



**CHAPLAIN JIM SA YS**

Greetings from the West!!

As I am writing this article the nation is mourning the death of several leading citizens. The one, Jimmy Stewart, is one of us, in that he served the nation in the armed forces. His legacy is one that is enviable by all of us.

How does his legacy affect us? In this way!

1. It should make us think about how our death would affect our families.
2. It should cause us to think about what of our life would be emulated by those we leave.
3. It should direct our actions to helping others live a better life.

Putting an answer to this question another way, I am suggesting another three points.

1. Live your life to the fullest.
2. Live to the fullest in a world of conflict.
3. You can live life to the fullest in a world of conflict knowing the Creator of everything is able to give you the guidance and strength to accomplish this.

A Person will be heard speaking of God most plainly when they are seen to cope with Future Shock as if there is one in control, the Lord of all change, the Lord always comes towards us from the Future.

See you all in Tucson.

Sincerely with Love  
Jim



Lewis E. Haines  
Joseph W Zorzoli  
Roy L. Hill  
Robert E Dobson

May 1997  
May 1997  
May 1997  
1987

**Tribute To A Giant**

**To the Editor:**

Joseph W. "Papa Joe" Zorzoli seemed like a giant to many who knew and loved him. Not only was he big in stature but he was a big man with a big heart. Most people in Walls remember him when he was the "chief cook and bottle washer" at Papa Joe's Restaurant where he concocted many fine meals and hosted many gatherings of coffee drinkers, politicians, and local residents. If a hungry vagrant passed through the door asking for a cup of coffee, Papa Joe gave him a meal.

Papa Joe, son of Italian immigrants, will be missed by many. He was charismatic; he was authentic. His restaurant, in it's day, was the heart and soul of Walls. His employees were more than that; they became his friends. The kind of friends one remembers from the old days when no one had to lock their doors; when everyone looked out for each other and shared lives, hopes and dreams.

He spent four years during World War II serving as crew chief for the 385 Bomb Group, 551st Squadron of the Eighth Air Force in Europe. For his heroic and expertise he was awarded the Bronze Star. One of his planes, The Betty Jo, flew 78 missions without an aborted flight. He experienced a couple of close calls while in the service which almost took his life, and was hit by a train in Walls but still survived for an encore at life. On May 5, his life ran full cycle, and his time on this earth ended.

Dear Ed,

It is with sadness that I have to tell you of the death of another member of our crew.

Roy L. Hill, who was the navigator on our crew for 35 missions, died on May 5, 1997. We will miss him greatly.

Roy grew up in Georgia, one of seven children. He graduated from Emory Law School prior to entering the military service to train as a navigator. Roy flew with us the entire time our crew was together. We shared 35 harrowing missions over Europe in 1944. He was a skilled navigator and always had an alternate course plotted for the plane. His humor helped us through many tight spots.

After the war Roy worked for AT&T as a Right of Way Agent for 20 years. In 1968 he formed his own Right of Way acquisition company called Continental Field Service. The company was started in the basement of his White Plains home. His company grew quickly and in the 1980's he was joined by his son and daughter-in-law. In the 1990's the company was honored by the Westchester Chamber of Commerce for two years as the fastest growing business in the county. Last year the company was sold to Comforce, a publicly traded technical staffing company. Roy was working for Comforce as a consultant at the time of his death. His employees remember him for his honesty and generosity.

Of the ten members of our crew there are five remaining. We will cherish the memories of our departed comrades who were part of a close knit aircrew 53 years ago.

Sincerely,  
Elmer Snow  
27 Reinert Drive  
Topton, PA 19562

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** From Nebraska Chapter, 8AF Historical Society. Quite a story!

### ELTON LEWIS

This issue mourns the death of Elton Lewis, Charter Member of the Nebraska Chapter, 8th Air Force Historical Society. Married May 11, 1936 to Mary, he used his talents in the mechanical field to become a service technician in the refrigeration and air conditioning market.

He was one of our 8th Air Force G.I.s inducted on July 16, 1943 and sent to England, Great Ashfield, Ipswich to service the radar units fitted into the lead bombers guiding the groups to the bombing targets. That's as much as he ever told anyone about his time in the 8th until discharged November 1, 1945. Now here's the rest of the story!

The radar units had been built in the dry conditions of our American South West deserts. When operating under the English weather conditions of always damp and wet, they failed to guide the lead planes properly and more than once, bombs were released on improper targets. Elton had an idea how to solve the problem and asked his C.O. for permission to try it out. The C.O. agreed they had nothing to lose and everything to gain so told him to go for it. The very first mission with the renovated radar unit was very successful for the critical part did not take on moisture and thus produced the proper readings. Elton made a couple more changeovers and finally 8th A.F. Hq. realized the bombers from a particular area were always successful and the Commanding General ordered all such units be modified according to Elton's instructions. His solution? Surround the faulty unit with liquid nitrogen. Encapsulated as it was, moisture could no longer affect the accuracy of these lead radars.

Who can say that the war might not have been shortened by Elton's idea? Headquarters must have thought it mighty important, for the C.G. issued a special commendation for Elton. To our knowledge, only his daughter knew this story told to her a long time ago by a loving father. It was from her, Marilyn Gibbs, that we learned of this honor and we are indebted to her for sharing it. Elton, like most of the G.I.'s we all knew, used what talents he had to shorten the war so he could return to the most perfect freedom the world has ever known.

We mourn the loss of Elton and hear the bugle sounding Taps for our friend and the many others who did their best when American needed them the most.

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Dear Ed,

Unfortunately, my only correspondence with you seems to be in connection with the passing on of old members of 385th. This time, it concerns Bob O'Brien, the "old sheep farmer from Vermont" who spent the last years of his life in a far-ranging quest for peace in Europe, Africa and Mid-east

He and my cousin, Ty Winton, enjoyed a lively and interesting correspondence, each somewhat baffled by the stance of the other, but each admiring the other. At the 1993 reunion in Spokane, Ty was avidly collecting messages on a card to send to Bob, whom he had tried very hard to lure to the gathering.

After Ty's death, I wrote to Bob and picked up the correspondence for just a while. The enclosure is in response to the letter I sent at Christmas time. Even as Ty did, I found Bob a fascinating personality and I'll miss his letters.

Sincerely,

Ida C. Scott

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Bob wasn't a member of our Association, but the message enclosed with this letter indicates that he worked ceaselessly for World Peace. He died in Kampala, Uganda. There was memorial service in Holland.

#### Notes from Bob O'Brien's Letter to Ty Winton

"Thanks very much for the list of combat crew officers from the early days in Geiger Field, where the 385th Bomb Group came into existence. Although I kept in touch with a few members during my years in the Air Force, which lasted until 1953, I often wondered about how many survived. Perhaps some crews were changing up to the time we left for England, so my curiosity would find satisfaction in knowing the survivors from the crowd that took off from Gander, which was our last stop in the Western Hemisphere. I remember, for example, that our crew had a pilot who suddenly got cold feet as we neared the end of our training. Bill Jacques came to replace him. What a break for us!

My years in the military were followed by several other lives: raising four children and hundreds of lambs on a Vermont farm; a 10-year period working for educational reform; another, fairly long political career (Senator from (Orange?) County in the Vermont Senate); and now for seven years, helping to find a Planetary Voluntary Service to address the need for social reconstruction and environmental renewal."





Dear Ed,

The editor of the newsletter, "Rip Cord", which is put out by the **McChord** AFB Air Museum, asked me to write an article for publication in the newsletter, telling of my experiences on the Project Aphrodite during World War II. I thought that you might be interested in it for publication in the *Hardlife Herald*, so I am enclosing a copy of it for you.

As you may already know, I was assigned to the 548th Squadron from May 1944, and completed my 35 mission tour in November.

My wife, Christine, and I are really looking forward to the reunion in Tucson and seeing all of the gang again.

Respectfully yours,

Fain H. Pool



1st Lt. Fain H. Pool  
548th Sqdn - 385th BG  
1944

### PROJECT APHRODITE -1944

by Fain H. Pool, Lt. Col (Ret) USAF

Lt. Fain H. Pool flew the first "Aphrodite" mission on August 4, 1944, from Fersfield Air Base, England, and parachuted out of his B-17 at about 500 feet altitude. It was the first mission using radio-controlled B-17s against missile launch sites in France, where the Germans were building intercontinental missile launch facilities. The new missiles were called the V-3, and were designed to destroy New York City and Washington D.C., and other large cities on the east coast of the United States.

In June, 1944, England was being bombed indiscriminately by the V-1 "Buzz" bombs and the V-2 missiles, which were being launched from sites near the coast of France. The new sites being built for the new V-3 missiles were fortresses having walls that were 12 to 14 feet thick, and had huge steel doors. The Royal Air Force bombers were dropping their largest bombs on the sites at night, and the United States 8th Air Force bombers were doing the same in daylight. The resulting damage was unsatisfactory due to the unusual strength of the construction of the sites. American Aeronautical engineers and scientists and Air Force planners developed a plan. They decided to use war-weary B-17 bombers and modify them to become Radio-controlled flying bombs, and to fly

them by remote control into the doors of the launch sites, which was considered to be the most vulnerable spot of the launch sites. The project was code-named "Project Aphrodite" and was classified Top Secret.

The B-17's were chosen from those which were considered no longer suitable for combat. Everything inside the aircraft was removed except the pilot seat, and all of the gun turrets were removed. New tires and re-conditioned engines were installed to increase the chance of success, since the load of 22,000# of RDX Nitrostarch was about 5,000 pounds over the designed gross weight. The Nitrostarch was the most potent explosive developed prior to the atomic bomb. A radio receiver was installed in the nose and was connected to the automatic pilot, to make it possible for the aircraft to be controlled by radio signals from another "mother" aircraft through the autopilot. A radio altimeter was also installed to control the altitude of the aircraft through the elevator control of the autopilot, to maintain an altitude of 200 to 400 feet above the ground or water all the way to the target, where it would be dived into the target.

July 1, 1944, ten pilots and ten autopilot technicians were selected from the various bomb groups of the 3rd Bomb Division of the 8th Air Force to volunteer to fly the ten aircraft which had been modified. Each aircraft had one pilot and one autopilot technician. The two crew members had to enter and exit the aircraft through the navigator's escape hatch, which was the only entrance which wasn't sealed and locked. The explosives were loaded in relatively small wooden boxes which were about one foot by two feet by three feet, and they were wrapped in dynamite cord. The cord was then connected to an electrical tumbler switch, to insure that the whole load would explode simultaneously on impact. There were also about 14 impact fuses strategically placed throughout the load to further insure simultaneous detonation.

During the month of July the crews were flying missions testing the systems and developing procedures to improve the chances of success, while waiting for the perfect weather conditions which were required. The explosive-laden "baby" ship was to fly between 200 and 400 feet altitude, while the "mother" ship was to fly at 20,000 feet, and had to maintain visual contact with the baby in order to control it to the target.

Finally on August 4, the weather was good enough to launch the first two bombers at five minute intervals. Lt. Pool and his autopilot technician, Staff Sergeant Philip Eterline, preflighted the airplane and climbed aboard preparing for takeoff. When the battery switch and alternator switch were turned on they were shocked to notice that the sparks from the alternator were only a few inches from the dynamite cord which was wrapped around the entire load of explosives, and it could possibly ignite it. As the B-17 taxied out for engine runup prior to takeoff, they noticed that all of the people who had come out to watch the takeoff suddenly started disappearing into the bomb shelters around the field.

After takeoff the aircraft was climbed to 1,500 feet and radio contact with the mother ship was established. The autopilot was en-

gaged and fine-tuned by Sgt. Eterline, and a designated course was flown to make sure that everything was working properly and that the mother ship at 20,000 feet altitude was able to control the baby ship by radio through the autopilot. The elevator control would not operate properly until the baby descended to about 1,200 ft. Sgt Eterline bailed out at that altitude. Lt. Pool put the aircraft in a dive using the autopilot, and started the procedures of setting a timer, arming the load manually and electrically. The electrical panel with the tumbler switches was mounted near the navigator's escape hatch and was connected to the dynamite cord. The next steps were to put on the spare chest-pack and then attach a static line from the back-pack to a bracket above the escape hatch, and then exit the plane feet first. As a result of having to descent to get the elevator control to function Pool's bailout was considerably lower than planned. According to a photo reconnaissance pilot flying alongside, it was only 45 seconds from the time Pool left the aircraft until he hit the ground. After the chute opened, Pool noticed that he was tracking perfectly along a huge high-voltage highline wires. He pulled the risers of the chute attempting to slide to one side, but couldn't tell that it did any good until he hit the ground, missing the high voltage wires by six to ten feet. As he took his parachute off, several British civilians came to investigate and asked what happened. Pool told them that he had to bail out because his plane was on fire. At that time they all heard a terrific explosion from a distance, and everyone assumed that it was his plane crashing.

The explosion was actually caused by the second aircraft which took off five minutes behind Pool's, and Lt. John Fisher was killed when the elevator control of the autopilot malfunctioned, and it caused the aircraft to pull up and stall before he could get out. The resulting explosion was that of an unprecedented scale during the entire war in England. It created a crater over 100 feet wide, and fully grown trunks of old oak trees were completely severed for 200 feet around the crater. Only shreds of metal remained of the B-17, and the only recognizable parts were of cylinder blocks from the engine.

Pool's "baby" drone made it all the way to the target, but when the "mother" control pilot tried to dive the baby into the target the elevator altitude control would not respond, so they circled the target and made another attempt. As the baby approached the target for the second time, an anti-aircraft battery shot it down short of the target. But that was the last aircraft that the gun crew would ever shoot down, because everything and everyone within a mile and a half were destroyed.

Two other aircraft were launched that day and were also unsuccessful in reaching the target, and the two pilots were injured during bailout. Lt. Frank "Sam" Houston, from Seattle, Washington, bailed out and his back-pack didn't open, so he pulled the ripcord on his spare chest-pack, and it also failed to open properly, so he started pulling the chute with his hands. It didn't have time to open completely, but he hit a tree, and the tree caught the chute and kept him from hitting the ground.

The next pilot, Lt. Cornelius Engel, had a similar experience. His back-pack didn't open, nor did the chest-pack, so he also started

pulling the chute out with his hands. It finally opened, but he took one big swing before hitting the ground flat on his back; so hard that his front teeth were broken and went down his throat. He and Sam Houston were not walking very well that night when they got back to the base for the mission interrogation.

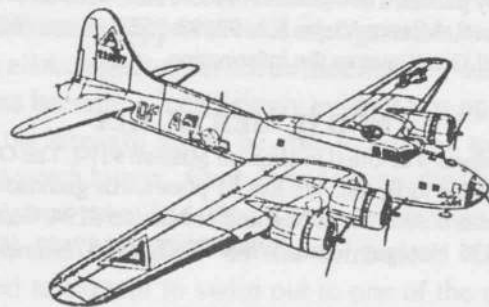
On 12 August 1944, the U.S.Navy launched a very similar aircraft, PB4Y, which is like the Air Corps B-24 bomber. It had essentially the same load of explosives and control arrangement as the Air Corps B-18s, with some differences. The Navy used two pilots. Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. (older brother of future President John F. Kennedy) was pilot, and his co-pilot was Lt. Bud Willy. Their target was to be the submarine pens at Heligoland, and they too were supposed to bail out over England. As they were setting up the autopilot and arming devices prior to bailout, the aircraft exploded for some unknown reason and the pilots and aircraft were pulverized by the explosion. Again, nothing was recovered but a few small engine parts of cylinders

Two other B-17 pilots were casualties of their parachuting. Lt. Richard "Lindy" Lindahl hooked his parachute static line under his shoulder harness in such a manner that when his chute opened it broke his neck and he was dead when he reached the ground. Lt. John Sollars also hooked his static line under his arm and when his chute opened it mangled his arm, and it had to be amputated.

None of the aircraft launched as "flying bombs" actually hit the target as it was designed to do, even though they destroyed a lot of enemy anti-aircraft guns and personnel near the targets.

Jack Olsen, of Bainbridge Island, Washington, wrote a book entitled "APHRODITE - DESPERATE MISSION", published by G.P. Putnam's Sons, which gives extensive and intimate details of the project and the individual missions and personnel involved.

Lt. Pool was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his achievements in this project.



# BULLETIN BOARD

## 385TH MUSEUM IN LUXEMBOURG

The people in the Perle area wish to have a museum for the 385th Bomb Group. They have the building, a school which they will maintain.

For this project to fly they will need items for inside the museum. Anyone wishing to donate objects for the museum, pictures, patches, etc., please drop a line to John Pettenger.

For a start they have an American Flag, casket size group history book, and the Munster Raid book.

I hope this museum will be open next year when they have the memorial service in Perle, June 20 and 21, 1998.

John F Pettenger

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Letters to the Editor or other information for the 385th newsletter should be sent to:

Ed Stern, Editor

PO Box 9466

Fargo, ND 58106

New Box #

& Zip Code

## DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS SOCIETY

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society was formed in California as a non-profit organization. Active members will be those who were awarded a DFC, with spouse and children as associate members. They publish a newsletter. For more info, write them at 2774K Via Alberti, Mission Viejo, CA 92692-1553, phone 1-714-830-7579. Bill Grodi sent us the information.

## NED H. MERTZ, KIA

Ned H. Mertz was killed in action on Mission #194. The October 6, 1944 mission to Berlin. We lost 11 planes. His grandson is looking for information about Ned and/or Mission #194. Contact: Jeff Page, 1136 Nosegay Road, White Bluff, TN 37187. (615) 797-9716.

## ANOTHER GREAT SOUNDING BOOK

"The Cold Blue Sky: a B-17 Gunner in World War II" by Jack Novey with the 96th Bomb Group in 1943. Call Fryar Calhoun for info—(510)-540-0800.

## "EYES OF THE EIGHTH"

"Eyes of the Eighth", a story of the 7th Photo Recon Group 1942-45 sounds like another interesting book for your consideration. Some of the events included are Berlin Raids of March 6 & 8, 1944. Brux Oil Refinery 24 March 1944, Aphrodite mission where Joe Kennedy was killed, Operation Frantic (Shuttle mission to Russia), VI Bomb Sites, D-Day—etc. For more information, write to Cavu Publishers LLC, 16810 Boswell Blvd, Sun City, AZ 85351-1270 or call 602-972-3991. It's a 384 page volume with 324 pictures. \$49.00 plus shipping.

## SAVANNAH MONUMENT REPORT

President Bob Valliere reminds us that we'll be voting on a free-standing 385th monument for Savannah at the Tucson reunion. A \$10,000 to \$15,000 monument would give us good representation. We could fund it from our treasury (using most of it), ask for contributions, or not do it at all. If you have any ideas, write to Bob—pro or con, ideas, sketches, wording. Honorary member Ray Tucker has suggested a piece of our runway could be incorporated into the monument. Advice wanted at once.

And Thanks, to Jerry Schulman for the \$100 contribution which will be put into a fund for the monument as of now.

## NEW TREASURER

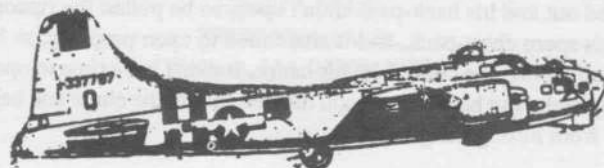
John Pettenger, our first and only Treasurer is ready to relinquish his position. He'll help indoctrinate a new Treasurer. Anyone willing to take on his job, please write Bob Valliere.

## OUR LAST MISSION OF WW2

Bob Valliere says the May 2, 1945 food mission mentioned as our last (as listed on our record of Missions as Utrecht) was actually to Hilversum. "Stork Club" of which he was Navigator, was hit by a 20mm, and we were credited with a combat mission because of it.

## REUNION

Ian McLachlan and family will be at our Tucson Reunion, and he will bring as many crew pictures as he can, hoping that some of us can identify the unnamed ones. Please plan on spending time to help with this for the future! Ian will also be bringing a slide program of the 385th that he has been showing in England that should be of interest.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Here's the way we are listed in a publication "Air Force Combat Units of World War II. Ken Laffoon sent these to us. Sorry 548th & 549th - didn't get anything on you!

### 385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP

*Constituted* as 385th Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 25 Nov 1942. *Activated* on 1 Dec 1942. Trained with B-i7's. Moved to England in Jun 1943 and assigned to Eighth AF. Operated primarily as a strategic bombardment organization until the war ended, striking such targets as industrial areas, air bases, oil refineries, and communications centers in Germany, France, Poland, Belgium, Holland, and Norway. Received a DUC for bombing an aircraft factory at Regensburg on 17 Aug 1943 after a long hazardous flight over enemy territory. Led the 4th Wing a great distance through heavy and damaging opposition for the successful bombardment of an aircraft repair plant at Zwickau on 12 May 1944, being awarded another DUC for this performance. Other strategic targets included aircraft factories in Oschersleben and Marienburg, battery works in Stuttgart, airfields in Beauvais and Chartres, oil refineries in Ludwigshafen and Merseburg, and marshalling yards in Munich and Oranienburg. Sometimes supported ground forces and struck interdictory targets. Attacked coastline defenses in Jun 1944 in preparation for the Normandy invasion and hit marshalling yards and choke points during the landing on D-Day. Bombed enemy positions in support of ground forces at St Lo in JuT 1944. Attacked German communications and fortifications during the Battle of the Bulge, Dec 1944-Jan 1945. Bombed troop concentrations and communications centers in Germany and France, Mar-Apr 1945, to assist the final thrust into Germany. After V-E Day, hauled prisoners of War from Germany to Allied centers and flew food to Holland. Returned to the US in Aug. *Inactivated* on 28 Aug 1945.

SQUADRONS. *548th*: 1942-1945. *549th*: 1942-1945. *550th*: 1942-1945. *55rt*: 1942-1945.

STATIONS. Davis-Monthan Field, Ariz, 1 Dec 1942; El Paso, Tex, 21 Dec 1942; Geiger Field, Wash, 1 Feb 1943; Great Falls AAB, Mont, 11 Apr-Jun 1943; Great Ashfield, England, Jun 1943-Aug 1945; Sioux Falls AAFld, SD, Aug-28 Aug 1945.

COMMANDERS. Col Elliot Vandevanter Jr, 3 Feb 1943; Col George Y Jumper, 24 Aug 1944; Col William H Hanson, 2 Jun 1945; Maj Totton J Anderson, c. Jul 1945—  
unkn.

CAMPAIGNS. Air Offensive, Europe; Normandy; Northern France; Rhineland; Ardennes-Alsace; Central Europe.

DECORATIONS. Distinguished Unit Citations: Germany, 17 Aug 1943; Zwickau, Germany, 12 May 1944.

INSIGNE. None.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This slightly off-color and certainly irreligious item is from the 401st BG Newsletter. It has nothing to do with anything connected to the 385th except that your Editor thought it was funny.

#### The Reverend's wife tells about her day

The other day I went to the local religious Book Store where I saw a "Honk if you love Jesus" bumper sticker. I bought it and put it on the back bumper of my car, and I'm really glad I did. What an uplifting experience followed!

I was stopped at the light of a busy intersection, just lost in thought about the Lord, and didn't notice that the light had changed. That bumper sticker really worked! I found lots of people who love Jesus. Why, the guy behind me started to honk like crazy. He must really love the Lord, because pretty soon he leaned out his window and yelled, "Jesus Christ!!!" As loud as he could. It was like a football game, with him shouting, "Go, Jesus Christ, Go!!!" Everyone else started honking too, so I leaned out my window and waved and smiled to all those loving people. There must have been a guy from Florida back there because I could hear him yelling something about a sunny beach, and I saw him waving in a funny way with only his middle finger stuck up in the air. I had recently asked my two kids what that meant. They kind of squirmed, looked at each other, giggled and told me that it was the Hawaiian good luck sign. So I leaned out the window and give him the good luck sign back.

A couple of the people were so caught up in the joy of the moment that they got out of their cars and were walking towards em. I bet they wanted to pray, but just then I noticed that the light had changed, and I stepped on the gas. It's a good thing I did, because I was the only car to get across the intersection. I looked back at them standing there. I leaned out the window, give them a big smile, and held up the Hawaiian good luck sign as I drove away.

Praise the Lord for such wonderful folks!



Thanks to Mike Gallagher for this humorous piece!



## Dick Feagler

### Flying high in a kinder, more intimate Air Force

In light of recent heart-wrenching, three-handkerchief military setbacks, the armed forces policy on sex and fraternization has come under fire.

Many are calling for a less restrictive and more enlightened view on intimate camaraderie between officers and enlisted persons. Some observers predict this drive may culminate in passage of the Armed Forces Hanky-Panky Liberalization Act of 1997.

Any relationship between such sentiments and the following column is purely intentional:

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"Pilot to tail gunner. We are commencing bomb run. Do you read me, Airman Lucille?"

"This isn't Airman Lucille, ma'am. It's /irman Shirley. I took Airman Lucille's place today. I got some things to get off my chest. Over."

**Some observers predict this drive may culminate in passage of the Armed Forces Ilanty-Panky Liberalization Act of 1997.**

supposed to drop these bombs? Over."

"Why, Airman Shirley. What ever can you mean? Over."

"Don't play Lt. Innocent with me, ma'am. I'm here to talk about Marc. Stay away from him, do you hear? He's mine. Over."

"I must object to your tone of voice, Airman Shirley. Remember, I'm your superior officer. Besides, I haven't got the faintest idea what you mean. Marc and I are just good friends. Over."

"Don't give me that, ma'am. I found the love letters. Over."

"Bombardier to pilot. What's going on up there, lieutenant? When am I



"Pilot to bombardier. Ex-CUSE me! Airman Sltirlcj and I arc having a private conversation ... Pilot to tail gunner. I haven't the foggiest notion to which letters you refer, Airman Shirley. Over."

"Bombardier to pilot. I'm standing by for orders to drop. Over."

"Pilot to bombardier. Oh, for heaven sakes, Roger."

"Waist gunner to pilot. Did you call me, my sweet? My angel of altitude? My atomic Aphrodite? My sylph of the stratosphere?"

"Pilot to waist gunner. Airman Roger. Are you here too? Over."

"Waist gunner to pilot. I may be 'Airman Roger' to you now, lieutenant. But what about that night in Fargo when the cold winter moonlight turned your bars into shimmering silver pools and the snow blowers were snorting their throaty love songs? No rank came between us then. Over."

"Tail gunner to Roger. Hey, you! I was here first. If you've got a beef, wait in line... Tail gunner to pilot. Don't pull that dumb act on me, lieutenant. You know perfectly well what love letters I'm talking about. Maybe you ought to turn on 'Inside Edition' to-night. That may refresh your memory. Over."

"Pilot to tail gunner. 'Inside Edition' is just the kind of trashy show I'd expect from you, Airman Shirley. It so happens, as befits my rank, that I'm booked on '60 Minutes.' Over."

"Bombardier to pilot. I'm pretty sure we just passed the target, lieutenant. Over."

"Tail gunner to pilot. I hear Marc is gonna be on 'Hard Copy.' Marc on 'Hard Copy'! What a joke that is, if you get what I mean. Which I'm sure you do. Over."

"Pilot to crew. Now listen, everybody. I want this knocked off right now! It violates the spirit of the new, enlightened and less restrictive sexual and fraternization policy. So let's just drop it, OK? I really mean it. Over."

"Tail gunner to crew. Well, get a load of Ms. High and Mighty  
»»»

"Waist gunner to crew. She didn't talk this way on that frosty July night in Grand Forks when I kissed her hand and my tongue got frozen to her Academy ring and we had to heat it with my Zippo. Are such memories nothing to her . . . ?"

"Pilot to crew. This is the last time I'm going to say this. Drop it, do you hear me? That's a direct order. Drop it!"

"Bombardier to pilot. Roger. Bombs away."

"Airman Roger to bombardier. Were you speaking to me?"

"Pilot to crew. Oh, nutsville!"

Messages/or Feagler may be left at 999-5757.





**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This nice Dear Abby was sent to us by Peggy Smith along with her note.

Chuck and I had a delightful visit to the 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah on Armed Forces Day. I took a picture of Chuck by the Memorial Plaque he placed on the Wall of Valor over a year ago.

The museum is very impressive.

Peggy

## Memorial Day reminds us that freedom isn't free

**DEAR ABBY:** I do not wish for my name to appear in your column as a contributor. I am only eager to impress on people what they owe the servicemen and women who have fought and died over the years protecting the freedom we enjoy. Not only the men and women who have died, but their wives, husbands, sweethearts, parents and children all paid a tremendous price for the freedom that many take for granted.

We, whose loved ones survived these horrible holocausts of history, realize only too fully that "There; -but for the grace of God .J\* While the memories of horrors endured will always remain with the men . and women who came back, they at least came back. Fbr that they are forevec grateful. They never forget their buddies who weren't so lucky. May the rest of the world also remember.

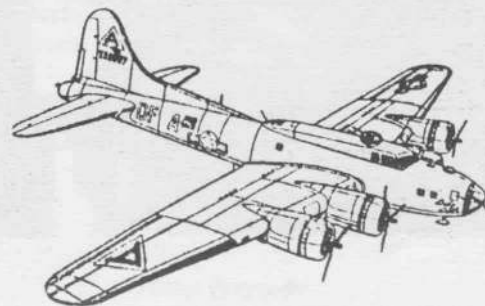
I'm enclosing a poem that you may want to share with your readers, Abby. — **Patriotic Reader, Casa Grande, Ariz.**

**DEAR READER:** Your poem is a poignant reminder of the price .. paid for the freedom many take for granted. Please take a moment to reflect on this poen, which was."} written as a tribute to our military who gave their all: - . - . - :

### FREEDOM IS NOT FREE

I watched the flag pass by one day.  
It fluttered in the breeze.  
A young Marine saluted it, and then  
He stood at ease.  
I looked at him in uniform  
So young, so tall, so proud.  
With hair cut square and eyes alert.  
He'd stand out in any crowd.  
I thought how many menlike him  
Had fallen through the years.  
How many died on foreign soil?  
How many mothers' tears?  
How many pilots' planes shot down?  
How many died at sea?  
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves?  
No, freedom is not free.  
I heard the sound of taps one night.  
When everything was still. .  
I listened to the bugler play  
And felt a sudden chill  
I wondered just how many times  
That taps had meant "Amen,"  
When a flag had draped a coffin  
'Ofa brother ora friend.  
I thought of all the children.  
Of the mothers and the wives,  
Of fathers, sons and husbands  
With interrupted lives.  
I thought about a graveyard  
At the bottom of the sea  
Of unmarked graves in Arlington.  
No, freedom is not free.

— **Cadet Major Kelly Strong,  
Air Force Junior ROTC,  
Homestead Senior High School,  
Homestead, Fla., 1988**



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

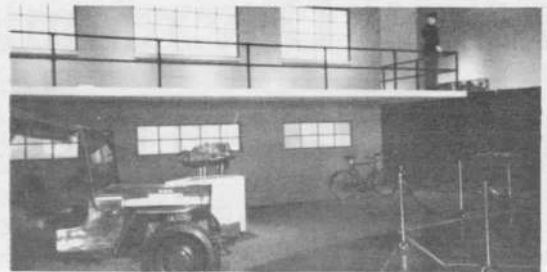
**Dear Ed,**

On our way to Pittsburgh from Florida this year, my wife and I stopped to visit The Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum. It is really a very nice museum and worth the time to see what they have to view. Here are some pictures we took.

Herman Heckel  
1427 Highland Villa S  
Pittsburgh, PA 15234

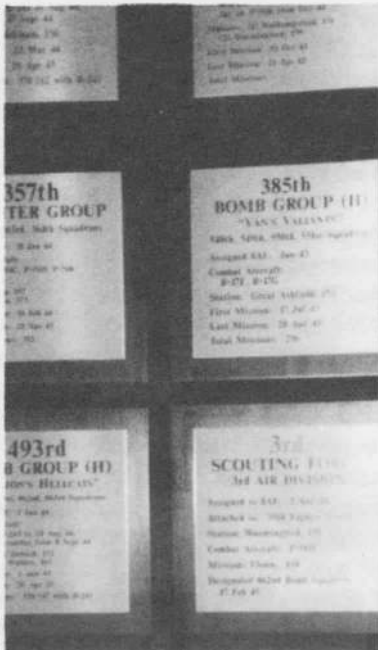


Herman Heckel



This is how a 385th display case would look if we had one.





TSGT R B PENNINGTON TSGT SAM I VANCE  
550 SO 385 BG 549 SQ TOO!!

! MAJOR CHARLES \* HAIFER ! F O GEORGE NASTAN  
I 15-17 PILOT 535 BG | 55TH F.G. POW

SSGT HARLAN VILLERS  
549 SO 385 BG

TSGT THOMAS PULLEN  
pr 550 SO POW t 3

LT HYMAN KAPLAN KIA 54? SO 385 BG	LT HARRY W. J. NOSTON POW 549 SO 335 BG
LT WALTER B SCHLLTE POW 549 SO 385 BG	LT JAMES MILLER JR POW 54? SO 335 BG
SSGT AIRPLD t : 4SSER POW 54? SO 355 BG	SSGT BRUCE H EY POW 54? SO 385 BG
SSGT HARRY J MATHIEU, JR POW 54? SO 355 BG	SSGT KELSO M POOR E 11 KIA 549 SO 335 BG
SSGT NED H MERTZ KIA 549 SO 335 BG	SSGT ARTHUR WALLACE 549 SO 585 BG

BI 7 >85 BG

CAPT FAIN H POOL  
548 SQ 385 BG

LT JAMES H REEVES  
HO 2AD 8AF

SGT ROBERT REEVE  
548 SQ 385 BG

TSCT R 3 PENNING!  
550 SO 385 BL

SSGT ED G NOWICKI  
548 SQ 385H BG



Dear Ed,

I am Milt Shalinsky, the navigator on Joe Montgomery's crew, of the 551st We were shot down on June 20, 1944 in "Mr. Smith" near Brunswick, Germany.

The sad news that I must report now is that Joe passed away a few months ago in Somerset, Kentucky. There are now only 3 members of our crew still alive—Jimmy Martin, our engineer of Birmingham, Alabama, Frank Sutula, our tail gunner of West Suffield, Connecticut, and me. Our co-pilot Sam Levy was killed on our final mission, and all the other crew members have since passed away.

The reason we were flying "Mr. Smith" at the time was that we did not have our own plane. A few days before we had been given 48 hour passes to London and were promised a new plane when we got back. However, we were told that an airplane caught on fire on the hard stand. When it blew up, it took out our new plane at the same time.

At our Tulsa reunion, I met a ground crew member who said he was the armourer for "Mr. Smith". He took full responsibility for the loss of the plane because he said on that day "Mr Smith" was suffering from significant battle damage and was not air worthy. He said he should have grounded the plane.

During the last few years, a lot has happened. In addition to losing Joe after his long fight with colon cancer, and the loss of Manley Cottongim, our radio operator who died of a heart attack, I have had a massive stroke and last September had open heart surgery with a quadruple bypass. I recovered from the heart surgery fairly well.

Despite my health problems, my wife and I have traveled extensively. We attended many reunions of the 8th Air Force, Stalag Luft 3 former POWs, American ex-POWs, and our group reunions whenever possible. Every year we got to Clarinda, Iowa for the Glenn Miller Music Festival. This was Glen Miller's birthplace. People visit there from all over the world. Two years ago they had a band there called Bill Baker's Big Band from Holland. Before their concert, Bill Baker thanked the American people for the food drops they received after the war. After the concert, I was able to talk to Bill Baker and many of the band members. I told them that our bomb group was one of the groups responsible for the food drop. They just jumped all over me and pounded me on the back so I told them that it was not me personally that was on the food drops since I was a POW at the time. This really got them excited. They said, "You went through all of that for us." They actually got down on their hands and knees and kissed my feet. They said to me if anybody in our group, especially the ones on the food drop, ever got to Amsterdam, they should ask anybody where they could find Bill Baker. He said he was pretty well known around those parts and everybody could find him. He said they would be treated very royally.

Also at the Glenn Miller Festival I met and became friendly with Steve Miller, Glenn Miller's son and Dr. Allen Case of the Univer-

sity of Colorado-Boulder who is the keeper of the Glenn Miller archives. They go around to many meetings and reunions presenting a video program and show various items from the Miller museum. I asked Allen Case if he would be willing to speak to our group sometime and he said he would be honored. I know it is too late to schedule him for our Tucson meeting but, perhaps for a later meeting.

The first time I met Steve Miller, there was a young woman with him named Kathy Shenkle. When I mentioned that I was with the 385th, she became very excited. She explained she was the historian of Arlington National Cemetery. She told me about the memorial and the tree of the 385th there, but she said she didn't have any history of the 385th. I gave her some brief information.

One of the other trips I took was a return to Sagan. It was a trip to commemorate the 50th year since our liberation from POW camp. There were about 300 people on the trip. We visited both East and West Berlin, then made a trip to Sagan, Poland where Stalag Luft 3 was located. We followed the route of our forced march from Sagan to Mooseburg. In between we visited Berchtesgaden, Hitler's Eagle's Nest, Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, and Munich before ending up in Mooseburg. The last stage of the trip was a couple of days in London. The only person that I met on this trip from the 385th was Jack Mills. He said he was in the 548th Squadron and was shot down on the Group's second mission. He was quite a character. He told everybody that he was General Mills, and about half of the people believed him. Do any of the old timers in the group remember Jack?

The trip organizer's niece, Vai Burgess, is compiling a documentary of the trip to be put on CD ROM. There may also be a video about the trip available later.

Other trips I have taken were to the 8th Air Force Association reunions at Chicago, St. Louis, and Louisville. Stalag Luft 3 reunions were in Norfolk, Seattle, and San Diego, with the big 50th anniversary in Cincinnati. The last one for the south compound only was in Colorado springs at the Air Force Academy. The American ex-POWs had a meeting I attended in Albuquerque. I met two of my non-coms that I hadn't seen in 50 years there. We had such a good time, we decided to meet on our own in Memphis. At that meeting along with me were Jimmy Martin and Manley Cottongim. We posed for a picture next to the "Memphis Belle". We called Joe Montgomery from there and everyone got to talk to him. Manley passed away shortly thereafter.

I also went to the opening of the 8th Air Force Historical Society museum in Savannah. I saw a few of our group members there. It's a great museum and I encourage everybody to visit if possible. The rotunda of the museum is dedicated to General Lew Lyle. I knew General Lyle from having participated in the video, "Behind the Wire," with him. Knowing General Lyle had commanded a couple of different bomb groups in the 8th Air Force, I asked him if he knew different bomb groups in the 8th Air Force. I asked him if he knew our colonel (General Van). He said, "Pete, I knew him well. In fact, after the war, he and I were roommates at the Air University in Georgia. We both worked on the same pro-



ject." Does anybody know that Colonel Van went by the nickname of Pete?

As far as putting a monument in the memorial gardens of the Heritage Museum, I am very much in favor of it. Enclosed is my check for the fund. I am also in favor of the widows joining the organization if they wish, although many may not want to. The last time we were in St. Louis, I asked Rose Frammer if she would go to the Omaha reunion with us. She said she would love to, but she knew that she couldn't stand going there without David. Some widows then may not join, but on the other hand, I'm quite sure Rosalee Cottongim, the widow of my radio operator might join. It also might be a good idea to start working on the children of the members.

About a year ago you put in the HLH that a friend of yours in Fargo saw me in the video that was on the A&E network. My friend Al Zimmerman was the producer of two videos, the one on A&E and another one. The first, "Start Engines plus 50 years", was on the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 8th Air Force, and the second, "Behind the wire," was about POWs. I'm sending copies of each. After you view them, you may keep them for the archives of the 385th.

God willing, we will see you all in Tucson. Now that we are all in our 70s, you guys take care of yourselves with a proper diet and exercise.

Sincerely,

Milt Shalinsky  
Lt. Colonel USAFR retired  
551st Bomb Squadron  
5513 W 86th St  
Overland Park, KS 66207

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Some of us knew Col. Van's nickname was Pete—but WE didn't call him anything but Colonel!

Dear Ed,

Judy and I want to give the Mightly Eighth Heritage Museum a "plug". We had a wonderful experience there and had our oldest son with us. He, too, thought it was great. Terrific sound effects. I would hope that every member and family of the 385th BGMA—and friends—would support it with donations and artifacts of WWII. We really should sue some of our treasury funds for a memorial to the members of the 385th.

If we can't support the museum, who will? I think it is well done and I hope it will be perpetual.

See you in Tucson.

Sincerely  
Vince Masters

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** We published Jan's letter to Ian and his reply in June. Here's her reply after getting Ian's information.

Dear Ed,

I want to subscribe to the Hardlife Herald together with all the back copies. I will send you a check immediately after I hear from you. I am most anxious to read them.

I have been corresponding with Ian McLachlan, and in his last letter he stated he was forwarding some of our correspondence to you. I won't repeat information found in those letters, but instead will enclose copies of some of them. My uncle, S/Sgt Anthony Burroughs, was killed in the crash of Lt. Sterling Bristols' bomber on 9 Aug. 1944. My father, his brother, died in 1954, so I was never able to talk to him about Anthony. There has been a void in my life—all I knew was that Anthony was "Killed in the war". As I approached mid-life, there arose a greater urgency to discover the facts of his life and death. A letter soliciting membership in the American Air Museum in Duxford provided the impetus for me to search in earnest. The search has been rewarding and exciting - I've "met" so many compassionate, concerned, and interesting people through correspondence.

On June 5th, I received a letter from Anthony Mosca which had an enclosure of a letter from Keaus Zimmer in Germany. This letter referred to eyewitness accounts of the crash - I am enclosing the report. It was difficult for me to read - although I knew Anthony's life was ended in a violent way. It is still hard to read the cold facts. I assume he was either the "second soldier" who had multiple injuries and a head wound or "third flier" who was not wearing a chute. According to a letter written by Buell Martin to Col. Victor Ferguson, Billy Allison (co-pilot) said that "Burroughs and Faulkner went out ahead of him." That would seem to indicate they both had on parachutes.

BUT, since Lt. Bristol apparently went down with the plane, ("body over the pilots' joystick in the cockpit.") and one dead flier had a parachute and one did not, that would corroborate the account of "Six parachutes counted" instead of seven.

Although the report questions whether "parachute 4 and 5" were from Bristol's plane, I assume that they were, since correspondence I have from Tony Mosca and Buell Martin states that all 5 survivors were together the evening of the crash. Also, I understand that Bristol's plane was the only one shot down 9 Aug 1944.

At least I do know with some certainty that Anthony was killed in the crash and buried at Kusal. My grandparents were living with uncertainty until August, 1948, when his remains were returned to the States. He is buried in a rural churchyard cemetery near his home. Another sad note - my grandmother received the telegram that he was MIA on his birthday, 21 Aug 44. She is 97 years old, a vital, interesting woman still, although she is fragile physically. She still lives in her own home. I've had to tread carefully, because I don't want to bring up memories and emotions that might be better left alone. In May, I told her what facts I had received, and that I have been in contact with surviving members of the crew.

She seems genuinely comforted and pleased that the memories of these men are being kept alive by concerned individuals and groups.

I'm planning to visit Great Ashfield in August. We didn't even know where Anthony had been stationed until this spring (government censorship). Now I know he lived at Great Ashfield and died at Kusel. I'm beginning to gain some closure and peace.

Yesterday was the anniversary of D-Day - "The most significant event of the Twentieth Century" according to some historians, and I agree. Although I am completing my search for the circumstances surrounding Anthony's death, I remain vitally interested in the men of the Eighth Air Force, and especially the 385th. Perhaps there are some men who remember Anthony and could share their recollections with me.

In appreciation for your interest in the 385th,  
 Jan B. Loftis  
 821 River Bluff Rd  
 North Augusta  
 SC 29841  
 (803) 278-3758

**NOTE:** I've just found two letters from Earl Hansen's family, written in 1945. Apparently he was on the plane - his first time out with Bristol's crew - now the "7th parachute" riddle rears its head again - I'm really confused now.

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Dear Ed,

Some pictures from my recent trip to Holland and Luxembourg. Rodger Feller and his wife in front of the church in Perle and the area where the memorial will be located.

The others are pictures of the memorial in Enschede, Holland. They are for different groups of people killed during the war. The one with the woman holding a child is for the first raid to Munster Oct. 10, 1943. Two groups from the first division were to bomb Rheine, but bombed Enschede instead about 25 miles away. 180 people were killed, Enschede was bombed four more times by mistake.

I was there three days after their memorial day which accounts for all the flowers. The affair next year will be a great occasion for a town of only 300 people. The memorial will be 10 feet high with a water fountain and water cascade, very large.

See you in Tucson.

Sincerely,

John Pettenger



Dear Ed,

Just a short note to say how much I appreciate receiving the "Hardlife Herald". Each edition is a treasure of information and good reading. I thought you might enjoy the picture and the words beneath. The F-16 belongs to the Air National Guard of my home state, Texas. Note the photographer in the small window above the Thunderbird insignia.

Best regards,

Ray Tucker



Dear Mr. Hruska,

I'm an aviation researcher and a contributing author for some Polish aviation magazines. Among them the oldest (since 1930s) and most popular - "Skrzydla Polsk" magazine.

I have formed a group of Polish researchers (amateurs like me) looking for info about combat planes crashed/force-landed in Poland at WW2. We call it "Aircraft M.I.A. Project". Poland was "visited by USAAF 8th and 15th Air Forces during the war. We have found several old black/white pictures present the USAAF planes after the events. We have collected several recalls from Polish eye-witnesses and American crew-members. We have located some parts of the planes too.

385th BG's "Kentucky Winner" (#42-102481) crash landed near Grodzisk, Poland on March 18, 1945 according to Ray Bowden's "Tales to Noses over Berlin". Therefore I have contacted Regional Museum at Grodzisk. Mr. Dariusz Matuszewski of the Museum has sent me very kind letter. According to him some things concerning the event are on permanent display. Among them: several pictures of the crashed plane, some pictures taken during burial of one of the crew members, a silk map of Central Europe, M-10 machine gun, and tail wheel. I feel the info will be of some interest.

By the way, I'm looking for contact with "Kentucky Winner's" crew members. I'm interested in a picture of them and the Fortress too. Could you help me with it?

I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Please, give 385th Bomb Group's veterans my kind regards!

Yours sincerely,

Michak Muscha  
Al. Wielkopolska 43  
60-603 Poznan  
Poland

Dear Mr. Pettenger,

From the list "8AFHS Unit Contacts-1996" I have your address as someone who can give me more informations about the 385. BG.

At first I shall describe the circumstances fo my searching. I am 39 years old and from my mother, who had served in the kitchen administration at Achmer Airfield during WWII I got the intention to research the history of Achmer Airfield. But the informations from the German side are not enough and sometimes not objective. So I thought it is usual to hear and describe the events telling from members of the Allied side too! So my interest is especially the view of the Allied Bomber and Fighter crews when they are going to bomb Achmer and its vicinity.

One point of interest may be a photo of a crash-landed B-17G. The story behind this event took place at 2 Nov 1944. The aircraft from 385th BG 561st BS has started from the base Great Ashfield (Suffolk/UK) for the briefed target Merseburg/Germany. But the B-17 left the formation approaching the target area because No 1 engine was shot out and another engine gave up. The a/c bombed Halle and returned as a struggler with two props feathered. The crew bailed out in the area of Damme (North of Asnabruck). The aircraft crashed 1403 H at Sutthausen near railway station Osthausen (South of Osnabruck/see map). The crew members were captured in the vicinity of Damme. Is it true, that when the crew members refused to give information, the SS singled out Lt. Harry Weissman because of his race (Jewish) and shot him in their Headquarters near Damme? It seems to be possibly a very cruel truth, very difficult to understand for an 39 year old German like me! If there is something to supply I should be very pleased to get it. Please note that the details were collected by my friend J.A. Hey (Hengelo/Netherlands) from MACR 10155. The photo (self-made reproduction from originals in Medienzentrum Osnabruck) is for your files.

I wish you and yours all the best and I am looking forward to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

Dieter Przygode  
Ass. Member 8 AFHS  
Westerkappeln Str. 8  
D-49565 Bramsche  
Germany

**NOTE:** I have an excellent picture of the plane at the crash site for any of the crew.

John F Pettenger

Dear Ed,

**Having** just read the book "The Wrong Stuff" by Truman Smith, I have to say how much I enjoyed it. Practically every chapter was *deja vu* to me. Pilot class 43-1; overseas as co-pilot on a B-17; 31 missions, of which about half were flown with the 548th Squadron out of Great Ashfield. Of my missions flown with the 385th Group my log book shows the mission dates and times within a few minutes of those mentioned in the book.

One mission report, however, jolted me into disbelief as I read over and over the account of the special mission to the French Marquis on June 25. I was a newly checked out First Pilot at that early morning briefing for the no bombs, low altitude supply mission. I looked forward to it! The mission board stated Pilot as Lt. Carlson, aircraft number and formation slot (close to tail-end Charlie, as I recall) so, out I went to meet the crew. Yes, meet the crew! Many of my missions were with crews that I did not know or had flown with before. Perhaps, some of this crew was McDonalds crew as stated in the book. Anyway, I got the (credit) for aborting. This mission was also mentioned in the book "Flying Fortress" by Edward Jablonski.

When we lost boost on number two engine, while assembling at altitude before crossing the channel, we changed the "black boxes" and checked turbo settings, to no avail. I made the decision to abort early enough to give the spare (evidently Truman Smith) an easier time to get into position.

Back on the ground at Hardlife we were greeted by a rather irate crew chief, who started up the engine in question and pronounced it to be sound. Of course, the engine ran fine on the ground but it was the turbo that could not hold power at altitude. This was because of a small crack in the manifold system that opened wider in the colder temperatures at altitude. This was a common reason for loss of boost, I later learned from ground crews in the 94th Group.

My crew was left standing on the ramp until a jeep came roaring up with a Master Sgt. and the Major from Engineering. They asked not what was wrong with the airplane, but, why did I abort "their" aircraft? With an attitude that implied I had a yellow streak down my back, the Major ordered me to report to Colonel Vandevanter. After post mission debriefing I went to quarters and cleaned up and into class A uniform.

Upon reporting to Colonel Van, he seemed a little startled to see a 2nd Lt. standing before him in full dress, with evidence of quite a few missions, topped by the Silver Star. "Who are you and why are you here?" the Colonel asked. First I reported the mission abort and why we did it. Then I apologized for not reporting in to him before, and explained that I came direct from the 15th Air Force in Italy and my orders were to report to a Major Bexfield in the 548th Squadron where I had been flying missions as a co-pilot.

I continued to fly missions in different aircraft and heard no more of the abort incident for a few days. Then, I was both saddened and yet felt vindicated, when another crew flying the airplane with the cracked manifold system, were heard to break radio silence

while deep into Germany and reporting they were unable to keep up because of lack of boost; and they were going to Switzerland.

Sincerely,

Theodore V Carlson Lt Col USAF Ret  
PO Box 177  
Stickney, SD 57375

Dear Ed,

It is not unexpected that letters to the Editor of *Hardlife Herald* deal with the past. For a change of pace, let me, for the moment at least, deal with the present and put the following questions:

Are there any members of the 385th Bombardment Group Memorial Foundation who are current pilots and if so (1) do they own their own aircraft, (2) were they pilots or were they members of the flight or ground crew during military service and (3) what prompted them to take up or to continue their interest in flying after leaving the service?

If there are any such souls I would like to hear from them. They can write to me either at my office address: Seventh Floor, Bulkley Building, 1501 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115 or at my home address which appears on the front page of the *Hardlife Herald*.

Very truly yours,

Mike R. Gallagher

Dear Ed,

We visited England, and London, in May this year and I tried to locate the old Mostyn Red Cross Club, Columbia, R.C. Club, and Rainbow Comer R.C. Club on Shafts Bury Street. I found what I believe are the old Buildings, but no identification or plaques. Like many others I enjoyed these during WWII. Do you know if anyone has ever written about their function/use in the wartimen years?

Charlie Price  
57558 M-62 East  
Cassopolis, MI  
49031-9752



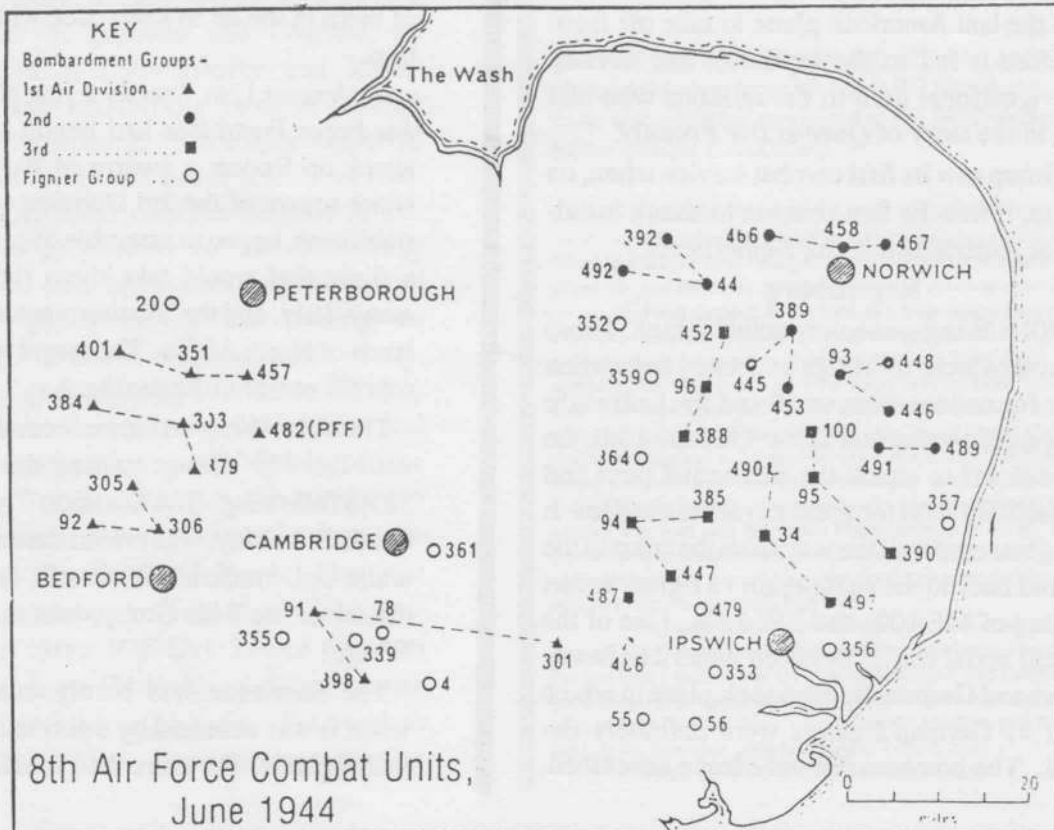


THANKS TO KEN LAFFOON

BOMB GROUP DESIGNATIONS 8<sup>TH</sup> AIR FORCE

<p>(A) A B A B C D C G H J K L P G H C J</p>	<p>-1 P<sup>TH</sup> AOMS Gp W- B&gt;MGF ? / 'Bo^a GP &lt;12. GP Boms 93- B0*, GP 9 H<sup>rs</sup> Bo^ &amp; P 3S<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GP 3G - /Bo*# GP /OO<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GP 3 o 3 B<sup>TH</sup> BOBB GP 3 OS<sup>r</sup> - (Gi GP 3 o C<sup>r</sup> - 13, MA Gp 3s / - pj0H/j GP 3 7 3 - 73OHS GP 38 / ~poAih GP 381? BM,, G? 3 8 S<sup>TH</sup> Bom GP 383<sup>r</sup> - Bona GP 383<sup>r</sup> - BOH* Gp 3 3 o<sup>TH</sup> Bona GP</p>	<p>(D) W S F H I K L J U S K P W P C +V W O M</p>	<p>39 2<sup>nd</sup> - BOMB Gp 39 8 - Bonn GP Got - 73OMB GP 19-3-^ BOMB GP 19 7 ^J^ona GP P 9-8 ? BOMB Gp 19 7? BMA GP I-? 2. - BOMB GP /S'3 A.° BOMB Gp I<sup>TH</sup> 3 7 ■ BOMB GP 12 8<sup>r</sup> - Bon 3 GP 9/7, T<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GP ^77 ? Bong G P PQ6-<sup>TH</sup> yaGP PQ 7 - Bone GP P-81 - BOMS GP PI o - BOMB GP *P1 / -<sup>TH</sup> BPMBGP 9-12.*? 73OMB (Gp 'PI 3 "3 BOMB'P</p>
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EDITOR'S NOTE: The way it was laid out - from Ken Laffoon



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Thanks to 94th Bomb Group Newsletter, here's the 385th part of a history of the 4th Combat Wing.

**Thumbnail Sketch  
of the  
4th Combat Bomb Wing  
by A A Jacobs**

*Editors Note:* Norman **Valentine** was located over two years ago. He was Col (then Gen) Castle's driver in the 4th Combat Wing. He has considerable memorabilia of those days and sharp recollections of his association with 4th Combat Wing Commanders. We plan to publish more as space permits.

He has furnished us with a copy of the following "thumbnail sketch" which was authorized by the CO, 4th Wing on 20 May 1945. We have no information concerning the author, Sgt A A Jacobs. If anyone has knowledge of him, we would like to get in touch.

**The 385th Bombardment Group**

The 385th arrived in England during the reorganization of the 8th Bomber Command. The Group was installed at Great Ashfield in Suffolk County, and assigned to the newly formed 401st Wing.

The commanding officer of the 385th was Col. Elliot Van Devanter Jr., who, as a member of the immortal 19th Bombardment Group, and as the pilot of the last American plane to take off from Java before it fell to the Japanese, had already become a national hero to the millions who had a part in the story of *Queens Die Proudly*.

The Group saw its first combat service when, on July 17th, it flew its first mission to attack installations at Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

**Regensburg**

The 401st Wing was a very active infant. Those early months were the rough and ready days when bomber formations were small and the Luftwaffe still ruled the continental skies. On June 13th, the Wing took off to attack the submarine pens and dock installations at the great naval base at Kiel. It had a fighter escort all the way from the coast to the target and back to the coast again - a fighter escort consisting of ME 109s and FW 190s. One of the first great aerial battles between American heavy bombers and German fighters took place in which at least 41 German fighters were definitely destroyed. The bombers did not escape unscathed.

however, for their losses, although far smaller than the enemy's, were the greatest yet suffered in a single mission.

Five days later, on June 18th, the Wing participated in an attack on the submarine pens of St. Nazaire - a mission that was distinguished by the fact that it marked the first time that 'Tokyo Tanks' had been used in combat in Europe. This mission marked a new stage in the development of the air offensive, for the 'Tokyo Tanks,' which are extra fuel tanks fitted in the wings of the aircraft, so increased the maximum range of the B-17s as to make it possible, for the first time, to penetrate to all four corners of the Reich.

By the middle of August, the 8th Air Force was ready for an all-out effort. The town of Regensburg, deep in southern Germany, was the site of one of the largest production centers for Messerschmitt fighters in the country. This was the critical time when, if strategic bombing was to succeed, the Luftwaffe must be broken. The Germans, as an answer to the growing number of Allied bombers, had concentrated their greatest effort on the production of fighter planes. The number of these aircraft was increasing so rapidly that the Allies could never hope to destroy enough of them in the air to keep pace with their production.

On August 17th, exactly a year after the first 8th Air Force Fortresses had begun history with an attack on Rouen, a swarm of B-17s bearing the white square of the 3rd Division on their vertical stabilizers, began to assemble over East Anglia for a flight that would take them right across Germany, Italy, and the Mediterranean Sea to the flatlands of North Africa. The target was the Messerschmitt center of Regensburg.

The 401st Wing was to be second over the target with the 94th Group leading the Wing and the 385th following. The Division Commander, Col. Curtis E. LeMay, was to lead the entire formation, while Col. Frederick W. Castle, the commanding officer of the 94th Group, was to lead the 401st Wing.

The formation had hardly crossed the coast when it was attacked by a formation of 275 German fighters. For more than four hours, the Nazis

dived, looped, twisted and turned, trying to break through the American formation. Time and again, the American machine-guns held the enemy off. The wreckage of bombers and fighter planes made blazing pyres on the ground below - but the bombers flew on - their formations unbroken. The armada reached the target area and the 402nd went in first. Visibility was good and the clearly outlined target was soon enveloped in flame and smoke. When the 401st began its bombing run, the AA guns, which had by now gotten the range, filled the sky with thick, black puffs of death. By the time the Wing came over the target, nothing could be seen behind the flames and smoke which had been set by the first wave of bombers. Instead of dropping its load in the middle of the holocaust on the ground and then scooting out of range of the deadly ground fire, Col Castle ordered the Wing to execute a 360 degree turn and come back for a second try. When the formation came over the target the second time, the smoke had cleared sufficiently for the bombardiers to see the target, and the bombs crashed almost dead-center of the still burning buildings. With flak bursts bouncing the Forts all over the sky and fighters diving from all points of the compass, the Wing flew on to its rallying point and, then, headed for Africa that evening, hardly one had enough fuel left to fly another mile.

One hundred and sixty-five enemy aircraft had definitely been destroyed in the air over Germany that day. Of these, 73 had fallen to the guns of the 401st Wing. The cost had been heavy, however - 24 Forts were missing - but of these, only three belonged to the 401st

The Messerschmitt plant at Regensburg never completely recovered from the blow.

The first part of the first shuttle-mission ever run by the 8th Air Force was over, and the crews rested for a week before beginning the second half of the mission. The second half consisted of a return trip to England via France, during the course of which they were to attack the submarine pens and dock installations at Bordeaux.

The 385th led the Wing on the return trip. . . There was no incident until they reached Bordeaux where heavy flak defenses caught the

bombers in a thick barrage. The lead plane had just released its bombs when a burst of flak caught it and knocked out two of its engines. It soon became apparent to the crew that they would have to ditch in the Channel. The plane hit the water within 30 minutes flying time of its base - and began to sink rapidly. The crew could only free one of the dinghys but when it was thrown into the water the waves immediately carried it several hundred yards away from the sinking plane. The men crawled out of the wreck and began to swim toward the dinghy. The radio man, Sgt Harry Jablon, dove into the nearly submerged fuselage to come out with the emergency radio equipment. He handed it to Lt Paul Schulz, the navigator, who, with the equipment on his back, attempted to swim out to the dinghy. Halfway to his goal, his strength ran out and he began to sink. Major Piper, who had already reached the dinghy, seeing what was happening, dove over the side and swam out to the half-drowned navigator. Lugging both the unconscious airman and the radio equipment, Major Piper, miraculously reached the dinghy where the others were now waiting. The radio equipment was set up and, within minutes, they were in contact with the powerful Coastal Command radio station. As they waited, the seas began to grow heavy and soon the dinghy, under the weight of the whole crew, began to fill up with water. Soon the seas were so heavy that it became impossible for the air-sea boats to come up to them. They decided to take turns in leaving the dinghy and holding on to the sides, to lighten the load. Air-sea rescue planes in contact with their radio located their position and dropped several emergency rafts - but they all dropped too far out on the churning waters. It was becoming increasingly evident that no one had the strength left to be able to hold on to the sides much longer. Capt. John Dewey, the Group Navigator who had flown this mission as the Command Navigator of the formation, volunteered to attempt to swim out to one of the rafts which had been dropped by the rescue planes. He had almost reached the raft when a huge wave soon broke over him. He was never seen again. Finally, after 21 hours in the water, the sea calmed sufficiently to allow the rescue boats to reach the exhausted crew...

On May 1, 1944, the 3rd Division was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation in recognition of its victory over Regensburg and its completion of the first shuttle mission in history.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** John Dewey, our Group Navigator was an especially good friend—his desk faced mine at Group Hq before I was sent to the 550th.

I remember how relieved we were when they made it to Africa and were returning with a "milk run" bombing of Bordeaux.

When they ditched in the channel, we heard they were picked up. One of us "clowns" marked their in and out status as "swimming in English Channel". You can imagine how we felt when we learned of John's drowning. Incidentally he was from North Dakota and had been an outstanding UND student.

Dear Ed,

Thank you for all you do and your kind words to include widows. I have a conflict and will be unable to attend.

I believe some of the Wayne Montgomery crew (Angel's Sister) will be attending; Ed/Olga Stermer; Don/Bonnie Shee; Harold/Marty Trousdale; Dean/Marj Leyerle - last I heard.

May you all have a wonderful time together and treasure today and the memories of yesterdays - however sorrowful some may be.

Sincerely,

Caroline Montgomery

Ed Stem, Editor

On May 8, 1997, the Massachusetts Chapter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society held their "Spring Fling" at the NCO Club at Hanscom Air Base, Bedford, Massachusetts.

President Albert E. Audette started with the salute to the Flag, followed by the invocation given by Secretary Berkev Hospian for our deceased members.

Our guest speaker Glenn Tessmer, 93BG spoke on his experience as a POW, glider pilot, flight instructor, both military and civilian, crop duster in main, also flying for Delta and Northeast Airlines.



Chapter Officers seated left to right: President Albert E. Audette, V.P. Henry Oi, Secretary Barkev Hosepian and Treasurer Joseph DeGiacomo headed the luncheon attended by 126 participants.



The Memorial Plaque design was displayed by members of a committee for all contributors to see. From left to right, Barkev Hosepian, Albert E. Audette and Dr. Robert Glebus. We encourage our members of the Massachusetts Chapter to help us reach our goal to place this plaque in the Boston State House.

All contributions: Mail to Joseph DeGiacomo, 7 Mill Terrace, Woburn, MA 01801.

Sincerely,

Albert E. Audette, 385th BG  
Pres. Mass. Chapter  
Eighth A.F.H.S.  
279 Washington St.  
Woburn, MA 01801-2738



Dear Ed,

This spring the wife and I visited our daughter in Tucson. It was so nice, we stayed for 2 1/2 months and still didn't get to see it all. I've been to the Los Angeles, Spokane and will attend Tucson reunion also, and I think Tucson by far the best. Also while there I bought a book at Barnes & Noble store, called Legend & Legacy by Robert Serling, a complete history of Boeing and its people. A great book on Boeing aircraft. It would be great if you could have some for sale at the reunion. Published by St. Martins Press, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010

As always,  
Wes Gildner

Dear Mr. Stem:

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Richard W. Smith. I served in the United States Army from January 1969 to February 1991.

In the scope of my employment, I became acquainted with a Mrs. Linda Me Daniel, who lives in Fairfield, California. Recently, Mrs. McDaniel's mother, a Mrs. Geraldine Bash, passed away from natural causes. While at Mrs. Bash's former residence, paying my respects to Mrs. McDaniel, I noted hanging in the living room hallway a shadow box with numerous military awards for valor, including a Distinguished Flying Cross, a Purple Heart, and other numerous military medals. Additionally, in frames on either side of the shadow box, were two framed "Lucky Bastard" certificates. One certificate, dated in 1943, was made out to a Lieutenant Robert W. Bash for the successful completion of 25 missions over Germany in World War II. The other certificate, dated in 1945, was made out to Captain Robert W. Bash for the successful completion of 46 missions over Germany in World War II. Also on this certificate was the notation that Captain Bash had been a "Lead Pilot."

After observing these certificates and awards, I paid my respects to Mrs. McDaniel and left the residence. After she returned to work, I asked her about her father, Captain Bash. She told me that he had been in the Army Air Corps in World War II, had been a B-17 pilot, had flown combat missions over Germany, and had been assigned to the Eighth Air Force. After the war, Mr Bash stayed in the military-he was reverted to enlisted rank and subsequently retired from the United States Air Force as a Chief Master Sergeant.

Mrs. McDaniel recently provided me with a copy of your newsletter (which is how I got your name and address).

Mrs. McDaniel was able to find various orders, etc regarding Cpt. Bash. Cpt Bash, 0685177 graduated from the Army Air forces Pilot School (Specialized 4-Engine), Lockbourne Army Air Base, Columbus 17 Ohio on 4 September 1943. The next set of orders I have on Cpt Bash is when he was assigned to the 551st Bomb Sq (H), Army Air Force Station 155, APO 559.1 then have numerous orders for the time Cpt Bash was in the ETO, including the orders

and the writeup for his two DFC's that he was awarded. From what I was able to find, Bash completed 26 missions over occupied Europe between 3/16/44 and 6/22/44 - he was awarded his first "Lucky Bastard" certificate for his missions as part of the "Golden Goose". He then went back to the US, later returning, and again flew 46 missions over Europe from 10/7/44 through 3/2/45. He earned his second "Lucky Bastard" certificate for these missions as part of the "Betty Jo." (On this certificate, he is listed as serving as the Lead Pilot.

What we are interested in is finding any photos of Cpt Bash and his plane.

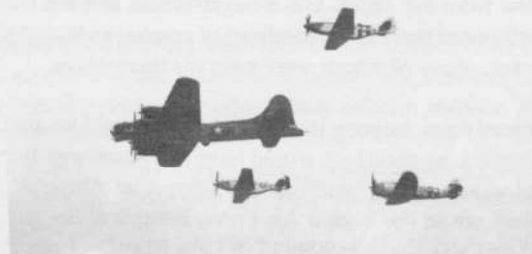
With this information, does this narrow it down, and can you help any further?

Hope to hear from you in the near future.

Richard W. Smith  
Phone (707) 447-0681  
Fax (707) 447-0681

P.S. His wife's name was Geraldine Bash. According to Mrs. McDaniel, she was a contributor to the church window at the 385th's former base at Great Ashfield, East Anglica, England.  
Thank you for your assistance in this matter

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Let's dig up what we can! Pictures of "Golden Goose", "Betty Jo", etc., and anything else. Quite a record he had!!



"Sally B" escorted by two P-51s and a P-47 salutes the new American Air Museum



The B-17 "Sally B" gives a flyby at Duxford August 1, 1997

**LETTERS FROM IAN**

Dear Ed,

I believe I sent you a picture of the wreath we laid at this year's Memorial Day Service but have included one of Sue because she presented it this year. I'm no horticulturist but Sue tells me the flowers were mainly freesias which the dictionary says originated from the Cape of Good Hope. No doubt there were many hopes and aspirations laid to rest at Madingley and the very least we can do is remember, especially those of us that belong to the following generations.

Last Friday, August 1st, Sue and I attended the opening by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth of the new American Air Museum at Duxford and I've enclosed some pictures of events which you can share through *Hardlife Herald*. It was a splendid occasion although the British weather behaved as so many of you remember our summers - the rain was warm! Luckily, however, it abated for the arrival of the Queen and held off during the actual ceremonies. The Queen spoke for our Nation when she thanked America for both sharing the conflict and preserving the peace and the exhibits at Duxford will remind us that such peace had to be paid for. Dr. Sheila Widnall, Secretary of the United States Air Force was there to represent the President but, for my money, the most touching speech was made by Major General Ramsey D. Potts, a former Eighth Air Force Group Commander. He spoke of American Air Power being Centre-stage on this occasion but then remembered how it was when the Eighth partnered the Royal Air Force whose sacrifices should also be given thought as prayers were said. He also recalled the sharing of resources, especially Air-Sea Rescue which fished many Americans from the drink, including, of course, quite a few from the 385th. His thoughtfulness and the fact that he'd actually been there in the forefront of combat endeared him to the audience, many of whom were veterans themselves.

I hadn't heard from Anyone in the 385th who would be attending the opening but, as good luck would have it, I found two veterans, neither of whom are in the 385th BG Memorial Association although they are in the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. The first one I met was Keith Stokes (1539 Lake Clay Dr, Lake Placid, FL33852) who was on board, "Haybag Annie" when she crash-landed at Valley, Wales, on the way home to the US. He gave me an account of events and related how they'd left Great Ashfield with 20 on board and a bomb-bay full of equipment for the Pacific Theatre, even mosquito nets! "Haybag Annie" settled, "real nice" on the runway - it was dusk and the landing lights were on but, inexplicably, "Haybag Annie" wouldn't stop and over-ran into mud and water at the runway's end. I can recall hearing from John Ford how she had apparently been fitted with B-17F tires instead of B-17G tires and this caused the braking system to go haywire - I'd welcome further input on this and so would Keith. Luckily there were no serious injuries but Arnold Walker sprained his arm. Lt. Robert G. Gunn was the pilot with Lt. Richard O. Etting as co-pilot and they, along with the rest of their crew were delayed several days at Valley while enquiries were made into the accident. Keith has promised to send me a picture of "Haybag Annie" sitting on her belly in the mire & I've got a full crew list to send him.

Sue and I then came to the rescue of another 385th Veteran, Irving Bregman (PO Box 209, Ocean City, New Jersey 08226) who was in the UK with a party from the 94BG. Cliff Hall, the 94BG contact and a good friend of mine told me that the 94BG would be visiting Rougham on the 2nd August but would not have time to take in Great Ashfield and could we help get Irving to his old base? After shuffling some plans, Sue and I picked him up from Bury St Edmunds and took him to Great Ashfield. Di Barker came to the aid of us all by providing coffee and an excellent lunch after we'd visited the church and driven around as much of the airbase as access and time allowed. Not having been back since the war, Irving only remembered the place as, "Elmswell" and was struggling to recall his crew and the names of some of the aircraft he'd flown. "Vat 69" came to mind because he envied the crew getting free whiskey from the distillery and he also remembered, "Princess Vai" and an occasion when he and his crew crash-landed at an RAF base. Not having all my records with me, I couldn't help Irving on the spot when he spoke of a Lt. Starkel as his pilot, but checking the Roster since, Robert Starkel is listed and I've sent his address to Irving as well as writing to Starkel himself. By Irving's account, Starkel did an excellent job of bringing home their shot-up B-17 and they literally skimmed the tree-tops before bellying in on this RAF aerodrome. Irving has forgotten when and where but I hope there'll be more to follow on this once they get in touch and then I can add more of the story to my own archives. Irving was a spare crew picture he's promised to send so I'm quite chuffed with how things went and hope both Irving and Keith will now sign up for the 385th BGMA.

All-in-all, Sue and I were delighted with the day, especially meeting two 385th Veterans and being able to help out.

Another letter has arrived from Jan Loftis, I'll send you a copy when I've got access to a copier - this is being written at home because I've got a few days off and am trying hard to catch up on a massive backlog of mail. I'm glad that others are stepping in to help Jan learn more about her uncle, Anthony Burroughs, and am well pleased when my work through *Hardlife Herald* helps others connected with the 385th. Thanks, of course, to you, Ed, for doing such an excellent job. Your work is the glue that helps keep it all together.

I recently had a letter and cassette tape from William Powell describing his experiences after being shot down on board, "Hustlin Hussey" on January 29, 1944. Bill ended up in Buchenwald Concentration Camp and, if ever any reminder of why we owe so much to him and others like him is necessary, two words say it all, "Concentration Camp". The fact that 385th airmen ended up there gives me good reason to include the loss of "Hustlin Hussey" in the next volume of "Eighth Air Force Bomber Stories". I have a nose-art of the aircraft but would welcome a full view if anyone has a copy plus, of course, any crew or ground crew pictures relating to, "Hustlin Hussey".

Will close now so I can catch the post - See you in Tucson.

Best Wishes,  
Ian McLachlan



Sue with 385th wreath  
Madingley, 1997



The American Air Museum at Duxford



The Queen speaks during the official opening  
of the American Air Museum, Duxford

Dear Irving,

I hope the rest of your trip was enjoyable. Sue and I are glad to have met you and to have shared some time with you at Elmswell rekindling old memories.

When we got home, I went through my records and found the address of Bob Starkel which is as follows: Robert H Starkel, 710 Bolto Road, Vernon, CT 06066. Delving further into my records, I found that I'd spoken briefly with him in February, 1992. You mentioned landing in Europe and he confirms this as Liege and

another time in Armentiers, France. I think the first time you were flying, "Kentucky Winner" but will copy this to him for confirmation and to Ed for HH out of interest. Bob also spoke about "Princess Vai", the ship you remembered and it seems I was right when I guessed that the RAF base where you crash-landed was Woodbridge. Bob said you had two engines out and ran out of gas at 1300 feet - the engineer managed to transfer some and you scraped into Woodbridge. From the conversation you and I had, you mentioned some of the crew baled out but your hatch was jammed and you couldn't get forward over the tail wheel. I'd appreciate it if you'd confirm this and throw in any other recollections that have occurred since we met.

Thanks for leaving the spare crew picture with Cliff, it'll wend its way to me and be added to the archive. While not 385th, I'd also be interested in any spare prints you have of B-25s and anything you can tell me of the time you spent patrolling the coast. As an aviation Historian, I'm also a squirrel for any material which may help me with books and articles in the future so the B-25 photographs you spoke of will have an excellent home here. Please let me know what costs are involved.

I hope the all-too-brief time we had in Great Ashfield (Elmswell) helped sort out a few things for you and I hope you'll sign up for membership of the 385th BGMA because there may be others who can help fill in some of the gaps in your own memory.

I'll look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,  
Ian McLachlan

Dear Mr. Starkel,

Last week I had the pleasure of meeting Irving Bregman who was tail gunner on your crew. Irving was struggling to recall events during the time you'd spent at the base he remembered as Elmswell but could recall the name of his pilot as Starkel and reminisced about the time you'd crash-landed on an RAF base. He reckons it was a brilliant piece of piloting to get in, especially since his hatch had jammed and he couldn't bale out!

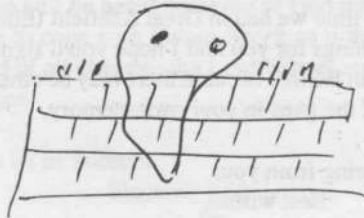
After meeting Irving and taking him to Great Ashfield, the airbase and the memorials in the church, we had lunch with Roy and Di Barker and more of the pieces began to fit in for Irving but, not having all my files there, I couldn't help until I got home and had the chance to look up your address and some notes I'd made during a phone call back in 1992. To cut short a long story, I've now given Irving your address and enclose a copy of the letter sent to him. I hope this finds you in good health and you're able to make contact because I know Irving would be delighted to hear from you and exchange some old yams. I'd also be keen to hear them myself because I couldn't get down much detail when we spoke on the phone.

I hope you don't mind my copying this to Hardlife Herald because there may be others who want to share their own memories of the ships you flew, "Kentucky Winner"; "Princess Vai"; & "Rum Dum".

Best Wishes  
Ian McLachlan



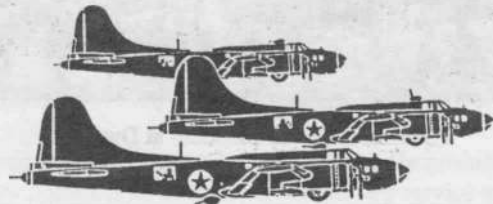
Best wishes from  
Les & Peggy Gordon  
1997



h>C> i NO 'YfINKS !



President Bob as an aide to the  
Grand Marshall in the  
Memorial Day Parade - Branford  
L-R Art Ruggiero - 493 BG  
George Ahern - 351 BG  
Bob Valliere - 385th BG



# 385THBGMA

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