

Hardlife



Herald



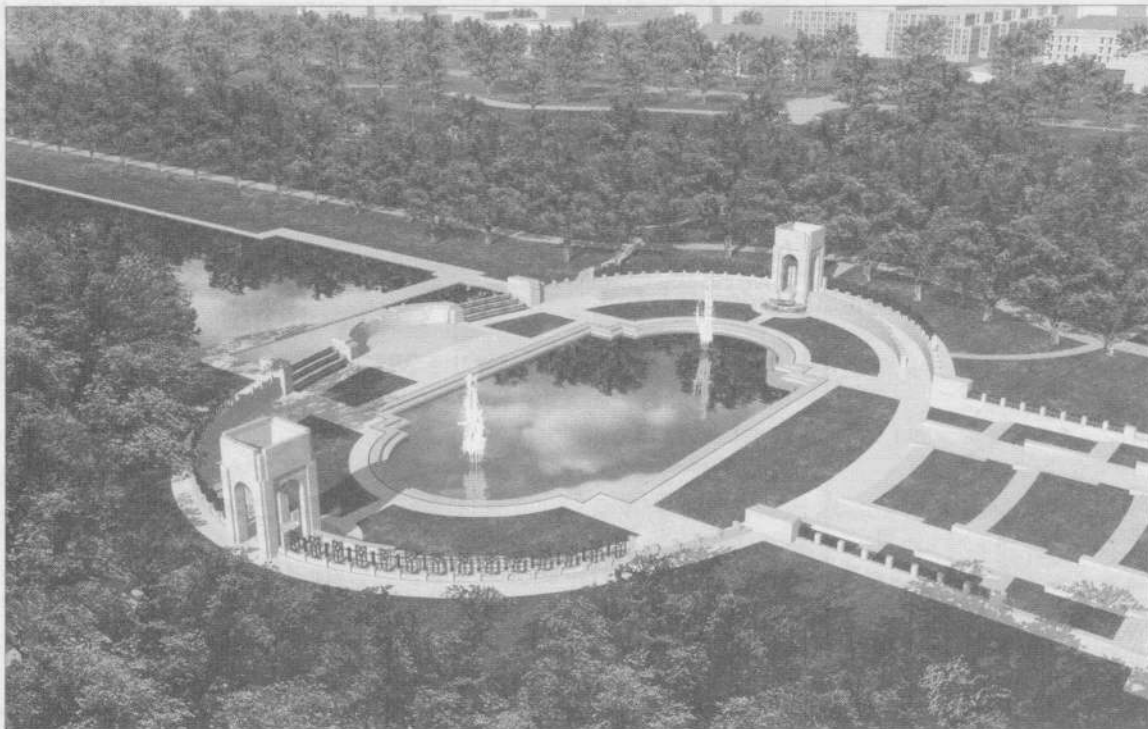
Newsletter of the
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The Mighty Eighth

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Washington, D.C.

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Hardlife Herald

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Table of Contents

Page	
2	Officers
2	Cover
2	Corrections
2	Board of Directors' Meeting
3	Prez Sez
3	World War II Veterans
4-5	One Lucky Bastard
5	Book Reviews
6-7	Assembling the Mighty Eighth Armada
8-10	The Savannah Saga
10	Regensburg-Mission 10
11	Fort Stars and Stripes
11	American Internees in Sweden
12	385th BGMA Reunion
13	8th AFHS Activity Registration Form
14-15	Proposed Constitution
21	Letters and E-mails
22-23	Taps
24	385th Group Tour 2005

Cover

The cover is an aerial view of the National World War II Memorial dedicated on May 29, 2004. It is located on the Mall between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. It honors and pays tribute to all military patriots of that conflict as well as the millions of non-military persons who contributed and supported the war effort from home. The WW II Memorial was dedicated on May 29, 2004. From the entrance on 17th Street, ceremonial ramps lead to the Memorial Plaza and Rainbow Pool which dominate the site. Grand arches on the north and south ends of the plaza represent the Atlantic and Pacific theaters of combat. The plaza is surrounded by 56 pillars symbolizing the states and territories that bonded together to defeat the enemy. On the western side of the plaza, the Freedom Wall, with 4,000 sculptured gold stars, remembers the more than 400,000 Americans who gave their lives for our freedom.

Corrections

The explanation for the 385th BGMA Flag picture on the cover of the May 2004 issue of the Hardlife Herald incorrectly listed the 385th BG Distinguished Unit Citations as Warnemunde and Zwickau. The correct missions for which the Group was awarded the DUCs were Regensburg and Zwickau.

Under the Officers on Page 2, the e-mail address for Chuck Smith is incorrect. The correct e-mail address for Chuck Smith is chucksmith@smithindustrialsales.com. The address and e-mail for Robert Valliere is changed from 18 Whiting Farm Road, Branford, CT 06405 — rvllr@aol.com to Robert Valliere, 201 Granite Road, Unit 213, Guilford, CT 06437 - RbVllr@aol.com.

Board of Directors' Meeting

President Bill Varnedoe has changed the 385th Board of Directors' Meeting originally scheduled for 1500 hours, October 6th at the 385th BGMA/8th AFHS Kansas City Reunion to 1900 hours, October 6th. The 385th BGMA Board meeting will be held in his room. The meeting is open to all members of the 385th BGMA.

PREZ SEZ

Bill Varnedoe

As I write this we are in the middle of Dog Days, as we call the hot summers here in the South. However, school will soon be starting and some of us will again be giving talks to school children. Have you noticed that in the text books of Social Studies, (a new word for History) they cover the Revolution and the Civil War pretty well. But they rarely mention WW I and sometimes omit WW II entirely, except, maybe, the atom bomb! Is it any wonder that a whole generation has no idea what WW II was all about? Many of us have been reluctant to talk about our war experiences with others, even our own families. I know because I get many letters from deceased veteran's kin asking about the WW II war service of their father, grandfather or uncle. If we don't talk about our war service, the memory of all we did will die! That is the reason many of us make the effort to contact schools and give talks to the classes. You don't have to be an orator or a

teacher, just tell it like it was. They will be grateful and you will be doing a real service.

On this subject, encourage your children and grandchildren to join our Association. They will enjoy both the *Hardlife Herald* and the reunions. Chuck (Smith) is doing a great job in organizing the 2nd and 3rd generation members.

In this issue of the *Hardlife Herald* is the proposed revised Constitution. This is the first real revision of our Constitution, and should bring it up to current practices. However, a word of explanation for the new document is in order.

Our current Constitution was adopted many years ago, and only amended once for a minor name change. As our Association evolved over the years, we were governed by the By-Laws, which were amended several times to reflect current practices. An example of a proposed change to the Constitution is the inclusion of a newsletter publication in the expanded "purposes" article. There

is no mention of a newsletter in the current Constitution.

The Constitution should be a fundamental document, and contain nothing that best can be covered by the By-Laws. With this philosophy, the proposed Constitution is simpler than the current one. Specifically, many redundant clauses with the By-Laws have been eliminated. As it stood, it would be necessary to amend both the Constitution and the By-Laws, using different rules for amendments to change such clauses.

Another wording makes the proposed Constitution compatible with IRS 501(c)(3) rule (charitable and educational organizations) for tax exemption status, if this becomes necessary owing to our dwindling veteran membership.

The proposed version was unanimously approved by the Executive Board and they recommend its adoption. We plan to vote on it at our Membership Reunion Meeting in Kansas City.

Bill

WORLD WAR II VETERANS

By Judie Timm

As a nation we stood holding our breath.
Hoping and praying there would be no more deaths.
These veterans were so young when they left our shores.
They were fighting for freedom and much, much more.
A cause they believed in 'til death they did fight
and our hearts were with them throughout their terrible plight.
Some were wounded, some did not return,
some were prisoners for many years.
But their families kept praying, and fought back their fears.
These people are our hero's, they are giants among men.
But, these humble Veterans simply state,
"We would do it again."
Freedom and democracy is what it was about.
After all that they suffered can there be any doubt?
So, we as a nation should kneel and pray
in thanks to these veterans
for the freedoms we enjoy every day.

Judie Timm is the widow of Wilbur Timm, Engineer-Gunner on a crew of the 603rd BS, 398th BG. She wrote this poem in memory of her late husband and all World War II veterans.

ONE LUCKY BASTARD

By Robert T. Marshall
(Radio Operator - 549th BS)

**June 21, 1944 - Mission No.1,
Berlin**

**June 22, 1944 - Mission No. 2,
Paris**

I should have written something yesterday about Mission No. 1 before exhaustion shut me down for good. Now I try to catch up. In my mind my first two missions run together and make a blur. Which illustrates that I am uncertain about what really happened up there these two days, as I write this after the second mission.

The call came yesterday and it was simple. Report to briefing, the sergeant said when he shook me awake. How did it feel? Right now I feel like I was sleeping for 48 hours and I just don't know what really happened, like I am in a daze. So how can I write this? I have had only one hour of sleep in the last 24 and I have flown two missions, but I will try to write the details.

I reacted but it was like I was off on the side watching what was happening yesterday and not part of it. Today's mission I see a little clearer. When the briefing officer said Berlin was our target yesterday, he seemed to be off in another room. I was in a daze watching him, dumb and numb. The word Berlin had significance. It took time for me to realize we were going to drop bombs on Berlin. I can remember that much.

Chow was at midnight (2400). Briefing was at 0100. Waking in daylight to a briefing in the middle of the night put me in some turmoil. The world I was in just plain unreal. Takeoff was

0445 in the dark after we had done such stuff as dressing into our flight gear, inspecting my antennas outside the plane and the equipment inside. It was normal Standard Operating Procedure, something I have done before, but different. We climbed to altitude, whatever that was, and assembled into the box formation that is the B-17 standard defense formation for greater firepower from the machine guns. I watched this development through the radio room window, always thinking about what might be ahead. Departure from England, sweating, waiting kept me alert, edgy. Details about our target don't come to mind — I'm not sure I heard them but I don't remember. I do remember the briefing officer said Berlin had many flak batteries protecting it. All I can say is we flew into flak, a terrible bombardment, and came out of it.

The mission lasted 9 hours and 25 minutes. We were on oxygen six of those hours. When we got back somebody counted and said we had 25 flak holes in the plane.

Billy Sunday (our tail gunner) said a piece of flak dented the three-eighths-inch armor plate he sits on in the tail and that the force of it almost knocked him off his seat in the tail. He kept talking about the ping it made. He said for a few seconds he was afraid to move his leg because he didn't think the leg was there.

We had fighter coverage, P-51s. They flew close to us and I loved seeing them out my window. After we landed I heard someone say that the flak was

the intense barrage type. I would not know but now I do know what being under a flak bombardment is, how you live being bombarded from the target all the way back to the French coast is like, how flak sounds, the fright it can create. The need to will one's self to sit there and take it, as if is nothing unusual. That's the way this game is played, I sense. I know the formation spread out and we dropped our bombs as were supposed to and I assume we did it when we were at an altitude of 25 -26000 feet.

That means we bombed the target from some 5-6 miles up in the sky. I know now why Ralph Armor (friend from my hometown) acts as he can't unwind, why he is as tense as hell. The strain really begins before takeoff and it doesn't end when you crawl out of the plane after a mission. This first mission showed me that a mission is never over because there is always the next one to sweat out.

Before I could adsorb and sort out all that happened on No. 1 we were at it again.

Today we went to Paris to bomb. Like Berlin, to me the word Paris had special connotations because it is a capital. I don't know if there was more or less flak guns at Paris than at Berlin. Again, I kind of blacked out on what the briefing officer said. I have to listen better at briefing. I do know that over Paris I had the thought that I had over Berlin: Get us out of this flak, Charlie! I must discipline my mind.

My wristwatch showed it was 1905 when we bombed Paris. The sunlight was of late

evening. We went over the target at 21,500 feet. We hit something because smoke billowed up to almost our height. I speculate we hit an oil dump or a refinery. I have no memory of what we bombed in Berlin.

I was told that flak at the Paris target was intense. I don't know the difference yet between heavy and intense flak, or how it is measured. I expect I am learning. We had about two-dozen holes in our plane as battle damage today, some of them big enough to ram a fist through. I took a long look at some of them when I walked away from the plane. I learned today that flak splattering the fuselage of a plane makes noise that sounds like rain or hailstones falling on a tin roof. Can flak be worse than what I heard today? Today a piece of flak went over Brackett's (our Navigator) head, missing him by about three inches. The nose of our plane had a scar to prove it was hit.

The Paris mission was a 7-hour job. Our entry to the continent was near Cherbourg, France, some place in the area of the D-Day invasion began. I looked hard for something I could identify as a beachhead. We were high, the clouds scattered, the sunlight weirdly weak.

I was not totally a sleep-walker today. I was quiet and I tried to act normal and observe. I study my crew, watching their reactions. Maybe they are giving me the same treatment. Nobody is in panic. I just don't know what's going on up there. I remember bits and pieces of what happened. I also know that this is a game of survival.

Missions of Fl. T. Marshall, 549th B.S., from his diary, "One Lucky Bastard" - Editor

BOOK REVIEWS

THE WRONG STUFF: *The Adventures and Misadventures of an 8th Air Force Aviator*, by Truman Smith (University of Oklahoma Press, \$17.95 paper, 0806134224) "Truman Smith, a gifted writer, provides an account of his own experience as a B-17 pilot, who faced danger and death all around him during the war. He writes about the harsh realities with wit and good humor. This exceptional memoir is on the reading list for history classes at the U. S. Air Force Academy." — Jean Brace, Brace Books & More, Ponca City, OK.

This book was listed as one of the "Top Ten World War II Picks in Honor of the 60th Anniversary of D-Day" by The History Channel's Book Sense Picks.

THE STORY OF VAN'S VALIENTS IN THE 8TH AIR FORCE: *The 385th Bomb Group, A New History* by W. W. Varnedoe, Jr. (McNally Publications, 15321 Donnington Lane, Truckee, CA 96161) "This book details the activation of the 385th Bomb Group in December 1942 through its wartime history at Great Ashfield airbase in East Anglia. The previous history volume had been printed in 1949 by Marston Leonard and it is now out of print.

Author Varnedoe, President of the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association, updates the Group history by adding further information to the history. In the telling, he shows concisely what a bomb group of the 8th Air Force was and in relating the group's missions as examples gives the reader a look at the problems faced daily during the war and of the 385th BG's accomplishments.

Photographs of the aircraft flown by the 385th are extensive and there is a complete listing of each aircraft. One large section has crew pictures of those who flew. Combat statistics and post WWII activities of the 385th members round out the book. The volume is 120 pages large format matte."

This review was published in The 8th Air Force News, vol. 04, No. 2, June 2004.

ONE LUCKY BASTARD by Robert T. Marshall (Wasteland Press, Louisville, KY, May 2004) — "This book is a day by day account of the military life of Robert T. Marshall written in diary style. The author describes his military career from his first day in June 1941, life through basic and technical training schools, his arrival at Great Ashfield and his days flying as a lead radio operator. He closes the book with Epilogues of the current status of many of the members of his crew".

Bob Marshall sent me a copy of his book. This review is my poor attempt at providing you a description of his daily writings. —Editor

APHRODITE, DESPERATE MISSION by Jack Olsen (ibooks, Inc., 2004, ISBN 0734-8670-6) — "This project, Aphrodite, was a failed attempt to use war weary B-17's loaded with explosives as remotely controlled bombs. The methods back then were crude, and it took a pilot to take off in the expendable B-17. The Fort was so loaded and unbalanced as to be almost unflyable. Once control of the plane was achieved by the mother ship, the pilot was to bail out over England, and the plane would be flown under remote control from the mother ship to the designated target. Also, prior to bailing out of the remotely controlled B-17, the pilot was to arm all the explosives. The book provides an interesting story, and one of our own 385th BG pilots, Fain Poole, was involved in the project.

Bill Varnedoe provided the review of this book. —Editor

ASSEMBLING THE MIGHTY EIGHTH ARMADA:

It Took A Monumental Planning Effort Just Getting Bombers Into Formation

By Leslie Lennox, 95th Bomb Group

Of all the stories that have been written and movies that have been shown about the 8th Air Force, very little attention has been given to what was involved in assembling 1200 B-17's and B-24's each day to get them in formation to carry out a strike against Germany. Showing bombers under fighter attack or encountering flak was a reality and interesting to watch, but just as scary to the crews was the assembly of the formations that was going on over England each morning.

The planning and coordination that had to be accomplished prior to each mission by the operations planners of each Group was unbelievable. Improper planning by the planners would have cause a free-for-all nightmare over the skies of England. Rendezvous points, altitude and times had to be precise and known by all crews before the 8th AF could form. The success of the planners caused the 8th AF to become the most powerful air armada ever assembled, and is one of the major untold stories of the war.

What follows is a typical mission from one crew member's perspective —

After the Group had been alerted of a mission and the Squadrons notified, Squadron Operations would post the names of the crews scheduled to fly the next day and begin preparing the crew's briefings information sheets. Then, on the morning of the mission, the CQ (charge of quarters) would awaken the scheduled crews about four or five o'clock, depending on take-

off time. Shortly after being awakened, trucks would take crews to the mess hall. We were fortunate to always have fresh eggs when flying a mission. After breakfast, the trucks would carry us to the main briefing room, where all crew members were briefed on the day's mission. At this briefing, prepared by the Group and Squadron planners, we received the target information, fighter escort, possible enemy aircraft attacks, anti-aircraft guns (FLAK areas), the route in and the return route out. In addition we received a sheet showing our aircraft's location in the Group formation, the call signs for the day and all information we would need to assemble the Group and join the bomber stream. Navigators, Bombardiers and Radio Operators went to specialized briefings for additional information pertaining to their specialty.

After the briefings, we got into our flight gear, drew our parachutes, and loaded onto the trucks for a ride to our assigned aircraft. The aerial gunners would already have drawn out the internal mechanisms of the 50-caliber guns and have installed them in the aircraft and the armament personnel would have completed the loading of the bombs. We were now guided by the times on the briefing sheets. We started engines at a given time and watched for the aircraft we would be flying with in formation to taxi past, then we would taxi behind him, always following strict radio silence.

Now parked, nose to tail around the perimeter, we were

extremely vulnerable to a fighter strafing attack. At the designated takeoff time, a green flare would be fired and takeoff would begin. Every 30 seconds an airplane started takeoff roll. Generally we were lined up on the perimeter so that the airplanes of the high squadron would take off first, followed by the lead and then the low squadrons.

Each Group had a pattern for their airplanes to fly to assembly altitude. Some would fly a triangle, some a rectangle and some would fly a circle using a "Buncher" (a low frequency radio station) which were located around East Anglia. These Group patterns fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. Unfortunately, sometimes strong winds aloft would destroy these patterns and there would be over running of each other's patterns.

Many takeoffs were before daylight, and it was not uncommon to fly through several thousand feet of cloud overcast. Also, it was not uncommon to experience some near misses while climbing through the clouds. You knew you had a near miss when the airplane shook from the other plane's prop wash since you seldom saw the other plane. It was a great feeling to break out on top where we could watch for other planes and keep from running in to each other. To add to the congestion of our planes, the RAF bombers would be returning from night missions and flying through our formations. Pilots had to keep their heads on a swivel and their eyes out of the cockpit. Each crew member would be

alert to advise the pilot of other aircraft.

After takeoff, the squadron lead would fire a specified colored flare every 30 seconds so that we could locate him and get into formation quickly. As each plane fell into their assigned formation position they would fire a flare to allow following aircraft to keep them in sight. Assembling the 8th AF provided a dazzling pyrotechnic show in the morning skies of England and was a rare sight to behold.

The order of assembling the 8th AF was first to assemble the Squadron Flight elements, the Squadrons, the Groups, the Combat Wings, the Division, and finally the 8th Air Force.

As soon as the Squadron Flight elements were formed, they would take their positions on the lead element to form a Squadron. When the three Squadrons completed their assembly, they would get into Group formation. This was done by having the three Squadrons arrive over a pre-selected fix at a precise time and heading. The high and low Squadrons were separated by 1000 feet and after assembling into Group formation would maintain their positions by following the lead Squadron.

Our 13th Combat Wing consisted of three Bomb Groups, the 95th, the 100th and the 390th. Whichever Group was leading the Wing would arrive at a pre-selected point at a precise time and heading. Thirty seconds later the second Group would pass that fix followed by the third Group 30 seconds later. This was the formation of a Combat Wing. The navigators in the lead aircraft for each Group had a tremendous responsibility to ensure that the

rendezvous times were strictly adhered to.

The first and third Divisions of the 8th AF consisted of B-17s only, while the second Division consisted of B-24s. The B-24s were faster than the B-17, but the B-17s could fly higher; therefore the two aircraft were not compatible in formation. As a result the first and third Divisions would fly together, and the second would fly separately.

Once the Combat Wings were in formation, the Division was formed. This was usually accomplished at the "coast pit" - a city on the coast selected as the departure point fix. The Group leader in each Combat Wing knew his position in the Division, and the precise time that he should arrive at the departure point to assume his position in the Division formation. The lead Group in the Division which had been selected to lead the 8th on the mission would be the first over the departure fix. Thirty seconds after the last Group in the first Wing passed that point, the second Wing would fall in trail, and so on, until all Combat Wings were flying in trail, and the Division would be formed. One minute later, the lead Group in the other Division would fly over that point, and the Combat Wings in that Division would follow the same procedure to get in formation. When all Wings were in trail, the 8th Air Force B-17 strike force was formed and on its way to the target. The second Division B-24s were assembled in a similar manner.

A major problem during a mission was that the Division bomber stream would become too stretched out. It meant that the Groups were out of position making the entire bomber stream

vulnerable to fighter attacks. Our planners determined that the climb to the bombing altitude as the Groups left the coast fix was the problem. As lead Group started its climb, its true airspeed would increase and it would encounter different wind velocities and it would pull away from the Group following and the stretch-out of the bomber stream would begin. By the time the last Group left the coast fix, the lead Group would be leveled off with an increased air speed, thus the bomber stream would be stretched out.

To fix this problem instead of climbing at the coast fix, all Groups would begin climbing at a designated time regardless of their position. All Groups would then have similar true airspeeds and also encounter the same winds aloft. Groups could still be out of position due to poor timing, but the bomber stream would not get all stretched out.

When considering today's Air Traffic Control System, it is almost unbelievable that we were able to launch hundreds of airplane in a small airspace, many times in darkness, loaded with bombs, with complete radio silence and no ground control, and to do it day after day with young aircrews.

There will never be another air armada to compare to the 8th Air Force, and historians will never cease to be amazed at our ability to assemble hundreds of heavy bombers into the devastating strike force we now fondly refer to as "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH".

THE SAVANNAH SAGA

Mid-Air Collision — February 5, 1958

By Howard Richardson

USCM — Homestead, Florida, 4 February 1958

A Uniform Simulated Combat Mission (USCM) was a practice combat mission that was designed to make this flight as close as possible to an actual war time mission. This was why a real MK-15 Nuclear weapon was on board each B-47 aircraft. The weight of the bomb was 7600 pounds, but the capsule that would have made a nuclear explosion was not loaded on any aircraft. I found out later that no capsules arrived or were at Homestead prior to our mission.

Fueled to the maximum with full wing tanks, take off, assisted by water injected during the roll, took almost the entire 12,000 foot runway. Aircraft was in pairs with a loose formation, and takeoff was at night. Our crew consisted of me as aircraft commander, 1st Lt. Robert Lagerstrom as Co-pilot and Capt. Leland Woolard as Radar Navigator. Flight was up the middle of Florida. When we were just west of Cape Canaveral, where we sometimes saw space missals take off, we turned west and proceeded toward the Gulf of Mexico to meet our KC-135 tankers. We normally spent about 35 minutes hooked to the tankers to take on much needed fuel.

After taking on fuel, we continued west to around New Orleans then turned north toward the Canadian border. South of the border, we turned east and proceeded to our simulated bombing target of Reston, Virginia. Enemy fighters, anti-air-

craft guns and airborne missals were expected as part of the USCM. The co-pilot had turned around and was facing to the rear where he could reach the guns and ECM, and watch for enemy aircraft.

After simulated release of the bombs where a ground unit scored our accuracy, we turned to a southerly direction and headed to Homestead AFB, Florida. In the vicinity of North and South Carolina we relaxed as we were supposed to be in friendly territory. The Co-pilot was shooting some stars and helping the Radar-Navigator in his navigation. We did see an occasional fighter crossing back and forth below us.

In looking back and trying to remember what happened before the actual collision of our aircraft with a fighter, and after talking to the fighter pilot many years later, it appears that the fighter pilot was above and to the rear of us and in a dive in order to catch us. He was looking in his scope and depending on his equipment to turn him away if he approached too close on an intercept. He suddenly looked up and all he could see in his canopy was a huge B-47 getting closer and closer and larger and larger. His instinct caused him to make a steep right turn missing the tail of our aircraft, but hitting the right wing making a large gash in the wing, knocking the right wing tank off and causing the number six engine to end up in a 45 degree angle hanging onto the wing. If the fighter had not turned at the last moment, then the fighter and the bomber would

have become one mass explosion and fire. Just a fraction of a second and a steep turn of the fighter avoided such a situation.

At the moment of collision, our B-47 crew felt a terrific jolt, and a fireball appeared off the right wing of the bomber. I am sure that all three crew member's hands were close to the ejection seat handles, and the ejection procedure was going through their minds. The B-47 bomber was equipped with ejection seats that ejected the Radar-Navigator down and the two pilots upward after the canopy was blown off.

Fear of death was quickly put aside as the two pilots had too much to think of what action was needed to keep the aircraft stable. The Pilot and Co-pilot could see that the right wing fuel tank was missing, and the number six engine was hanging crazy on the right wing. We could not see any other damage. We did know that if the engine departed the wing, we would have a real big problem keeping the B-47 under balanced control and flyable. We cut the fuel to and shut down the number six engine.

We really did not know what actually happened. We had seen fighter aircraft below our flight path so we had to consider what other objects could be at 38,000 feet of altitude. Material from outer space was considered, but made no sense. Therefore we determined that we must have collided with a fighter aircraft.

My first action was to tell the crew not to eject at this time. Ending up in a parachute at night, descending outside into below zero

temperatures, and landing into trees, water or power lines by ejecting would only be considered as a last resort. We needed to determine if the aircraft was flyable.

Both pilots discussed the situation and a decision was made to descend to 20,000 feet altitude, then put the gear and flaps down, determine controllability and maintain a speed just above stall speed. The Co-pilot made the three calls, "Mayday-Mayday-Mayday" on the guard channel, contacted Hunter AFB, Georgia tower, and informed them of our situation, and asked them to relay the information to Strategic Air Command Headquarters at Offutt AFB, NE. We still did not know if the aircraft would hold together so our hands were not too far from the ejection seat handles. I guess it was fortunate that we did not know that the main wing spar was broken as we found out later. The weather was clear and I think the moon was shining thus the night visibility was excellent. During the decent, we avoided flying over any built up areas.

Arriving at 20,000 feet altitude, we slowed the aircraft down to the maximum speed allowed for lowering gear and flaps and then lowered the gear down first then the flaps. Airspeed was slowed to around 215 knots and we determined that we could control the aircraft and make the necessary banks and turns. However, we were still not sure that the aircraft would hold together and a possible out of control condition still existed.

Hunter Tower now called and informed us that their runway was under repair and the end or edge of the runway had not been finished and a 12 to 18 inch bare front edge was exposed. At this point both pilots imagined that if

we landed short of the runway, then this would create a situation where the MK-15 weapon would go through the cockpit like a bullet from a gun barrel thus endangering the crew and the airfield. If the MK-15 bomb weighing over 7,000 pounds were not on board then the final approach and landing would be vastly improved.

We reviewed and considered what is called "Tactical Doctrine". This doctrine, of which was required knowledge for all crews, stated that if a condition existed, such as the one with which we faced, then the first priority was the safety of the crew. This gave our crew the authority to consider disposing the weapon, so we decided to go offshore and drop the MK-15 in the Atlantic Ocean.

We retracted the landing gear and wing flaps, descended to 12,000 feet and headed for the ocean. We asked the tower at Hunter to notify SAC Headquarters, tell them our intentions and ask for their approval. I instructed the Radar-Navigator to take a picture of the radar scope at the moment of bomb release and to record the coordinates at release. Permission from SAC had not been received and time was running out. A short time later over the water, I told the Radar-Navigator to release the bomb. As the bomb left the bomb bay, we felt a slight lift in altitude and control of the aircraft was improved. We turned back toward Hunter AFB and proceeded with "the before landing checklist". About his time Hunter Tower informed us that SAC Headquarters had approved release of the weapon, but to go 20 miles offshore. We advised Hunter to inform SAC that we had already released the weapon and that we were heading toward the airfield to attempt a landing.

With number 6 engine hanging down at a 45 degree angle, we did not know if it would drag on the runway and interfere with the landing. Lining up with runway and maintaining the aircraft lined up in the proper runway direction required us to keep turning the aircraft and was a continuous problem during the approach. We continuously thought about the exposed end of the runway, and the high air-speed required for continuous flyable control of the aircraft during landing. Gradual easing back on the throttles to reduce the air-speed and the continuous turning of the aircraft to align with the runway kept us busy for the approach and final flare to meet the runway. We knew we came in too fast for a stall when we met the runway, skipped and returned to the air again. However, the next time we touched the runway, I called for the Co-pilot to pull the brake chute which caused us to remain on the pavement. The brakes were slowly applied and we came to a speed allowing us to turn off the runway onto a taxi strip. Number six engine did not scrap the runway. We were met by the operations officer and many vehicles, including fire trucks, ambulances, and maintenance vehicles.

We shut the engines down, and all three crew members climbed down the ladder, and kissed the tarmac. When we looked at the aircraft to check the damage, we saw a wide gash on the right wing and the aileron pushed in 20 inches deep, the main spar was broken and parts of the other aircraft were scattered over the vertical and horizontal stabilizer and the rear

Cont. on page 10...

Cont. from page 9...

fuselage of our aircraft. There were large holes in both the vertical stabilizer and in the empty fuel tank. There was also a large hole in the horizontal stabilizer near the ECM plates on the right side of the fuselage and tail turret. Later we found out that this B-47 was never flown again.

We were told later that the pilot of the F-86H had ejected immediately after the collision and descended in a thin summer flying suit, landing in a small clearing in the largest swamp in Georgia. Found by some local persons he was taken to the house of a forester, who gave him some shots of the family whiskey. This probably saved his life. He spent over a month recovering from wounds and frost bite. He remained on active duty and retired in 1977.

I later checked out in the B-52H and served in operations and other staff positions. I completed 31 years of service and retired in 1973 as a colonel.

This accident has been thoroughly investigated. The Air Force Nuclear Weapons and Counter Proliferation Agency made an Air Force Search and Recovery Assessment of the

1958 B-47 Savannah, GA accident and reported their recommendations, dated 12 April 2001. They recommended that the MK-15 bomb be left in its watery resting place and remain categorized as irretrievably lost for the following reasons:

1. There is no possibility of a nuclear explosion.
2. There is no risk to the public, and
3. There is no potential unacceptable impact to the environment.

I have a copy of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission temporary receipt, Certificate #2-044, dated 4 February 1958 showing MK-15, Serial No. 47782 checked out to aircraft 349 with Major Howard Richardson, 30th Bomb Squadron as being the temporary custodian, and the capsule was simulated and not on board the aircraft with the MK-15 weapon. A further study indicated that Homestead AFB never received any capsules for MK-15 weapons prior to the mission of the mid-air collision on 5 February 1958.

I state these facts because many years after this mid-air collision, and the release of the MK-15 in the Atlantic Ocean, rumors were circulated that this weapon poses a possible nuclear explo-

sion or a major radiation disaster that may envelope Tybee Island, Savannah, and possibly the entire Eastern US coastal area. A bid of over \$900,000 to look for and locate the bomb was submitted to the US Air Force. However this bid was denied. Unfortunately, these rumors are again being revived.

Proof that a capsule needed to make the MK-15 a nuclear bomb was never on board our aircraft is available. Also no capsules were physically located at Homestead AFB prior to our actual mission. Regardless of these facts, these rumors are being kept alive, and we have been on the defensive to counter any doubts about a nuclear explosion or severe radiation problem.

In summary, a concentrated and conclusive study was made, and the results in simple terms stated, "Leave the weapon alone."

I wish that this problem could be closed for good, but in the words of our Co-pilot, "This Story Will Never Die."

Howard Richardson was a pilot with the 385th BG during WW II. This incident occurred while he was still associated with "The Mighty Eighth." - Editor

REGENSBURG - MISSION 10

By John Storie - 95th Bomb Group

The Regensburg shuttle mission (to North Africa) resulted in one bomber crew returning to Horsham with a North African donkey in tow. It subsequently provided many local English children with cart rides, in an improvised wagon, around the base and into Horsham village. It finally succumbed to pneumonia or dis-

temper during the winter months of 1943-44.

The problem of disposing of the animal's carcass was solved in a typical bomber crew manner. Enough surplus GI clothing was assembled, including suitably inscribed dog-tags, and the deceased donkey was attired as only proper crewman could be.

The next available raid gave us the opportunity to drop the unfortunate animal (without a parachute) at the initial point (IP).

Unfortunately no one can record the confusion and consternation of the German people assigned to grave registration.

Fort Stars and Stripes Finds 12B (Awright, 13) Lucky Trip S

By Charles F. Kiley, Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

AN EIGHTH BOMBER STATION, Nov. 16 — The B-17 *Stars and Stripes* thumbed its plexi-glass nose at superstition and winged its way over Axis territory for the 13th time today, joining in the second bombing of important military targets in Norway by Eighth Air Force heavy bombers.

If there was any hard luck riding on the Fortress it was in the form of heavy bombs which cascaded down on the unlucky objectives. Otherwise the mission No. 13 or 12B, as the flying trade calls it — was just a long frigid trip for the B-17 which 1/Lt. Clarence McIlleen, of Portland, Ore., and his crew named after the serviceman's newspaper in the ETO.

Aerial photos and reports from crews at this station, com-

manded by Lt. Col. Elliot Vandervanter Jr., of Washington, indicated that the target bombed by this group was destroyed.

In position to note the damage, 1/Lt. Earl Mazo, of Charlestown, S.C., who flew in the *Raunchy Wolf*, said the bomb loads from the *Stars and Stripes* and other Forts dropped straight across the target.

As on the Marienburg mission Oct. 9, this group led a bomb division on today's trip, with Col. Vandervanter in command.

The group reported no flak over the target. A few enemy fighters were reported over Norway on the outward flight and over the North Sea on the way back, but none was seen.

"It was one hell of a cold trip,"

observed S/Sgt. Dan Sullivan, a 20-year-old *Stars and Stripes* waist gunner from New York, the only crew member doing his 13th mission with the ship. "But the scenery was nice. I would have hated to bail out over those snow-covered mountains in Norway."

Because another crew flew the ship on last week's raid on Bremen, most of the S and S fliers still have 12B ahead.

The *Stars and Stripes*, which started ops in the Lorient raid Sept. 23, has never turned back because of mechanical difficulties, thanks to her ground crew.

The original Stars and Stripes, A/C 42-3544, crashed on July 7, 1944. Another 385th BG aircraft, 42-31349, was named Stars and Stripes, 2nd Edition.

AMERICAN INTERNEES IN SWEDEN

By Par Henningsson • Upsala, Sweden

The following was abstracted from Par Henningsson's story—Editor

During WW II, 1939-1945, a total of 327 aircraft from belligerent countries found their way to Sweden. Most were damaged from missions, some had navigated astray and some brought refugees or deserters. Of these 327 aircraft, 140 were American, 113 were German and 58 were British. Most diversions occurred during 1944 when 160 aircraft diverted to Sweden. Since Sweden was a neutral country, all aircraft and airmen were interned. Early in the conflict these airmen were repatriated on a basis of "one for one", that is, one Allied for one

German. Later with the large number of Americans arriving, this was not possible as there were not enough Germans. Thus Americans were repatriated "as soon as possible".

The first aircraft to divert to Sweden was a Polish RDW 13 with refugees, and the second was a German He 60. Both came in September 1939. The first US-AAF aircraft came in July 1943. It was "Georgia Rebel", a B-17 from the 381st Bomb Group. It had participated in a massive raid against southern Norway and had been damaged by FLAK.

A total of 40 Americans were buried in the town of Maimo, Sweden. Two were killed in acci-

dents during their internment, and the remaining 38 died of wounds after arrival, were dead on arrival, or were later found at sea. Thirty eight of these were moved to Military Cemeteries or private burial places in 1948.

Today there is a monument at the cemetery in Maimo. It consists of a full sized propeller and bears the inscription:

**DUTY CALLED THEM
TO GOD AND COUNTRY
THEY REST IN PEACE WHILE
MEMORY OF THEIR
SACRIFICE
IS WRITTEN IN ETERNAL
GLORY**

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

Following is the revised Constitution of the 385th Bomb Group Association as approved by the Board of Directors, February 2004. This proposed new Constitution will be presented to the membership at the General Meeting of the Association in Kansas City in accordance with Article VIII of the current Constitution. Under the current Constitution we can not vote to approve, or disapprove, this proposed document until the following General Meeting of the membership after it is presented. However, we can unanimously pass a motion to suspend the rules and vote on this proposed Constitution at the Kansas City meeting.

CONSTITUTION OF THE 385TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of the Association shall be the 385th Bomb Group Association. Its official abbreviation shall be 385 BGA. The 385 BGA is unincorporated and is non-profit in accordance with the provisions of Section 501 (c) (19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and subsequent amendments.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The purposes of the 385 BGA are:

(a) To perpetuate the history and activities of the 385th Bombardment Group (H), 8th Air Force, that was stationed at Great Ashfield, RAF Station 155, Suffolk, England, during World War II, as well as the subsequent 385 BGA.

(b) To remember and honor the veterans who gave their lives in this Group during World War II, and to those veterans who have died since.

(c) To maintain items and documents of an historical nature for the purpose of preserving the history and activities of the 385th Bombardment Group (H) and its veterans as well as the 385 BGA, both during World War II and since. Such archives will serve as reference material for historians and for educational purposes.

(d) To enhance communication among members with the publication of a newsletter. This Newsletter may also serve as a journal of the 385 BGA activities and as an historical record.

(e) To hold Reunions and Special Meetings to promote fellowship between members and enhance the esprit de corps within the 385 BGA.

(f) To locate and enroll veterans of the 385th Bombardment Group (H), relatives of the veterans of the 385th Bombardment Group (H), and other interested parties so that they may participate in and learn of the activities of the 385 BGA, and to pass these on for posterity.

(g) Maintain a close relationship with other 8th AF Groups, Historical Societies and Organizations when ever possible.

(h) To educate the public, including school children, about the activities and history of the 385th Bombardment Group (H) during World War II.

(i) To assist, if possible and feasible, in the maintenance of memorials of the 385th Bombardment Group (H).

ARTICLE III

Membership

Members shall be either veterans of the 385th Bombardment Group (H) of the 8th Army Air Force, including members of units assigned or attached for support while this Group was stationed at Great Ashfield, Suffolk, England during World War II or other persons or organizations interested in the history of the 385th Bombardment Group (H) and its veterans. Types of members shall be defined in the By Laws.

ARTICLE IV

Registered Address

Section 1. The registered address of the 385 BGA shall be the address of the current Treasurer. Due notice will be given to the Internal Revenue Service when such address changes.

Section 2. The following documents should be kept at the Registered Address, subject to the inspection of the membership at any reasonable time upon written request:

(a) A list of the current members of the 385 BGA, with current addresses, e-mail addresses, if available and permitted, and in the case of Associate Members, their 385th BG relative, if known.

(b) A copy of the current Constitution and By Laws.

(c) The annual balance sheets of the receipts and disbursements of the 385 BGA as filed, if required, with the Internal Revenue Service for the previous five (5) years.

(d) A copy of the notification of the IRS that the 385 BGA is a tax exempt organization, together with all other pertinent IRS documents.

(e) All other books and documents required by law to be kept at the Registered Address.

**ARTICLE V
Government**

Section 1. By Laws shall be passed to implement the purposes and operation of the 385 BGA, provided no By Law, or part of a By Law, conflicts with the purposes of this Constitution. The members may repeal or amend the By Laws provided that the proposed amendment has been published in the Newsletter prior to the meeting.

Section 2. The government of the 385 BGA shall be vested in an Executive Board, whose membership and functioning shall be defined by the By Laws, except, the membership at a regular meeting, may repeal any act of the Board.

Section 3. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all meetings of both the Executive Board and the meetings of the members, except as otherwise explicitly stated or required in this Constitution or in the By Laws.

**ARTICLE VI
Officers**

Section 1. The Officers of the 385 BGA shall be President, one or more Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor of the Newsletter.

Section 2. The Officers of the 385 BGA will perform the normal duties prescribed for their office.

Section 3. Officers shall be elected by the members at a regular meeting, normally a reunion meeting, and shall hold office until their successor is elected or appointed.

**ARTICLE VII
Duration and Dissolution**

Section 1. The duration of the 385 BGA shall be perpetual.

Section 2. However, if the 385 BGA is to be dissolved, the dissolution shall be implemented as stated in the By Laws.

**ARTICLE VIII
Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any scheduled meeting, provided that the proposed amendment was submitted in the 385 BGA Newsletter, or by mail, and delivered to the members two months prior to the meeting at which the vote is taken.

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

From: "Louis Guido, Jr."
<l.guidojr@worldnet.att.net

6/1/2004

Dear Sir.

I am writing thanking you for the February issue of the Hardlife Herald.

As I read through each page, I again thought about my brother, John G. Guido, tailgunner. As I got to page 14 my heart jumped a couple of beats, there on page 14 was a letter from Chuck Hamlin, a crew member of the Lil Audrey, 385th (BG) 551st (Squadron). You would not believe that I have been searching for any of these crew members that flew with my brother. I called Chuck Hamlin immediately and had a great conversation with him. I haven't been able to get a crew picture. All of John's possessions, after his death, were lost when my sister-in-law remarried. We (Chuck and Louis) are going to exchange information by mail. A four year search has started a new spark in my research.

Have a great run as editor. I hope to enjoy future issues as much as the first. My next endeavor, this fall is the WW II Memorial, and the NARA (National Archives) at College Park, MD.

Thank you again, God Bless.

Louis A. Guido, Jr.
l.guidojr@worldnet.att.net

Subject: Anthony James Mosca
5/3/2004

From: KennethJ. Laffon
laffon1@mindspring.com
To: Bill Varnedoe (billvar@comcast.net)

Anthony James Mosca, 78, of Lumberport, W. Va. died April 21st, 2004 at the Louis A Johnson Medical Center in Clarksburg, W. Va.

Tony was a POW for 9 months and suffered lots of injuries, being shot down over Germany on Aug. 9th, 1944. He was a member of the 550th Squadron of the 385th Bomb Group.

Ken Laffon

June 26, 2004
Bob E. Beanland
1017 Hwy. W
Eldon, MO 65026
573-392-5872

Mr. Jerome Mudge,

My dad served in WW II as an engineer in the 548th Squadron of the 385th Bomb Group. He has gone now, but he still lives in me.

With this and the news that there is a Reunion in Kansas City, I would like to attend, but I need to know what process I need to go through.

Do I need to become a member of the 8th AFHS as well as to the 385th BGMA?

I would like to receive the "Hardlife Herald". Please notify me.

Thank you,
Bob E. Beanland

Bob's request for information was answered by Chuck Smith, our 2nd & 3rd Generation Contact. Copies of the latest issues of HH were sent to him. - Editor

Jerry Wilson
3014 Ruth's Ct.
Greenbriar, TN 37073

Dear Verne,

Received your response to my address update. Enclosed is my check for 2003 & 2004 dues for \$50.00.

Also believe you need to send me the first quarter 385th News for 2004 and suppose the 2nd one coming up in June - don't like to miss an issue. On this Memorial Day weekend I remember my brother Danson (Wilson) and all his crew that perished in the North Sea February 3, 1944 on A/C 42-39952 and all our service people especially those that gave the greatest sacrifice for their country, their life. They are our real heroes.

Thank you for catching me up on the 385th News.

Sincerely,

Jerry Wilson

February 2004 issue of Hardlife Herald sent. - Editor

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

Subject: Madam Shoo Shoo

6/25/2004

From: ianm385bg@btopenworld.com (Ian MacLaughlan)

Hi Frank,

I thought you might be interested to know that I've just finished my latest book. "Eighth Air Force Bomber Stories — A Further Selection" and, while doing research, I met Fiona Carville, Anne Haywood's daughter. As you know, Anne died in 1999 but Fiona had some pictures which were of some value for the book plus she had a few feet of movie film but didn't know what was on it. Cutting a long story short, I took the film to a film archive and they put it on a video. It's only about a minute long but it shows Anne painting the nose art on Madam Shoo Shoo and I'm wondering from whom the film originated and whether there are any more 385th footage around I could borrow to copy. I thought I'd ask if you'd run this in the newsletter to see if I could get a response.

I'm now trying to get this on to DVD which is easier viewing because UK video formats don't work in the USA - I need to check that a CD will. In return for doing the copies, Fiona has donated the film to the film archives where it will be kept and preserved. It would be very exciting to find additional footage or establish who took this film.

Meanwhile, I am still working on supporting the history of the 385th — the new book features Anne's story plus gives an account of some of the aircraft she worked on which were lost in combat or accident. As we know Madam Shoo Shoo came home although it would be nice to hear more experiences of those who flew in her.

My daughter recently laid the wreath for the Group on Memorial Day. As before, the wreath was paid for by the Massari family while Sue and I picked up the other costs and also attended — will send pictures later.

Cheers,
Ian

Subject: Mission Folders (Stork Club)
7/19/2004
From: Charles.Dushane@usss.dhs.gov

Dear Frank,

My father was a tail gunner on the Stork Club. I was able to obtain some of his military records, but I would be interested in any of the mission folders. I have spoken with Bob Valerie and Jim Eshselman.

Second, my father was always a strong supporter of the Hardlife Herald and the 385th Bomb Group before he died. In some past issue I recalled reading about a memorial. If you could please forward some information, the family would like to make a donation in my Dad's name.

Do you recall in the bomb group was issued .45 calibers, I found a Remington Rand 1911 series?

Thanks,
Chuck DuShane
312/469-1316

Subject: Madam Shoo Shoo
7/13/2004
From: ianm385bg@btopenworld.com

Hi Frank,

If I get a copy of the book sent to you, would you be kind enough to review it for HH? Did you get the art work I sent for Stork Club — I'm hoping this can be reproduced in HH to see if we can get a response & learn more about it?

I also have some pictures of the Memorial Day in Cambridge this year — can I e-mail 2 or 3 to you for HH? Sue and I attended on behalf of the 385th along with my daughter Bethan and her partner Tom. The Massari family kindly purchased the wreath again. They sent me funds for this purpose so Sue and I now cover only the incidental costs — fuel and the like. Bethan actually placed the wreath this year — the next generation needs to become more involved.

I'm doing a slide show for the villagers at Great Ashfield this year — always a pleasure to promote the group's achievements.

Take care,
Ian

I requested that Ian send me pictures of Memorial Day, specifically that of Bethan placing wreath. —Editor

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

Frank,

April 29, 2004

Sid (Sidney Alex Carney) was the First Sergeant of the 548th Bomb Squadron.

Sid hosted a mini reunion in San Antonio in 1999. He arranged for us to attend the graduation ceremony of the Cadets at Lackland Air Force Base.

We were welcomed by the Commanding Officer over the loud speaker. We sat in the V. I. P. section and as the graduating class passed in review, they all gave us an "Eyes Right".

After the ceremony, many of the Cadets and guests came over to shake our hands and thank us for what we did in World War II.

It sure gave us a nice feeling. It's great to feel appreciated.

Sincerely,
Marty Gibson

Subject: RO3 Designation
7/6/2004
From: putski72835@msn.com
To: Merlinphil@aol.com

Tuesday, July 6
Dear Verne,

I just received my copy of the "Hardlife Herald"...and noticed that on the back page it talks about delinquent dues. I am labeled as an "RO3". Last June (2003) I had you confirm my Life Membership (I paid \$100 in 1999). Could you please "reconfirm" my Life Membership and remove the "RO3" label from my name... I very much look forward to my issues of the "Hardlife Herald" and value, no treasure (more than you know), my Life Membership in the 385th BGMA. Thank you for your kind help and assistance. God Bless.

Derral Lee
16430 Tao Road
Apple Valley, CA 92307-1551
760-242-3940

Subject: Membership Dues
6/12/2004
From: Karl T. A. Moravek
ktam5@pctcet.net
To: merlinphil@aol.com

11 June 2004
Dear Verne:

I sent a check for \$50.00 for my membership dues and per the suggestion of President Bill, for the reinstatement of our son William's membership. William is a past member, but since he has been serving overseas 8 of the 10 past years he let his membership lapse.

William (Bill) is retired from the USAF and currently is serving on the NATO Staff in Luxembourg. He will be returning to the United States the latter part of this October. Please use the following mailing address until further notice.

Colonel William D. K. Morevek, USAF (Ret)
74 Cranston
Centerville, Ohio 045458
See you in KC in October.

Karl T. A. Moravek

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

Subject: Re: Addresses
4/29/2004

From: William Daysh (WDaysh@aol.com)

Hi Frank,

I've been doing some research for you (and learning something about our postcode system in the process).

The first part of the UK postcode designates the delivery office the mail should be sent to. This is always one or two letters followed by a single or double diget number (e.g. KT10, PO1, SW1).

The second part of the code 9plus the property number tell the delivery office where to deliver it. This is number followed by one or two letters (e.g. 9UD, 6WD, or 9EJ).

Hence you get codes such as KT10 9UD or IP30 9EJ.

The first part of the code has some resemblance to the delivery area it is destined for, such as IP (Ipswich) for Suffolk, CB (Cambridge) for Cambridgeshire and NR (Norwich) for Norfolk.

Confused? Welcome to the club.

Anyhow it would appear that all of Suffolk has codes beginning with the letters I (India) followed by P (Peter) and the second part will begin with a single or double diget followed by two more letters.

(Hence we woke up one morning to learn that we had been moved from the county of Suffolk to IPxx xEJ.)

Hope that helps more than it confuses.

Best regards,
Bill

This a response to a question from your editor as to why some English addresses began with (I)Px and others began with (1)Px as indicated on my mailing list. All English addresses have since been corrected. - Editor

July 15, 2004

Dear Frank,

Other than wondering how a T/Sgt. got to be a Colonel, I find your letter of July 9 answered all my questions about why I sent you a copy of One Lucky Bastard. You as a former trainee at Scott Field, A B-17 RO, and a member of the 549th Squadron and 385th B. G. are definitely "in" with me, especially when you write that OLB is excellent.

You have my permission to reprint any part of the book in the *Hardlife Herald*. My war stories are in the OLB. I wrote this book about 20 years ago from WW II diary notes, shortly after I retired from being a newspaperman, sportswriter mostly. I never had the money to publish it myself and I lost some of my desire after an agent in New York told me only my family would be interested in my version of history. So I tinkered with it off-and-on for 20 years and then one of my daughters published it and gave me 100 copies last May as a Father's Day present. And I have given away 70 of them. Readers lead me to believe that that agent might have been a little precautious about OLB.

I have read that we old soldiers should write our memories, that it is therapeutic. I must say it was therapeutic for me since 1984, and since. I would urge those Lucky Bastards still alive that despite the fact that memory plays tricks on all of us, put those memories on paper! Or on tape, if you haven't already done so.

Sincerely,

Robert T. Marshall
3530 N. E. 46th St.
Kansas City, MO 64117-1276

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

June 7, 2004

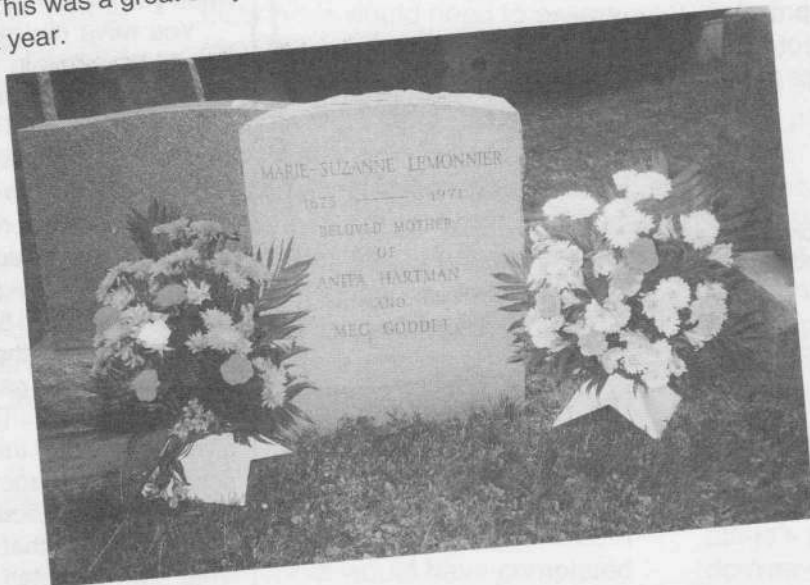
Dear Mr. Newton:

The November 2003 issue of the Hardlife Herald contained an article about a French heroine named Anita Hartman who rescued many downed airmen and escorted them to freedom. The story concluded saying she was buried in Arlington, a private cemetery in Pennsylvania.

My wife passed away in 1992 and is buried in Arlington cemetery which is in Delaware County, a suburb of Philadelphia. I contacted the cemetery officials who established from their records that Mrs. Hartman, along with her mother was indeed buried on their grounds. They were excited about this and requested a copy of the story.

On Memorial Day, May 31, 2004, I placed flowers on the graves of Mrs. Hartman and of her mother, Mme. LeMonnier. I also placed a French and an American flag on Mrs. Hartman's grave. I am enclosing some pictures taken that day.

This was a great story. I shall remember these two courageous women next year.



Sincerely,

Horace R. Hosbach
737 Amosland Road
Morton, PA 19070
Hos737@aol.com

Note: I was with the 385th BG, 551st Squadron, shot down on 2-28-44, POW 14 months.

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

Subject: VE Project for BBC
17 August 2004
From: Kieron Humphrey

Dear Mr. Varnedoe,

I work for the BBC Manchester on forthcoming projects. One of the programme ideas we are working on is a commemorative event for VE Day next year. David Calcutt at Knettishall mentioned your organization and I hope you may be able to help.

We are hoping to feature stories about people who forged a special bond or friendship with someone between 1939-1945, but then lost contact after the war and would like to get in touch again. We aim to tell those stories and, where possible, help track down some of those people.

I wonder if there were any such scenarios among the members of the 385th Bomb Group, or even people who (re)met at one of your Reunions and have struck up a friendship again after all this time. I wonder if you might have time to speak to me again and give me a steer on this query.

My E-mail is Kieron.humphrey@bbc.co.uk — or Tel: 00 44 161 244 3965. Obviously I can ring you straight back if you send me your best contact number and convenient time to call.

Thank you very much,

KIERON HUMPHREY
Development Producer
BBC Format Entertainment

Members of the 385 BGA who meet the criteria as outlined by Ms. Humphrey should contact her at her e-mail address or telephone. —Editor

39 Westridge Drive
Brandon, MS 39047
17 May 2004

Dear Frank:

I have enclosed two different stories that I have written about this mid-air collision (Mid-Air Collision: B-47 and F-86H, February 5, 1958) I was involved in, back in 1958. One, I believe, was included in the HLH many years ago. The other one, with small ink corrections, was written this month. A news man visited me last week from Washington, DC who represents NBC and the Today Show, with a camera man. I wrote this one for my benefit and gives more detail than I had written before.

I have referred to a Lt. Col. In Savannah, GA area that has kept this story alive, because in my estimation, he wants a contract with the US Air Force to go and find the MK-15 Nuclear Weapon. Or he wants to interest someone in a movie contract or a book for some monetary reward. He keeps everyone upset by putting some doubt that this weapon may explode and cause damage or a radiation scare that would affect many people in the Savannah area. The MK-15 was not armed with a capsule, nor was a capsule on board of the aircraft. Prior to our mission, no capsules were delivered to Homestead AFB.

If he found the weapon, what does this accomplish? It would take a large expert crew to recover this MK-15 and would they be capable of finding the weapon. The capsule when inserted in the MK-15 bomb would cause a nuclear explosion. Without the capsule it would only cause a high explosion similar to the bombs we carried in the B-17 bomb bay.

Hope this info suffices, and if I can be of further help don't hesitate to call on me.

Sincerely,

Howard Richardson

Taps

Dominic Thomas Jordan - Dominic, 89, died on June 6, 2004 in Ft. Myers, Fl. He was born in Camden, NJ, son of Rosa and Peter Jordan, but raised in Penn's Grove, NJ, and was co-owner of Jordan's Fuel, Carney's Point, NJ. He is survived by his son, Thomas, a sister Margaret Campo and a brother Peter, plus many nieces and nephews. Enlisting in the Air Corps, he was a Bombardier-Navigator with the 548th Bomb Squadron, 385th Bomb Group where he flew 35 missions earning the rank of Major.

Dominic was a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church in Ft. Myers, the Florida Elks and the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association. He was an avid golfer, traveler, and writer of his Penn's Grove and Italian heritage. He was a passionate dancer, dancing several times a week until the age of 88. He traveled throughout the country to visit and attend events in honor of his family.

A Memorial Mass was said in St. James Roman Catholic Church, Penn's Grove on June 14th, and his ashes was interned in the family plot in Riverview Cemetery, Penn's Grove, NJ.

From Margaret A. Campo, sister

William E. Schubert — William, 80, died April 6, 2004 in Lincoln, NE. He was born in Douglass, NE to John and Gwendolyn Schubert, and graduated from Palmyra High School as Valedictorian of the Class of 1940. A retired special agent of the Burlington Northern Railroad, he served with the 385th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force as a tail gunner on a B-17 in England, completing more than 20 missions, and was awarded the Air Medal with clusters. He was also a Korean War veteran. He is survived by his wife, Santos, sons William D. and Robert S., two daughters, Pamala McCabe and Elizabeth Jane Shanahan, a sister Helen Percy and a brother John R. Schubert, plus three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

William was a member of St. Teresa's Roman Catholic Church and their Men's Club, the Burlington Northern veterans, the Lincoln Right to Life group, and a member of VFW Post 3606's funeral detail.

A Funeral Mass was held April 13th at St. Teresa's Church with interment in Lincoln Memorial Park.

From James Bond and Elmer L. Dickerson

Anthony James Mosca — Anthony, 78, of Lumberport, WV, died April 21, 2004 at the Louis A. Johnson Medical Center in Clarksburg, WV. Tony was a Prisoner of War for 9 months and suffered many injuries, after being shot down over Germany on August 9, 1944. Tony was member of the 550th Bomb Squadron, 385th Bomb Group.

From Ken Laffoon

Taps

Sidney Alex Carney — Sidney, 82, passed away on April 10, 2004 at his home in Comanche, TX. Sidney was born in Rudy, Arkansas to Sidney Arthur and Madge Lucille Carney on November 8, 1921. He retired as General Manager of Moorman Manufacturing Company after 37 years of service. He was a Deacon and Sunday School Teacher in the First Baptist Church of Comanche. He served as an Air Force Medic, and as the First Sergeant of the 548th Bomb Squadron, 385th Bomb Group. In 1999 he hosted a mini-reunion of the Group in San Antonio, and arranged for the attendees to visit Lackland AFB to review the graduating class of Cadets.

Sidney is survived by his wife of 56 years, Wanda Lee Carney, daughters Deborah Ann Johnson, Christina Flannery, Carol Jane Carney and Alexis Lee McJilton, a son Sidney Mac Carney, and a brother Stanley Maurice Carney.

Funeral services were held at the Comanche Funeral Home Chapel on April 12, 2004, and his final resting place is Garden of Memory Cemetery, Comanche County, TX.

From Marty Girson

Charlie Dobbins — Charlie, of Marshall, MI was a member of the 549th Bomb Squadron, 385th Bomb Group, and a pilot on the B-17 Raggedy Ann. He flew 35 missions, and was a member of the Lucky Bastards. He was the owner of the Marshall, Michigan airport.

From 8th AF News and friend Jack Keller

Dale Leggett — Dale, of Sherrodsville, OK, passed away on July 12, 2004. Dale was a member of the 548th Bomb Squadron, 385th Bomb Group.

From Marty Girson

DECEASED

Ronald Wilson Reagan, President of the United States — June 2004

Sidney Alex Carney, 548th Bomb Squadron — April 2004

Dominic Thomas Jordan, 550th Bomb Squadron — June 2004

Anthony James Mosca, 550th Bomb Squadron — April 2004

Charlie Dobbins, 549th Bomb Squadron — 2004

William E. Schubert, 385th Bomb Group — April 2004

Dale Leggett, 548th Bomb Squadron — July 2004

Robert Morgan, Pilot of Memphis Belle, 91st Bomb Group — 2004