Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin met face to face at the Teheran Conference in late 1943 that they made the irrevocable decision to stage a cross-Channel invasion in the spring of 1944. This time there would be no turning back.

PART II

Western Allied troops stormed ashore on the coast of the French province of Normandy a half century ago this June in a dramatic attempt to end four years of Nazi occupation of Western Europe. This invasion represented by far the most meaningful Western contribution to the final destruction of Adolph Hitler's Third Reich, a regime

responsible for the deaths of millions of Europeans and the enslavement of millions more. The landings also were the culmination of more than two years of often heated debate over when, where and ever whether the invasion should take place. In the meantime, Anglo-American forces had carried out a number of lesser operations in North Africa, Sicily and on the Italian mainland while the Soviet Union had faced the overwhelming bulk of German strength.

When President Franklin Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Premier Josef Stalin finally agreed that the cross-Channel invasion should take place in the spring of 1944, preparations for the assault 'Operation Overlord,' accelerated rapidly. The Allies chose Normandy as the invasion site for several reasons. Among the most important was the proximity of the major port of Cherbourg, which would prove extremely valuable in supplying the invading troops after they had secured a beachhead. Another was the fact that the Allies had broken the German military cypher and had intercepted messages indicating that the enemy expected the invasion to come as the Pas de Calais 200 miles to the northeast and lying only 20 miles from England. Accordingly, the Germans had constructed their strongest defenses and stationed a larger portion of their troops there than in Normandy.

General Dwight Eisenhower, who had commanded Anglo-American operations in North Africa and the Mediterranean during 1942-43, received the task of leading the Allied Expeditionary Force designated to execute the Invasion. Six divisions formed the initial seaborne landing forces — three American, two British and one Canadian. The Americans formed the nucleus of General Omar Bradley's U. S. First Army. The Anglo-Canadian troops represented the advance guard of General Miles Dempsey's British Second Army. Bradley's forces were to land near the eastern base of the Cotentin Peninsula and drive toward Cherbourg, while Dempsey's troops were to land farther east and capture the important road junction of Caen, which was to serve as the anchor point for the beachhead.

Until Cherbourg fell and the Americans repaired the damage which the Germans were certain to inflict on port facilities, the invading troops would depend on prefabricated concrete harbors called 'Mulberries.' Allied ships were to tow the Mulben— _____ >> ^vuorts and put them in place off the coast. They also were to lay pipelines that would provide badly needed fuel.

Preparations for the Invasion took many months to complete. Including the transportation of 1.5 million American soldiers across the Atlantic and from the Mediterranean. Six hundred warships and over 4,000 transports and landing craft formed the greatest invasion armada in history. Twelve thousand aircraft provided support for the operation. A massive conversion of the economies of Britain and the United States to a 'total war' basis during the previous few years had made all this possible. A gigantic buildup of equipment and

supplies unfolded in Britain throughout the months preceding the invasion.

Eisenhower actually planned to launch the attack on June 5, but stormy weather over the English Channel forced postponement and threatened to delay the operation for two weeks. German leaders were convinced that they had nothing to fear for some time to come. But on June 5, Eisenhower received a report that a lull in the bad weather would begin later that day and continue until the next morning. 'Ike' decided to take advantage of this brief window of opportunity and ordered the invasion to take place on June 6, codenamed 'D Day.'

This decision proved of great value to the Allies. Not only did it prevent a lengthy delay, but the invasion caught the enemy completely off guard, nevertheless, the invading forces progressed much more slowly than anticipated. This was especially the case on 'Omaha Beach,' the easternmost of the two American landing sites, where numerous problems developed. Among them was the navy's decision to launch many landing craft too far out in choppy seas that swamped them, taking a heavy toll of men, tanks and artillery. Once the invaders were ashore, they found themselves pinned down for hours by heavy enemy fire and did not establish a secure position until late in the day. The Americans who landed at 'Utah Beach' to the west encountered fewer obstacles, although here, too, they moved inland more slowly than expected. The British and Canadians landed to the east of Omaha Beach and advanced several miles with little difficulty. Unfortunately, they failed to capture their main objective for the first day — the key communications center of Caen. This enabled the enemy to establish strong defensive positions north of the city. Caen did not fall to the British until six weeks later.

German generals now pleaded with Hitler to divert troops from the Pas de Calais to Normandy, but the Fuehrer refused, insisting that the landings there were merely a diversion and that the main invasion would come in the north. German reinforcements did eventually reach Normandy, but not in time or in sufficient strength to have any chance of driving the Allies into the sea. They were able to offer fierce resistance, however, and slowed the Anglo-American advance. In the meantime, a flood of Allied manpower and material poured into the beachhead, and the Allies prepared to break out from their confined position. It was not until July 25 that they were able to execute this operation. On that day, the U.S. First Army, now under General Courtney Hodges, broke through the enemy line on the western end of the Cotentin Peninsula and opened a corridor for General George Patton's U. S. Third Army. Patton sent his troops rolling northeastward across France in the direction of the German border.

Over nine months of bitter and bloody fighting still lay ahead, but the war in Western Europe was clearly moving toward its end. Meanwhile, a series of massive Soviet offensives steadily pushed back the frontiers of Hitler's once-vast empire in Eastern

Europe. Both Allied juggernauts continued to roll forward, heading toward a rendezvous in Germany that would mark the total collapse of Hitler's 'Thowsemd-Year-RelctrMn the spring of 1945.

THE "MICKY II"

ft

The "Micky II" was named after the Pilot's wife with the permission of the crew.

James Ed Hughes, Jr. was the pilot, in fact he was a group lead pilot.

Ed asked the crew if anyone would mind if he named the plane "Mickey II" after his wife who was home in Jeannette, PA.

Jeannette is a small town 25 miles east of Pittsburgh, PA.

Ed Hughes and the crew completed their 25 missions and were rotated back to the states.



John Alcock, Orville Brown, Marty Girson



Sometimes fragments of letters got through from home—mostly block lines made by the censor. Nevertheless, that's where we got a good part of the news for our news sheet, about ball scores and movies. But it is remarkable how much Tom Kneple learns about reading between the lines—even block lines filling most of the space between "Dear Tom" and "Devotedly Yours."

letters to Ian

Dear Ian,

Sorry I missed you when I called, I would have enjoyed talking to you. Your letter was received 17 October, and was the little nudge needed to make me do what has crossed my mind several times this past year. I wanted to contact you last fall, and offer my collection of photos for copy. I just didn't act. It would be foolish to send all of my collection as you may only want a few of them. This is what I will do. I will xerox everything I have, and make notes of all that I can recall from memory.

You mentioned Charles Guyler in your letter. He joined Harry Singleton's crew on what I think was our sixth mission. He was assigned as co-pilot. We flew together on the Dragon Lady and Powerful Katrinka. He was truly a gentleman and a soldier. Guy was the only member of my crew that I found. A neighbor lost my copy of the group history, it was filled with names and addresses of people that meant a great deal to me. One evening while reading a copy of the 385th BG newsletter, I saw his name and address. He was living in Flotsam, Maine. I called him and we had a great visit, and we exchanged a couple of letters. I was planning to fly up to Maine and surprise him when I read his name in the obituary. I wish we could have met one more time. During our phone visit, he told me that he had been landing at Stormville Airport several times a year since his retirement from the service. The airport is only 15 minutes from my home. If we had only known how close we were. I guess it wasn't meant to be.

Ian, I am pleased that you asked, and hope that I can help in your effort to document our group history. I shall get everything to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Charles "Mac" McCarty
Flight Eng.-Top Turret
Dragon Lady/Powerful Katrinka

Mr. Henry I. Dworshak
6927 Greentree Road
Bethesda, MD 20817-2212

Dear Henry,

Many thanks for your letter of 26th May 1992 and my apologies for the delay in responding but it has been a very busy year.

I can help you with information about Deloy Taylor, because when I consulted my files, I realized he was one of those lost on the infamous 6th October 1944 Mission to Berlin/Tegel. That day was the worst in the 385th BG's history - 11 aircraft were lost in a few moments of vicious combat with Luftwaffe fighters who caught the Group on their bombing run in a classic bounce from rear and above, coming out of the clouds. For information, I enclose copies

of the April and July 1984 Newsletters giving further information. Sadly, only one of Taylor's crew survived - 2Lt Bruce C. Martin, the bombardier. Those KIA were:

2nd Lt Pilot Deloy Taylor
2nd Lt Miles W. Cosner
2nd Lt Nav Orlando A. Krupka
2nd Lt TTG Ira M. Barnes
ROG Sgt Albert Beens
BGT Sgt Vernon W. James
TG Sgt Orvil E. Wright
WG Sgt Elvin Brown

I'll copy this letter to Ed Stern in case he wants to use it in the Newsletter - it may prompt recollections from veterans who have joined the Group since 1984 and were unaware of the stories contained in the Newsletter at that time. I hope I have been able to help. If you think I can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Before I close, I note you were the Adjutant of the 548th Squadron - I would appreciate it if you could spend some time and send me a cassette tape of your experiences in this role. Any recollections/anecdotes would be welcome.

Yours sincerely,

Ian McLachlan
1 Joy Avenue
Newton Flotman, Norwich
Norfolk NR 15 1 RD
England

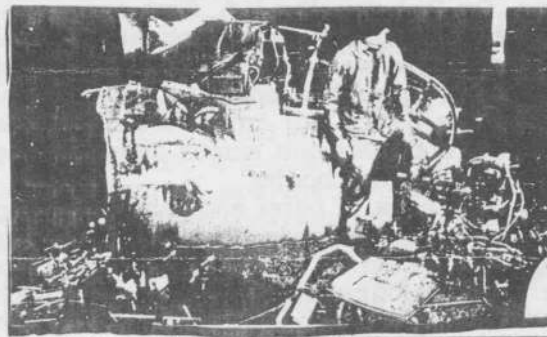
Dear Steve,

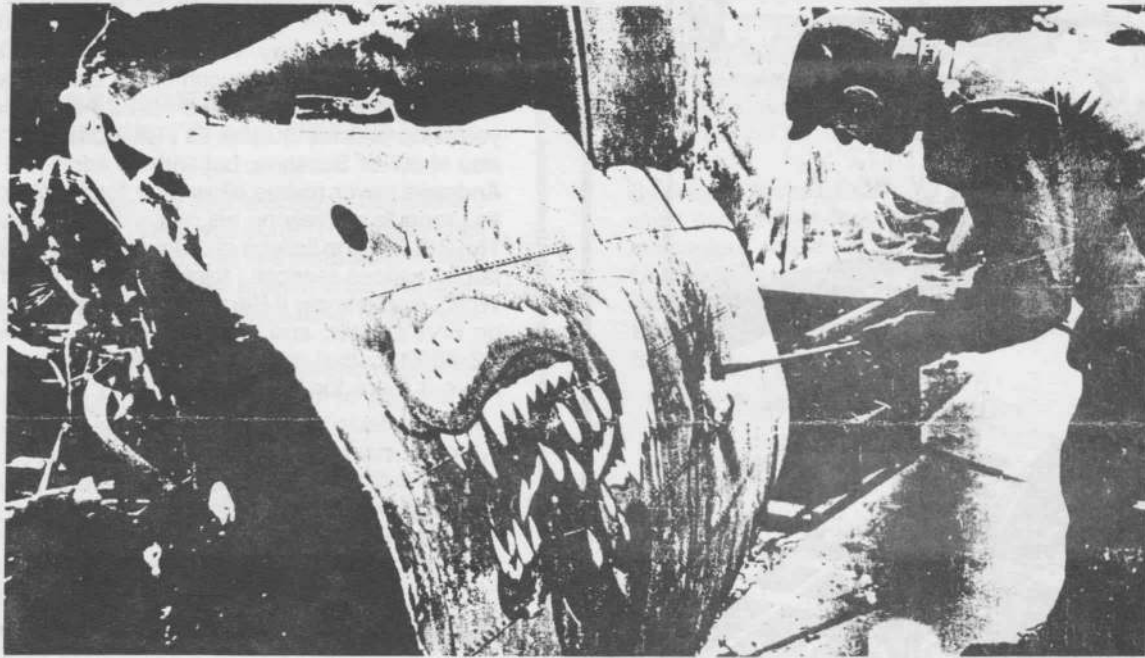
Thought I'd drop you a line to let you know my new address and enclose a flyer for my latest effort "Night of the Intruders". I'm afraid that I've not been as active as I'd like to for a while and have no follow up to our "Raunchy Wolf" correspondence although I have copied it to Ed Stern for inclusion in the Hardlife Herald to see if we prompt any reaction for those who serviced or flew in "Raunchy Wolf", "Suzanne" or El Sabo.

I'll let you know the outcome.

Cheers,

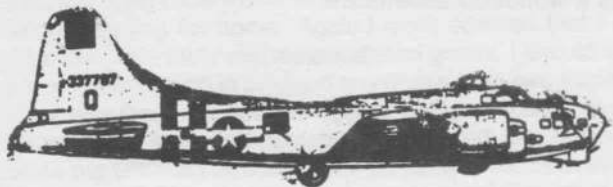
Ian McLachlan

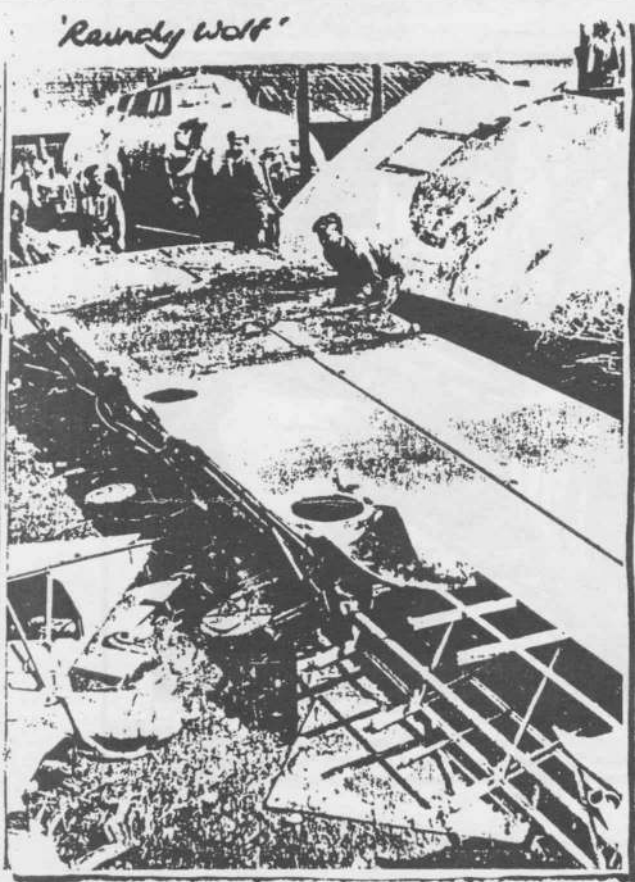




A French worker uses a cutting torch to cut *Raunchy Wolf* into easily handled segments. The aluminum salvaged from this Fortress could very well have end up as part of a *Luftwaffe* fighter. (Bundesarchiv)

AH airframes stored in the scrap yard have been cannibalized of all usable equipment. This P-47D was Q11 of the 361st Fighter Squadron, 356th Fighter Group while the B-17F in the background was known as *Raunchy Wolf* to its former crew. The damage to the nose was caused during the hnmbers shipment by rail to Nanterre. (Bundesarchiv)





(Above) Dutch workers unload the wreckage of a B-17F from flatcars at the Luftwaffe scrap yard at Utrecht, Holland. The Fortress had been cut into movable sections by the salvage team at the crash site and loaded onboard flatcars for transport to the scrap yard. (Bundesarchiv)

Dear Ian:

Many thanks for your letter of December 20, and the photo of "Raunchy Wolf."

I don't have prints of the Bundesarchiv photos in question, which appeared in Hans-Heiri Stapfer's "Strangers In A Strange Land", published by Squadron. I've corresponded on-and-off with Stapfer over the years and have asked him to let me know the file numbers, but nothing yet...as soon as I hear something, I'll pass it on.

In the meantime I've enclosed photocopies of the four photos in question., in the one with the workman and his cutting torch the name is clearly visible, as it is on the shot of the nose art panel leaning against a B-25's nose.

Whether the Bundesarchiv captions will help is doubtful - I get the impression that Heiri Stapfer had no knowledge of "Raunchy Wolf's" identity, or he would have mentioned it in a caption. And any date mentioned in the captions would only give us a "no-later-than" date for the plane's loss. Anyway, we'll get there.

It would seem to me that the "Raunchy Wolf" without nose art and with the flash-guards on the guns would be 42-3290, salvaged September 26, 1943. It has the slightly

higher demarcation line between the OD and the undersurface grey, a characteristic of Long Beach B-17s.

I feel that "Raunchy Wolf" with the wolf's head was 42-30249. There's some confusion. One of the 3rd Air Division listings I've used shows 42-3294 as "Suzanne", [as your list], and 42-30294 as "Raunchy Wolf", which you also show as Suzanne, but with no additional details. Paul Andrews never makes allowance for simple clerical error, so I tend to not rely on his research in instances like this. The 3rd Division listings do show 42-30249 as "El Sabo", but for various reasons I think this is the second "Raunchy Wolf". You'd know if Bernard Wasserman was bombardier on Frye's crew, and if Earl Frye was the regular pilot of 42-30249...that might help clear things up. Anyway, I'll leave it there for the time being.

All the best,

Steve Birdsall
31 Parkland Rd.
Mona Vale 2103
Sydney, Australia

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Ed,

Recently Chuck played hooky from our office when the restored B-17, "Aluminum Overcast", came through Atlanta. He was fortunate to buy the first seat sold for the trip over North Georgia and for five to ten minutes sat at the controls in left seat. I think that Chuck thought he had died and gone to Heaven! .

"Aluminum Overcast" did a fly-by at Cartersville Airport at a near-full speed about 15 feet above the deck. We know of a friend who observed this incident in Cartersville; he was a Navy pilot in WWII. The former pilot said he could not keep back a few tears and that he removed his hat and saluted the B-17.

I wonder if my Charles Smith smiled! I know my heart turned over when I saw our son ascend into the wild blue yonder in that Flying Fortress. I remembered the day at Duxford Museum, England when Charles showed Chuck the B-17 on display there. Chuck took a photo of Colonel Dan Riva in the cockpit as he commented to me, "Mom, I surely would like to ride in one of those things some day." This experience was a dream come true-a chance of a lifetime for Chuck.

Chuck appreciates this opportunity, and he appreciates the legacy of Charles' days in the 385th Bombardment Group. It is a wonderful inheritance.

Sincerely,

Peggy Smith
1025 Oakhaven Drive
Roswell, Georgia 30075

Dear Ed,

Have been meaning to write this letter for quite a while. I read the *Hardlife Herald* religiously and have them conveniently stacked to go back over them. I am amazed by the details in some of the letters. I'm just starting to look at the pile of memorabilia - orders - pictures - maps - etc. Enclosed are copies of orders assigning us to the 385th clearance sheet leaving the 385th and orders for the trip home including our passengers. We came back via the Azores.

There are a few things that do stand out in my memory - one is my first mission. We were assigned to the 385th in mid February 1945, and went into indoctrination (2 weeks as I recall). Every night we stayed up late listening to "Combat Stories," playing cards and drinking Gin and Grapefruit juice. Our crew hadn't completed indoctrination and I had stayed up quite late. It seemed that I had been asleep for about an hour when I was rudely awakened and told I had to fly a mission. I insisted that I had not completed indoctrination but was told a crew needed a navigator. I'm not sure of the mission. My form five shows I had 9 hours 15 minutes on March 5, 1945, so it must have been a 263 to Chemnitz. It was a continental assembly. (I didn't recall covering that in training). I went through briefing in a daze. We took off for France and the assembly, between two cloud layers, seemed rather haphazard. We headed for the target and dropped bombs by radar. I couldn't see the ground or the sun. Heading back we had to drop out of formation due to an oxygen problem. It was very disheartening to see the rest of the formation fading into the distance. The pilot asked for a heading. I assumed that we dropped on target - that was my first fix. Using forecast winds, I computed a heading and we proceeded on. After sufficient time (plus a few extra minutes) I assumed we were out of enemy territory. I suggested to the pilot that we go below the lower cloud layer to verify our position. We broke out below 5,000' and discovered we were quite a way east of course and heading towards the north sea. I computed a new heading and with the help of the G-Box got us back to base.

We landed quite a while after the rest of the Group and some of my crew met us at the hardstand with a bottle of Scotch. I don't remember de-briefing. My crew put me to bed and I slept for 18 hours. The pilot of the crew I flew with told me later that he and the co-pilot looked down between the rudder pedals and said it looked like a madhouse - maps, charts, intercom wires flying every which way.

Picture #1 shows some of our crew.

Picture #2 shows Bill Boss (OSN) a high school buddy that spent some leave with us. We outfitted him with A/C uniforms and took him to the mess hall and O/C. We outfitted him with flight gear and took him on one of the Dutch food drop missions. He sat up in the nose with the bombardier and when I saw him last year at our 50th H.S. Reunion, he remembered the flight in detail.

After 4 or 5 missions we were assigned to lead crew training and ended up with 5 leads. I still remember Maj. Nedjlick (I?) treating me (a 19 year old kid) like a Dutch Uncle, convinced me that I could handle the responsibility. I've never seen his name in any of the H.L.H.'s and I believe

he was unfortunately killed in a handgun accident after VE Day. I will always remember him.

Some other crazy recollections:

Bike riding (in formation) through the English countryside. Shooting our 45's through the roof to discourage the practical jokers from plugging up our chimneys.

Mud-Mud-Mud.

Putting lighter fluid in inflated condoms and lighting them off with a string fuse to simulate flak. (You can leave this out if you feel it's inappropriate.)

Slow-timing engines - the pilots hated this duty - on one occasion one rested in the nose compartment and one in the radio compartment while the engineer and I flew the plane in big lazy circles.

Crowded train rides to London.

Relaxing three day passes in Cambridge.

After VE Day I was assigned to a skeleton crew and made a flight to Belgium to take some Army brass on a low level flight so they could take pictures of bomb damage with their liberated Leicas. After the flight they invited us to their HQ for dinner. It turned out to be very fancy - cocktails before dinner, wine with dinner and after dinner drinks. I tried to convince the pilot to spend the night and fly back to the base in the AM. He insisted on flying back that evening. I think he had a date he didn't want to break. That is one night take-off and landing I'll never forget.

I retired to eastern North Carolina about 6 years ago and have met many 8th AF vets and have shared many "war stories". One person I met was in the 385th - 548th the same time I was there.

Sometimes events are really strange. A few days after I started to compose this letter I had a phone call from Nick Alonge, our crew bombardier. I hadn't seen or heard from any of the crew since we broke up at Bradley field.

Sincerely,

Cono J. Damato
101 Baywood Court
New Bern. NC 28562





Beautifully restored B-17 "Aluminum Overcast", owned by EAA and based at Oshkosh, was seen throughout the South with stops in Atlanta and Savannah.

Dear Ed,

I'm enclosing a newspaper clip of a B-17 that recently visited Huntsville.

This Fort, named "Aluminum Overcast", belongs to the Experimental Aircraft Association Historical Society. They have restored this one to war configuration, and it is touring many cities so probably has been or will be near many 385th'ers in the near future. Want a ride? The cost is a whopping \$475.00 so I just looked! But it was fun to go through the old girl and see her flying. It was nostalgic hearing those engines starting up! (Does anyone else also have tinnitus from the war?) Restoration is not quite complete. The upper turret is missing, and is simulated on the outside. The astro turret is gone; the flux gate compass, air speed indicator and altimeter are not up in the nose, but a Norton bombsight is. There are non original seats for passengers. (2 extra in the radio room and one on the flight deck.), but it LOOKS complete. There were even some dummy bombs in the bomb bay, although the bomb bay doors were not functional.

We local members of the 8th Air Force Historical Society set up a table under one wing of the B-17, answered tourists questions and escorted some VIP's and the press through it.

There are few vets from the 385th in this immediate area, but there are quite a few from other bomb groups. If others are not members of the 8th AFHS, that's a good way to meet local B-17 types.

Yours,

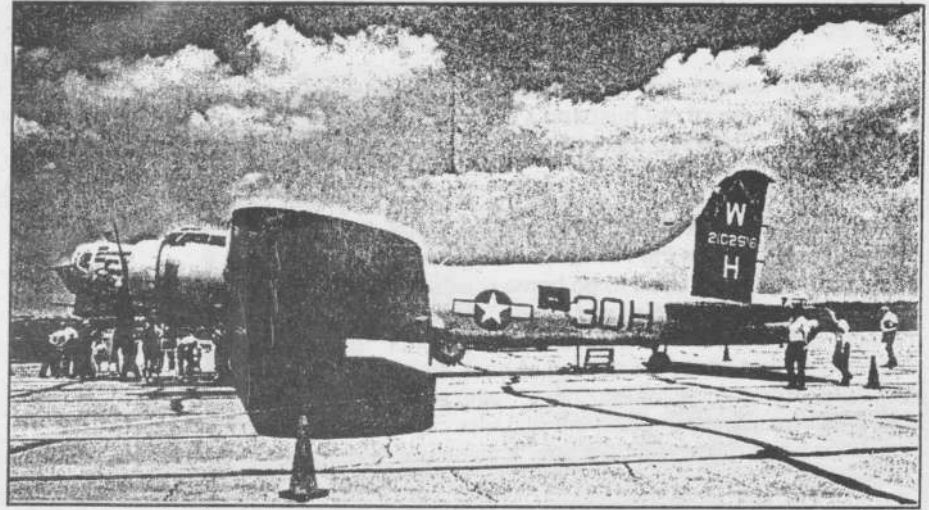
W.W. Varnedoe, Jr.
5000 Ketova Way
Huntsville, AL 35803

PS. I ALMOST made it up into the nose hatch without a ladder! (But the B-17 is smaller inside than it was in 1945 AND the hatch is higher.



Bomber

A B-17 bomber, one of the most-used aircraft during World War II, flew into Huntsville Monday for a two-day stay. In top photo, Bill Varnedoe, left, and Harry Vaughn, both B-17 veterans, look out the gunner's window of the "Aluminum Overcast" and reminisce over past missions. Varnedoe was with the 385th Bomb Group and flew 26 missions. Vaughn was with the 100th Bomb Group and flew 35 missions. At right, the "Aluminum Overcast" sits on the tarmac at Huntsville International Airport.



Dear Mr. Stern:

I am writing you in hopes that you may be able to help locate anyone who flew in B-17s with my father. My father's name was Paul Engman Moe. He arrived in England approx. April of 1944 and returned home approx. December of 1944.

He was in the 385th Bomb Group, 551st Squadron, and the name of the ship was "Moonglow". He was a waist gunner and may have been a flight engineer. He flew "35 missions."

My father died from a brain tumor at the VA Hospital in Minneapolis in February of 1958. I was then 10 years old. I would like to find someone who may have known and flown with him.

Any help you could provide would be greatly appreciated.

Thank You,

Leon P. Moe
8660 Grospoint Ave. S.
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

Dear Ed,

Thanks for yet another wonderfully interesting H.H. It is always an education for we "younger" generation to read of the things that went on during the war and especially those that involved the 385th directly.

I was very sad to read of the untimely death of a Mr. James A. Hess. During my father's term at Gt. Ashfield, he had a buddy who was nicknamed "Smokey Hess" and I wrote to Mr. Hess, during the latter part of last year, in the hope that he was one and the same person. I received a delightful letter from his wife who explained that Mr. Hess has suffered ill health and that he could not remember if he was ever nicknamed "Smokey". Mrs. Hess went on to tell me of his wonderful service record and that she was happy to receive my letter as it gave them an excuse to reminisce about the old days. It really was such a nice letter so, in return for their kindness, I sent them some very recent photographs of Gt. Ashfield, the Poplar trees, All Saints church and of the B-17 Sally B. I hope the photographs

brought back some more happy memories for him. My deepest sympathy goes to Mrs. Hess, Mr. Hess's family, friends and colleagues.

Your war-time letter to your wife was great to read. With everything you had to endure during those times it is good to see you managed to retain your sense of humour. I held the page up to the light to see if I could decipher what was written under the parts that were censored. Alas, nothing was revealed!

My full attention has been given recently to the media coverage of the D-Day campaign. It was a shocking experience to see real film footage of actual battles and heart-breaking to see the Veterans in tears as they remembered old friends who were not lucky enough to live through the terrible ordeals of war. It was terrifying just to watch from the safety of my armchair!

A great deal of attention was given to the pre D-Day bombing raids by the Mighty Eighth, which really made the invasion possible, and my thoughts naturally turned to you all in the 385th. Had it not been for the magnificent efforts of the USAAF and the British and other Allied Forces, life in the United Kingdom and Europe would most certainly be very different for us all.

The media coverage also brought the horrors of WW2 to the attention of the younger members of the population and several that I have spoken with have openly admitted that they were moved to tears at what they had seen and read. Personally, I think it is good to bring these historical events to the attention of the children of the U.K. so that they can appreciate how fortunate they really are and to humble themselves to those who fought so bravely for us all. I feel happy in the knowledge that we will always remember.

Our most sincere and heartfelt thanks go out to you all.

Sincerely,

Vance Pennington
10 Gilpin Close
Mitcham
Surrey, CR4 3QR
England

Dear Ed,

Irene Huber (who is one of my best friends) told me she had informed you of my husband's death for which I was very grateful. I had not thought that far ahead.

There are a couple of mistakes in the obituary, my Dad, Frank Blakea was the MANAGER at the Fox Hotel, Elmswell; and although I was in the A.T.S. for two years stationed in Bury St. Edmunds, I used to go home 6 nights a week and serve in the bar; that's how I met "Mush"; for some unknown reason 548th and 551st were my parents favourite squadrons, and when we ran out of beer etc, Dad always managed to find some for the "boys", who also were allowed in our living quarters when the pub was closed because we had run out of our quota of beer & spirits for that week.

"Mush" was the nickname my husband was always known by; we had 9 "Mushs", 6 boys and 3 girls. 21st of June would have been our 50th wedding anniversary.

I do hope I will still be receiving the Hard Life Herald; I really look forward to it.

Sincerely yours,

Olive (Blaker) Mushrush
(Mrs. Darwin L. Mushrush)

Dear Ed (Hello Hardlifel);

I just read our June 1994 issue of the newsletter, which regularly moistens my eyes with nostalgia. Bob Silver from Miami wrote you enclosing write-ups of three missions which you set forth starting on page 17.1 remembered the first one with great pleasure, that of April 15, 1945, to Bordeaux and the low altitude view of Paris.

The second mission that of April 4, 1945, to Kiel, is my most vivid memory of WW2. With goosepimples I remembered closely observing the collision between the planes of Crimmins and Ritchie, whose names stayed in my mind, and can recall clearly the vision of the low element lead pulling ahead of and then up into the low section lead plane. I remember seeing the planes come apart and the members of the crew reaching frantically without time to reach their parachute packs as the second plane made a turn around to the left. There was time for most of that crew to bail out and I seem to recall watching parachutes descend into the clouds. After bombing Kiel, I can recall returning low over the north Sea in the futile hope of finding a survivor.

For a few years after the war, I kept track of some of our crew. I was co-pilot and Donald J. Arvas was pilot. He died and I do not know the location of any of the rest of our crew and am disappointed that their names don't show up in our membership roster. I wonder if there is any possible means of communicating with any of the crew of "Summer P. Peter", as I recall our code name.

Incidentally, but unrelated, up until my flying days ended several years ago, I had the pleasure of owning an airplane

that I donated to the Smithsonian and hope to see it at the museum at Dulles Field. It was the first aircraft that Henry Piper built, the original J-2, serial No. 1937, for the year that it was built. It was a lot of fun to fly but didn't compare to the B-17.

Many thanks for your great work which I enjoy and appreciate.

Sincerely,

Lefferts L. Mabie, Jr.
P.O. Box 12308
226 South Palafox Place
Pensacola, FL 32581

Dear Ed,

I was a member of Harold Lane Jordan's original crew in the 549th Bomb Squadron. I had the privilege of being his co-pilot on the "Picadilly Queen" for a dozen missions, before having my own crew. He was an outstanding pilot and those who flew with him will attest to his skill. And I might add a very notable poker player.

All who knew him will be saddened by the enclosed news.

Very truly yours,

Al Corriveau
99 Maurice St
Manchester, NH
03103-3825

Dear Editor,

You and your staff are to be highly commended for the wonderful job you have been doing all these years in putting out the "Herald". Not only does your magazine allow me to relive my youth where I flew with Lt. Hibbert on my 33 missions as his R/O, but it also gives me a deep insight in other crewmen's trials and tribulations on their missions.

I was wondering if any member of our organization has suggested the making of a decal sticker for use in our car. I've seen one recently that said "World War II Veteran" and then it had pictures of a submarine. I thought it was pretty neat and perhaps some artist could come up with one that I'm sure all members would like to buy.

Fraternally yours
George Alonge
T/Sgt 549th Bomb Sqn-385th Bomb Group
333 7th Street
Fairview, NJ 07022

Dear Bob:

I have just finished reading about the mission "2 March 1945 / C3 / F261" at that time my crew was at the rest home at Aylesfield House from 28 Feb thru 8 March 1945. Thank heavens we missed this mission.

Your story mentions three pilots in our Quonset Hut: Keskes, Bloom and Sherry.

Bloom was (is) a fine fellow who flew in my squadron position and was shot down by a burst which hit in the bomb bay. Some members survived because I talked to one survivor months later. Your article doesn't mention Bloom's plane loss? Maybe another mission prior to our return to base?

According to my letters home, I find I have mentioned Keskes and Sherry, as follows:
Letter home dated 11 March 1945:

"They have given me two new wing men - on my right wing, Keskes flies (he sleeps above me in the barracks) and on my left wing, Sherry flies (He sleeps across from me)..."

Letter home dated 20 March 1945:

"Lt. Sherry (a new boy in the barracks) came home from Berlin on 2 engines and has been put in for the DFC. Hope he gets it because he deserves it."

Letter home dated 23 March 1945:

"One of the boys in the barracks (Sherry) got on the ball this pass and bought some rat traps. We have them set throughout the barracks with cheese and candy. These rats don't eat anything but candy, so we are rather dubious as to the effect of cheese bait. My drawer is full of rat "calling cards", so I set one trap there."

Letter home dated 24 March 1945:

"Lt. Keskes (a new boy in the barracks) had his first chewing out today by Major Shankle because he was flying "not too good" formation. Keskes has been down in the dumps for a couple of hours now - I have told him not to think anything about it".....

It is surprising how things like the above come popping up from your good articles

Yours truly,

Don R. Williams
551st Sqdn
Pilot of "Lil Audrey"
5675 N.W. 137th Ave.
Portland, OR 97229-2325



Dear Ed,

Can't tell you how much I appreciate the copies of the Hard Life Herald you sent me. Thanks to you and Marty Giron, I've spent the last several evenings reading them and re-living with the 385th.

I had completely lost track of my old crew members of the Mickey II, and have watched the "Reunions" section of Air Force magazine for any evidence of a Group reunion for several years with no luck.

My missions occurred between 21 April, '44 and 16 November, and names like Emmonds, Mason, Shankle, Faroe, Tesla, Masters, LaCasse, Benner, Witherspoon, Hamilton and Castle bring back thoughts of some tough lead missions. Several years ago, I watched a BBC TV program in which Leo LaCasse appeared. The R.A.F. was still contesting the value of Daylight Bombing! I was glad to see his name on the roster of the 385th BGMA! I remember that Leo had a fine collection of revolvers of various denominations, as well as English-custom-made shoes and uniforms. One vision I'll never forget is one of Leo, on the night of our 200-Mission party, lying in his bed in full uniform, and emptying a Luger into the English-owned roof of his quarters! He earned it!

I retired after thirty years from the General Electric Jet Engine plant in Lynn, Massachusetts and moved to the Kingsmill Resort, just outside of Williamsburg. It is a Busch Properties development, located on a mile-wide bend of the James River, and adjacent to a large Anhauser Busch Brewery, Busch Gardens, and Water Country, U.S.A.

Kingsmill has two Championship Golf courses, with another opening this Fall, plus a 9-hole par 3 "Executive Course", a Tennis Club with about 20 courts, a Conference Center, and a Marina, in case you want to come by boat! Of course, the big thing around here is Colonial Williamsburg, which draws tourists all year round!

It's forty-five miles to Norfolk airport and the same to Richmond. Not a bad place for some future reunion! Just a thought).

Thanks again for the extra copies of the Hardlife Herald.

All the best,
James E. (Ed) Hughes
124 Edward Wakefield
Williamsburgh, VA 21385

EDITOR'S NOTE: We cannot believe that a man of such sterling character, who acted as a role-model for everyone, with such stability and high morality-could ever lie on his bunk and break the law the way this letter says he did. And especially not after returning from a 200 Mission party, and in full uniform. Not Leo, Please!!!



Dear Ed,

To the tune of better late than never, I would like to find the whereabouts of my original crew.

In photograph standing left - R. Swanda, RO; J.J. Conway, Engr; R.H. Wallace, BTO; Kneeling left - H.F. Wilkinson, TG; Bech, Pilot; myself, WG. Other members were E.F. O'Day, Bombardier, and Alheim, Co-pilot. Both Alheim and O'Day were shot down over France and later returned to the group.

This crew never flew together in combat as our Pilot Bech, formerly a native of Luxembourg, was grounded upon our arrival at Great Ashfield on May 3, 1944.

I do know that R. Swanda and R. Wallace are deceased.

Sincerely,

Charles Lubicic
54 Masconomo St.
Manchester, Mass 01944

Dear Ed,

Glad to hear a Hardlife Herald has been sent to Savannah. They seem to have the wherewithal! to do a first class job if they do not screw up.

One little phrase I keep in mind regarding your sending the Hardlife. "Those with the firstest get the mostest." Maybe we (385th) can get the prominent place we deserve in the museum.

My wife and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary March 21. One of our gifts was what I believe was a hand-out at the 385th Bomb Grup 8th Reunion. It lists all 297 missions including the May 2, 1945, which had the last shot fired by the German nation at an enemy aircraft. Do you have one?

Enclosing a couple of photos that show all there was of the 8th Air Force Heritage Center on April 5, 1994.

Regards to all,
Richard Molzahn



THIS CAN'T *BE* OUR
GROUP, ERNIE...
THERE'S NOBODY
THERE BUT A
BUNCH OF OLD
PEOPLE.

Dear Ed,

Here are the two pictures I have of Tommies 20 MM. The gun is from a fighter plane, which one I have forgotten. Maybe if some of the old 550th armament boys read this they can fill that part in.

We fired the 20 MM enough out at a firing range to break the sight window.

The only problem I could see was the ejection drum on top. You kind of shot from the hip.

Note the thumb trigger between the two handles at the rear.

The boys did a good job converting it over to a hand operated gun. It is too bad Tommie couldn't have had a chance to try it out on an enemy fighter.

I would like the pictures back, please Ed. they are a reminder of a very good friend.

Charley Hughes

You are right Ed, it (the gun) was never used again. Too bad, it would have been interesting.



Dear Ed & Jane,

Enclosed is a photo taken by me at Great Ashfield in '92, these folks were the first Vets which I met at Levenham. Unfortunately, I don't remember their names. Could you either print the photo in the H.L.H. and ask these people to contact you for the enclosed photo or if you know these people and their address, maybe you could send it direct to them.

We should have had Bob Valliere over some weeks ago but his wife has been in hospital for an operation, and we haven't heard from Bob for quite some time.

Nancy is not the only one been in hospital, I came out 6 weeks ago having had a mild heart attack and I am quite well now considering, but have to be careful what I do.

I wrote to the lady who won the picture we sent to Spokane and asked if she could take a photo of the picture and send to us, but alas no more news.

Two days ago we met up with the "Guys and Dolls" of 34th B.G. at Mendesham and had lunch with them in the village hall and a good day was had by all.

We should be meeting up with the 100th at Thorpe Abbott when weather permitting we should have a fly past of the B-17 Sally B.

Out of the 34th BG came a guy who approached Peggy and said I know you and 50 years ago you had a girl friend with red hair and you both worked in the Ceylo Red Cross in Stowmarket Canteen. This guy was a crew chief, so he asked his wife to take a photo of him & Peggy. I always said Peggy has kept her looks.

We trust you are both well and Peggy and I send our very best wishes.

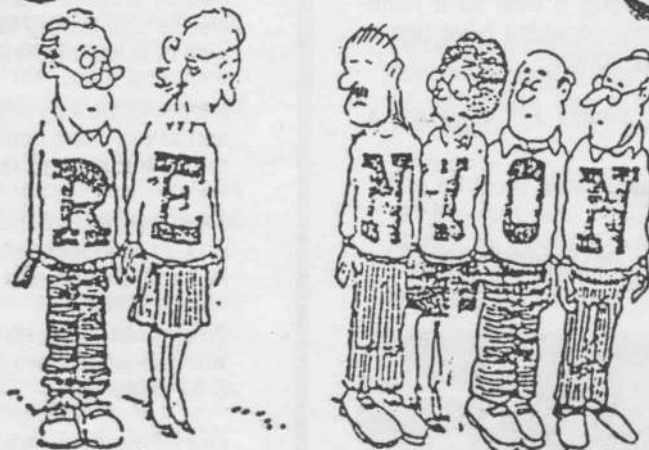
Les & Peggy Gordon

P.S. Just a thought, including various 385th'ers, quite a number would like to spend more time with the natives of this country and less time in bases. Would this idea be worth a mention in your H.L.H. re further reunions in England.



SEPT 27,28,29,30-OCT 1

REUNION 1995



IT Y/ONT JJE THE SAMS VOTHOfv//

385th BGMA

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