

BACK TO THE SACK
OHIO AIR FORCE
SKY GODDESS
HONKY TONK SAL
HESITATIN' HUSSY
GROUND HOG
BIG GAS BIRD
THOROBRED

HIT PARADE JR
RAUNCHY WOLF
"HAYBAG" ANNIE
LIBERTY BELLE
ANGELS SISTER
GREMLIN BUGGY II

THE BLACKJACKER
GOLDEN GOOSE
WAR HORSE
HEAVENLY BODY
CHOWHOUND
MISS AMERICA
PREGNANT PORTIA

THUNDERBIRD
PICCADILLY QUEEN
YANK
GELDING
STARS AND STRIPES
DORSAL QUEEN
HARES BREATHE
WAR WEARY
MARY FAT
SLY FOX

OFF SPRING
WANDERING DUCHESS
BLUE CHAMPAGNE
WINNIE THE POOH

HARD LIFE



HERALD

SKY CHIEF
MR. LUCKY
BARBARA B
SHACK HUNNY
SOUTHERN BELLE
MARY ELLEN III
HELLS BELLS
PRINCESS VAL

PERRY'S PIRATES
GIZMO
MADAME SHOO SHOO
PAT PENDING
POSSIBLE STRAIGHT
MY GAL SAL
HOMESICK ANGEL
BIG STINKY
HOT CHOCOLATE
VIBRANT VIRGIN
RAGGEDY ANNE
LIL-LU
BETTY JO

SLO JO
ROGER THE DODGER
MCKY
HALF AND HALF
LATEST RUMOR
MAIDEN AMERICA
MISSION BELLE
OL' RUM DUM
MAC'S HACK
LADY ANN
PICKLE FINGER OF ?

SLEEPYTIME GIRL
MCKEY II
SLEEPYTIME GAL
FOOLISH VIRGIN
RAGGED BUT RIGHT
LULU BELLE
THE JOKER
AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'

ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND
LONESOME POLECAT
MR. SMITH
SUGAR JO
PISTOL PACKIN MAMA
MIS-FORTUNE
SHACK N LADY
SWEET CHARIOT
SWINGING DOOR
MISSISSIPPI MISS
SATAN'S MATE
SLICK CHICK
KITTY'S REVENGE
BELLE OF THE BLUE
MARY ELLEN II



NEWSLETTER OF THE 385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



COMBAT UNITS

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

VOL. XIV NO. 4

Editor: Ed Stern
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424th AIR SVS. GP.
877th CHEM. CO. (AO)
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DECEMBER 1996

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THOUGHTS OF THE PRESIDENT

"We should concern ourselves with due respresentation at the HERITAGE MUSEUM in Savannah. In two ways:

1. to be included on the WALL OF VALOR as an individual of the 385th.
2. that the 385th should have a MEMORIAL at the Memorial Gardens.

Number 1 requires a donation of \$100 to be on the Waal of Valor. Application and info appear within this issue. If our applications are sent in to Savannah as a group mailing we could all be on the Wall in the same section.

Number 2 requires more thought. A minimum memorial will cost in the range of \$1000-\$2000, depending on how elaborate the stone will be. Perhaps only by donations could this be possible. Sugesstions and your comments, please.

Nancy and I wish the best of Season's Greetings to all members of the 385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association. May the New Year be one of good health.

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LTC Raymond B. Tucker

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*Frank B. Walls
Vincent W. Masters
*John C. Ford
James E. Emmons
*Paul Schulz
Forrest V. Poore
William A. Nicholls
*Earl L. Cole
Sam Lyke
Sid Colthorpe
Robert C. Smith

TUCSON REUNION

November 14 - 18, 1997

CHAPLAIN JIM'S THOUGHTS

Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas!!

I know by the time you read this the Feast of Light/Hanukkah is past but I am writing this when both Advent and Hanukkah are coming up. Both of these events have a lot of importance to me as a Christian Minister. Hanukkah, in the rededication of the Temple after the Maccabees defiled it and Advent when the Light of the World is fore told. So, I pray that whichever event you are celebrating it is a happy and important time.

We are ending 1996 with all the experiences- exhausting campaigns-tiresome crime-births of grandchildren-another year older(goody) and not wanting to repeat any of it. But as we look toward 1997 let's keep in mind God's blessings of good friends, loving families and a nation that allows us the freedom of voting for whomever we want if others don't agree.

Regardless of your voting(win or lose) our elected politicians need our prayers. Our nation and o'ur society also need our help. We, as individuals, can encourage our leaders to make the right decisions. We "fought" to preserve this freedom so let's continue to do our part for our children's-children.

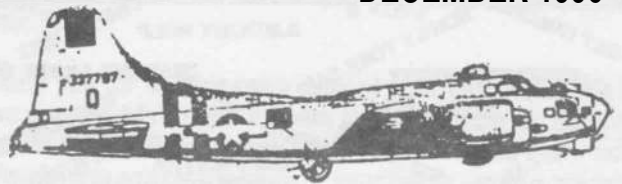
Blessings on you all for the holiday season and through out all of 1997.

Sincerely with LOVE!!

Jim



Frank Walls	October 1996
David N. Tipton	September 1996
B.J. Henshaw	October 1994
Russell L. Follwell	March 1996
John K. Bember	August 1996
Robert Thoretz	November 1994
Walter D. Phillips	October 1996
Edward Carey	May 1996
Wm. Gaylord Watson	October 1994
Samuel Baglio	June 1996
Walter Zombeck	January 1996
Walter Peters	1992
Joseph P. Pritchard	
Novo J. Martin	August 1996
Anthony J. Pazzola	September 1996
Theodore B. Smith	November 1996



JOHN LEMKE

John H. Lemke, 80 of Carlstadt, died May 2, 1996. Born in Hoboken, he lived in Jersey City five years, moving to Carlstadt 48 years ago. Mr. Lemke was a production line supervisor for Becton Dickinson and Co. of East Rutherford, retiring 31 years ago.

He was a member of the Santa Maria Assembly, a member of color guard, and a member of the Catholic War Veteran's of St. Joseph's Post 663. He was also a member of the Veteran of Foreign Wars Schmidt-Hoeger Post 3149, Carlstadt, and a member of the 385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association. He was a life member of the Disabled American Veterans Bergen County Chapter 15.

Surviving are his wife, the former Ellen A. Baker; and two brothers, Edward P. of North Bergen and Harold W. of Ringwood.

Edward F. McCarthy

CAPE CORAL, Fla. — Edward F. McCarthy, 74, of 1709 SE Cape Coral, FL, died Thursday, March 28, 1996 at his home.

He was born November 8, 1921, in Greenville, S. Carolina, the son of Allen James and Maude (Bryant) McCarthy. He is a graduate of St. Peter's High School in Staten Island, New York, and later attended Manhattan College and graduated from Wagner College in Staten Island.

Ed served during WWII and received the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters, the E.A.M.E. Champion Medal and 6 Bronze Stars. Ed had a great love of flying. He was lead pilot of the B17 Flying Fortress Squad and flew 30 successful missions home. He was a retired Lieutenant Colonel of the USAF Reserves and a member of the American Legion. After the war, Ed was Regional Sales Representative for Chevron Oil. He married the former Dorothy Shikoski on Sept. 27, 1945, and they made their home in Des Moines, Iowa.

Ed flew w/lk the
548th Sqdrn, 385th
Bomb Group of the
8th AF (fy.-jtw. J
1st 1944.

He is survived by his wife, Dorothy; mother, Maude "Nana"; 4 sons, Edward (Karen) and John (Debbie), both of Cape Coral, and Jim and Bob, both of Fort Myers; 1 daughter, Kathy. Smith of Ripon; 8 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild; 1 sister, Helen McCarthy of Sun City West, Arizona; and 1 brother, Ray of Cape Coral. He was preceded in death by his father, A. J. "Dee - Dee" McCarthy and 1 brother, Allen "Bud" McCarthy.

Ed is deeply loved and respected by his family and friends, and especially his crew from the B17 whom he has remained very close with. He will always be greatly loved and remembered, especially by his grandchildren. Ed was always there for everyone with smile and a kind word.

Dear Ed,

I'm enclosing Frank's obituary.

It was 40 years ago that a group of us (Weikerts, Masters, Coopers, Cunants, Walls and a few more; I've forgotten) got together and planned the first 385th reunion. It was in Pittsburgh and Frank was the host. It has really grown since that small beginning.

I'm hoping to see you all in Tuscon in '97.

Sincerely,
Winifred Walls

EDITOR'S NOTE: Frank was C.O. of the 550th for the last 3 or 4 months of the war—a great "boss."

Frank Watts

Frank B. Walls, 79, Calimesa, Calif., formerly of Reynoldsville, died Tuesday.

Born July 22, 1917, in West Liberty, he was a son of the late Bwrton and Isabelle Calvert Walls. He was married to Winifred Lockhart in November 1946. She survives.

He was a retired lieutenant colopel in the U.S. Air Force. He served as a B-17 pilot during World War U



John Kristian Bomber Sr.

GALVESTON — John K. Bomber Sr., 74, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his family, Monday, August 5, 1996.

Mr. Bomber was born May 27, 1922 in Galveston, Texas. He was a Graduate of Kirwin High School, Class of 1939. Mr. Bomber served in W.W.II in the 548th Bomb Squadron, 385th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force. He transferred to the Reserves, United States Air Force in October 10, 1971. He retired May 27, 1982, from the U.S. Air Force as a Lt Colonel. Mr. Bomber had also worked for the Corps of Engineers, Galveston District 1941 to 1981, retiring as Comptroller.

An old battle-scarred soldiers obituary carried the erroneous headline: "Battle-'scared' Veteran Gone to Rest". The would-be correction in a later issue was worse: "Bottle-scarred Veteran Gone To Rest."

The next correction attempted was equally devastating: "Battle-scarred veteran Gone to Roost."

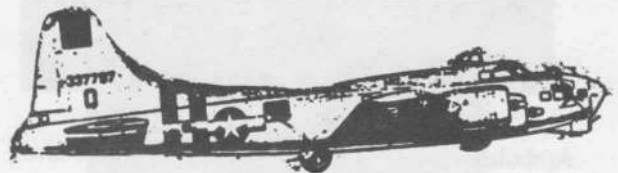
But alas, amidst family complaints, the editor tried one last time with the horrendous result: "Battle-scarred Veteran Gone to Roast."

The superintendent of Scotland Yard was interviewing detective candidates. After the standard questions, he asked the first, "If someone asked you my most prominent facial feature, what would you say?" The chap thought for a bit and replied, "You cover it up very well, but I notice your left ear is much higher than your right ear." "Very good observation! Next..."

The second candidate was given the same test, and he replied, "You hold your head at an angle to disguise it, but your right ear is much lower than your left." "Excellent observation," said the superintendent, "Next?"

The third man got the same questions. He thought then replied, "I say that you wear contact lenses." "That's exactly right!" cried the superintendent, "what a precise observation. How did you know?"

"Well," replied the candidate, "with screwed up ears like yours, I knew you couldn't wear glasses."





Gen. Jimmie Doolittle, Col. Jumper-385th Bomb Gp.
At 200th Mission Party (from Bob Woods File.)

Dear Ed,

Many thanks for the latest 385th BG newsletter. Very interesting as always. I can fully appreciate the hard work which goes into every issue.

Each issue is, of course, a part of history and each issue you so kindly send is sent on to the "Percy Kindred Library" at the 390th BG Memorial Air Museum (post card enclosed).

Sadly, Percy Kindered, President of the Museum, passed away very recently. He was a very fine friend of the 8th AAF and will be missed by us all, on both sides of the Atlantic.

I was very interested to read extremely moving story of Capt. De Wolf by Les Paulson. Please find enclosed several photographs of Gt Ashfield airfield that I took in the Spring of 1995. I'm almost certain that the concrete base of the hangar pictured is the same hangar where the tragedy occurred.

Best Wishes to you all,

Ian Hawkins
29 Birch AVE,
Bacton Stowmarket
Suffolk IP 14 4NT



Ambulance/Fire Tender building near control tower
Great Ashfield Airfield, Spring 1995



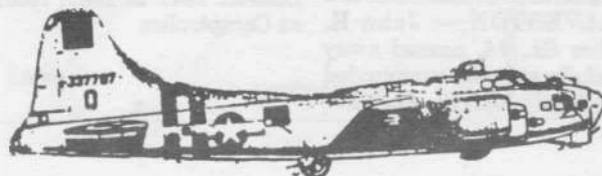
"Cleared for takeoff...."
Great Ashfield Airfield Spring 1995

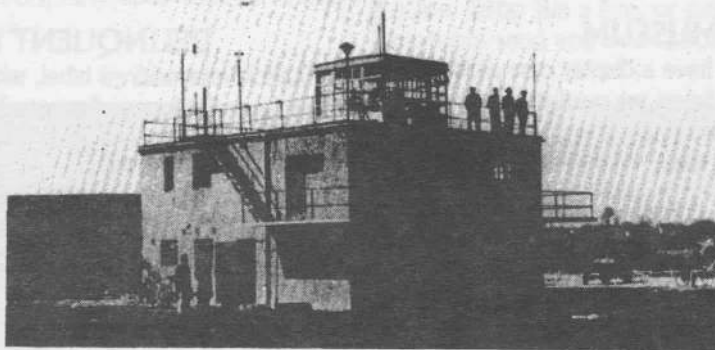


"Twelve O'Clock high"
50 years on Great Ashfield Airfield, Suffolk. Spring 1995

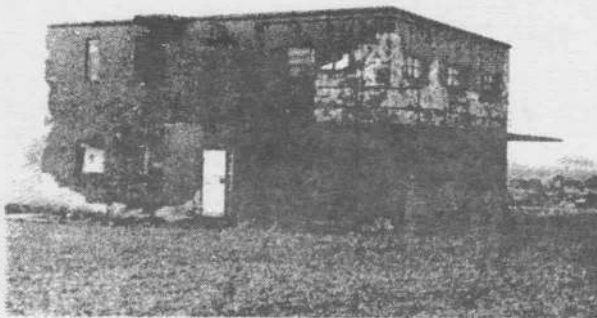


Base of A/C Hangar near control tower
Great Ashfield Airfield, Spring 1995





1944



1974



1984

THE 390TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL AIR MUSEUM WAS DEDICATED 13 MAY 1981 IN GRATEFUL TRIBUTE TO THE ALLIED AIRMEN WHO, IN VALOUR, GAVE THEIR LIVES TO THE VICTORY THAT MADE REAL THE CHALLENGE FOR WORLD PEACE AND UNITY.

1939-1945.

Editor's note: Back in December 1993, we printed a questionnaire by Lt. Col. Mark Weils, who was writing a thesis for his Ph. D. The thesis is completed and is now in book form (we've listed it previously). Tom Hair sent a detailed story answering his questions, and he presents an interesting perspective that will be read with much interest by all. We'll spread this over several issues, showing the questions and Tom's answers. Tom was a waist gunner on Ohio Air Force.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE AAF?

Why did I join the AAF? My father was a rotating member of the draft board in Anderson SC in 1942. The members had already learned something about what happened to volunteers as opposed to draftees. He advised my brother and I that our numbers would come up soon and that he could not protect us. I volunteered in October 42 and my brother in December 42. He also was an enlisted gunner, on the B-24 bomber. My first call was to Fort Jackson SC for briefings and a physical exam. I returned home for about a week and was called to report for duty. The stay at Fort Jackson was no more than a week. There were records to complete, intelligence and skills test, and briefings on the options. During these briefings the officer dwelled at length on the urgent need for aircrew gunners. We also learned that volunteering for the AAF did not insure avoidance of the infantry. The level of education and the testing determined that. I again volunteered.

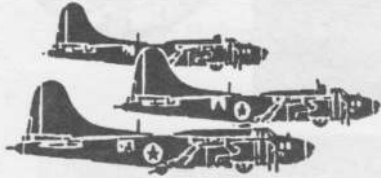
The AAF selectees were sent to basic training at St. Petersburg where we lived in, for us country boys, the plush conscripted tourist hotels. As the name implies, we marched, did calisthenics, obstacle

con't on page 7

BULLETIN BOARD

SAVANNAH MUSEUM

President Bob reminds us that we have a display case available to us at the Savannah Museum. Unless we send items for the display, we may lose it. Go through your closets, your attics, your memorabilia and send it down there—Mighty 8th Air Force Museum, Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402.



WERE YOU AT DAVIS MONTHAN IN 1942 OR 1943

As part of the 1997 Reunion, we'd like to arrange a feature story in the Tucson newspaper about "55 years ago at David Monthan." We'd have to come up with a couple of old guys like us for them to write human interest stuff about. Let us know and we'll start the ball rolling. Lou Massari, weren't you one?

DELINQUENT NOTICES

Please check your address label, which indicates your dues status. If it shows R94 or earlier, you haven't paid your dues since 1994 (there are 97 of you). If you want to continue receiving the Hardlife Herald, please write me and we'll continue to send it. If we don't hear, we'll drop you after the December issue. These figures are based on our records as of November 1, 1996.

LIFE MEMBERS

Some of you received Dues notices by mistake—sorry! It won't happen next year—blame it on a computer glitch.

FINANCIAL NEWS

President Bob's discussion of our financial situation wasn't meant to be a plea for help—just a statement of possible trouble in the future. But two of our members, Standlee Roberts and Bill Hunter sent substantial voluntary contributions— and their gifts are much appreciated.



*Proceeds from the sales of this card goes to the upkeep and preservation of the B-17 Flying Fortress "Sally B" U.S.A.A. F. WWII Memorial Flight.
Drawing by Peter Hale.*

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

Ed & Jane Stern

Jan & Wanda
Interstate Printing

Les & Peggy Gordon (who sent this great card from England)

courses, guard duty, and KP. We had classroom work on military organization, and there were some basic medical tests. We were next assigned to Apalachicola FL about mid-November for gunnery training. At that time the medical and psychological testing became serious. I do not recall any great detail, but I do recall the full physical exam, hearing, eyes, depth perception, lab work, and dental repair. That activity was performed during the early morning and late evening hours so that training could be conducted during daylight hours. The psychological testing concentrated on the aspects of the future. The idea seemed to be to establish a base-line profile for each of the individuals. That testing was continued during the five weeks gunnery training period, probably to detect any newly developed symptoms. And there were definitely some of those. It was during that six weeks that the "meat" of technical training and aircrew duty started and never let up until the last combat mission was flown. The training was intensive. No days off and very few evenings. We were first introduced to the basic army weapons on the firing range, progressing to the 30-caliber machine gun and then the 50-caliber which was the standard weapon on the bombers. If nothing else, we had lots of ammo. The next step was airborne in an early version of the T-6 modified with an open rear cockpit fitted with a gun-mount ring and a 30-caliber gun. The 50 was too large to handle in the cockpit. That was when attrition started.

Prior to my first flight of the training, my association with aircraft had been limited to two or three rides at the local airport-low and slow. Talk about a rude awakening. We were firing live ammo on towed targets over the gulf. The maneuvers were obviously designed for more than just getting into position on the target. The pilot would let it all out when he rolled off target for the next pass. We were strapped such that the body could not get out of the cockpit, but the imagination could fly freely. Our final training flights were in the old Hudson "bomber" fitted with two 50-calibers in windows on each side of the fuselage. We did more firing on towed targets and stationary targets in the gulf waters. We had a celebrity join us briefly during that training. Captain Clark Gable joined us for two of the Hudson flights (no evidence that he took an open cockpit ride). He had some sort of photographic assignment and later appeared in England, supposedly made some combat flights to collect film footage for a movie. We had three open cockpit flights where a camera had been mounted on the gun, no ammo, and we did "dry" firing on incoming aircraft. The talk was around that it was Gable's idea and specifically for him. Anyhow, that camera film provided some fun and games at the evening de-briefings. It definitely highlighted the problems in solving the geometry of relative motion in establishing the proper "lead". The booby prize was a cardboard sign which read, "I shot myself down today". Attrition was high during that training. Some few were eliminated during the initial medical and psychological testing, but the open cockpit flights took a heavy toll. It is possible to overcome a fear of flying but a pre-disposition to air sickness is another problem. I do not recall specific numbers, but I do recall missing many of my new friends when we departed. (Later research indicates that the attrition ran about 25% on the average). I recall those five weeks as a very intensive, non-stop exercise designed both for the training and for a culling out process.

Our next stop was briefly at Keesler Field for further records preparation, a quick physical update, and orders which assigned us to armament training at Lowry Field for a specific type aircraft: B-17, B-24, B-25, or B-26. We moved quickly to Lowry prior to Christmas of 1942. That training was classroom intensive. Guns, turrets, bomb racks, electrical systems, mock aircraft installations, etc. We learned basic maintenance to the extent that we were responsible for the equipment while in flight. Otherwise, ground crews performed the heavy maintenance. As it turned out later in combat, our guns were considered personal property, not to be touched by anyone else. We removed, - cleaned, repaired, oiled, and stored our guns until the next flight.

Our next stop was about one week at Salt Lake City (mid-March 1943) where we stayed in a large exhibit hall at the Utah State Fairgrounds. Acres and acres of double-decker bunks. B-17 training was being conducted at various locations and stages in Utah, Idaho, the Dakotas, Montana, Washington, and Oregon. Assignments were made at Salt Lake as either replacements, or to a new crew. I went to Boise, Idaho, where I finally joined a new crew during the latter part of March. Our initial flights at Boise were crew and aircraft familiarization. That progressed to day and night cross-country flights. We made many runs on the bombing and gunnery ranges. Ground training consisted of classroom work and more range firing. We did aircraft recognition, basic radio use, map reading, and aircraft structural fundamentals. We did no more "trekking" and GI stuff, but it was more ground firing on the range. At Boise we were introduced to one of the more enjoyable aspects of our training. That was skeet and trap shooting which brought together the fundamentals of eye-target contact, three-dimensional motion, and ultimately firing at the correct time and point in space. Roll call was not necessary. The rich man's sport had found a home. But on the darker side, there were aircraft and crew losses.

We moved on to Geiger Field, Spokane, Washington, after a short hiatus at Rapid City where the runways looked like the desert road in the TV commercials. At Spokane we became part of the Bowman (Major) Provisional Group. The initial contingent of the 385th Bomb Group departed in June and flew the first combat mission in July. Our training at Spokane was more of the same, but also more advanced. There was formation flying and more bombing and gunnery. Our ground training was at Walla Walla where there were extensive firing range facilities. We chewed up more targets and dirt with the 50-caliber and indulged extensively in the rich man's sport. The skeet and trap shooting became more sophisticated. They had constructed a dirt road in a large circular pattern which ran through dense trees and underbrush. The traps were concealed randomly in location and launch angle. The gunner rode in the back of a truck with high sides and no restraining harness. That was the ultimate target shooting challenge. Good training.

We moved on to Pendleton, Oregon, and did some over-water flight familiarization over the Pacific Ocean. The stay at Pendleton was very brief. I remember most the (one) Saturday night at the local dance barn (where they had barn dances). There was a young woman who stood well over six feet tall. Her friends called her "timber." We

#3. Did you receive good quality flying or technical training which prepared you adequately for what you faced in combat?

#3. The technical and flying training were superb for 1942-43. Training was non-stop, and real-world, and on the surface would appear to have been repetitious. Not so. There were no simulators for gunnery training, and probably all for the best. There was a difference, specifically with the weapons training. I am sure that the ammunition was not inexpensive but compared to today's missile, we apparently could afford what appeared to be an unlimited supply of ammunition for training. The hands-on, near real-world aspects gave us the best that we could get, short of having the enemy involvement.

#4. Was there any "Mickey Mouse" stuff which you can describe?

#4. I do not recall any "Mickey Mouse."

#5. Were you satisfied the way your crew was formed? Was it cohesive?

#5. I had absolutely no complaints with the formation of our crew. It seems that we just fell together and started working. We came from Ohio, Oregon, Washington, California, Michigan, New York, New Jersey, Missouri, Kentucky, and South Carolina. A mixed bag. The oldest, top turret and aircraft engineer, was age 27 (more or less) . I was the youngest; just past my 19th birthday when we departed for England. I was also the youngest in the 385th Bomb Group for a very short period of time. The pilot, co-pilot, navigator, and bombardier were in the 23-26 age bracket. The other gunners and radio ranged between 21 and 27. (these are broad guesses at ages). I would be remiss not to highlight our pilot (aircraft commander). John Richey was probably about age 24 in 1943. I recall a mention that he had attended an aeronautical school in Florida prior to entering the AAF. He was obviously born to the blue and a very good, no nonsense, thoroughly disciplined pilot. At the end of the war in August 1945, he signed on with TWA and over the years worked up to senior captain on the international flights. He is now retired and living in Florida. By the time we had reached Pendleton our crew was complete and remained the same except for the initial bombardier. He was replaced by another after we arrived in England. When we departed Grand Island we were comfortable with our training, our weapons, and our aircraft. There was definite cohesion. Other than the initial bombardier, our crew flew each mission together until wounded members had to be replaced and others missed missions for sickness of sorts.

#6. Did you ever see crews who didn't get along?

#6. There were signs, even during training, of crew shuffling and these observations continued on into combat. I am sure that the leaders were doing their best to form cohesive crews out of their resources. One could probably say that two good crews were better than three not so good, crews.

REFLECTIONS ON HOW THE WORLD HAS CHANGED FOR WOMEN AND MEN

It is said there are three ages of women: Youth, middle aged and "You haven't changed." But change is the name of the game. Consider that when we graduated from high school it was before the "pill" and the "population explosion," which, inexplicably, went hand in hand, so to speak.

We were before TV, pencillin, polio shots, antibiotics, frozen food, nylon, dacron, zerox and Kinsey. We were before radar, fluorescent lights, credit cards and ballpoint pens. To us, time-sharing meant togetherness, not computers; a chip meant a piece of wood; hardware meant hardware; and software wasn't even a word.

We were before pantyhose and drip-dry clothes. Before icemakers and dishwashers, clothes dryers, freezers and electric blankets. Before Alaska and Hawaii became states. Before men wore long hair and earrings and women wore tuxedos.

We were before Leonard Bernstein, yogurt, Ann Landers, plastics, hairdryers, the 40-hour work week and the minimum wage. We got married first then lived together-" How quaint can one be?"

In our time, closets were for clothes, not for coming out of, and a book about two young women living together in Europe could be called "Our Hearts were Young and Gay."

Bunnies were small rabbits and rabbits were not Volkswagens. We were before Grandma Moses and Frank Sinatra and cup-sizing bras. We wore Peter Pan collars and deep cleavage was something the butler did. Pizza, cheerios, frozen orange juice, instant coffee and McDonald's were unheard of. We thought fast food was something you ate during Lent. We were before FM radio, tape recorders, electric typewriters, word processors, muzak, electronic music, disco dancing..and that's not all bad!

In our day, coke was something you drank, grass was mowed and pot was something you cooked in. We were before day-care centers, house-husbands, babysitters, computer dating, dual careers and computer marriages.

In our time, there were 5 and 10 cent stores where you could buy something for 5 and 10 cents. For one nickel you could make a phone call, or buy a coke, or buy enough stamps to mail one letter and two postcards. You could buy a Chevy coupe for \$650, but who could afford it then?...Nobody. A pity, too, because gas was only 10cents a gallon.

If anyone asked to explain CIA, MS., NATO, UFO, NFL, SAT'S JFK, BMW, IBM, ERA, or IUD, we would have said alphabet soup. We were not before the difference between sexes was discovered, but we were before sex change. We just made do with what we had. And we were the last generation that was so dumb as to think you needed a husband to have a baby.

12 Nostalgic Notes, September 1996

The Grinch Who Stole VE-Day from *Flight Lines*, Oregon Chapter, 8AFHS

May 8, 1945, VE-Day. Do you remember? I sure as hell do, as I know you do! What did it mean for us as individuals? Each has his or her answer to that question. For those of us in England it meant no flight list for tomorrow's mission into that inevitable sea of dirty black flak. It meant no planes to sweat over all night to have them ready for another raid on the enemy. It meant no maps to pore over and no foreign weather to predict. It meant no early meal to prepare for the fly boys. It meant that the war was OVER!

A momentous day? You bet your bippy! Yet, this year there was no mention of it in my daily newspaper! It was just as if it never happened. I guess that date just isn't worth the ink and the space any more. Well, I remembered!

I am reminded of a story of a small boy and his mother who were very much aware of what May 8, 1945 meant to them. Bobby turned 8 on that day. The news came over their old Philco that afternoon. Neighbors ran outside and whooped and hollered and hugged each other in joy that the Germans had signed the surrender. Bobby and his mother joined in the celebration. Now, he knew, his daddy would be coming home.

As hard as Bobby tried he had trouble seeing his Father's features in his mind. It had been so awfully long for such a little boy. He looked up at the window of the house next door, at the little flags in the window, the ones with a blue star in each. He knew that they were for Mrs Peterson's two boys, the ones who taught him to play basketball in their driveway. He knew that they would be coming home, too. He was very happy.

At that moment Mrs Peterson appeared at the window and removed one of the flags. She replaced it with another only this one bore a star of gold. Bobby pointed at the window and tugged at his mother's dress. She took him by the hand and led him up the front steps of the porch. Bobby asked, "Why is there a gold star there now. Mommy? How come a gold star, huh. Mommy. . . why is there a gold star. Mommy? Huh, Mommy... Why are you crying. Mommy?"

VE-Day has come and gone, once more. Some of us will always remember...!

And some wonder why an organization such as ours is important!

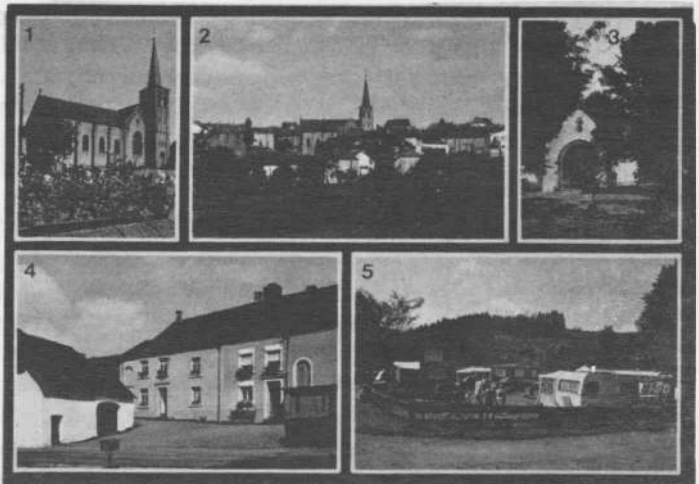
Ed Note: Now that the 50th Anniversary celebrations are long gone, is that all there is or will be? Around here there wasn't any mention of D-Day, either. Maybe the newspaper reporters and publishers are too far removed from our generation?

Maybe WWII is important to us because we took part in it. Some of our children are interested because we have shared some of our experiences with them. And perhaps our grandchildren will be interested when they mature. But most of them certainly won't learn about it in school unless their curriculum is pretty special.

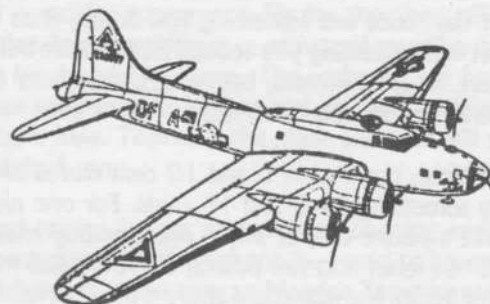


One of our recently deceased members who wanted to remain anonymous cared so much about our memorial in Great Ashfield that he donated over \$5,000.00 toward the new cut glass window in the church. Many thanks to you Gene Silberberg.

John F. Pettenger



1,2,4: View from the Village
3: Chapelle at Wolvelange
5: Camping



OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION

President Bob Valliere's comments about our financial future generated a number of suggestions, which we'll boil down to the following. The changes suggested will no doubt be presented at the Tucson Reunion for whatever action is decided on - so be thinking about it.

Les Reichardt writes:

Having been involved with local chapters and state councils of the retired Officers Association for some 25 years, there is but one way to a break even situation. All activities must be conducted on a breakeven basis and additional expenses; i.e. printing, postage, and certain miscellaneous expenses should be paid through the collection of dues or contributions.

Non-payees are given three strikes and they are OUT! This 3 and out should not extend over more than a one year period.

Raising dues might result in more delinquencies and retaining future Life Membership monies would be a mistrust to All Saints Church in Great Ashfield.

Bill Hunter sent a check and writes:

I'm sorry to hear of our financial woes in Hardiife Herald, for this reason I am renewing my life membership in the Association, please find check enclosed.

Charles C. Smith was my Supply Officer and one of the finest men I have ever known, as well as Frank Marano, these men I was fortunate to serve under as Supply Sgt of the 549th, I was honored to do the best job possible for all of the officers of the 549th, but these two were special.

Very truly yours,

And from Russ Byers:

It is probably time to raise the dues to \$ 12.00 per year, it has been a long while since the dues have been raised?. I have been a Life Member for a while so annual dues have not been an issue for me. This could change. The Life Members Could be assessed a voluntary one time fee to help avoid future financial difficulties. This may or may not be a sensitive issue. I would not object to an assessment.

If non paying members were removed from the roster would this not help reduce the quarterly cost of mailing the Hardiife Herald?. I wonder if a stronger plea to non-paying members would produce much revenue?.

Sincerely,

Carl Williams Wrote:

Dear Ed,

In reading the thoughts of President Valliere, I was not surprised about the financial problems concerning the publishing of the Hardiife Herald Newsletter. The age of WWII vets is going to catch up with us. The number of 385th vets attending reunions will no doubt diminish as will eventually interest of surviving family members also diminish. Sad as it is to contemplate. Income from Life Memberships will also dry up. My thoughts are as follows"

1. Raise the dues to \$ 12.00 per year, as soon as possible. That is a trivial amount.
2. Make a strong appeal to delinquent members to pay their dues; some are probably deceased.
3. If no response is received from delinquent members, drop them from the roster.

From Ben Love:

I did not learn about the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association until 1990. I did not join the instant I became aware there was such a group of fellow airmen. I have attended all reunions since becoming a member. I wish to express my opinion on the options you put forth in the October HLH. First let me say that I am proud to have a reunion to attend and that I am willing to pay my fair share to insure they are continued. The reunions are something I plan to attend from one to the next.

As you may remember there was some discussion at Omaha about the solvency and perpetuation of the association but no suggestions were offered. I feel dues should be raised, keeping in mind that a \$2.00 increase would only add approximately \$ 1400.00 per year to the treasury, so maybe a \$5.00 would be more appropriate. Our dues are the least I pay to any other organization I am a member of.

I have never been in favor of Life Memberships in any organization. A life member pay dues only once and when the money is spent that income is gone and my experience is that life members are seldom assessed when a need arises. As our constitution is now written, the treasury never sees income from LM. I think it should be changed.

I read EVERY word in my HLH, not once or twice, but several times. I know when time comes to pay my dues, and I pay them. I know that if I do not I may not get a HLH, as it should be. If delinquent members should suddenly stop receiving HLH, I'll venture they would question why or perhaps they would not care. Either way we would know if there is interest enough to pay dues or not, thereby saving expense of mailing. If a person is behind in dues they should not be able to rejoin but must pay back dues to get current. I feel that any person interested in our group and reads the HLH should know that expenses must be met and costs borne by members.

If I pass on before my wife you may be assured she will continue to pay dues. She may not attend reunions but would at least keep the opportunity to do so and continue contributing to the solvency of BGMA.

If push comes to shove I would not object to a modest assessment of each member. If the members did not pay the assessment then they would be removed from the rolls. I do not expect something for nothing but I do expect what I pay for.

Thanks,
Ben T Love

And finally from Hal Heidbreder:

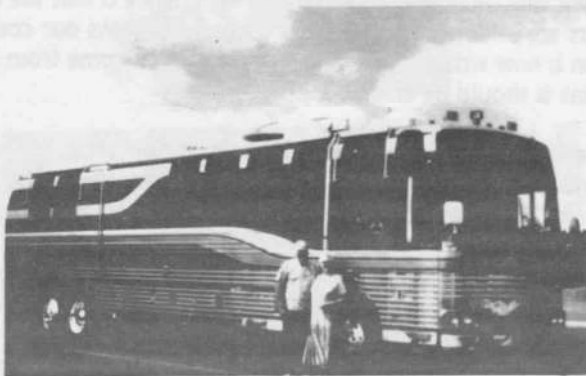
I just paid my '97 dues and I'd suggest that they be raised to \$ 15.00 per year for '98 and thereafter (till the next dues increase.) 700 dues-paying members would bring in \$10,500 annually-and that would cover 4 issues at more than \$2000 per issue. Of course you should also appeal to delinquent members to pay up. (However, I would refrain from dropping non-payers because maybe then CAN't pay.)

I appreciated the photo and story on Lowry's crew. I flew five missions with them as toggler and chin turret gunner, including the Feb. 3rd one to Berlin. They (Lowry's Crew) are pictured by Miss D-Day, but my mission diary lists Hell's Belles, 803, for at least two of the missions when I flew with them.

Three members of the 385th attended the 8th AF Historical society Reunion in Orlando in early October. Harry Clew and wife, Carol; Bob Weixler and wife, Jean; and myself. Milton Shalinsky was on the reunion roster, but we could not find him.

Regard,
Hal

Bill Hunter of Carson CA uses this bus as his home away from home when he trapshoots, which he does a lot (over 30 years).



B-17 DEDICATION ANNOUNCED

Monumental Bronze Memorial at the United States Air Force Academy

Information: 1-800-305-1738

Colorado Springs, CO - August 22, 1997 has been set for the official dedication of the B-17 Monumental Bronze Memorial in the distinguished "Study Hall" Sculpture Garden on the USAF Academy Honor Court, beginning at 10:00 AM. The monumental bronze replica of the famous aircraft will join four other Warbirds already in place at the Academy, including the P-38, P-40, P-47, and P-51.

The creator of the Sculpture Garden, Robert Henderson, has dedicated his art over the past decade to crafting planes from the WWII era. "It is an honor to recreate these magnificent aircraft while representing the men and women who designed, maintained, and flew them. They dominated the sky during their collective primes," Henderson said. "Thanks to the sacrifices made by them and others during WWII, I have the privilege of doing what I love to do."

The B-17 will be comprised of over 100 bronze pieces welded to create a rough statue of the plane. A series of grinding, sanding, and filling procedures will give the monument a very realistic appearance. From there, Henderson's attention to detail will ensure every rivet, seam, and bump from the actual plane is meticulously copied to give the final version of the B-17 its striking appearance. Finally, the plane will be coated in a patina finish, enabling it to withstand anything nature can muster for decades to come. The sculpture will have an approximate wing span of 19 feet and sit upon a beautifully polished granite base. Together, the plane and base will weigh approximately 3 tons.

Fund raising for the project is an ongoing endeavor to allow men and women throughout the world to honor the B-17 Flying Fortress. According to Maurice Thomas, project manager, limited spaces are still available for those who want their name inscribed on the monument. Individuals contributing to the memorial include those who flew, serviced, and designed the plane, family members, individual bomb and fighter groups, and various Little Friends.

Call 1-800-305-1738 for more information or if considering attendance at the dedication, so an approximate number of anticipated attendees can be determined.

EDITOR'S NOTE: You'll have to excuse a little home-town | October 3 USA Today. One of our Schweinfurt paintings hangs boasting by your editor. Here's part of a front page story in the | in their lounge-lots of interest generated (but no orders yet).

2A • THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1996 • USA TODAY

'When it's over you are emotionally drained, but euphoric'

COVER STORY

Old-time pilots show 'top guns' who's hot

By Joe Urschel
USA TODAY

FARGO, N.D. - The scene around the air base of the 119th Fighter Wing of the Air National Guard here would never be confused with the set of Top Gun. It is no hotbed of 20something fighter jocks tooling around on motorcycles and doing shooters at the local bar after work.

Here you see balding middle-agers with chiseled faces. People whose "other jobs" are at the insurance office, on the farm or Hying for FedEx. They are members of local churches, officers in local civic organizations, habitués of the nearby public golf courses.



Hooligans': 119th Fighter Wing's F-16s take to the air

Yet, when you strap one of these senior Biers into the cockpit of an F-16 Fighting Falcon, the younger boys get out of the way because these are the best air-tpair combat fighters in the world. They are the Godfathers of air superiority — and right now, they are in the final "spin up" to defend that title.

Two years ago, in October 1994, Fargo's "Happy Hooligans" as they are called, flew down to Tyndall Air Force base in Florida to duke it out in the Super Bowl of dogfights — the biennial William Tell competition. What they accomplished there may

Please see COVER STORY next page ►

"Yew effieentratftm level is so high," says Maj. Bob Becklund, who win lead Fargo's team as they defend their title Oct 21. "Everything is happening so quickly that it just starts feeling like slow motion."

When a pilot jerks his plane skyward, as he may do several times in a competition like this one, the blood actually drains from the head and concentration can be affected. Still, the pilot must react instantaneously.

At that point, says Robert "Pee Wee" Edlund, "you are not really flying the plane, it is just something strapped to your back" as you go through the maneuvers.

In situations like this, the Fargo pilots use the F-16 to their advantage. "You can visually spot an F-15 maybe 10 miles out," says Becklund.

"In the F-16, if I've got the nose pointed at you, and I'm jamming your radar, you aren't going to pick me up visually until I'm maybe 3 miles out."

At Mach 1.6, three miles out is as good as in your back pocket. If both planes are moving at about the same speed, the F-16 is on you in less than 7 seconds.

"It is physically and emotionally very demanding," says Edlund. "When it's over you are emotionally drained, but euphoria"

In 1994, when the Fargo team won, "people were surprised and upset — shocked," says Edlund, who is prevented by the rules from competing again but is serving as a kind of coach for the team. "Believe me, there are some big egos out there. I know those F-15 crews went home embarrassed." Particularly because Air Force crews flying F-15s had won the previous two competitions.

The Fargo team also won the Hughes Trophy that year, an award given to the best air combat unit in the Air Force. They were the only F-16 unit ever to win it.

How did a group of such precision fighters spring up in the unlikely location of North Dakota?



B. Fyler, USA TODAY

On the flight line: Master Sgt David Sunram and Maj. Marshall Kjelvik sit on an F-16 down the runway in Fargo, N.D., home of the Happy Hooligans' of the Air National Guard.

"It is a family kind of thing," says Maj. Marshall Kjelvik, one of the pilots who will fly in the William Tell. "We are a family-oriented organization, with deep roots in the community."

Indeed, Kjelvik's father worked in maintenance at the Fargo air base and introduced him to jet fighters as a child. "After that, I always wanted to fly," he says.

"It means a lot to represent your hometown, where my family and my father are from," says Kjelvik.

Family connections run through

the base like electrical wiring. Kjelvik's sister works in the maintenance division. Becklund's father, retired Brig Gen. Thornton Becklund, was a former base commander.

First Lt. Brad Derrig is an alternate pilot who will travel to Tyndall. His father also flew for the guard and his brother, Tom, is the flight surgeon. "That's one of the unique things," he says about Fargo. "There are a lot of brothers, sister and family members working together."

Pride in safety record

But surely, there must be some Tom Cruise wannabes in the bunch.

"There is a fine line between being a cocky fighter pilot, and being a good pilot. If you are really good, you realize you don't have to be cocky," says base commander Col. Mike Haugen, who at 50 still flies the F-16. "When you are 23, you think there is no end to life and you are always going to be here. But this is a serious business."

First Lt. Jon Wutzke, 31, is on the Tell team. He joined the Air Force straight out of high school and joined the Fargo Air National Guard when he was going to college at North Dakota State University.

"The age difference was a shock for me," he recalls. "Back then we were flying F-4s and I worked in the shop. Some of those guys had been working on those same engines since the 1950s! So the corporate memory here goes way back."

And continues. The Fargo team would not be as good in the air without the skills of the crews on the ground.

"As proud as I am of our performance at William Tell," says Hau-

gen, "it is our safety record and our ground crews that make it possible. We haven't lost an aircraft in over 100,000 hours of flight time, over 251 years of flying" he says.

"Frankly, we should have lost three of those aircraft by now," says Haugen of the F-16s on the runway. "That's what the statistics say."

Those statistics do not trouble the men who fly these F-16s, however.

"It's like I tell my wife," says Edlund, "the only dangerous part about being a jet fighter pilot is driving to the air base. We have some of the oldest jets in the world, F-16-wise, but I the way they are maintained by our crews, they are like brand new." j

Experience counts

When it came William Tell contest time, the Hooligans had rebuilt, retuned and customized their F-16s like hotrods in the shop.

As a result, when those old planes went to Tyndall, they were ready to do things that were not even possible when they were brand new.

There also is a distinction among the fliers.

"They are young" says Edlund of the regular Air Force units. "We are experienced. They younger guys might pull more Gs (maximum speed maneuvers) and have quicker reactions, but we've got more flight time. There is no substitute for having been there."

Edlund, 39, has been there. He spent 11 years in the Air Force, then joined the Guard full-time six years ago. It is not an easy way to make a living.

An F-16 can fly at Mach 2, twice the speed of sound. It is capable of making a 9G turn or climb. In a 9G turn, the gravitational pull on the body is 9 times that of gravity. The force of such a turn is so great that if you happen to be looking over your left shoulder at an approaching plane or missile, and you throw your jet into a steep 9G turn to the right, the force can break your neck.

Even if you do everything right, you can return from a routine flight bruised up and exhausted.

In a 9G turn all the organs of the body will be pulled two inches out of their normal alignments. The liver shifts, the heart moves, connective tissue strains. Pilots training for William Tell will often fly twice daily.

"I pulled a neck muscle once in a 9G turn and it was bad. I couldn't fly for a month," says Edlund. "Finally I went to the flight surgeon and he cleared me. He said, 'Pee Wee, you're good to go. You can fly, no problem.' But then he took me aside

and said he wanted to show me something. He pulled out my X-rays and there were these white spots, calcium deposits and stuff, all up and down my neck and back.

"He said, Tee Wee, this is what a 60-year-old man's back looks like. Nobody knows what the long-term affects of flying a jet aircraft like the F-16 will be, but the body was just not designed to take all these Gs."

"I said, That's great, doc, but can I get that in writing?" He laughs.

"I mean, this is the best job there is. Where else can you get to fly a multi-million dollar aircraft that is the best in the world? I wouldn't trail" it for

all of Bill Gate's money or Michael Jordan's fame," he says.

Edlund is nearing the end of his career as a jet pilot. His hair is gray, he's working in an industry that is constantly downsizing. He has a wife, two kids, a dog and a cat, a house in the suburbs and a Little League team he has taken to the state championships. He is no longer much of a Hooligan, but still good to go.

"I'll probably have to hang it up in five years or so, maybe when I have 5,000 hours. That would be a pretty good career for a fighter pilot. Then, I'll just push paper. Be a ground-pounder for the team."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Here's a heart-warming story sent us by I -evidently from the Fargo Reunion, along with a white knit shirt Marilyn Cavan-not about one of "us", but nice. And Marilyn I with our insignia on it. Anyone who wants it, write her-1 Wolfe also mentioned that she had a red plastic bag with our insignia-1 Trace-608, New Albany, IN 47150-4185.



BY MICHAEL CLEVENGER. SPECIAL TO THE COURJER-JOURNAL

Alfred Montgomery, left, talked yesterday with Ruth Gillespie as he showed her pieces of the airplane found at Lawrence Dundon's crash site in Belfast Northern Ireland.

Wedding band missing for 52 years

Ring's return seals memory of airman's love

The circle is complete now. Lawrence Dundon's wedding ring is back home in Louisville; a journey of 52 years is over.

It ended about 2:30 p.m. yesterday at a warm reception at Baptist Tabernacle when Alfred Montgomery of Belfast, Northern Ireland, placed it in the waiting hands of Ruth Gillespie. Her face, as usual, was strong and impassive, but who knows what was going on in her heart?

"It's been a very moving experience," Gillespie said.

She married Lawrence Dundon on Oct. 21, 1939, in the old Baptist Tabernacle, now located at 2854 W. Market St. They had dated six years. In 1941 the couple moved into a small house at 219 N. 33rd St., the same house where Ruth Gillespie lives today.



BOB HILL

military cemetery England.

Ruth Gillespie was never able to visit the grave, or learn many details

Lawrence Dundon was drafted into the service, became a radio operator on a B-17 Flying Fortress and died with his nine crew members when their plane smashed into a hill in fog near Belfast on June 1, 1944. His body was buried in Ireland, then moved to a U.S. near Cambridge,

of the crash and the funeral. All she had were his dogtags, a group shot of his crew and photographs of their time together.

In time she met a printer named Woody Gillespie, began dating him, and married him in 1946. They would have four children, and were happily married almost 50 years before he died last December. Lawrence Dundon was always remembered and revered in the Gillespie house. But the memories and mementos of their time together stayed in the background, in Ruth Gillespie's personal thoughts and scrapbooks.

Until Alfred Montgomery found their wedding ring. As a boy, he had

See RETURN

Back page, col. 3, this section

Return of airman's ring seals memory

Continued from Page One

discovered the Belfast hill where Dundon's plane had crashed.

Montgomery's father, a museum director, had often taken him there. Montgomery, 31, shared his father's reverence for military artifacts. One day in 1994 — 50 years after the crash — Montgomery was picking through the soft dirt in the wooded hillside when he found what he thought was a steel washer. When he cleaned it up he could read an inscription in the dirty, twisted metal: "Ruth-Larry 10/21/39."

With only that slim evidence, Montgomery spent two years searching through 8th U.S. Air Force records trying to find information on Larry. By telephone, fax, cassette tape and mail he sought the Dundon family, finally contacting someone in Louisville — and then Ruth Gillespie.

"Yes," she said, "I would very much like to have that ring."

With the help of an Irish newspaper — the Belfast News Letter — Montgomery brought the ring to Louisville on a 20-hour airplane trip Saturday night, then to her Baptist Tabernacle Sunday afternoon.

Ruth Gillespie has been a valued stalwart in the church all her life. About 75 friends and church members gathered for the informal ceremony, along with all four of the Gillespie children who knew what the ring — the whole afternoon — meant to their mother.

"What's amazing," said Bill Gillespie, one of her sons, "is that the ring was found by perhaps the only person who might respect it, would want to find its owners. Anybody else might have just stuck it in their pocket."

Many people in the room remembered Lawrence Dundon, the war years, the long separations and the moments of grief. The reception not only brought family together, it reunited old friends. One niece was wearing Dundon's military wings; a friend remembered double-dating with Ruth and Larry; two women remembered their wedding.

"At least I think I do," said one. "It was a long time ago."

Montgomery, a tour-bus driver, will be in town all week, his trip becoming



Lawrence and Ruth Dundon, far left, in their wedding photo in 1939 in Louisville.



Lawrence Dundon is pictured with members of the crew that went down in the plane crash in 1944; he is on the front row, far left.

"What's amazing is that the ring was found by perhaps the only person who might respect it, would want to find its owners."

Bill Gillespie

a Full Louisville; hospitality aided by the Galt House, Actors Theatre, the Kentucky Center for the Arts, the Louisville Science Center, Churchill Downs and Lynn's Paradise Cafe.

Mayor Jerry Abramson named him an honorary Louisville citizen.

Warm applause greeted Montgomery as he moved toward the front of the room, passing flower baskets

decorated with American and British flags. He spoke a few words, then handed the ring to Ruth Gillespie. The room was silent, expectant, as she held it in her hands.

"Words cannot express how I feel," she said.

Pastor Eugene Enlow spoke of a ring of love, a circle of grief, a happy and sad occasion. He asked that everyone remember Lawrence Dundon. As Ruth Gillespie held the ring, all heads in the room bowed in prayer.

You can reach Metro columnist Bob Hill at (502) 582 4646.



BY MICHAEL CLEVENGER. SPECIAL TO THE C-J

Lawrence Dundon was revered in the Gillespie house. But the mementos of his time with Ruth stayed in the background — until the ring was found.



PUT YOUR NAME ON THE 8TH AF WALL OF VALOR

By Edwin Johnson, 550 Sqdn

All veteran members of the 385th BGMA are eligible to have their names chiseled in stone on the Wall of Valor in the Memorial Gardens of the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum at Savannah, Georgia. For this honor, however, you'll have to help the museum with a \$ 100 donation.

Whether you were crew chief, cook, flier or bottlwasher, the Wall of Valor won't be complete without your name. And you'll be proud to be a part of this as you are to be an 8AF vet. Best of all, getting on the Wall is as easy as saluting a pretty nurse used to be.

You can write to: Mighty 8AF Wall of Valor, PO Box 1992, Savannah, Georgia 31402-1992 or call toll free 1-800-544-8878 for an informative brochure and application form but here's all you really need:

From the brochure: For a minimum donation of \$ 100, an 8AF vet's name, rank and unit number will be incised on a 4 x 12 inch stone tablet on the Wall. You may honor individuals, flight crews, pilots, ground crews or any service units. The donation covers an inscription of 24 letters. Additional letters at one dollar each.

From Wall of Valor Committee Chairman judge Ben Smith: "You can have up to 22 letters on each of the tablet's two lines. We don't count periods or spaces. Some vets have included their nicknames, crew position, KIA, POW, DFC or other designations. Anything you want. If crew members want their names together on the Wall, the best way is to mail in their orders together and state prominently on the order that you want your names together. We also have Memorial/Crew plaques at increased cost."



The Wall is an ongoing project with no application deadlines and it will be built through the Gardens in whatever length is necessary to hold all the names. A main directory will make locating your plaque simple and easy. Names go up on the Wall in the order received so if a large group mailed in all their applications on the same date their names would be located in the same general area on the Wall. Here are a few sample plaque wordings:

SSGT Edward McMillen
550 SQ 385 BG

Gen Eliot Vandevanter
CO 385 BG

Lt Gordon Akley
My Husband 385 BG

SSGT Samuel Moore
KIA 385 BG

SLO-JO Ground Crew
550 SQ 385 BG

SSGT Harold Muentner
POW 385 BG

WO Thomas Thompson
Armorer 385 BG

TSGT Edwin Johnson
385th BG -DFC

The foregoing is about all you really need to know or do. That, and coming up with the hundred bucks. What you get for your money is the assurance that future generations will remember and honor your name and your group as patriotic Americans who served their country and the cause of freedom at a time of great need.

Your Name:

Address: _____

City: State: Zip

Phone: Spouse

Rank: Station Name

Sqdn. Bomb GP. Ftr. Gp.

Other : KIAPOW
ESC and EVAs

Enclose \$100. minimum for each 4" x 12" panel. Add \$1 per letter for each additional letter above 24.

Number Total \$ Amount

Mastercard # Visa #

Exp. Date Print Name

Signature

Please fill out the following space exactly as you'd like your memorial stone to be carved:

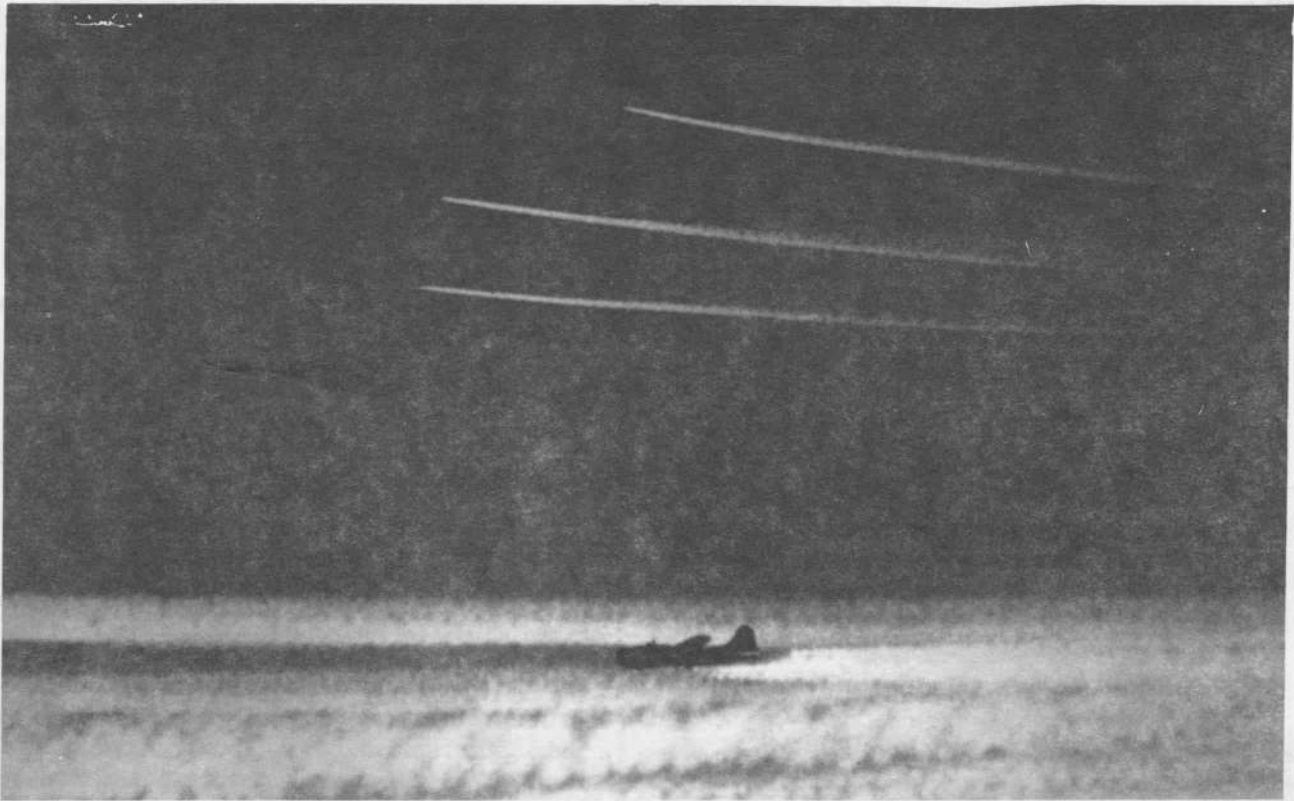
(Line One:) _____

(Line Two:)

EDITOR'S NOTE: Let's all who want to be in on this send their applications & check by January 31, 1997 and ask to be grouped with the 385th donors. If you send your check to Ed Johnson, 695 AIA North 139, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082 by January 31, 1997 he will gather them up and send in as a group. Let's get in on this!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Here's a calendar that Jim Dacey, one of our younger-generation members, developed-and he sent us a larger one that's over our desk.

Note that he even marked off the dates for the Tucson Reunion. Drop Jim a line, or send him a couple dollars and he'd probably send you one-2305 N Monroe St, Arlington, VA 22207.



The ZBftK

Home u* r ef boantff'orri <H
Bombing M ISStart

1997

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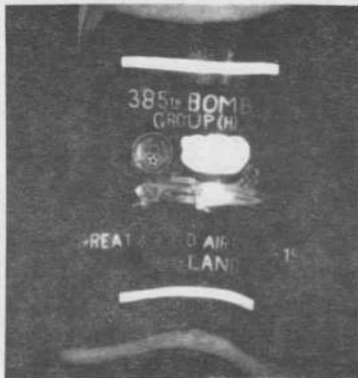
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Ed,

Here is a snapshot of my repainted back of my B-3A with the updated "297" missions.

I see that Fargo has been in the national news lately, cold and blowing snow, I sure don't miss Minot

Allen Holtman



Aloha Ed,

Article on Page 5 October Hardlife Herald re: license plates drove me up the wall. I have been an avid license plate collector for the past 15 years and would be more than willing to pay for any and all plates, any year, type or whatever.

Many 385th'ers have been kind enough to send me plates from many states to add to my collection. I have them displayed on the back wall of my attached garage on a white painted wall and have each person who I got a plate from name on the lower right hand corner of the plate.

A lot of neighbors and cronies of mine come to view my collection from time to time.

I would appreciate any and all that might be sent to me. Easy to mail, just wrap in a super market shopping bag, tape up, address and mail.

Take care and thanks a million

Jerry H. Ramaker
310 Simone Ave
Carson City, Nevada
89701-7408
Ph (702) 883-6693

Dear Ed,

While I'm chatting with you, I should mention that I returned from San Antonio last week and the 52nd year reunion of our B-17 crew.

We were in the 548th and flew from November 1944 to March 1945.

Present were First Pilot Wilbur N. (Bill) Whitehead, Navigator Gene Hackney, Radioman Jack Povey, Engineer Olen Gilmore and Radarman David Cates, plus myself, Co-Pilot. Ball Turret Gunner George Crobaugh couldn't make it because of poor health.

We've had nearly 10 reunions, starting in 1983. Along with sight-seeing and a lot of swapping stories, we had lunch at the Officers' Club at Kelly Field and had a tour of old war planes at Lackland Field.

We'll meet next in a year or so at Savannah, GA where a B-17 museum opened recently.

Best,
Wes Sullivan

Dear Ed and Jane,

Although it is only October I feel that it is time that we wrote once more to send our Christmas Greetings to our many friends in the 385th. Those who do not receive a personal card will, I am sure, forgive us, but know that we still remember them, either for visits to us at Fox Farm, or our visits to them in America.

We were sorry not to be able to make the journey to Great Ashfield last weekend for the reunion visit to the old airfield and to All Saints Church.

We did, however, have the pleasure of a visit here in Monmouth from Ruth and Jane Pettenger. They kindly invited us out to lunch, and we chose the old Inn at Skenfrith, a village on the banks of the River Monnow, which forms the border between England and Wales. The inn was once the haunt of fly fishermen, who spent many happy hours fishing for trout in the Monnow. The village has an old watermill, which still uses its old wheel, alongside more modern machinery, to drive the stones which make stone ground flour for traditional bread baking. There is also in the village an ancient castle, built by the Norman Barons some 800 years ago to defend the river crossing against the Welsh, during the borderland wars which did not cease until some time after the year 1500. Altogether a splendid place to take visitors.

Please forgive this diversion into ancient history, but it is part of our life, and crops up everywhere when we make our local journeys most days.

Once again, or very best wishes to the 385th and our many friends amongst it members.

"John and Lncv Ellis

EDITOR'S NOTE: More from our friend in Luxembourg. Hope we locate Larry Athiyeh & Robert P McPherson.

Dear Mister Stem,

Today I got your letter with the nice pictures from the B-17 and the Hardline Herald, thank you very much for all your help. It was very hard to find out all the informations about this crash after 50 years. I was working for about 5 years now. But now I can see the finish line and it is impossible for me to tell you the feeling I have for this men who died here in the town. The older people told me when the Germans captured Sgt Larry Athiyeh, they had a dog with and the Germans told to the dog to bite him, his hands were badly injured by this dog. He was not able to protect himself because his hands were fasten on his back, and until this day this people are angry to the Germans.

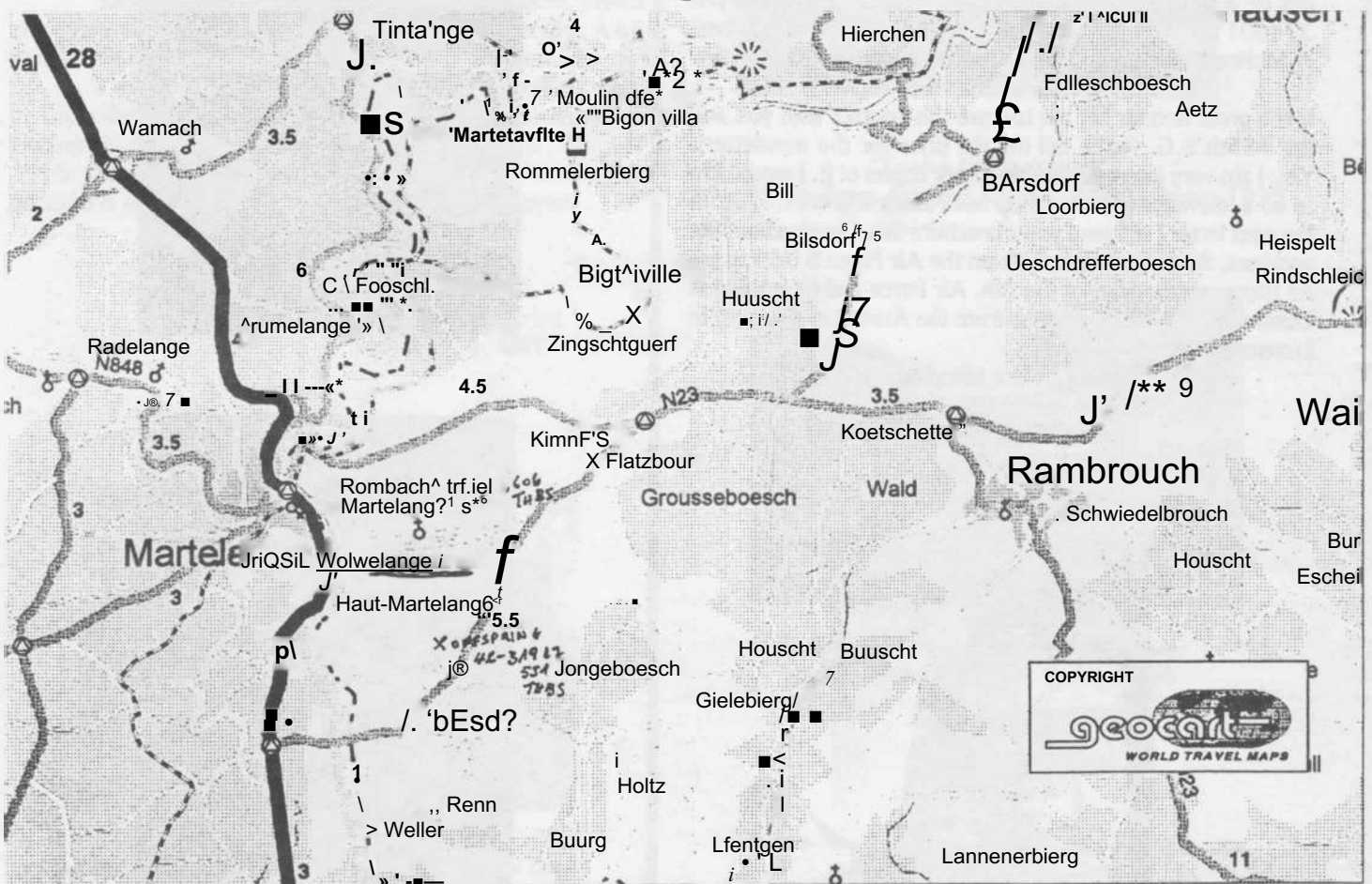
After the liberation a requiem had been hold for the airmen and I found now a picture from this ceremony. I will send it to you too but it takes a little bit time to copy it. On the Memorial Day we will make the same decoration at the church as it was at this time. I need for that 18 helmed but I think that will not be a problem. I'm still trying to find Sgt Larry Athiyeh 3286011 (L.W.) from the 550th THBS and from Sgt Robert P. McPherson. I would like to have them with us on this day.

It is a great honour for me to have this contact with you and the 385th B.G. Please tell me the price for the newsletters. Yes, I am very interested to have back copies of it. I would like to be a member of your group but I know it is impossible. In the next letter I will send you a brochure that I made about the accident. A reterted Colonel from the Air Force is helping me he also was a member of the 8th. Air Force and he is living in Luxembourg. I got his address from the American Embassy in Luxembourg.

Nices greathing from a friend of the 385th B.G.

Roger Feller
Rue de l'Ermitage 22
L-8813 Wolwelange
Luxembourg





Dear Ed,

I have retained every copy of the Hardlife Herald that I have received since the August 1978 issue. I do not recall whether that is the first one I received or not. I thought at the time, what a history of the exploits of the Eighth Air Force this would be if the newsletter continued to be published for a number of years. I have not been disappointed! I have them all in ringbinders and all in all they tell quite a story.

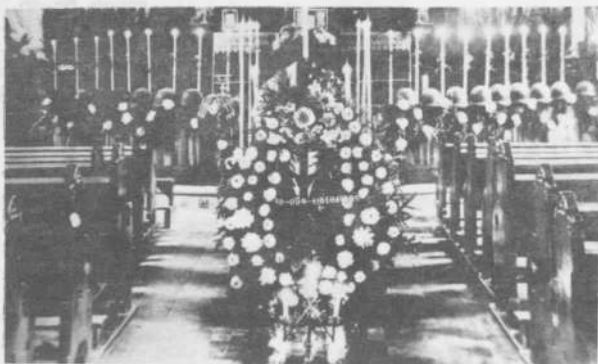
The Ohio Veterans Home is located in Sandusky near where we reside. It is a large, excellent facility dedicated to the care of Ohio veterans of all wars. It was established after the Civil War and has been kept up and thoroughly modernized in recent years. It has a recently built nursing home section as well as fine domiciliary living quarters for vets who need them, it is truly an institution the State of Ohio can be proud of.

My point is; If my heirs are not interested in keeping my files of Hardlife Herald Newsletters, and other of my military memorabilia they are to go to the museum at the Veterans home.

I was a member of the Maryonovich crew in the 550th Squadron. My first mission was to Bergen, Norway of July 24, 1943, and flew my twenty-fifth to Brunswick, Germany on January 30, 1944. I was then transferred to the 452nd, a newly formed group as a gunnery instructor.

My most memorable raid was to Bordeaux, France, December 5, 1943 when our crew ended up in Lisbon, Portugal, then returned to England to complete our combat tour. The details of this experience appeared in an issue of the Hardlife Herald.

All who have been active in the establishment and continued success of the 385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association are to be complimented for their fine work!!!!



17th October 1944

Requiem for the 18 Crew Members at the church of Perle



Picture to be used in Luxembourg display

We came into the 385th to replace one of the two crews which were lost in the Atlantic crossing when the Group was on its way to England. I do not recall the name of the pilot of the other replacement crew. As I remember, they were lost on the Wesser Munde mission July 26, 1943. I believe we saw them attempt to ditch in the English Channel on our way back to the base. The plane went right in and disappeared. So sad! I have thought of it often, especially after our ditching experience off the coast of Portugal.

You probably saw Mary and the rest of the crew at the reunion in Dayton in 1987. We were all able to make the reunion. We had a reunion of our crew in Dayton in 1984 and all were there. I have always been so happy that we were able to get together those last two times before death started taking its toll. As Johnny Johnson quoted our tailgunner Ed "Mac" McMillen, in a recent letter, "We were just like brothers." I think perhaps we might have been even closer.

We have lost three of our number now. Ed McMillen and Gordon Akley not too long after the Dayton reunion and then Mary this summer. Admit it or not, we are all getting old!

You and your family have a Happy Holiday Season, and keep the good work up!!

Sincerely,

Carl Williams
2205 Pelton Park Dr
Sandusky, OH 44870
November 25, 1996

Dear Editor Ed,

Earlier this year while meeting with the Illinois Director of Veterans' Affairs and some of his Staff, I mentioned the 385th BG Schweinfurt painting.

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs maintains a section of some military photographs and other memorabilia in a gallery like setting. Director Robert Foster (IDVA) indicated an interest to include our painting along with a brief narrative depicting the scene..Well! You can bet that I jumped at the opportunity and agreed to loan my copy to the IDVA for as long as they desired to have it upon display.

Shown (center) in the enclosed picture is Dir. Foster accepting my copy of that great effort. On the Directors left is the son of a 385th member, James Rinkenberger (home town Peoria, IL) who happened to be in town on business and witnessed the occasion. Yours truly is on the right of Dir. Foster.

Its probably a stretch but perhaps a later visitor to the Veterans Affairs Office might make a connection with the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association.

In comradship,
George J. Behl
548 Czervinski Crew



Dear Ed,

Thank you for sending me a copy of your publication the last two months. My fascination with and admiration for the members of 8th Air Force during WWII grows as I read every word. The pictures and recollections of your fellow warriors are amazing.

During a visit to Germany a few years ago I was disappointed to find that museums and memorials dedicated to WWII events are very difficult to locate. I find it interesting that you regularly receive correspondence from Germans and other Europeans who are actively accumulating information about the war. It would be fascinating to contact these people to find out where to go to see points of interest prior to going there again. I would also like to visit Great Ashfield.

Ed, I am happy to enclose a check which, hopefully, will entitle me to associate membership status in the 385th BGMA. If so, I will be proud to be associated, in this very small way, with so many true American heros. I made it out for \$12.00 as I noticed the appeal from your president concerning the solvency of the organization. Hopefully, others will voluntarily increase their annual dues. It's worth every nickel.

Keep up the good work.

Dick Larson
LtCol (ret) NDANG
6420 13th St N
Fargo, ND 58102
701-293-3646

EDITOR'S NOTE: We suppose the Germans don't want to have too many memorials to their WWII defeat. Hope you get to Great Ashfield, Dick.

385TH B G M A

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

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